

1890.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

VOTES

AND

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

DURING THE SESSION

OF

1890,

WITH THE VARIOUS DOCUMENTS CONNECTED THEREWITH.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.
VOL. VI.

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NEW SOUTH WALES.

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AND

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1890.

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1890.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDICES, AND PLANS,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

NYNGAN TO COBAR.

Presented to Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act,
51 Vic. No. 37, section 8.

SYDNEY : CHARLES POTTER GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM NYNGAN TO COBAR.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, and the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon the expediency of "constructing a line of railway from Nyngan to Cobar," have, after due inquiry, resolved, that it is expedient the proposed railway should be constructed, and in accordance with the provision of sub-section IV, of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

1. The proposed railway from Nyngan to Cobar, a length of 80 miles 49 chains 62 links, will leave the Great Western Railway at 378 miles 9 chains 38 links from Sydney, at about a mile to the north of the Nyngan Station. The general direction of the line is parallel with the main road, excepting just at the terminus at Cobar, in Jindera-street, at a distance of 458 miles 50 chains from Sydney. The estimated cost submitted by the Department for a light line of railway is £207,360, or £2,560 per mile, exclusive of cost of land and compensation, which, however, will not be heavy, as throughout its whole extent, with the exception of a few chains about the middle, and in Cobar, the line will be upon Crown land. According to the evidence of Mr. Henry Deane, Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, the ruling gradient will be not steeper than 1 in 75, and although this involves an improvement upon the original plan, which contained grades of 1 in 40, Mr. Deane thinks it will not cost any more than the estimated £2,560 per mile. There will be no curves sharper than 20 chains radius.

Description
of the pro-
posed line.

2. In inquiring into the expediency of constructing this railway, the Committee have had to bear in mind always that the line from Nyngan to Cobar was referred to them in view of the probable extension of the railway from Cobar to Wilcannia and Silverton, and so on to the South Australian border. The necessity for such an extension is set forth at length by the Railway Commissioners in their report. They point out that the question is of considerable magnitude, and cannot remain long undetermined, in the interests of the places named, and the western district generally; that this will afford a means of direct communication between Sydney and South Australia, and ultimately, when a line is constructed connecting the Northern and Western lines, a direct route from Brisbane. They urge as further reasons for the construction of a line to Wilcannia and Silverton the necessity for providing facilities to the pastoralists in dry seasons to obtain supplies, to forward their wool to market, and to remove their stock to more favoured feeding grounds. They also allude to the marvellous development of the mining industry at Broken Hill, where the population already numbers 15,000, and is still increasing; and they affirm that the trade of this place is out of the hands of New South Wales, and the sympathies of the population to a great extent are with the Colonies of Victoria and South Australia, on account of the communication with New South Wales being so difficult. The Committee, therefore, in making their investigations, have not confined themselves merely to the expediency of constructing a railway as far as Cobar, but have directed their attention also to the larger question of opening up communication by railway with the extreme north-western portion of the Colony.

Part of ulti-
mate extension
to the South
Australian
Border.

Mode of
inquiry.

3. In order to carry out these objects effectually, the full Committee, in Sydney, took evidence almost entirely of a departmental and professional character, and carried out the greater part of their investigations by means of a Sectional Committee, consisting of six of their members, who began their inquiries at Nyngan, and five of whom proceeded thence to Cobar, Wilcannia, and Broken Hill, where they were rejoined by Dr. Garran, the other member of the Committee. They also visited Silverton, taking evidence at all those towns, as well as at various stopping places on the route, as will be seen by their report herewith. The Sectional Committee examined no less than 109 witnesses, in addition to those who gave evidence before the full Committee in Sydney. Among those examined were pastoralists, farmers, mining managers, local officials, bank managers, hotelkeepers, storekeepers, merchants, teachers, journalists, carriers, surveyors, engineers, and others, representing every class of society, and almost every variety of occupation to be found in the country districts. The mass of evidence thus gathered, though sometimes varying in details, is in the main so consistent and direct that the Committee were enabled, without much hesitation, to come to a conclusion, which is embodied in their report submitted to the General Committee.

The Nyngan
to Cobar
district.

4. With regard to the railway from Nyngan to Cobar, now more immediately under consideration, it appears that the line was first staked out in 1885, and the line now proposed is practically the same, with only a few slight deviations for the purpose of improving the grades. These deviations, however, would have the effect of lengthening the total line by about three-quarters of a mile. The estimated cost in the first instance was some £34,000 more than the present estimate, but the estimate has since been revised, and the cost of labour is now lower than it was. Among other ways in which it is proposed to reduce the expense of constructing the line it is intended to do without fencing on a great part of the line, and in fact to fence only within the range of settlement. It has further been arranged that the Railway Commissioners shall only charge 1d. per ton per mile for the carriage of the ironwork for this particular line, instead of the previously usual charge of 4d. per ton per mile, which will be a reduction of about £470 per mile in the construction of the line. The soil in most parts through which the line would pass consists of a rich red loam, which, with a sufficient rainfall, would be very fertile. Where cultivation has been tried it has been found that excellent crops of wheat and oats are obtained in favourable seasons, and several witnesses expressed the belief that by early sowing satisfactory crops of these cereals would be obtained three years out of four. The wheat and oats are mostly made into hay. Splendid lucerne-paddocks were also inspected by the Sectional Committee on some of the Yarran flats near Cobar, while oats 6 feet 11 inches high were measured near the same town. It may be stated that numbers of equally good flats for cultivation were to be found almost all the way between Nyngan and to within a few miles of Wilcannia, while equally good opportunities occur also between Wilcannia and Broken Hill. If facilities for transit were given by the construction of a railway, it was thought that an average of alternately successful crops would prove remunerative, as good markets for fodder exist at Nyngan, Cobar, Wilcannia, and Broken Hill. Various kinds of fruit, including grapes, are found to thrive when cultivated, and vegetables grow remarkably well by the aid of irrigation. The country traversed by the proposed railway is capable of considerable improvement for grazing purposes. By scrubbing and ringbarking where necessary, and with a sufficient water-conservation, this part of the colony would be well adapted for sheep-farming in even average seasons; while in a specially good season, such as prevailed when the Sectional Committee were making their examination, the country might be described as a grazier's paradise, with waving flowers and grass 2 to 3 feet high. On the other hand, in times of drought the face of the country is completely changed. The stock have, under such circumstances, to depend solely upon the remnants of salt-bush and other drought-resisting herbage, which, in their turn, give out, having been eaten down till scarcely a root remains. Should the drought be prolonged, the stock are kept alive by cutting down such edible scrub and trees as the country may supply; while on many of the runs thousands of sheep necessarily perish from sheer inability on the part of their owners either to remove them to better country or to find food of any sort with which to avert starvation. The district is rich in mineral resources, especially in the neighbourhood of Cobar, where is situated the mine of the Cobar company. Mr. Russell Barton, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the
the

the Company, was examined at great length before the full Committee. He stated that the mine had been at work for about seventeen years, but had suspended operations a few weeks previous to his examination. The want of facilities for communication had been the great drawback of the district. Flour has been as high as 1s. a pound, and this state of scarcity was brought about equally by wet or by dry seasons, but by wet seasons especially, when the roads became perfectly impassable, even for horses. The mine required from 300 to 500 tons of firewood per day, and they had used up all the available wood within 10 or 12 miles of Cobar, having, in fact, constructed a tramway of about 15 miles, in order to facilitate the supply of fuel. The mine was closed partially on account of the low price of copper, but principally, Mr. Barton stated, because they found it impossible to get a supply of wood. In his opinion the construction of a railway from Nyngan to Cobar would remove that impediment to the successful working of the industry. He looks upon the supply of ore in the Cobar copper-mine as practically inexhaustible, and the idea of the directors is, if they get the railway, to open the mine and take coal to it, returning ores to the coal-fields—to smelt at both ends, in fact, and have trucks running one way with ore, and returning with coal. With regard to the roads it is stated that at times 2in. of rain renders them impassable. The local Road Superintendent says that to make a properly metalled road from Nyngan to Cobar, 20 feet wide, would require as much as £200,000, and then it would cost for maintenance £10,000 a year. In his opinion the construction of a railway would be much cheaper. There is no good metal for road making to be got in the district, but porphyry, suitable for ballast for a railway, can be procured along the line. There is, besides, a large quantity of slag or refuse which has accumulated around the Cobar Copper Company's mine, which would be suitable for ballast, and which, Mr. Barton says, the Company would be willing to give for that purpose. The traffic with Cobar at present goes chiefly by way of Nyngan, Coolabah, or Bourke, and occasionally by the River Darling, *via* Louth. The river route is not much patronised, owing to the uncertainty of the river keeping open in dry weather. There is comparatively little difference between the distance by road from Nyngan to Cobar and from Coolabah to Cobar, and the latter route, though longer by rail, seems to have been adopted in consequence of some difficulty with the carriers. Strange as it may seem, some classes of goods are sent to Cobar by way of Bourke, notwithstanding the fact that this involves a further distance by rail of 126 miles. This is in consequence of the differential rates charged on the railway, by which it becomes actually cheaper to send the goods on for this extra 126 miles, as the diminished charge for the extra distance by rail more than compensates for the slightly additional charge for carriage by road from Bourke to Cobar over the rate from Nyngan to that place.

5. The country beyond Cobar towards Wilcannia was found by the Sectional Committee to be generally of the same character as that between Nyngan and Cobar. Witnesses state that the country would be taken up largely in home-stead leases if only there were better means of communication. A large proportion of the trade of this part of the district is transacted with Wilcannia, when the river is navigable, which, however, is occasional, and then it takes from three to five weeks to get goods up the river, so that storekeepers are put to great expense in keeping large stocks to tide over times of accidental delay in obtaining supplies. Very little business is done with Sydney at present, in consequence of the lack of means of communication, but in the opinion of some of the witnesses, if a railway were constructed from Nyngan to Wilcannia, more business would go in the direction of Sydney, as it would save time as well as interest on the value of the heavy stocks that have now to be kept. The wool would probably mostly go down the river when it was navigable, but would be conveyed by train in dry seasons. The railway to Wilcannia would largely convenience the miners in the Mount Browne district, with which a large trade is done by the business people of Wilcannia. The population of the town of Wilcannia is stated to be now from 1,000 to 1,200, and for the year 1888 the Customs collections there amounted to £10,535.

6. Broken Hill has at the present time a population of about 15,000, and appears to be rapidly progressing, the chief attraction being its mining industry, which is said, however, to be as yet only in its infancy, the deepest existing shaft on the main lode being only 300 feet. Firewood is largely used for mining purposes

purposes, but the local supply is dying out, and coal and coke will have to be used. Coal at present costs 54s. per ton at Broken Hill. It is sent from Newcastle to Port Pirie, and is taken thence to Broken Hill by rail. The coke used is English, and costs about five guineas per ton at Broken Hill. Lime and iron ore are largely used as fluxes in smelting the silver ore, and these minerals could be procured along the line between Wilcannia and Broken Hill, and would be sources of traffic to the proposed railway. Large quantities of timber are used in the mines, which is now mostly imported by way of South Australia; and fodder, in the shape of hay, bran, and chaff, is largely procured from the same quarter, but supplies could be obtained from our own Colony if means of transit were available. The wool of the district mostly goes by the river when communication by that means is open, otherwise it is sent to Adelaide or Port Pirie, and the bullion from the mines goes in the same direction. The road from Wilcannia to Broken Hill, according to the local Road Superintendent, could not be properly constructed and metalled at much less than £1,300 or £1,400 per mile, for a width of 18 feet, and the roads in the plain country would cost nearly double that sum. He says it would be almost impracticable to form those roads, and it would not be desirable if it were practicable. He considers it would be decidedly preferable to construct a light line of railway. There would be an ample supply of ballast for a railway to be obtained between Broken Hill and Wilcannia. There is at present a tramway running between Broken Hill and Silverton, and thence on to Cockburn, on the South Australian border, a distance of 36 miles. This tramway is the property of a private company, managed by a Board of Directors in Melbourne. The manager of the company was examined at some length by the Sectional Committee, and his evidence shows that there is a large and profitable business done by the tramway in conveying ore and bullion from Broken Hill, and in bringing back coke, coal, and mining timber. Silverton is another mining township, with a population, including the mining districts around, of 3,000 to 4,000 persons. The trade of this place is principally done with Adelaide, though one witness stated that he dealt partly with Sydney, receiving his goods by way of Port Pirie or Port Adelaide. His reason for procuring goods from Sydney was not that there was any difference in the price, but because, as a citizen of New South Wales, he preferred to keep his money within the colony to which he belonged. Crushed ore from the Silverton mines is sent to Port Pirie or Port Adelaide, either to be smelted or sent to Europe. Fluxes, such as lime and ironstone, are found in the neighbourhood, and are sent thence to Broken Hill, and good building stone is found adjacent to the township. In the opinion of one witness the town of Silverton is likely to become the sanatorium for Broken Hill, being singularly free from typhoid fever, and having a good supply of water, and a pure atmosphere.

Alternative schemes to connect with Broken Hill and Silverton.

7. While considering the question of establishing railway communication between Sydney and Broken Hill and Silverton, the Committee have not ignored the fact that other routes have been suggested by which to reach those localities without adopting the line from Nyngan to Cobar at all. The railway already extends to Hay, a distance of 454 miles, and thence to Broken Hill would be 274 miles as against 355 from Nyngan to Broken Hill, or a saving of 81 miles of new line to construct. The total length of line from Sydney to Broken Hill *via* Nyngan and Cobar would be 732 miles, while by way of Hay it would be 728, involving a saving of only 4 miles on the total length. There is yet another route which has been suggested, and that is to go along the valley of the Lachlan River, by way of Forbes and Condobolin, striking the Darling at Menindie, and thence proceeding on to Silverton. This line, it appears, has not yet been surveyed; but, according to a return furnished by Mr. Deane this route would be the shortest by about 64 miles. The railway in this direction is as yet only constructed as far as Molong, 216 miles; so that, in order to reach Broken Hill, about 450 miles of new line would have to be constructed as against 355 miles by the Nyngan-Cobar route. But it must be borne in mind that the last-named route will embrace the thriving township of Wilcannia and district, which would not be served by any other proposed route.

Conclusions of the Committee.

8. Under these circumstances, and especially considering the necessity for establishing railway communication with the great mining centres of the north-western portion of the colony as soon as possible, the Committee, after due consideration, have come to the conclusion that it would be better to recommend the adoption of the line from Nyngan to Cobar, as part of a line eventually to extend'

extend to Wilcannia and Broken Hill, and to connect with the South Australian Railway system. From the nature of the country the line will be comparatively a cheap one, but although the Committee urge the adoption of economy in regard to fencing, station buildings, &c., they are of opinion that as the line will be an important one, the permanent way should be made sound and substantial. The Committee also suggest, with a view to expedite the work, that the contract should be let in sections. On the 17th of December, the Committee having proceeded to consider the evidence, Mr. Trickett moved "That the Committee consider it expedient that the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar, as referred to them by the Legislative Assembly, be constructed." The resolution was seconded by Mr. Tonkin, and carried unanimously.

J. P. ABBOTT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 18th February, 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM NYNGAN TO COBAR.

WEDNESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWAL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Joseph Barling, Esq., Under Secretary for Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] You are Under Secretary for Public Works? Yes.
2. Have you any statement which you would like to make in reference to the proposed line from Nyngan to Cobar? Yes; it is as follows:—

Nyngan to Cobar.

Length, 80 miles 49 chains 62 links.

Estimated cost of constructing a light line of railway is £207,360, or £2,560 per mile, exclusive of cost of land and compensation.

THIS line would leave the Great Western Railway at 378 miles 9 chains 38 links at about a mile to the north of Nyngan Station. Curving to the west, the line passes into the travelling stock reserve and follows it alongside the main road throughout the whole distance, excepting just at the terminus at Cobar. It crosses the road to Nymagee at 390 miles 65 chains, and is terminated at Tindera-street at Cobar at 458 miles 59 chains from Sydney. Throughout its whole extent, excepting for a few chains about the middle and at Cobar, the line is within Crown land.

I may mention that at the present time there are three surveyors engaged upon the line improving the grades, with a view to altering the ruling gradient from 1 in 50 to 1 in 75, if possible. It will be necessary to restake almost the whole of the line, because when it was staked in 1885 it followed the travelling stock route for pretty nearly the whole of the way, and many of the stakes are now missing. When the proposed extension from Nyngan to Cobar was referred to the Railway Commissioners it was in view of the probable extension of the railway from Cobar to Wilcannia and Silverton, and so on to the South Australian border. I will read the report of the Commissioners upon that subject:—

Proposed railway extension from Cobar to Wilcannia and Silverton.

15 July, 1889.

In the reference to us of the proposed Nyngan and Cobar line we were requested to report in regard "to the question of ultimately extending the line to Wilcannia, and thence to Silverton, with a view of connecting it with the South Australian system." We have therefore inspected the route from Cobar to Wilcannia and Broken Hill.

The question of railway communication with Wilcannia, Broken Hill, and the South Australian border is of considerable magnitude, yet it is one that cannot apparently remain long undetermined, not only in the interest of the places named, and the western district generally, but as a means of direct communication with South Australia from Sydney, and probably at no distant date by the construction of a line between the Northern and Western lines—a direct route from Brisbane. Lines of this character can only be dealt with upon national principles, yet there is also a commercial aspect.

While Wilcannia and the surrounding district depends at present upon water carriage for its supplies, and as a means of getting wool to the seaboard, the carriage is uncertain, and it is fair to assume that a portion at least of the traffic would go by rails if such a means of transit were available.

The pastoralists are at the present almost helpless in times of drought and their losses during the past season have been great. A railway would have a material effect on their prospects, by affording the means of selling part of their stock in bad times, or of removing the same to more favored feeding grounds.

The rates now paid for getting the stores used on stations are excessive in consequence of the great distances to be travelled to reach the railway at Hay, Nyngan, or Broken Hill.

Another very great consideration is the fact of the marvellous development of the mining industry at Broken Hill, where there is a population of 15,000 souls at present existing, and we were assured it would rapidly increase.

The whole of this trade is out of the hands of New South Wales, and the sympathies of the population are, to a great extent, with South Australia and Victoria, as the communication with New South Wales is so very difficult.

We were assured by the manager of one of the mines that his railway carriage account amounted to £18,000 per month; and were assured that if a through route existed with Sydney, a fair proportion of this traffic might be obtained, in spite of our long route. It is probable also that a market would be opened up for coal and coke for our western coal-fields.

This route would also be as short from Sydney to Adelaide (and of course to places north of Adelaide shorter) as that now existing *via* Melbourne; but the New South Wales Railway would receive a 771 miles of proportion, instead of 387 miles as at present to Albury.

With regard to our northern system and Queensland, if a line is constructed from Werris Creek to the Western line a shortening of distance between the North and South Australia of about 400 miles would be effected.

J. Barling,
Esq.
25 Sept., 1889.

The line is only now being roughly surveyed from Wilcannia to Broken Hill, but making the lines throughout on as cheap a principle as possible without fencing, it is roughly estimated that it will cost as under:—

Cobar to Wilcannia.....	£497,000
Wilcannia to Broken Hill	390,000
Broken Hill to Cockburn, <i>via</i> The Pinnacles and Thackeringa	150,000
	£1,037,000
Interest at 3½ per cent.....	£36,295
Rough estimate of cost of working.....	51,000
Interest on rolling stock	3,339
Cost per annum.....	£90,634

Of course it is impossible to offer a pronounced opinion upon the probable financial success of such a large undertaking from the outset, but there is no doubt ultimately it will be successful; and as it is most desirable to open up communication with remote portions of the Colony of New South Wales, which are at present nearly, if not wholly, commercially connected with our sister colonies, we strongly advise the Government to adopt the scheme and to commence it in about four sections, so as to get it opened throughout as quickly as possible.

We suggest the route for the line from Broken Hill to the South Australian border at Cockburn, *via* the Pinnacles and Thackeringa, as the mining industry at the Pinnacles requires the aid of a railway to develop it, and a private company is also being projected to afford this facility, and we would advise the Government not to grant powers to any other private company in the district.

The Bill now before Parliament for constructing an extension of the present Silverton tram-line to the River Darling, at Menindie, a distance of about 80 miles, regarding which we have been asked to report, is also affected by this scheme. We are of opinion it would be unwise to authorize the line, yet it is desirable that access should be given with the river from Broken Hill, and if the Government decide to make the Wilcannia line we would advise the rejection of the Bill.

I may mention, in this connection, that the Minister received a letter from a gentleman whose name I cannot give the Committee at present, because his letter is confidential, but if I did the Committee would recognize that his remarks are worthy of attention. He points out that in August, 1889, when he wrote, he was only just sending away his wool clip of 1888, which had been delayed in Wilcannia for twelve months. It may also be interesting to the Committee to hear a report from Mr. John Whitton, the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, which was called for by, I think, Mr. Secretary Fletcher. It is dated the 28th February, 1889, and is as follows:—

Department of Public Works, Railway Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office,
Sydney, 28 February, 1889.

MINUTE PAPER.

Subject:—Proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar, Wilcannia and Silverton; and to connect with the South Australian Railways at the latter place.

In reply to the Minister's minute of this date I have no hesitation in stating that if it be considered desirable to construct a railway to connect Wilcannia with the railway system of the Colony, and which might eventually be extended to Silverton, the best route to adopt would be from Nyngan to Cobar, thence to Wilcannia and Silverton.

This route would form almost a direct line from Nyngan to Silverton where connection could be made with the South Australian Railways, thus providing a through route to Adelaide.

In my opinion this would form a very important line and would directly connect Adelaide with Sydney, and the distance would be nearly the same as the line now passing through Victoria.

The country from Nyngan to Wilcannia is remarkably easy for Railway construction, no important bridges or heavy cuttings will be required in the whole distance.

The following Tenders were received for the construction of the Railway from Nyngan to Cobar:—

	£	s.	d.
1. Carey & Maund	182,838	10	0
2. Fishburn & Co.	144,048	1	0
3. Hardy & Morton	121,799	8	4
4. Angus & Co.	133,747	6	8
5. Halliday Owen & Co.	150,154	5	4
6. Fergus & Blair	159,457	5	0
7. Salmond, Denne, & Co.	153,344	4	6
Engineer's estimate	126,579	0	0

Messrs. Hardy and Morton's Tender being the lowest was recommended, but no Tender was accepted.

The comparative distances from Sydney to Adelaide via the respective routes are as under:—

	Miles.
Sydney to Adelaide via Melbourne	1,086
Sydney to Adelaide via Nyngan, Cobar, Wilcannia and Silverton, <i>viz</i> :—	
Sydney to Wilcannia	616
Wilcannia to Silverton, estimated from map.....	135
Silverton to Adelaide by rail and tram	320
	1,071

On the present route Sydney to Adelaide, the distances travelled on the New South Wales Railways is only 388 miles, whereas by the other route (*viz*., Nyngan, Wilcannia, and Silverton) the distance travelled on our lines would be 771 miles.

The distance from Sydney to Silverton via Melbourne and Adelaide is 1,406 miles, and from Sydney via Nyngan and Wilcannia to Silverton, is 771 miles only.

JOHN WHITTON.

The Minister for Works regards this extension chiefly in connection with the proposition to carry the line further on to Broken Hill and the South Australian border, and the report of the Committee will determine him as to his recommendations to the Cabinet with regard to the further extension alluded to.

2. *Mr. Trickett.*] You state that a very large proportion of the land through which this line will pass is Government land—you cannot tell us the amount of private land? I think you will find that on the plans.

3. When were the surveyors set to work to alter and improve the grades? I cannot give you the date. Mr. Deane will give you that information. They are at present on the work, and it is estimated that they will take six weeks or two months to complete it.

4. *Chairman.*] Have you had any flying surveys made on any of the other routes? I believe surveys have been made, but Mr. Deane would be able to give you that information.

5. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you know how the statistics of trade were prepared? The statistics were first obtained by Mr. Hornidge, who is now in the employ of the Railway Commissioners. The officer who can give you the most complete information will be Mr. Harper, who is one of the goods superintendents now.

6. Is he available? Yes, I saw him this morning. He has been over the line three times and knows it thoroughly. Mr. Kirkcaldie will also be able to give you information.

7. We can also obtain returns with regard to the river trade? Yes. Mr. Kirkcaldie has given a great deal of attention to the matter.

8. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you received many requests from the residents of Broken Hill, Silverton, and Wilcannia with reference to the construction of this line? You will be able to find that in the printed *précis*.

9. Do you know anything of a public meeting having recently been held at Broken Hill in reference to this matter? I cannot speak from memory—it will be seen in the papers.
10. Are you aware that arrangements have been made by the Minister to receive a deputation from the residents of Broken Hill about it? I believe that a deputation from Broken Hill will wait upon him to-morrow.
11. Do you know of any meetings that have been held at Cobar, or whether any deputations were recently appointed to wait upon the Minister? I do not remember any recent deputations from Cobar. No doubt a great many meetings have been held.
12. Do you know anything about the amount of bullion that comes from Broken Hill? No; I cannot give you that information; but I can easily get it. The Government Statistician furnished me with statistics of the trade of 1888, and I will send them to the Committee.
13. You cannot say what amount of bullion is produced in Broken Hill per week or per month? I have no direct knowledge. In the Report of the Railway Commissioners which I read they say: "We are assured by the manager of one of these mines that his railway carriage account amounted to £18,000 per month, and that if a through line to Sydney existed a fair proportion of that might be obtained in spite of the long route."
14. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you know whether the estimate of cost is exclusive of the whole of the fencing? It includes the fencing I think, where the Department proposes to fence.
15. The line is not to be fenced except where there is population? Yes.
16. Does the estimate of cost include the necessary fencing? I believe so.

J. Barling,
Esq.
25 Sept., 1889.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

17. *Chairman.*] What is your position in the Service? Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways.
18. What position did you hold before you held that? Inspecting engineer of railways under construction.
19. Do you know anything about the proposed line from Nyngan to Cobar personally? I have not been over it, but I have had a good deal to do with the making of plans and surveys.
20. Can you tell me what surveyors have been engaged upon this line? The first surveyor out there was Mr. Henry Hardy. He was recalled in 1885, and Mr. Martin and Mr. Hixson completed the survey.
21. Those are the only surveyors who have been upon the line? They are all who were on it at that time. We have some surveyors at work there now improving the line.
22. Are the three gentlemen whom you have named engineers as well as surveyors? No.
23. None of them? No; they are surveyors.
24. Nothing was done between 1885 and the present time as far as the surveyors were concerned? Yes; Mr. D. C. Simpson, who is district engineer, was over the line last year with a view to improving it.
25. Who else? The men engaged there at present in improving and restaking the line are Mr. Stewart and Mr. Stawell, district engineers' assistants, and Mr. Marshall, a surveyor.
26. When was the line first permanently staked out? In 1885.
27. Up to that time had any engineer inspected it? I am not quite sure whether Mr. Palmer, who was at that time in charge of the trial surveys went over the line.
28. Will not your papers show whether he did or did not? I daresay I could find out whether he was over the line.
29. Were the plans now before the Committee prepared when the line was permanently staked? Yes. It is the same line practically. I think there is one small deviation.
30. I want to confine your answer to the plans laid on the table of the House on the 29th April, 1886? Yes, that was the line.
31. The line surveyed by Messrs. Hardy, Martin, and Hixson? Yes.
32. You cannot say positively whether Mr. Palmer inspected the line before the plans were laid upon the table of the House? I do not think he did.
33. Any checking in reference to these surveys would be done in the office in Sydney without any knowledge of the contour of the country except from what was shown on the plans? Yes. Mr. Hardy, when I asked him about the matter on a subsequent occasion, said that he had instructions from Mr. Palmer to lay out a line which was through nearly the whole of its length parallel to the travelling stock route.
34. Can you tell me what the steepest grade was on the line laid out in 1885, and shown on the plans laid on the table of the House in 1886? I am not quite certain. The plans, I think, were prepared first with grades of 1 in 40; but afterwards the section was altered to 1 in 50.
35. At all events you say you think the steepest grade was 1 in 40? The steepest grade when the plans were first completed was 1 in 40. Afterwards it was improved on the section only to 1 in 50—there was no restaking.
36. Was that alteration made before the plans were submitted to the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly for their approval or afterwards? I cannot say. I am sure that the line which was approved of had grades of 1 in 40.
37. *Mr. Lackey.*] Would that be the average grade or a special grade? The ruling grade for short lengths here and there.
38. *Chairman.*] Of course one grade would influence the haulage on the whole of the line? It would depend upon the length of it. If it were only short, and you could take a run at it, you might get over it.
39. Must it not necessarily influence the haulage on the whole of the line? Unless it were only a few chains in length.
40. We will say that the haulage power of an engine is 200 tons on a grade of 1 in 40? The momentum of the train, if there were only 2 or 3 chains, would carry it over.
41. Is not that severe on the rolling stock? Certainly not.
42. These plans were afterwards referred by Mr. Secretary Sutherland to the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Whitton, for him to try and find out better grades? Yes; last year.
43. Mr. Simpson then inspected the line? Yes. He had his instruments with him, and he cross-sectioned the line and found how it was possible to make some improvements. He made a report upon the subject.
44. When instructions are given to the surveyors, are they told what the steepest grade is to which they must bring the line—that they are not to get a higher grade than 1 in 40 or 1 in 50? A surveyor is told to get the best grade that he can.

H. Deane,
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45. But it must not be more than a certain steepness? Occasionally that instruction has been given.
46. Have you got the instructions which were first issued to the surveyors about the Cobar line? No.
47. Can you get them? I can see whether there were any written instructions; but I expect that the instructions given were verbal.*
48. Were they burnt in the Garden Palace fire? No; if any written instructions were given they would not have been burnt.
49. Mr. Simpson was the first engineer who visited the line? Yes.
50. That was after the house had been invited to approve of, and did approve of, the plans and sections of the line? Yes.
51. What did he reduce the grades to? His steepest grade was 1 in 50.
52. What was the difference between the original cost and the cost of the line as laid out by him? There was not any difference worth considering. His estimate came to within a few hundred pounds of the other.
53. *Mr. Garrard.*] Per mile? No;—altogether.
54. *Chairman.*] How did the plans now before the Committee come to be produced? The original working section was taken, and the formation line altered so as to give grades of 1 in 50.
55. By whom? By my orders.
56. By whom was the work done? By the men in the office.
57. Without going on to the ground at all? Yes. We had the levels all the way along the line. You can lay down any grade you like, and can calculate the earth-work involved without going on to the line; that is all office work.
58. Could you do that in broken country as well as in level country? If you had all the information you wanted. You would not go and measure the cuttings and banks on the ground. You would take levels along the centre line, and if it were rough and uneven country cross-sections would be taken. Those would be sent to the office, and the earthwork calculated there.
59. The map before the Committee showing a grade of 1 in 50 was prepared under your instructions in the office? Yes.
60. Since then Mr. Simpson has been sent out? No. Mr. Simpson's alterations involved a number of deviations, and when it was desired to have the work proceeded with, I think in April, those deviations not having been staked, Mr. Whitton considered that it would occasion too much delay if men were sent into the field to stake them, and the longitudinal section was altered so as to give a gradient of 1 in 50 instead of 1 in 40 as before.
61. Do I understand that Mr. Simpson's alterations were entirely discarded, and that the office went back to the old 1 in 40 plan, and altered it to 1 in 50? Yes. I asked Mr. Whitton to have the deviations staked out as recommended by Mr. Simpson, but there was an anxiety on the part of the Minister, Mr. Bruce Smith, I think, to get the work started so as to give employment to those who wanted it. It was considered that too long a delay would be occasioned if the line were restaked. It would have taken a couple of months extra.
62. Did the Minister know then of Mr. Simpson's recommendation? I am not sure, I did not see the Minister about it. My communications at that time were with Mr. Whitton. I got my instructions from him.
63. At all events when this line with a grade of 1 in 50 was recommended there was a survey in the office, the result of Mr. Simpson's inspection, which showed that a grade of 1 in 60 could be obtained at an additional cost of a few hundred pounds? Yes. I think the way it occurred was this: The Minister wanted to get the works commenced as soon as possible; Mr. Whitton was ill at home, and I was sent for to say how soon the work could be put in hand. I happened not to be in the office at the time, and Mr. Drewitt, who is in charge of the drawing department, went instead of me. He promised that all the plans should be ready in about a fortnight. When I heard that, I went over to see Mr. Whitton, and pointed out to him how desirable it was that the deviations should be staked out, and that if that were done we could not possibly get the plans ready in a fortnight. Mr. Whitton said that the work being pressing, and the plans having been promised, it would be better to alter the present longitudinal section.
64. There was an impression that as the House had approved of the line the contract might be let? Yes.
65. How long have the surveyors who are now on the line been there? About a month, I think.
66. Can you tell us what instructions have been given to them? They have had instructions to make a ruling gradient of not less than 1 in 75. They have had the line marked out for them on the plan, and that is the line which they have to stake; but they are to report as to its suitability or otherwise, and suggest deviations.
67. Could that line with a grade of 1 in 75 be constructed at the estimated cost of £2,560 per mile? I do not think it will cost more. I have a progress report from one of the surveyors showing a deviation which does not materially lengthen the line. It commences at about 405 or 406 miles, and terminates about 412 miles. I believe it will be cheaper than the old line, and it will certainly be better, because the country is not so undulating. It reduces the grade from 1 in 60 to 1 in 75.
68. By this deviation what will be the ruling grade on the line? 1 in 75. The other deviations will be treated in a precisely similar manner.
69. Those deviations, gives a grade of 1 in 75, will cost a comparatively small sum? Yes.
70. Do you think you could work out for us what the saving would be by constructing a line with a grade of 1 in 75 instead of 1 in 40? In construction?
71. Altogether you might take the Commissioners estimate of the traffic as the basis? Yes, I could work it out.
72. *Mr. Garrard.*] You spoke of one deviation; but there is a large number of grades of 1 in 50, 1 in 55, and 1 in 60? They will all be taken in succession. This is only one I bring as an example.
73. Have you sufficient data to show that all the others could be taken as economically as the one to which you have just referred? Not at present; there is only the probability. I had some information about the levels of the country before giving the surveyors instructions.
74. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Is the deviation you spoke of before you come to the granite ridge at Florida homestead, near "Budd's Hotel"? Yes, it would be before that, I think.
75. The deviation would be to avoid that granite ridge? It is made to avoid one of the ridges; but they are so frequent on this line. I find that the deviation is 20 miles back from Budd's.
76. Where does it come out? It extends about 4 miles altogether; it comes out about 410 miles.
77. Then the line will go past Budd's and Florida homestead, as marked on the plan? Yes. 78.

* NOTE (on revision):—The instructions were verbal.

78. *Mr. Hurley.*] Is there no difference in the length of the line with a 1 in 40 grade and with a grade of 1 in 75? Yes. With a grade of 1 in 75 the line will be slightly longer.
79. By many miles? I cannot tell you exactly, but I think by about three-quarters of a mile.
80. Do you think it advantageous to the Department and to the country to send out ordinary surveyors on such an important mission as the survey of a railway line instead of civil engineers? I think it is quite possible to get good work out of surveyors if they are properly looked after by an engineer.
81. As the expenditure of some hundreds of thousands of pounds is concerned in a work of this character, should it not be the duty of the person in charge of the Department, the Engineer-in-Chief, or of some other equally competent man, to go over the line before it is decided upon? I consider that Mr. Palmer ought to have gone over the line; but I believe that he did not do so.
82. Is it not the general impression that those surveys were made merely because political pressure was brought to bear upon the Department at the time? That I cannot answer.
83. At all events, you believe that some negligence has been manifested in not sending efficient persons over the line in the first instance? I explained what Mr. Hardy told me as to what was the nature of the instructions which he received. Of course it is possible that if he had been left to himself he would have obtained a better line.
84. If an efficient man had been sent out in the first instance, a man competent to judge or to carry out the survey properly, would there have been any necessity to make four or five surveys in such level country as that between Nyngan and Cobar? Mr. Hardy was a competent man; but he was hampered by his instructions.
85. So that the country has been saddled with the expense of five surveyors, where one would have sufficed had he been left to himself in the first instance? I have no doubt that he would have adopted a different line; but he said that he had to take instructions. The fault certainly lies with Mr. Palmer.
86. You are of opinion that in all matters where much money is to be expended one of your most efficient officers should be sent to inspect the line—if not the Engineer-in-Chief himself? I think that an engineer should inspect a line which has not been laid out by engineers.
87. Seeing that there is such a difference in the grades as that between 1 in 40 and 1 in 75, you think a proper and efficient survey was not made in the first instance? Not in the first instance. The second survey was when Mr. Simpson went over the line. He got a good line.
88. Can you give us any idea of the reason for going *via* Budd's instead of to the north or south. Near Budd's there is a large basaltic range;—was it the intention to secure metal for the whole of the line in that particular spot? The reason for going along that way was to keep as near to the road as possible—in fact to keep along it. There would certainly be an advantage in going near basaltic hills where ballast could be obtained.
89. *Mr. Dowel.*] What position does Mr. Palmer occupy in the Service? He is not in it now.
90. Have you had considerable experience in railway construction? Yes, I have had a good many years at it.
91. Outside the Colony? Yes.
92. Where? In England and in Europe—in Hungary.
93. Do you not think it desirable that where a line is being laid out a competent railway engineer should always be associated with the surveyors? I consider that the surveyors should have a certain amount of engineering experience; but I think that most of our surveyors have sufficient. Some of them are actually engineers; men who have been brought up as engineers.
94. Although you term them surveyors they have a large knowledge of railway construction? Yes, as to the principles of the economic laying out of lines.
95. I presume their instructions will be to get the best grade possible? Yes.
96. They would not be confined to any particular set of instructions? They certainly are not now. I can only speak from my own experience. They have always had instructions to get the best gradients they can.
97. They are not restricted in any way at all? Except that frequently a limit had been put on. They are told that in certain country they must not go beyond a grade of 1 in 40 or of 1 in 50.
98. Are their instructions to lay out a line that will not exceed £2,560 a mile? To lay out the cheapest line possible.
99. As a rule is it not a fact that easy gradients could be obtained at some considerable cost in excess of what it would take to get a grade of 1 in 40? In this country, certainly.
100. What about broken country;—would not that materially affect the cost? I mean the Colony;—not the country between Nyngan and Cobar.
101. Would it not materially affect the cost of construction of this line if a grade of 1 in 75 were adopted instead of 1 in 40? Not in the way I have shown. I have shown that by making deviations in the line at various points we can get better gradients, and no heavier earthwork; and in fact in some cases lighter earthwork; but there is a slight increase in the cost in the length of the line.
102. That rule would not apply to broken country—hilly country? No, probably not. Each country must certainly be taken on its own merits. I should be better prepared to give an opinion if I knew the particular country and had been over it.
103. Was it not one of Mr. Palmer's duties to make the final inspection of the line? Yes.
104. Mr. Palmer was a qualified engineer? Yes.
105. Did he inspect this line? I believe he did not. I believe he was satisfied with the work which was done in the field, and that he thought it was not necessary for him to go over the line.
106. The levels and cross-sections so satisfied him that he thought it was not necessary to make an inspection? Yes. He considered that the information got from the surveyors was sufficient.
107. Have you any reports in your office as to the class of country which the line will traverse? You will find a good deal about it in the papers laid before Parliament about the Cobar railway. There is a report there by a traffic inspector, Mr. Hornidge.
108. Do your engineers furnish you with reports as to the character of the country in which cuttings have to be made? Yes; we always have a report as to the character of the country and its resources.
109. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you know what the estimated cost of the line was per mile with a grade of 1 in 40? The estimates have been revised since, and the prices have been altered, but the cost of labour is lower than it was. I do not think the original estimate would be very much of a guide. The estimated cost in August, 1886, was £241,661.
110. About £34,000 more than the present estimate? Yes.

H. Deane,
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111. The estimate now before us is for a grade of 1 in 75? The present estimate is for a grade of 1 in 50. It is my belief that the estimate will not be materially affected by having a grade of 1 in 75, though I could not speak positively about it.
112. If you had a grade of 1 in 50 a mile long you would not call that a short grade? No; we have no grades of 1 in 50 that length.
113. There is a grade of 1 in 50 half a mile up and half a mile down;—do you not think that it would be better if there is only one grade of 1 in 50 to expend a little more money and reduce it? To expend a little more money—yes.
114. There is only one 1 in 50 grade on the proposed line? Yes; but to get a ruling grade of 1 in 60 you would have to cut out the 1 in 55 grades.
115. But would it not be advantageous to reduce the grade to 1 in 55? Yes; but the difference is not very much.
116. Does it not materially alter the haulage power;—is there not a great deal of difference between the power required to pull a load up a grade of 1 in 50 and that required to pull it up a grade of 1 in 60? Yes; roughly speaking it would make about one-fifth difference.
117. If you had had the drawing of those plans, would you not have tried to reduce the 1 in 50 grade, seeing that it is the only one on the whole line? If it were the only one on the whole line, and all the rest were good grades, I should certainly have tried to cut it out, even at a considerable cost in earthwork.
118. You know that the grades have a great deal to do with the working expenses of a line? Yes.
119. That the easier the grades the less the working expenses? Yes.
120. Taking that into consideration, in constructing the lines you would make the grades as easily as possible? For that reason I gave instructions to the surveyors to adopt a grade of 1 in 75, and not to get anything steeper.
121. Do you think that it would have been a mistake if the country had decided to construct the line upon the plan now before us? I do.
122. You have no doubt that we shall be able to get a 1 in 75 grade? I have not the slightest doubt of it.
123. *Mr. Humphery.*] About when did you issue instructions to alter the grade to 1 in 75? It was before the surveyors who are at present engaged on the work left. In the beginning of July I saw Mr. Eddy about this matter, and made special reference to the Nyngan and Cobar line, and the extensions. I was very much in favour of reducing the grade, and Mr. Eddy was also very anxious to have them reduced. I arranged there and then that if possible we should get grades in the western country from 1 in 75 to 1 in 100. Acting upon that, I applied for sanction from the Minister to have the line from Nyngan to Cobar examined, improved, and restaked, so as to get a ruling gradient of 1 in 75.
124. Has that sanction been granted? Yes; it was in consequence of it that the surveyors were sent out.
125. The delay in the construction of the line has been of material advantage to the country? I believe it has.
126. That is to say we get a good railway with a grade of 1 in 75 instead of 1 in 40 at the same cost, or without an increased cost? Yes; I believe the cost will be about the same.
127. Did the plans show a grade of 1 in 40 when approved of by Mr. Palmer? Yes, I think so.
128. Mr. Palmer was satisfied with the plans showing a grade of 1 in 40, and therefore did not inspect the field-work? Yes.
129. Do you know if special instructions have been issued by the Department to the surveyors to be satisfied if they can get a grade of 1 in 40? Nothing more than verbal instructions have ever been given, as far as I know.
130. Was that the general instruction, that if a grade of 1 in 40 could be secured the surveyor was to be satisfied, and not seek for a better grade? I do not think so. One reason why the 1 in 40 grade was adopted on the Cobar line was to cut down the expense. The centre line had been adopted, and in order to cut down the cost of construction the steepest grade allowable was made use of.
131. As a matter of fact you have ascertained that the grade can be reduced from 1 in 40 to 1 in 75 without an increased cost? Yes.
132. And without any appreciable lengthening of the line? And without any appreciable lengthening of the line.
133. *Dr. Garran.*] I understood you to say that the original surveyors were instructed to keep as close as they could to the stock route? Yes.
134. And if they followed the surface by that route they could not well avoid a grade of 1 in 40? No.
135. You are now making deviations? Yes.
136. But they are only deviations from that line as originally staked? Yes, that is all.
137. So that even the engineers now on the ground are in bondage to the original instructions to stick to the stock route? They have instructions to report if they see any other deviation or route that can be adopted with advantage.
138. Still they are practically tied to a moderate degree of deviation from that route? Well, if they saw that by deviating considerably from the line they could obtain an advantage they would be expected to report to the office to that effect, and if the deviation proved a good one they would have instructions to make it.
139. I see in the *procès* under the date 6/7/87 that Mr. Secretary Sutherland stated in the House that "he had been informed that a line could be found with grades of 1 in 100." Do you know anything of the possibility of constructing a line with grades of 1 in 100 between Nyngan and Cobar? No.
140. Do you think that it would be possible? I really could not say. From the information which we have I should not think that it was possible.
141. If the original surveyors, or the subsequent surveyors, had been told that they might disregard the stock route altogether and simply lay out the best line they could, could they have got a grade of 1 in 100? We could get 1 in 100 on the present line as staked out, if we went in for a certain amount more earthwork. It is quite possible that when the line has been staked out and the levels come in it may be found advantageous to make 1 in 100 the ruling grade. At present the surveyors are working to 1 in 75. It is a question of earthwork, and it is quite within the range of possibility that it may be desirable to alter that to 1 in 100. If the earthwork caused by that alteration would not be excessive, I shall certainly make it.
142. Has any surveyor been instructed to travel between Nyngan and Cobar, holding himself perfectly free from the stock route altogether, to see if he could get a line of 1 in 100 that would not require considerable cuttings? Not within my experience.
- 143.

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143. How many grades have you to alter to establish a grade of 1 in 75? A great many.
144. So you have to make a great many deviations from this fixed line? One deviation will sometimes cut out a great many grades.
145. It is not worth while to consider at the present stage of things the feasibility of an altogether fresh route, that might be 5 or 10 miles north or south of the stock route? I think a satisfactory line will be obtained in the present position.
146. You do not see any necessity for going further afield? No.
147. Are the ridges of which you spoke sand or rock? Some of them are rock.
148. Of what description? I believe basalt.
149. If you had to cut through those at any depth it would be expensive work? Yes.
150. Do the rocky ridges or the sandy ridges make the worst grades? I could not tell you which are which. From the reports I do not think there is much sand in the country.
151. The surveyors' report do not speak of sand ridges? No.
152. If there were sand ridges they would be comparatively cheap to cut through? Yes.
153. *Mr. Copeland.*] I suppose the line as surveyed is a pretty straight one, is it not? Yes, it is fairly straight. The diagram plan will show that.
154. There are no sharp curves? No. With those deviations I think we shall have curves of 20 chains radius, but not sharper.
155. What is the general method adopted in making flying surveys;—I suppose you send a surveyor out and he goes over the ground merely with an aneroid? Yes.
156. You expect after that to improve the levels, do you not? He would have to use a spirit-level also. If that exploration promised well, a proper survey would have to be made with a theodolite and a spirit-level.
157. But I suppose that in all cases you expect to improve upon your first survey? Yes. A great deal of attention is paid to the surveys, and a great deal of trouble is taken to find out the best line. I could show you places where several deviations have been tried in order to improve upon the original route.
158. Is it an unusual occurrence in the Department for you to have first of all a line with a grade of 1 in 40 and then to be able to reduce it to 1 in 75;—is this the only instance you know of where that has been done, or has the grade been similarly reduced in other cases? I do not remember any other surveys that have been treated in the same way. I think that probably the same scope for improvement has not been afforded.
159. I suppose you seldom have such a long period in which to experiment and make additional surveys as you have had in this case? If the batch of lines that were voted in 1884 had been commenced straight off I should not have had the chance of offering an opinion.
160. Supposing the line had been constructed on the plan then passed by Parliament with a ruling grade of 1 in 50? It was 1 in 40 in the first instance.
161. Was the grade on the plan approved of by Parliament 1 in 40 or 1 in 50? I think 1 in 40.
162. It will prove of immense advantage to the country if the line is constructed with a grade of 1 in 75 instead of with a grade of 1 in 40, as was first suggested? Yes.
163. It would be an immense saving on such a long line as this would be from Nyngan to Silverton or to the South Australian border to have a grade of 1 in 75 instead of 1 in 40? Yes, an immense advantage.
164. The saving would be equal to 30 or 40 per cent. on the working expenses, would it not? I could not tell you exactly. On the haulage expenses you would save 30 or 40 per cent. The cost of maintenance of permanent way, and some other expenses, would practically remain the same.
165. Do you think that hitherto the Department have paid as much attention to reducing the grades as you are paying now? I scarcely know.
166. I suppose you could say without committing yourself whether on many of the railways that are now constructed the grades could be materially reduced without any great difficulty? Many of the grades might have been reduced with a considerable increase of the cost.
167. You do not anticipate that the reduction of these grades will lead to an increase of the cost? No; but this is a different kind of country. I should not like to give an opinion upon that unless you were to specify one particular line, and I were to see it.
168. *Chairman.*] I will mention one—the line from Gunnedah to Narrabri—they have a grade there of 1 in 40? 1 in 50. There is a grade of 1 in 40 this side of Gunnedah. I do not know what I myself should have recommended in that case.
169. Have you any knowledge of the country between Cobar and Wilcannia;—have you had a flying survey made? We have had a trial survey made. We have had a complete section taken.
170. What do the levels show between Cobar and Wilcannia? They have not been thoroughly worked out, but they justify me in believing that grades could be obtained similar to those on the proposed line. With the exception of a few miles there will be no difficulty about it.
171. All the way to Wilcannia? Yes.
172. You think you would be able to get a grade of 1 in 75? Yes.
173. Have you any knowledge of the country beyond Wilcannia towards Broken Hill? We have surveyors up there, between Wilcannia and Broken Hill, and they have had instructions to find a line with a ruling gradient of 1 in 75, and to report if the country became excessively difficult; but we have had no reports to that effect. They were not to lay out a line if such a gradient could not be obtained without reporting to the office, and obtaining sanction of the work.
174. Suppose this line is constructed, and you have to take coal or coke out to, say Broken Hill, it will be an immense advantage as far as haulage is concerned to be able to run on a grade of 1 in 75 instead of 1 in 40 or 1 in 50—will it not? Yes.
175. You will be able to carry the coal at a less rate and with more profit to the Department? Yes.
176. *Mr. Trickett.*] Cannot you tell us when the last surveyors were sent out? I have not the date here.
177. The report of the Railway Commissioners is dated 15th July, 1889, and the concluding paragraph says, "Great attention must be paid to the gradients on the line, if necessary slight detours being made to avoid ridges, as it will only be by having easy grades, thus enabling heavy trains to be taken, that we can hope to secure the traffic of the far west from the sister Colonies, which have for so long enjoyed our traffic." Was it in consequence of that paragraph that you sent out the surveyors, or was the consultation which you spoke of prior to that? It was before that date. I have here a minute on the subject dated
the

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- the 12th July. Some time previously, when Mr. Whitton became ill and I had to undertake a good many of his duties, I paid a good deal of attention to it.
178. Can you give the Committee any information as to how the surveyors were instructed—are their instructions merely verbal; have they printed regulations; or are they told that a railway is to be constructed from such a place to some other place and that they have to survey the route? Their instructions are nearly always verbal.
179. Are they told to get the easiest grades possible? As a rule they are told to get the easiest grades possible. Sometimes they have written to say that they cannot get anything lighter than (say) 1 in 40, and they have been told that they must make further attempts to improve the grade.
180. In the *précis* I find this: "19/1/89. The Engineer-in-chief forwarded to the Minister Mr. D. C. Simpson's report upon certain proposed deviations of the line which would have the effect of reducing the steepest grade from 1 in 40 to 1 in 50, and of otherwise improving the grades. The Locomotive Engineer in reply to the Commissioner reported that this easement of the grades would have the effect of increasing the haulage capacity of the engines 60 per cent., that is to say, if an engine could haul 100 tons on the original grades she could haul 160 tons on the improved grades." Could you say how much an engine could haul if the grade were reduced to 1 in 75? That paragraph is not correct—it would not reduce the hauling capacity 60 per cent. Approximately the reduction is in proportion to the grade.
181. That is what he says, "If an engine could haul 100 tons on the original grades she could haul 160 tons on the improved grades"? That would not be the case—it would only be about 125 tons.
182. Who was the locomotive engineer on the 19th January, 1889? Mr. Midelton.
183. The grade would not have as great an effect on the hauling capacity of an engine as he says it would? No.
184. In your opinion if the original plan had been carried out, leaving the grade at 1 in 40, it would have been a mistake? Yes.
185. Financially and otherwise? Yes.
186. *Dr. Garran.*] You have no survey between Hay and Wentworth? No; there has never been any survey made.

THURSDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

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187. *Dr. Garran.*] Who is the surveyor who was first sent out to survey the Nyngan to Cobar line? I believe Mr. Hardy was the first.
188. From whom did he receive instructions? From Mr. Palmer.
189. It was Mr. Palmer who was responsible for telling him to keep on the cattle route? So he says.
190. Have you arranged on this line for gates at the level crossings or for cattle stops? For gates.
191. Entirely? Yes.
192. Have you gone into the question whether cattle stops would be cheaper? It has been specially considered with regard to the Nyngan to Cobar railway. Cattle stops are certainly very much more expensive for private crossings.
193. Would you have gate-keepers' houses at these crossings? It is proposed to do without fencing on a great part of the line, and in that case no gates will be required. It is proposed only to fence within the range of settlement.
194. How many watering-places will you have for the engines? Four have been allowed for.
195. They are all provided for in the estimates? Yes.
196. Will you get your supply of water from the Government excavations? Yes, that has been contemplated.
197. You will not require to go to any special expense in making tanks of your own? No; but we shall have the usual tanks on stages.
198. Have you provided for any excavations for tanks? No.
199. How are you going to get your supply when you cannot depend on the Government water? There are three tanks on the road at convenient distances, about 20 miles apart.
200. Will there be any stations where there are at present no tanks? I cannot tell exactly where the stations will be provided, but that would not be of any importance.
201. How would you provide the stations with water if you had no tanks;—would you trust to the rain water? Yes; or it could be brought along with the engines.
202. The Commissioners say that they have put the rates of carriage of material at the lowest possible price. I presume by that that you are going to be charged less for the carriage of the iron work than has been customary? Yes.
203. What is the amount of the reduction? 3d. per ton per mile. We used to be charged 4d. per ton, but the Commissioners have arranged to charge for this particular line a 1d. per ton per mile.
204. That is one-fourth of the usual rate? Yes.
205. What difference will that make on the whole line or per mile? I have not the exact account with me, but it would make a reduction of about £470 per mile.
206. Then in comparing the estimated cost of construction of this line, namely £2,560, with the cost of previous lines, we must bear in mind that it has a special favour to the extent of £470 a mile which the others have not? Yes, if you like to call it a favour. I think the other lines have been very unfairly treated.

207. What I mean is that this line has a special advantage which was not granted to the others? Yes, with the newer lines we have arranged with the Commissioners to have the iron carried for 2d.
208. When you were making the line from Nyngan to Bourke you were charged 4d.? Yes.
209. So that if we compare the cost of the line from Nyngan to Cobar with that of the line from Nyngan to Bourke we must remember that the former line had a special advantage to the extent of £470 a mile? Yes.
210. If we did not remember that, the comparison would be deceptive? Yes.
211. So that while a reduction is made in the cost of the line it is at the expense of the railway account? Yes.
212. In other words we are paying £470 a mile and lightening the loan account by that? I do not think that the carriage of rails for new lines is a fair item of revenue.
213. It has always been considered a fair item of revenue? By Mr. Goodchap.
214. I am simply contrasting the two. Hitherto our revenue has been fostered at the expense of the loan fund—now we are going to lighten the loan fund and charge a lower rate for carriage which will give us less revenue? Yes.
215. I only want to draw attention to the fact that the cost of £2,560 a mile is not all due to economy pure and simple? No.
216. Part of it is simply due to a lighter charge for the carriage of permanent way? A juster charge.
217. A lighter charge? Yes.
218. If we added £470 to £2,560, it would bring the cost up to about £3,000 a mile, which would be the proper comparison to make with other lines? Yes.
219. You promised to supply me with the ruling gradients on several of the lines? Yes, they are as follows:—Orange to Dubbo, 1 in 40; Dubbo to Nyngan, 1 in 50; Nyngan to Bourke, 1 in 80; Juneec to Narrandera, 1 in 40; Narrandera to Hay, 1 in 55. Lines surveyed only—Molong to Parkes, 1 in 40; Parkes to Condobolin, 1 in 50; Condobolin to Wilcannia, 1 in 60.
220. In looking at the traffic from Sydney I suppose we can get nothing as far as Dubbo without going in for a gradient of 1 in 40? No.
221. The loads must be adapted to that? Yes.
222. Between Dubbo and Nyngan we come down to 1 in 50? Yes; that gradient is just a short distance out of Dubbo, and then the grades are pretty light.
223. What are they after that? I think about 1 in 80.
224. If we could have got rid of that 1 in 50 we should have 1 in 80 all the way between Dubbo and Nyngan? I believe so.
225. Do you know the locality of that grade? I have not been over that portion of the line, but I know the section where it occurs.
226. Do you think that at a moderate expenditure it might have been reduced? That I could not say.
227. It would have been a great advantage to the traffic on the whole line if it could have been cut out? Undoubtedly.
228. It spoils the load for the whole distance? I am quite of opinion that an isolated grade of 1 in 50 is a great drawback.
229. When the train gets to Dubbo it can, with a better grade of 1 in 50, take a slightly increased load as far as Nyngan? Yes.
230. But from Nyngan to Bourke you come down to 1 in 80? Yes.
231. Would it not be desirable to bring the Nyngan to Cobar line down to 1 in 80 too and make it light? There is not much difference between 1 in 75 and 1 in 80.
232. It simply means adding another truck or two to the load? Of course, the flatter the grade you can get the better. I have not the slightest doubt that we can get a grade of 1 in 80 on the line which is now being laid out at a slightly increased cost.
233. You say that you have a grade of 1 in 40 in Dubbo with the same engine, how many tons could you add to the load in going over the 1 in 50 grade between Dubbo and Nyngan? If an engine drew 100 tons between Orange and Dubbo, I should say that it would take about 125 tons between Dubbo and Nyngan.
234. And what could the same engine draw between Nyngan and Bourke in a grade of 1 in 80? About double what it could in a grade of 1 in 40.
235. 200 tons? Yes.
236. On the surveyed line from Molong to Parkes there is a grade of 1 in 40, and between Parkes and Condobolin the grade is improved to 1 in 50? I have not the slightest doubt that that can be cut out.
237. Between Condobolin and Wilcannia you get a grade of 1 in 60? Those are only trial lines. I have not the slightest doubt the bad features can be cut out.
238. If it is possible to get a grade of 1 in 60 from Condobolin to Wilcannia, would it not better to start with that and have it all through? I could not say without investigation what extra cost it would involve.
239. At anything like a moderate cost it would be an immense advantage? Yes, it is a mistake to have to break and make up trains at different stations along the route.
240. Especially as you are leaving the more settled part to go through the places where there is less population? Yes.
241. If these lines through the flat country are to pay, it will be by our taking the largest loads we can at a time, and minimising the number of trains? Certainly.
242. If we had a heavy grade at the beginning of the journey we could not do that? Of course it is very much better to have the same ruling gradient over the whole length, but the extra cost of earth works involved might be a serious consideration.
243. But if you had a heavy grade between Molong and Parkes, and then a light grade to Wilcannia, you would have to take two trips from Molong to Parkes to make up a load for the flat grade? From Molong to Parkes might be considered a distinct section. To some extent there would be a different traffic. There would be a lot of agricultural produce between these two points.
244. You consider that the point of departure from the Western line is practically passed? Yes. I may say that between Molong and Parkes there is some pretty rough country. I know there are difficulties in the way of getting a good line there. We have had a good deal of trouble, and a good deal of time has been spent in making deviations along portions of the route.

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245. Is not the country between Junee and Narrandera remarkably level? It does not look so on the section.
246. You have not been over it? I have not examined it.
247. Do you know anything of the country between Hay and Wentworth or between Hay and Menindie? No, I have not been out there; but a little way beyond Narrandera the country gets pretty flat.
248. Even between Narrandera and Hay you have a grade of 1 in 55; the line running beside the river banks all the way? I think that 1 in 55 is near Narrandera. If you would like to see the section I could send for it.
249. What I should like to see would be an easier grade? The grade is already made.
250. Does it not strike you that to have a grade of 1 in 55 when starting over flat country like that between Narrandera and Hay is to be avoided if possible? Yes. Of course, generally speaking I should avoid them myself. I can scarcely tell what the conditions were that induced Mr. Whitton to adopt this grade.
251. Without criticising this particular line is it not a very undesirable thing to have a stiff gradient when starting out, and easy country for the rest of the journey? It is objectionable.
252. And a very considerable expenditure would be justified in order to get rid of it? My general opinion, of course, is that gradients should be eased as much as possible. I quite agree with everything you say, but I am not prepared to criticise any of those lines. I have not examined them with that purpose, and I should really rather not do it.
253. *Mr. Lackey.*] You were saying a few moments ago that you thought some of the lines which had been constructed in the past had not been fairly treated through the charges made for the carriage of the rails? Yes.
254. Do you mean that the charges were too high? Yes.
255. Were they out of keeping with the usual charges for carrying heavy material, such as iron rails? It was the schedule rate.
256. All goods of a similar character would pay the same rate? Nobody except the construction branch wants rails carried. There is nothing in the handling of them that necessitates such a high charge.
257. Is not the handling the same as would be required for heavy iron goods of any description? These pieces of iron are all the same length, and they pack together very easily.
258. What would be the cost at home in England? I do not know, but I do not suppose that more than 1d. per mile per ton is charged, and perhaps less.
259. You think the charge here has been an exorbitant one? Yes.
260. Do you base that opinion upon a comparison of it with the charges in England for the carriage of similar material. The Deniliquin rails did not go over our lines at all? No.
261. Are there cases where old rails have been carried to Mittagong or Lithgow for smelting purposes, or to be worked up again? Yes, I believe so.
262. Do you recollect what was charged for the carriage? It has not come under my notice. It has not been done for construction purposes, but for renewals.
263. Do you object to the charges with which the public account has been debited for the carriage of rails? Yes.
264. You think that the public account ought to be debited with the haulage of rails for railway construction? I think the cost of the haulage ought to be charged, but not an exorbitant profit.
265. You think that hitherto it has been too much? A great deal too much.
266. You have not yourself traversed the line between Molong and Parkes? No. I have been over the line from Borenore to Parkes, the parallel line.
267. Those two lines have both been regarded in the Department as a portion of the extension from the Western line to Wilcannia? Yes.
268. Have you been right through from Borenore to Forbes? Yes.
269. You found some considerable impediments, did you not? At the first start off, for a few miles from Borenore, there is a very awkward descent; there is a great descent on the road.
270. And very swampy country, I think? I do not think the swampy country afforded any difficulty.
271. Do you recollect that the Department encountered any difficulty in making a survey through a place called Kean's Swamp, or in the neighbourhood of Kean's Swamp? I do not remember that.
272. Is it within your recollection that the engineers on the line gave up the survey, and said that it was impracticable? Can you tell me where Kean's is?
273. It is in the neighbourhood of the descent of which you spoke? Yes; I remember it. It is a narrow swamp alongside the road.
274. You have no doubt that the gradients on the line between Nyngan and Cobar will be considerably reduced by further surveys? I have not the slightest doubt that the grade of 1 in 75 will be practicable.
275. Have you a report from your officers recommending grades of 1 in 75? I considered the matter in the office with the engineer who went out there, Mr. Simpson; and I decided afterwards to adopt a grade of 1 in 75.
276. *Mr. Copeland.*] In the paper which you have handed into the Committee you show the ruling gradient between Orange and Dubbo at 1 in 40? Yes.
277. Do you know how long that grade is? No. I will send for the section if you like.
278. What I want to know is, whether it would be possible to reduce the gradients at anything like a reasonable cost? I think there are a number of them.
279. Are the trains broken now at all between Orange and Bourke on account of the grade of 1 in 40? I cannot tell you how the Commissioners work the traffic.
280. I suppose you have seen the paper that was put before the Committee containing the history of the agitation for the line? No.
281. Are you conversant at all with the anticipated traffic on the line between Nyngan and Cobar? I have the Commissioners' report.
282. Do you know anything about the line between Dubbo and Nyngan where the grade of 1 in 50 is—are you personally acquainted with it? No.
283. You cannot now say whether that could be dealt with—whether the grade could be reduced? No, I cannot. If you get the heavy grades in a batch and the light grades follow on, the line is easily worked. It is a succession of good grades and bad grades alternately that is objectionable, because it necessitates a continual breaking and making up of trains. If at one point of the line you get an altogether new class of country I do not see that there is any difficulty in working it.
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284. Do you know the grades this side of Orange? On the mountains we have 1 in 30 and 1 in 33.
285. Do you know the grade between Orange and Bathurst? There is a grade of 1 in 40 at George's Plains nearly 3 miles in length.
286. It would be quite useless to attempt to cut out these grades of 1 in 40? Yes. It could not be done without increasing the cost very much.
287. *Mr. Trickett.*] The Commissioners in recommending this line recommend that it should be constructed as cheaply as possible—has that recommendation been carried out in any other direction except by dispensing with the fencing? Yes; the cost of the station buildings has been reduced to a minimum.
288. Anything else? I think that is almost the only way in which you can reduce the expense.
289. Is there any difference in the mode of ballasting? No, it was decided afterwards that the ballasting should be done as on the main lines, so that there is the usual quantity of ballast, 6 inches under the sleepers.
290. The sleepers the same distance apart? Yes.
291. And is the same sort of stone used for ballast as has been used in the past? The best ballast will be used that we can get in the neighbourhood.
292. I see that the estimated cost of the line is £2,560 a mile;—that is a cheap rate of construction for this Colony, is it not? Very cheap.
293. If it is constructed at that price will it be the cheapest line that has been constructed? Yes.
294. Can you tell us what would be the next cheapest? I could not without looking it up.
295. Have you considered the policy of this line with regard to its extension beyond Cobar? Yes.
296. What are your views in the matter? I can give you a copy of a report by Mr. Whitton.
297. Is he favourable to the construction of the line? Yes.
298. To the line in itself or as the commencement of a further extension? As forming a connecting line.
299. Do you agree with the views expressed by Mr. Whitton in that minute? I do.
300. You think that if the railway is to be taken to Wilcannia, you think that this the best line that can be adopted? I think it would be.
301. The country between Nyngan and Cobar is very swampy difficult country? No; but there are bad places.
302. Boggy parts? There are some boggy parts. There are long stretches of country, where in wet weather it is difficult for a horse to get a footing.
303. Do you know what the cost of constructing an ordinary road along there would be? No, I have not considered it.
304. *Mr. Hurley.*] What is the distance from Molong to Wilcannia? About 360 miles.
305. And from Nyngan to Wilcannia *via* Cobar? 239 miles.
306. Do you think the difference in length determined Mr. Whitton to extend the line through Cobar? Possibly, I did not discuss the matter with him.
307. Have you heard anything of the character of the country through which each line passes? Yes, I remember the reports from the surveyors who were out between Condobolin and Wilcannia.
308. Would the construction of one line lead to a greater settlement than the construction of another? I should say that the country between Nyngan and Wilcannia, and between some point beyond Condobolin and Wilcannia would be very similar, and only suitable for pastoral purposes.
309. Therefore, as a matter of economy, the line from Nyngan to Wilcannia would be the best to construct? Yes.
310. *Mr. Lee.*] What is the distance from Nyngan to Orange? 185 miles.
311. So that in point of fact from Orange to Wilcannia by the Nyngan route is 424 miles as against 360 miles by the other route? I think I am mistaken in the distances. I will try and get them corrected.*
312. Has the policy of tapping the far western country been considered by your department—I mean apart from any political influence? We would have to consider the capabilities of the country.
313. Has the question of the best way of reaching the western portions of the country been considered by the department? I believe that it has been considered that a railway would not pay if it were constructed for the purpose of tapping the western country, but only as a connecting line such as this between Nyngan and Wilcannia.
314. Your department being charged with the railway development of the country would naturally have to consider from time to time the probable route which a line would take. Has this line through Silverton and Broken Hill, and on to the South Australian border been thought out by your department? It received some attention at the beginning of the year.
315. Has the alternative route by way of Parkes and Condobolin been thought out? Not as a connecting link with South Australia.
316. You said yesterday that by this route the distance between Adelaide and Sydney would be the same as it is now *via* Melbourne? Yes.
317. Have you taken into consideration the possible connection of the line in the future with the great Northern and Queensland lines? Yes.
318. I suppose the map before us is approximately correct? Yes.
319. Could you give the Committee any information as to the character of the country between Werris Creek and Nyngan? I shall be very glad to get you that information. I have all the distances made out.
320. *Mr. Copeland.*] In the construction of this line have you taken into consideration the question of dispensing with platforms? Yes, that has been suggested.
321. Can you form any estimate as to how much would be saved if we were to treat the railways, as I believe they do in America, and as we do our tramways, not having platforms? The saving would not be very much I think—between £2,000 and £3,000 at the most.
322. How many stopping places do you purpose having on the line between Nyngan and Cobar? It has not been decided.
323. Have you any idea of the general cost of these platforms? It could not be more than £300 or £400 a piece.
324. To have a raised platform all the length of the station? Yes.
325. You do not think that more than a couple of thousands of pounds could be saved on this particular line by dispensing with platforms? No.
326. Do you think it would be possible to dispense with platforms, if you had the ground round the station properly metalled? It might be done if the carriages were suitable. Long carriages with doors at the ends would have to be used.

327.

* NOTE (on revision):—The correct distances are Orange to Wilcannia, *via* Cobar, 422 miles; Orange to Wilcannia, *via* Molong, 420 miles.

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327. Why would not carriages with doors at the sides do, if you had an additional step? I do not think that could be managed, because you would want a projecting step, and then the carriages could not be run through the stations already built.
328. Would there be any necessity for a projecting step? It would be very awkward if there were not a projecting step.
329. I suppose one of the chief advantages of a raised platform is the facility it affords for loading goods such as wool or farm produce? That would be done at different platforms.
330. You would find it necessary in any case to have a raised stage, from which to load goods? Yes; certainly.
331. So that the only saving would be in the platforms at the passenger stations? Yes.
332. What sort of buildings do you purpose to construct on this line;—what have you provided for in the estimate? Wooden buildings.
333. With corrugated iron roofs? Yes.
334. What about the goods sheds? We have always made them of wood with iron roofs. Those on this line would be made in that way.
335. Would not corrugated iron walls be better than wooden walls for buildings of that character;—would not such buildings be less likely to catch fire than wooden buildings? The sides are covered in with corrugated iron; but the studding and framing is wood.
336. Would it not be an improvement in a very hot district like Cobar, where everything is liable to take fire at any time, to have iron studding instead of wooden studding, so as to have the whole building made of iron? The great danger of fire would be in the weatherboard covering. The studding itself would not be a source of danger.
337. You would not cover the sheds with weatherboard and with corrugated iron too? No, I should abolish the weatherboard and substitute iron, that does away with a great source of danger.
338. On this particular line I suppose you purpose having wooden station master's houses? Yes.
339. *Mr. Humphery.*] When did you arrange with the Commissioners for Railways for the reduction of freight on materials to be used in the construction of the line? I think it must be about six months ago. A reduction was arranged for the other lines, that is to say, the freights were to be reduced to one-half. Almost immediately on Mr. Eddy's arrival, he was spoken to on the subject, and he agreed to the reduction. The freights in this particular line were arranged about six months ago, as nearly as I can say from memory.
340. Can you explain the difference between £3,000 a mile and £2,560 a mile, shown on the two papers before the Committee, one dated August last year, and the other July. On the paper dated July, the Engineer-in-Chief estimates the cost of the construction of the line at £241,000, and in the other paper he has estimated it at £207,000? The reduction did not take place between those months. The Commissioners have taken their estimate from the estimate that was furnished to them some time ago.
341. The estimated cost of the work as placed before the Committee is £241,661? That was the original estimated cost.
342. That is the present estimated cost as proposed to the Assembly? I think the estimated cost proposed to the Assembly was £207,360.
343. No? I do not understand it then, because the Minister was furnished with this statement.
344. You think the estimated cost of £241,661 must be an error? Yes; I know that that was the amount of the former estimate, and the estimate which the Commissioners were furnished with, but reductions have been made since in the carriage of rails and the fencing. The reduction in the fencing came to £10,000.
345. The Committee will have to deal with the estimate of £207,000, and not with the estimate of £241,000? Yes.
346. *Mr. Lackey.*] That would be considerably more than the estimate when tenders were called for some two years ago? I do not think so; I think it is less.
347. *Mr. Humphery.*] The lowest tender was £122,799 8s. 4d.? That was without the rails. The following is a statement of the cost of the line:—

ESTIMATE OF ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF.		£
Works		126,579
Less fencing portion		10,000
		116,579
<i>Permanent Way Material.</i>		£
60-lb. rails, 84 miles at £600		50,400
Freight		13,525
Loading and unloading 8,610 tons at 2s.		861
		64,786
Water supply		4,000
Turntable		1,000
Interlocking		1,850
		6,850
Engineering expenses and contingencies		19,000
		£207,215

348. *Mr. Lackey.*] I think you said some time ago that you knew the character of the country between Deniliquin and Moama? Yes.
349. Have you been over that line? No.
350. You know that the character of the soil there is something similar to that between Nyngan and Cobar—decomposed granite? I am not aware of that.
351. The Cobar soil is a strong granite soil? Yes.
352. And the soil is the same on the Deniliquin line? Yes.
353. Is it the case that the ballast on the Deniliquin line is formed from the excavations at that side? Yes.
354. That would make the line cheaper to construct? Yes.

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355. Do you not think that the same could be done on the Cobar line instead of stone being used? If it is found suitable no doubt we shall use it, but it is very desirable for a line that is to be worked profitably that ballast should be used that will allow drainage from the sleepers.
356. The Deniliquin line is a private line, and has been used and worked profitably from the time of its construction? They have such a large traffic.
357. The ballast has been obtained entirely from the excavations made at the side of the line, and it seems to me that the same could be done on the Cobar line? I may point out that we have put down a very low price for ballast, and it is expected that any suitable material will be used.
358. *Mr. Tonkin.*] In the estimate of cost I suppose proper provision has been made for all flood openings, water courses, culverts, and bridges? Yes.
359. Do you know whose estimate is taken for that particular work? The estimate was made some time ago: but I am not quite certain who made it. It was made, I believe, from information given by the surveyors in the drawing office here.
360. Is it probable that the estimate for this work was made by the same parties as those who did the Nyngan to Bourke line? No, I do not think so.
361. Was the cost of the flood openings and bridges on the Nyngan to Bourke line put down on the recommendation of the surveyors? I do not think so. The process usually adopted is, that after the line has been laid out, and the plans and sections prepared, some responsible officer goes over the work and decides what openings shall be made. I am not aware what was done on the Nyngan to Bourke line, because I had nothing to do with it.
362. You do not know who is the officer responsible for those openings? No.
363. You do not think it is the same officer who has given us the estimate of cost for this line? I should think that on the Nyngan to Bourke line it was either the district engineer of the previous section or Mr. Wade who made the estimate.
364. Can you tell us who has made the estimate of the cost of these bridges, culverts, and openings on the proposed line? Do you mean as to the number required or as to the design?
365. The design, number, and size of each opening? As this estimate is to be entirely revised through the restaking of the line, I think that probably the timber openings will undergo consideration again by the engineer in charge of the surveys. He will probably go over the line and make a report upon it to see if it is all right.
366. Then the size of these openings is not ultimately settled? No. I think that this estimate so far should be taken only as approximate, seeing that the line is being restaked.
367. Do you think that if the estimated cost of these openings is considerably under what it should be it will materially alter the cost of the line? I think not. I do not think that there are likely to be any alterations which will come to more than a few thousand pounds. £3,000 or £4,000.
368. Do you know that the water courses and flood openings on the line from Nyngan to Bourke has been a complete failure? I do not know anything about it.
369. Do you know that alterations are now being made with regard to them? I have no information about it.
370. You do not know that where they originally put in 6 feet openings they have had to tear up the line to make 24 feet openings? I think it is very likely. I know that in plain country it is very difficult to tell where the water is coming, and it is sometimes difficult to tell which direction it will run.
371. You know that it is much more expensive to make alterations of this kind after a line is constructed than it would have been to construct openings of the proper size originally? I am aware of that; but still in the first instance you very likely have not the information to go upon. Suppose, for instance, you had a series of dry years—there may not have been many inches of rain fall at a time for perhaps ten years and nothing like local floods—you could not tell from the levels of the country the extent of any particular catchment area; you could only guess the amount of water which would have to pass through the embankment in a particular place. I know that the effect has sometimes been very surprising. There have been floods in places not anticipated by the residents even: and perhaps where the residents have said that it is necessary to provide large openings we have had scarcely a drop of water.
372. Might not that be accounted for by the fact that the construction of the line made a sort of dam on this flat level country? All that must be considered of course.
373. But after the experience on the Nyngan to Bourke line is it the intention of the Department to take into consideration the necessity of enlarging these floods, openings, and water-ways? I am sure ample provision will be made.
374. You know that on the Bourke line these openings are a failure? I know that there have been cases of failure.
375. Having that experience ample provision will of course be made on this line? I should say that the fact of other openings having been a failure will not be taken into consideration in connection with the Nyngan to Cobar railway—that line will be dealt with on its own merits. The best information that can be obtained will be obtained, and no doubt that information will be more valuable than the information which was available with reference to the line between Nyngan and Bourke, because within the last two or three years there have been falls of rain which will guide us as to the best places to make openings. It would not do to be frightened because the water-ways on the other line have been too small, as it would very likely lead to great extravagance.
376. Do you know that where the water is backed up by a railway embankment it eats away the embankment and endangers the line, and that the expense of maintenance is on that account much greater? I have heard a great deal about that.
377. What is your opinion about the culverts in this hot country where the timber is subject to the ravages of the white ants;—do you not think that you could substitute something that would be better and cheaper in the long run than timber? No, I think not.
378. You do not think that iron girders would be better? They would be very much more expensive. Iron girders would be of no use unless you had concrete or brick abutments.
379. Do you not think that they would be very nearly as cheap as the wooden piles? I am pretty sure that they would not. I have in many cases compared the cost, and I have found that brick or concrete piers and abutments with an iron superstructure are very much more costly than wooden piers.
380. Do you know that at the present time nearly the whole of the wooden culverts between Nyngan and Bourke are eaten through with the white ants, and will have to be replaced? I have not seen any report upon them.

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381. That comes under your Department, does it not? No.
382. It is dealt with by the Permanent-way Department? Yes; by the Commissioners' Department.
383. If that is a fact, do you not think that it would be better, supposing the cost of the culverts were increased by twice as much, to substitute brick and concrete piers and iron girders instead of wood piers in this particular part of the country where the timber is so subject to the ravages of the white ants? Before giving any opinion I should like to see the extent of the damage that has been done. I know that the white ants in some cases merely attack the sap wood, and leave the heart alone. If they attacked the sap wood only, very little damage would be done.
384. Could you give us an estimate of the difference in the cost between a culvert with a 12 feet opening constructed with iron girders and brick piers, and a wooden culvert of the same dimensions. In this country you would not have to go much beneath the surface for a foundation for the piers? I should very much doubt that. It has been already stated that a good deal of the country is very boggy when wet weather sets in, so that some depth of foundation would probably be necessary. I could prepare an estimate; but I should have to assume a certain depth of foundation—perhaps 3 or 4 feet—according to circumstances.
385. You could not give us an estimate now? Not at the present moment.
386. What depth have you to drive the piles? It depends upon the nature of the ground. I should not under any circumstances drive them less than 8 feet, but they might have to go down 20 feet or more.
387. In the estimated cost for this line you have made every provision for flood water? The provision will be made, but it has not been made already. Everything will be revised before the contract is let and these water ways will be carefully considered.
388. Taking that into consideration, you still think that the estimated cost of £2,560 per mile will not be exceeded? I do not think that it will be materially exceeded. I think it possible that the deviations from the line may cost a little more, but I do not think the cost will be materially exceeded, and I do not think that the extra openings, if any are required, will materially add to the cost of the line.
389. At any rate you are quite confident that even the deviations required, and the possibility of the water ways being increased, will not make the cost of the line exceed the original estimate of £241,661, which is nearly £40,000 in excess of the revised estimate? I am quite sure that will not be exceeded.
390. *Mr. Garrard.*] Is it a fact that on the Homebush to Newcastle line the ballast used has been obtained from the cuttings through which the line passes? Yes.
391. The ordinary broken metal ballast has not been used? At this end the ballast is all sand-stone rock.
392. But between Wyong and Newcastle? I think that all the way from Gosford the ballast was obtained from the cuttings.
393. Has the ballast been found satisfactory? Yes.
394. *Mr. Douel.*] Does a grade of 1 in 40 necessitate the use of the heaviest engines you have? It depends upon the load—it does not necessitate it.
395. Is it not a fact that they are usually employed on that grade? Yes.
396. What is the weight of those engines? The engines themselves weigh 50 tons, and with the tenders, 72 tons.
397. What weight of engine would you use on a grade of 1 in 100? It is rather difficult to say—do you mean if one were ordering new rolling stock?
398. For the same load? You would require a much less heavy engine. I suppose an engine of thirty-five or forty tons would be sufficient.
399. Would not a twenty-four ton engine do the same work? I daresay it would.
400. A twenty-four ton engine on a grade of 1 in 100 would do the same work as a fifty-ton engine would do on a grade of 1 in 40? I think it would be fair to say that, assuming that the engines are similar of course, everything depends upon the design of the engines.
401. Are you aware that the late Minister for Works, the Hon. John Sutherland, was of opinion that a grade of 1 in 100 could be procured on the line from Nyngan to Cobar? I do not know. I do not suppose he would have any reliable information except through the Department. I think I remember that he did express that opinion.
402. If you will refer to the *précis* handed in by Mr. Barling you will find that he stated that "he was informed so;"—that, I presume, would be by the department? I have not a copy of the *précis*.
403. What kind of sleepers do you propose to use on this line? The same as on the main line—iron-bark.
404. Are you aware that large quantities of pine can be obtained nearly all along the route? Yes.
405. Would it not be much cheaper to use pine timber for sleepers instead of iron-bark? It might be cheaper, but it would be very undesirable. I should not recommend pine on any account.
406. Not for sleepers? No.
407. Suppose you increased the dimensions of the sleepers, and made them of pine, would not your objection to that wood be removed, and the cost of the sleepers be materially lessened? I think not. There would be several objections to the use of pine. In the first place it is a brittle timber; secondly, it is not so durable by a long way as iron-bark, and it is not so tough and incompressible. The rails would work into it and soon render the sleepers useless, and the screws and spikes would not hold in the same way as they do in iron-bark or other hard wood.
408. Therefore you consider the use of pine for sleepers not desirable? Certainly.
409. Would you use pine for fencing? I should have no objection to pine for fencing.
410. How many sleepers do you propose to use to the mile? About 2,000.
411. Have you had any experience at all in constructing railways with longitudinal sleepers? I have never constructed any myself; but I have seen many railways where they are used.
412. Are you aware that in England longitudinal sleepers are used on several lines? They are used on the Great Western line.
413. Are they found to be more advantageous than cross-sleepers? No. Nearly all the companies adopt cross-sleepers.
414. Which is the cheapest mode of construction, cross-sleepers or longitudinal sleepers? I should say cross-sleepers.
415. In your opinion they are the best? Yes. I think that the use of longitudinal sleepers here would be most undesirable, because the wood warps.
416. Is the country through which the line will run granite or basaltic? There are basaltic hills, and it is expected that possibly we may get some ballast from the main line.

417. It is not a granite country? I do not think so. I understand that the soil consists of decomposed granite, but I am not aware of its being a granite country.

418. Your information with regard to the ballast points to its being basaltic country? Yes. The ridges that we pass are basaltic.

419. The whole of the ballast you would use would be broken metal? That does not follow. We should use the best material available. If we could get anything like sand or clean grit from the cuttings we should use that because only a low price has been put down in the estimate for ballast, as it is believed that sufficiently good material will be found on the line itself.

420. Do the reports of your officers inform you as to what material would be available—metal, gravel, or sand? There are reports of that kind, I have them here.

421. The reason of my asking you that question is because Mr. Lackey directed your attention to the fact that the Deniliquin line was ballasted with material from the side cuttings and excavations—do you propose to ballast this line in that way? If the material obtained was suitable. I believe from some of reports that have been furnished to me that suitable material will be obtained from some of the cuttings; but it is not intended to use that all the way along.

422. Ballast is a very important item in the cost of the construction of the lines? Yes.

423. Does the information which you have had from your officers show that the line can be ballasted as cheaply as the Deniliquin line or not? I do not believe that the line can be ballasted in the same way as the Deniliquin line is ballasted.

424. Supposing the grades on the line were reduced to 1 in 100 would not that cheapen the working expenses very much since light rolling stock could be used and heavier loads carried? I do not believe that that matter will enter into consideration, because I do not anticipate that such very heavy loads will have to be drawn.

425. You are aware that if the line is constructed to Broken Hill, there will be a large amount of heavy traffic in the shape of bullion? You will want a good deal of silver to make up a train load.

426. I suppose you are aware that between 400 and 500 tons of bullion came from there every week? I was not aware of it.

427. That would make up a pretty good train load? Yes.

428. Of course you are aware that large developments are continually taking place in that mineral country? Yes.

429. And that the output in future will in all probability be larger instead of smaller? Yes.

430. Is it not likely that the late Minister for Works, the Hon. John Sutherland, would make a statement to a deputation about the grade on this line unless he had good grounds for doing so? He might have considered that he had good grounds.

431. From the information you have at your command are you of opinion that a grade of 1 in 100 can be obtained on the line? I should be in a better position to say when the new section is out.

432. You cannot say from the information you have at hand? I think it is quite possible that we may get a grade of 1 in 100 by increasing the cost of the earth works. When I get the section, that matter will be taken into consideration.

433. *Mr O'Sullivan.*] It is pretty well understood that the land between Orange, Condobolin, and on to Wilcannia is of a superior character to that between Nyngan and Cobar, and thence on to Wilcannia? All down the Lachlan the land is of a fine character; but I believe that as soon as you leave the river it is very poor. You go through a lot of mallee scrub.

434. You say that the land is very good from Orange to where the line leaves the Lachlan River? I believe it is.

435. As a matter of fact, the land between Nyngan and Wilcannia is not what may be called good land for agricultural purposes? It is decidedly pastoral country.

436. I presume that the advantage which the Orange to Wilcannia line has in passing through better country has been counterbalanced by the fact, that a line from Nyngan to Cobar, being extended to Werris Creek would be a short line from South Australia to Queensland? That advantage has been considered.

437. In designing this line I presume the Department has been swayed more by what might be termed intercolonial views than by considering the mere question whether it is the best line for settlement? I do not think the question of settlement came so much into consideration.

438. You are aware that it is the opinion of the Commissioners that a line should be made between Nyngan and Werris Creek? Between Dubbo and Werris Creek.

439. In order to connect the northern with the western line? Yes.

440. And thus give a shorter route between Queensland and Victoria and South Australia? Yes; I should say that there would be about the same extent of country only adapted to pastoral pursuits on either of the two routes.

H. Deane,
Esq.
26 Sept., 1889.

WEDNESDAY, 2 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

THE HONORABLE JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JACOB GARRARD, Esq.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Russell Barton, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

- R. Barton, Esq.
2 Oct., 1889.
441. *Vice-Chairman.*] You know the route of the proposed line of railway between Nyngan and Cobar? Perfectly.
442. You have been for some years intimately connected with the Cobar district? Yes, for twenty-five years.
443. You are connected with it still, I think? Not much now, but I have interests there.
444. You were a large shareholder in the Cobar Copper Co.? I was at one time.
445. You were one of the directors, I think? I am still.
446. Were you chairman of the Board of Directors? Yes.
447. Are you chairman still? Yes.
448. Then you take an interest of course in the success of the Cobar Copper Company? Yes.
449. Is it in active work still? No, it has stopped these last few weeks.
450. How long has it been in work? Since 1872, that will be 17 years.
451. During the whole of that time you have been actively connected with it? I have been connected with it since the very inception of the work.
452. Have you found during the time you have been connected with the Company that it has suffered from want of facilities for communication? That has been the great drawback of the whole district ever since I have known it. When we first opened Cobar, carriage there was £40 per ton. Even within the last twelve months the people there have been almost starving. They have used up all the tinned preserves, and they have no flour there, this article being brought in at a cost of 1s. per pound during last year.
453. That would be in specially wet seasons? In seasons like this.
454. Would that be brought about by wet seasons or dry seasons? By both; by wet seasons especially, and by great droughts such as we have just passed through. In 1870, and again in 1873, the country around there was perfectly impassable, even for horses. I had teams of horses on the road for three months, and could never move them. They were twelve months all but a fortnight in getting from Orange to Bourke via that route, and they were lightly loaded, too. The country becomes, in such seasons as this, perfectly impassable. Of course, in consequence of the establishment of tanks, &c., they are generally open in any ordinary drought, but such a drought as this last one has entirely closed them.
455. Do you recollect the population of the town of Cobar? About 4,000.
456. You employ a great number of hands in the Copper Co.'s mine? Well, you may say the whole population, directly or indirectly, is employed by the mine.
457. Is the population increasing? No, the population is decreasing in consequence of the mine shutting up. The mine is closed partially because of the collapse of copper, but principally because we found it impossible to get a supply of wood. We require from 300 to 500 tons of wood a day, and in a sparsely wooded country like that we found it utterly impossible to supply it.
458. Then you have used up all the wood within available reach? Yes; within 10 or 12 miles of Cobar.
459. And you have constructed a tramway? Yes.
460. What was the length of the tramway? About 15 miles.
461. And that received the wood which was supplied by carters from different directions? Yes; that is the only way in which we have been getting it now for the last four or five years, and even that has come to an end, because it became too expensive.
462. Supposing a railway were constructed between Nyngan and Cobar;—would that impediment to the successful working of the industry be removed? Entirely.
463. You would be able to get fuel? We have made a calculation that we could get from thirty to forty years' supply of wood along the line between Nyngan and Cobar, and within 5 miles of the railway, which would be an easy distance for carrying. That is within 25 to 30 miles of the mine. The supply of ore in Cobar, I may say, is practically inexhaustible; but the idea of the directors is, if they get the railway, to open the mine and to take coal to it, returning ores to the coal-fields. It is their idea to smelt at both ends, and to have trucks running one way with ore and returning with coal.
464. Then you would not smelt at Cobar under those circumstances? Oh, yes; we should smelt about half the ore at Cobar and half at the other end. We think that by having the same trucks employed running both ways it would be more advantageous and economical to the mine, and we could obtain freights at a much less cost.
465. What is the nearest coal supply to Cobar? Twelve miles from Dubbo. That is the coal-field which we have tested. We have smelted ore with coal, and we find it adapted for the purposes of copper smelting.
466. You found it suitable for smelting in every way? Yes; that is the report of the manager.
467. Then there is no scarcity of ore;—there is plenty of ore in the mines? There is ore for generations. The lode is enormous and solid throughout.
468. All you require then is fuel? That is so.
469. And you feel certain that if a railway were constructed between Nyngan and Cobar, that difficulty would be removed? I think so. The whole thing, from my point of view, depends upon that, and I am speaking altogether without prejudice. I have only enough shares to keep me on the board, and I have no interest in the district beyond a few hundred pounds.
470. Are there any other industries in the Cobar district besides copper? Yes; there is gold-mining. The last escort brought 800 ozs. of gold from there. There are very large gold mines there employing a great number of hands.
- 471.

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2 Oct., 1889.

471. Are there any other minerals about there? Yes; there is silver as well as copper. We have partly opened up another large mine originally known as C. S. A. We have done a great deal of work upon it. Then there is the Nymagee Copper-mine, which is one of the finest copper-mines in the world. That is one mine also depending upon cheap carriage.
472. Would the Cobar railway affect the Nymagee mine? It would make the difference between 70 miles of carriage and 35. It would lessen the distance by one-half.
473. There is a large pastoral district around Cobar? Yes; and a very fine pastoral district too. The whole of the land is available for pastoral purposes right through to Wilcannia. I know the whole of the country. It is good, fair, average, dry, pastoral country.
474. Not many rivers or creeks? There is no impediment to the railroad whatever, except in a hill here and there, and those hills in every case can be avoided by a detour.
475. Still it is a well watered district, is it not? It is well watered from tanks and dams, and probably will be by artesian boring.
476. Of course there is no cultivation carried on there? Very little—none of any moment.
477. Have you made yourself acquainted with the route of the proposed line? Only to Cobar; not beyond it.
478. You know the features of the country very well? I do.
479. You think the surveyors have hit upon the right line? No, I do not think so. They have gone over very high hills in one or two cases, where by a slight detour they could have got on level ground. In one place especially, where I have an hotel, they have gone past the front of the hotel and over a steep piece of ground. If they had gone a quarter of a mile to the back of the hotel, they could have kept on level ground all the way.
480. *Mr. Hurley.*] Is that at Budd's? Yes.
481. *Vice-Chairman.*] That is near the Station called Florida? Yes; I understand the Commissioners are going there, and they will see it.
482. Have you given any attention to railway construction at all? Yes; I made it my study here for many years.
483. Have you ever seen the line between Deniliquin and Moama? Yes.
484. Has it ever struck you that there is some similarity between Cobar country and the Deniliquin country? It is very much the same.
485. It is a red granite soil? Yes, red soil right through.
486. Is it the case that the Deniliquin line has been ballasted by the soil which has been taken up on either side of it? Yes.
487. Could that be done in the case of the Cobar line? I will not say it could. One of the great expenses on all our inland railways is the expense which is incurred in excavation. The natural surface of the ground is the firmest and hardest, and every inch that is moved injures the line of railway. I have called attention to it before; in fact Mr. Whitton has twitted me with it many times.
488. Then you think the line could be constructed at a lower price than anything the Government has ever constructed before? If my opinion is worth anything I think we should not construct what are called light railways in any case, but should have our rails the same weight as those now in use. But when you have timber on a line of railway which will answer every purpose of sleepers, it is a great farce to go away hundreds of miles to obtain sleepers at great expense, and having them cut to one particular size. I think that we should have the rails fully as heavy as the rails used on the lines over the hills. That is all the expense you need go to. No expense need be gone to for sidings, stations, or anything of that kind.
489. Nor for fencing? Nor for fencing. Let the squatters look after their own cattle.
490. You recommend the same gauge as the other lines? Yes; but carry it through on the surface of the soil, and in places where you now put in culverts or viaducts to cross over, let there be a dam and thus supply water for the engines. I had to get out of a train the other day and walk half a mile, and in consequence of the water not being dammed back I fell through between the rails, and I was injured.
491. Did that arise from the culverts not being large enough? Yes, or from dams not being put in to keep the water back.
492. The line was covered with water in places? No, it was not, but the top looked solid. Being a level country and no creeks there, they had not taken the trouble to put in culverts to carry off the surface water. Therefore the surface water soaked into the line and it gave way.
493. Is it not the case that the culverts on the line between Nyngan and Bourke have, in some instances, been found insufficient to carry off the water? Exactly, because it is so difficult there to get the levels of the country and to ascertain the area in which the water would collect.
494. You were speaking about the timber for sleepers;—what timber do you suppose will be available for sleepers on the line between Nyngan and Cobar? There will not be any great quantity of timber along there. We have found plenty of timber for the construction of our tramway, but of course our sleepers are shorter than you will require them with lines of the present gauge.
495. Would you recommend the use of pine for sleepers? No, I think not. Pine is a bad wood to have touching the ground on the surface. It is a good wood in the ground, but it is a bad wood to lay on the ground. Whenever a pine log is cut and is laid down for a short time it commences to rot, although it will not do so in the ground.
496. You think timber sufficiently durable for sleepers would be found along the line? In some places, but not in many, there is a good deal of box between Nyngan and Cobar, which I think might be used. We have found this box, even if partly hollow, last better than the timber you will get from more favoured places where it grows free and contains more sap. We have found the bastard box for sleepers and for timbers in the mine last wonderfully well.
497. You are aware that tenders were called for by the Government some time ago for the construction of the line between Nyngan and Cobar? Yes.
498. Do you know the amount of the lowest tender? I was told the gross sum at the time.
499. You do not know what it came to per mile? I do not.
500. Then you have not had an opportunity of forming an opinion as to whether the tender could have been fairly carried out? No.
501. Did you ever hear that a tender had been sent in to construct a line at £1,500 per mile? Yes, without rolling stock. That was my estimate for constructing the line, given the railway freight from the sea-board to Nyngan.

- R. Barton,
Esq.
2 Oct., 1889.
502. There has never been any proper road made between one place and the other—it is simply a track? There is no road at all; you could not make one. The road would cost as much as the railway, because of the distance you would have to carry metal. In fact, I think all over the western portion of the country railways, properly constructed, would be cheaper than macadamised roads, and there would not be the after cost of keeping them in repair.
503. Would you recommend the system of railway without fences to begin with? I would.
504. And without Station houses? Yes.
505. In that case people would bring their own teams and platforms and provide their own tarpaulins? Just so, as they would have to do now.
506. *Mr. Copeland.*] How many tons of coal or wood would you require if the mine were in full work? That is a very difficult question to answer. For instance, we have never been at full work, owing to the difficulties we have experienced in obtaining wood to smelt. But we have used for years equal to 300 tons per day.
507. 300 tons of wood per day? Yes.
508. Is there any assurance that if this line were constructed the mine would commence full work? That would depend upon a certain rise in copper.
509. Suppose copper were to keep at its present price, and the line was opened, would the mine be at work? No, I do not think it would. Perhaps you know that the present surplus of copper at the present price is being absorbed at the rate of over 1,000 tons a week. No mine can produce copper to make it payable with the exception of one or two at the present prices, and these are not simply copper mines, but mines which depend upon other products such as silver and gold for their profits. No copper mine that I know of could continue working at the present crisis.
510. Then in the construction of this line, one of the chief inducements held out to the Government would be the supplying of the Cobar mine. Yet if the line were opened one would have to depend rather upon the price of copper if the mine were to be kept at work or not? I don't say it is the chief inducement. I think myself that this mine has been looked at too much from the Cobar point of view. There is an enormous district there—300 miles by 250 miles—without any roads or means of conveyance, except what nature has provided from the earliest times. The whole of that country for many years was supplied from South Australia and Victoria with goods, in consequence of the utter impossibility of getting them from Sydney. I was the first pioneer, as it were, in opening up that country; and the Cobar Co. and the Nymagee Co. reduced the price of carriage from £40 to £4 per ton plus the railway freight. Still, even now, in fair seasons, nearly the whole produce of that district comes from those two Colonies. It comes up the river and is scattered through the whole of the district. Beyond that, from Nyngan to Cobar, from Cobar to Wilcannia, and from Wilcannia to Broken Hill, is a most direct line of road, and it is all good pastoral country without any engineering difficulties. The line is as straight as an arrow. It goes right through from Dubbo to Nyngan, from Nyngan to Cobar, and from Cobar to Wilcannia, and it is as certainly as good a country as any through which any other line could be proposed from any other direction. The mineral resources of the country have lain dormant in consequence of the difficulty in unearthing them. Cobar has succeeded through being an immensely rich mine. If Cobar had been placed with fair railway communication, I have no hesitation in saying that it would have paid millions in dividends, and would have employed three and four times the number of hands it has done. But the immense difficulties which have been met with have simply cramped the industry and to a certain extent have ruined it. There are other mines in that district, and no doubt there will be a great many more when there is railway communication. There is the Nymagee, the Mount Hope, the Burra Burra, the gold mines, and the C. S. A. mine, all of which have been cramped for want of carriage.
511. Which is the C.S.A. mine? It is an enormous lode, 7 miles from Cobar. There are known to be other mines there which would be opened up, and which would find work for thousands of people, if they had facilities for getting their produce to market. The bugbear has always been that the Cobar mine and Russell Barton, connected with it, had prevented justice being done. That is the feeling which exists.
512. You say that the mine would be using 300 tons of firewood per day if it were in full work? I beg pardon. I said it had used that amount. Its capacity for using is really three times that amount. If that mine were opened up again its capacity would be equal to at least 300 tons of coal per day.
513. What equivalent in wood do you reckon a ton of coal? 3 tons of wood to 1 ton of coal for smelting purposes.
514. And you estimate that the mine, if in full work, would consume 300 tons of wood per day? I think so; but I would put it in a different way, and say it would be probable we should use from 100 to 200 tons of coal per day brought from the coal-mines, and that we should return the trucks with 100 or 200 tons of ore to the mines for smelting. That is the theory the Company has laid down, and we have gone into the matter of necessary improvements to be made in our machinery and furnaces to enable us to do the work.
515. You would obtain this coal, I presume, from Dubbo? From the nearest coal-mine available.
516. At present that is Dubbo? Yes; it is 12 miles on this side as it were of Dubbo, but the coal-measures go about 12 miles on the other side of Dubbo.
517. What distance are the coal-mines from the railway? At present, 12 miles. I have never been to them, but I am given to understand that that is the distance.
518. Is Dubbo the nearest station? I think it is.
519. Do you estimate that it would pay you to carry this ore from the Cobar mine to Dubbo, and then carry it 12 miles by teams? No, by rail. We should never think of carrying it by teams.
520. Would you construct a railway for yourselves to the coal-mine? Certainly.
521. You said just now that Cobar was principally supplied from the river;—what distance is it from Cobar to the shipping port on the river? 80 miles from Louth.
522. But what distance is it from Cobar to Nyngan? 80 miles.
523. So that Cobar is midway between the river and Nyngan? No. It is the same distance from our place, but it is at an angle.
524. How is it then that they can afford to pay for carriage from the river to Cobar, a distance of 80 miles, and cannot afford to pay the carriage from Nyngan to Cobar, a distance of 80 miles? First, because the vessels bring up the provisions from Adelaide at a lower rate than the railway can; and, secondly,

secondly, because the road between Cobar and Louth is often open and available when the road between Nyngan and Cobar is closed up.

525. But would not the river remain open all the same if the railway were constructed—would we not have to compete with the river? The river is sometimes not open for three years, and that spoils its usefulness to the settler there. You cannot depend upon it. It is just possible that the squatter up there may have had all his wire and shearing supplies landed when up comes the river. You can never calculate when it will be navigable.

526. Are there no dams and tanks between Nyngan and Cobar? It is not that matter, but the matter of the road being shut up through wet seasons, and although there are tanks there they are not sufficient for all times. Stock have access to them, and in dry seasons and in droughts they have to be sent away to pasture.

527. I am not alluding to stock, but more particularly to horses and the teams. I understood you to say that you have paid 1s. a pound for the carriage of certain articles by coach? Yes; flour, for instance.

528. Is there not sufficient water for teams? Yes; but there is no feed. Along a line of road like that travelling stock making their way to market eat every blade of grass which they can get at.

529. Cannot they supply themselves with oats or feed from other places by train to Nyngan? Yes; but do you know what the cost of fodder was in that district last year? They were paying as high as 6d. a lb. for chaff to feed their teams on. That will give you an idea of the difficulties to be contended with in that district.

530. That is at Cobar, I presume? In that district.

531. How much a pound did you pay for oats? I do not know I am sure, but I know that is what was paid for chaff.

532. I should imagine it would be cheaper to buy oats than pay 6d. a pound for chaff? I have paid myself 1s. a quart for oats to feed my horses on, and that is equal to 32s. a bushel. People in Sydney cannot understand this kind of thing.

533. What has been the usual price for carriage from Nyngan to Cobar for mine supplies? I could not tell you exactly, but I think the average in fair seasons has been about £4 or £4 10s. a ton.

534. What do you pay for the carriage of the copper from the mine to Nyngan? £2 10s. to £3; but at times we have had hundreds of tons—as much as 1,500 tons—of copper on the mine, utterly unable to get it away.

535. Supposing the mine were at work again, could you give the Committee an idea as to the amount of carriage which would accrue in bringing copper from the mine? That would depend upon whether we elected to smelt part at the coalfields or not. If we smelted the whole there we should reckon on having about 5,000 tons of copper a year.

536. Could you tell the Committee how many tons of copper you sent away the last year you were at work, and how many tons of firewood you used? I cannot tell you from memory, but I could send the information to you. I could get it at the office at any time.

537. Will you prepare a paper and send it to the Committee, giving the information required for the last half year you were in full work? Yes, I shall be glad to do so.

538. Is there not a copper mine somewhere about Hermitage Plains? Yes; it is called the new Burra Burra.

539. Do you know anything about the mine? Yes; it was under offer to me and I inspected it.

540. Is that mine likely to supply much carriage to the railway? I think it is a fairly good mine. They talk about it being twice as big as Cobar, but that is all nonsense. It is not a quarter as big.

541. How many miles will that mine be from the proposed line of railway? About 3 miles; but there are several mines there as good as that. I know of one or two which have better surface indications than that mine. The Government would therefore not have to depend solely on the Cobar mine. I believe that if there were a railway through the country, and given copper at its lowest price, £50 a ton, you would have from six to twelve mines at work directly.

542. Have you ever seen wheat grown at Hermitage Plains, at Mr. Hall's place? Yes; I have seen as fine wheat there as any I have seen in my life, and it is produced in marvellous quantities. There is also lucerne and hay grown there.

543. Do you think there would be any chance if the wheat were sown early enough to get the benefit of the winter rains, to grow wheat extensively in that district? I do not think so. I think that most of the cultivation that will be carried out there will consist in growing the fodder which is used in the district. I believe there is more fodder grown there this year than will be used in the district, as this is an exceptionally good year. I hear that the crops are heavy everywhere, but I do not think you could depend upon the district for wheat growing, as the seasons are too variable. No doubt the average rainfall is sufficient for wheat growth, if it came at regular seasons, but it does not do so. We have an enormous number of rains which are under an inch, and they are no good for anything.

544. Do you know of any limestone in the district? Plenty.

545. Do you know of any iron lodes in the district? Yes; some of the largest I ever saw in my life are in that district.

546. You have stated that you have given railway construction a good deal of attention, and you have suggested converting the culverts into dams? Yes, in places where water is required.

547. Did it never strike you that these dams would be likely to overflow and wash away the railway line? No, I would not allow them to do that. Instead of making a deep culvert I would make a level culvert, there would then be no rush of water. If a puddle-dam were placed alongside the line it would throw back water for three-quarters of a mile.

548. Would not that soon evaporate? Of course it would evaporate.

549. Assuming that the water extended back from the line half a mile, would not there be a danger of it rising higher than the dam and overflowing the line? No, not if the culvert was made under the rails and at a level with the line. There would be the by-wash.

550. How would you get a by-wash without taking it over the railway? I would take it over the railway. We could not do better. I think that is what is being done in many cases all through northern Queensland.

551. But have they converted their culverts into dams there? Yes, and they supply their engines from them.

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552. And do they lay the sleepers down on the ground? Yes, in some places. They lay them on longitudinal sleepers, and fill up with stones, and let the water go over them. In other places they put in stone-wall dams.
553. Do they use metal between the sleepers for ballasting? In some places they do. My own idea is that the difficulty is that our railway engineers have been in the habit of constructing railways for enormous traffic, and they want to run trains at a greater rate of speed than there is any necessity. What does it matter when you get into the interior, over the Dividing range, whether a train occupies twelve or twenty-four hours on its journey. In going to and from Cobar it would not matter to us whether the copper was two or three days on its journey. We do not want trains so very often. There is no necessity to run a daily train as is done to Bourke.
554. Don't you think there is a probability of the people swearing a little if they ride in a train travelling at so slow a speed? They will swear under any conditions. They will swear if they do not get a train, and they will swear if they do get one, and they will swear if they get their goods at half the cost they paid for them before. I never could understand why you should carry freight into the interior below a paying price. I have been in the habit for twenty years of paying £15 a ton for the carriage of my wool from Bourke to Sydney. Why should I grumble now at paying £5. The Government seem to imagine that in running a railway train in the interior they must run at a pace which is run in the settled districts.
555. You have had a station near Cobar for some time? No; I have had two or three near Bourke for many years.
556. You do not know what the cost of carriage of wool from Nyngan to Cobar is? Yes; I do know the cost has always been sufficiently high to take the teams from the carriage of copper.
557. *Dr. Garran.*] I understand you to say that if the line were constructed, and you were working the mine, you could always fill the returned coal trucks with ore? That is the idea. It is only a theory of mine in working the mine in the future, and it is borne out by the advice of our late manager, in whom we have a great deal of trust.
558. But you are not prepared to say positively that you could give the Government a full load both ways? No; but it would not make any difference to the Government at all; because if we did not send our ore away we must take wood or coal in place of it. It is to our own advantage that the trucks should go up loaded. I am given to understand by the late Commissioner of Railways that if our trucks travelled 100 miles full, and returned full, they could carry produce at a very low rate per ton per mile. They have even gone as far as to say that a large amount of produce could be carried at a half-penny per ton per mile each way. It is done in America and in other places. Even private railways in America carry as low as a half penny per mile over level country. In making my calculations upon that basis, I came to the conclusion that it would be an immense advantage to us to take up 200 or 300 tons of coal to the mine, and return with 200 or 300 tons of ore, carried over the same line and in the same trucks, the Government simply doing the hauling.
559. But acting on the principle which you explained to Mr. Copeland, you would not think of asking the Government to carry at that price? This is a Company. I am speaking before individuals.
560. You remember that for many years there was a return trade between Wallaroo and the Waratah coal-mines, carrying ore one way and coal the other? No, I was never there often enough to find out.
561. Supposing the Dubbo coal did not turn out so satisfactorily as you seem to anticipate it will, what would be the next nearest coal-mine—the Wallerawang? I am not sure. I think there is coal in the vicinity of Wellington. Father Curran, of Cobar, has told me that he has seen some magnificent coal between Dubbo and Wellington, only 12 or 15 miles back from the line.
562. If the coal was of the same quality, and the Dubbo coal should not turn out well, it is possible that the Wellington coal may not turn out well? It might not; but we have tested the Dubbo coal, and we know that if the quantity is there, the quality is good enough for smelting purposes. We had a good many tons carted to Cobar, and used in the furnaces for the purpose of testing it. It was a good, fair, commercial test, made for our own satisfaction, and in order that we might know whether, if the railway were constructed, we could depend upon getting supplies necessary for smelting purposes.
563. You say that you made a small tramway to get your wood? Yes.
564. What did it cost you per mile? I could not tell you that. I can only tell you it cost us at first double what it cost us after we got experience in laying it down; and after we had become experienced, in using wooden instead of steel sleepers. The tramway was originally imported from Sir. John Fowler and Co. It was supposed we could lay down a quarter of a mile per day. We found it would be to our advantage to use wooden sleepers, and we have used them since. I can however append all the information that is asked for to my evidence.
565. Was that a narrow gauge-tramway? It was.
566. Did you gain any experience in the laying down of that line to show whether that was really a cheaper design than a branch line would be? Yes; we got this knowledge of it: that the cheapest and best line is a steel rail on wooden sleepers; but where we gained an immense experience—which I place at the disposal of the Commissioners of Railways—was in regard to the cost of keeping the tramway in repair. The tramway has not cost us more than 10s. per mile per month to keep in repair since it was laid down. You can compare that with the Government line. We were running 32 trains a day over it of seven carriages each.
567. How many tons did you carry? About 18 tons of wood, and we ran as many as 32 trains a day. The cost of repairs will be considerably reduced when we get all the wooden sleepers laid down. I think you might reckon the cost of repairs per mile per month on the Government railways is at least £10.
568. Did you use horse-power haulage? Oh, dear no; we used steam.
569. What was the full carrying capacity of that line per day? I could not tell you that; because our engines and everything else were out of repair, and we had not the proper workshops to mend them.
570. But did the loads you carried test the power of your engines fully? Yes; we only had small engines, said to be equal to 30 tons over the gradients we laid down.
571. What were the worst gradients you had? I think 1 in 40.
572. An engine of that power would not carry traffic between Cobar and Nyngan? No; it would be too light.

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573. If you were making this line from Nyngan to Cobar, you would put down steel rails? I would make them nearly as strong as on the main trunk line.
574. You would not save in the metal? No; I should not try to save in it. I should try to save by putting down such sleepers as I could get within reasonable distance of the line, and I should lay them as nearly as possible on the crust, simply constructing a drain on each side to keep the water off.
575. But in laying out the line you would instruct surveyors to get the easiest gradient? Yes.
576. Do you think you could get gradients of 1 in 100 between Nyngan and Cobar without deviating very much? Yes.
577. I understand that you have no wooden sleepers on this line of yours? Yes we have. Originally we had steel sleepers, but we have thrown them away.
578. You did not use the iron posts to rest the rails on? No; we had steel sleepers, which rested on the surface of the ground.
579. Did they cut into the ground? No; but they vibrated and shifted, through the jar caused by travelling.
580. Did you make side cuttings and throw up the material as ballast? No; we never dreamt of it. We carried it wherever we could on the dead level.
581. Then you have not made any experiments in that particular locality as to whether the side cutting would serve for ballast? Oh, yes; wherever we had to make a cutting for the side we used the earth for ballast.
582. Did you make any experiments? Oh, yes, for several miles.
583. How did it answer? Very well.
584. When rain came did it wash the stuff away? No.
585. Did it harden after being thrown up? Yes, and it had a good crust upon it.
586. I understand you to say that the crust of the ground there is hard, and that if you cut through it becomes soft? Yes.
587. Then the stuff you threw up would be soft? It would be soft at first, but being exposed it would become stiff and hard. Of course it would be rammed down before the sleepers were put on.
588. The estimate before us for this line from Nyngan to Cobar is about £2,500 a mile;—do you think it can be made for that? Does that include everything.
589. Yes, exclusive of rolling stock, I think, and exclusive of land? I believe there is not much land to purchase—there could not be more than a few acres.
590. Do you think the line could be made for that? I think it could, and a good line too.
591. Do you think there is any need for fencing on that line? Not the slightest. You do not want to travel at high speeds, and there is no necessity for travelling by night.
592. We should want nothing but a few level crossings? That is all.
593. Did you, on your own tramway, make the dams you speak of? No; we had no necessity for them. It was only a short line, and we had a large tank at one end with water laid on, so that we could always fill the engines from there.
594. Would you make the by-washes you speak of of wood or concrete? Of wood. I should not use concrete or sandstone all along the line. I should use timber throughout.
595. A shallow by-wash would carry off the waters? Yes.
596. You said that you had seen places where this was done in Queensland? Yes.
597. Were they made of wood? Yes; all of wood.
598. Does not the wood rot through this alternate exposure and covering? I daresay it would; but it is cheap. We find that our overshot dams there last for a great many years.
599. What particular wood did you use? Box.
600. Did it last well? Wonderfully well.
601. Do you think it would be good enough for a Government railway? I do; and on the river, when you go to the other end, red gum would be obtained.
602. You said that you think that the country could, in fair seasons, grow fodder;—do you think that it would pay to export any of the fodder if there were a surplus? No.
603. The growers must look to the local market to get rid of it? Yes; what they grow one year they can sell at high prices the next. They were selling hay last year at £20 a ton, resold at £40.
604. Will they be able to grow more this year than they will want? Yes; they will probably be able to stack it, and next year they will get good prices for it if there is a dry season.
605. If the local market was the sole market for produce there would not be much carried on the railway? There would be a traffic in hay in dry seasons in three out of five years.
606. But there would be no produce exported? No; because the probability is that when there was a good season there would be a good season elsewhere, so that it would pay them better to stack their hay than to send it away.
607. The only return traffic we can expect will be wool, live stock, and minerals? And supplies.
608. I mean traffic from the district? Yes; wool, livestock, and stock going away to pastures in great drought. It is a great saving to the country if you can take stock away to other pastures in time of drought.
609. You have recently paid a visit to Silverton? I have.
610. There is a private tramway there? Yes.
611. Is it paying? Enormously.
612. Do they charge at the Government rates? No; their rates are a great deal higher than the Government rates, and the Adelaide rates are higher than ours.
613. Would that tramway pay at the Government rates? I could not answer that question; I do not know.
614. Where private people are at liberty to charge a price that their customers will pay, these railways are profitable;—we have two instances in the Colony of private railways paying? I think so. This tramway at Silverton is paying enormously, and they are trying to get a duplicate line from the Border to Broken Hill.
615. Do you think that there is room for both railways? I do; and both will pay enormous dividends on the money expended.
616. You explained to Mr. Copeland, I think, that there is a line of copper mines between Cobar and the

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- the Lachlan? They do not come near the Lachlan. There are a great number of mines there. Nymagee is only 30 miles from Cobar, and then there is Mount Hope.
617. There is nothing between there and the Lachlan? Not that I know of.
618. I asked that question because I wanted to know whether a line from the Lachlan would suit the district better than a line from Nyngan to Cobar? It would not suit it so well.
619. Would it suit the pastoral traffic of the district so well? There would be only the same pastoral traffic on it.
620. The line from Nyngan to Cobar leaves the main line at an angle, and therefore it does not collect any traffic for some distance. That is taken by the main line? Yes; it only takes traffic from the centre.
621. And as we go west we have to compete with the Darling? When the river is up.
622. Would a line from the Lachlan through Cobar give more general accommodation than the proposed line? I do not think that it would.
623. You do not think that there would be anything gained by making a line parallel with the existing line further to the south? I do not think so. You would have to go over rougher country.
624. The country would not be so easy? No. I rode over it on purpose to see.
625. If the district is to be accommodated you think that on the whole Nyngan is the best point from which to start? Yes.
626. Looking at Broken Hill as the terminus to be reached by our railways, do you think that this route is better than one from the Lachlan, through Condobolin, or from Hay? I do.
627. Do you know the country between Condobolin and Menindie? Yes.
628. Is it as good as that between Condobolin and Wilcannia? It is in some places, but there is a lot of swampy ground.
629. I suppose that actually the shortest route we could make to Silverton would be from Hay? I suppose it would.
630. Do you know the country between these two points? No, I do not.
631. From your knowledge of the district bordering on the Darling, you think that this is the best route to get to it? I do.
632. I understand that to Dubbo the gradients will be easy; but that between Dubbo and Sydney are the worst gradients that we have? Yes.
633. You do not think it would be better to make a line to serve this district from the southern line? —
634. You have said that we cannot trust to the mineral traffic from this district unless copper reaches £50 a ton. Supposing that it does not reach that price, do you think that the other traffic will pay? —
635. Do you think it would be better to run through to Wilcannia than to Cobar? No, not unless the line were run through to Broken Hill.
636. If it were your own private speculation you would rather run from Nyngan to Broken Hill than stop at Cobar? I should, because Broken Hill must be in the future the best district in New South Wales. It is going to be an enormous district, 100,000 people residing there.
637. Although there will be a large population there, you do not suppose that we should take the whole of the traffic? We should take a considerable portion of it. At the present time silver is coming here from there by water; but if there were a railway it would come by train, and there would be an enormous traffic.
638. Must that silver be smelted with coke, or can coal be used? It must be smelted with coke. That is the present way of smelting. They have no furnaces in which to smelt with coal.
639. Could they make furnaces? They have not found any way of doing it yet.
640. We could not send coke from any of our coal-fields in the eastern parts of the country to Broken Hill as cheaply as they could import it from England? I think we could. I think we make coke equal to any English coke. The coke will be taken from the mountains to Broken Hill, and the ore will be brought back. I have spoken to a number of the large mining managers there, and to people interested in the mines, and it is their idea that if they had a direct line to Sydney they would bring coke one way and send ore the other, supposing that the freights were fair for the haulage power only.
641. They have tried our coke. Does it contain more or less ash than that brought from England? They told me that it was admirable.
642. Could we lay it down at better prices? I fancy that we could lay it down as cheaply, and we should have the advantage of taking back the ore.
643. On equal prices do you think that we could cut out the English coke? I think we could.
644. With a difference of 5 or 10 per cent. you are sure that we should? I think we should be about on a par with the English coke; and I have no doubt that in the future we should be able to compete with it. We could also send large quantities of timber, which at present they have to get from New Zealand, Tasmania, and Swan River.
645. *Mr. Cox.*] Of course you are aware, having had a long experience there, that the timber grown in that dry country is very much harder than that grown in moister climates? I believe that is so.
646. And that apparently poor timber will last very much longer when used than better looking timber grown in a moist climate? Yes.
647. Believing that a railway could be made from Nyngan to Cobar, and then on at the rate of about £1,500 per mile—and we have reason to suppose that it could be made at that price because a tender was made at that amount—do you think the traffic to the metropolis in wool, minerals, and live stock, and of goods outwards would be sufficient to warrant the expenditure of that money? I do, and to show you that it was thought so by thoroughly practical business men, I had the whole capital for the Cobar railway subscribed when I asked for permission from the then Government to construct it. Mr. Lackey was then Secretary for Works, and Sir Henry Parkes Colonial Secretary; but I did not get an answer to my letter until that Government went out of office. When Sir Alexander Stuart came into power he answered the letter within a few weeks. Mr. Copeland was then, I think, Secretary for Works, and I know that he was against a private railway, because he told me that he would not have one constructed. The answer of the Government was that they would not allow us to construct any more private railways in New South Wales.

648. Your interests do not extend westerly, beyond Cobar? I have no interest at Cobar now. I have no interest in the district except one little station near Bourke.

649. Therefore you do not think that Cobar should be the terminus of the railway? Certainly not now. At the time I advocated the railway I thought that there was good warranty for the construction of a railway to Cobar—that it would have paid a private company or the Government to construct it. Of course, since the development at Broken Hill, and the opening up of the whole country north and west of Wilcannia, I think that the railway should go on.

650. *Mr. Garrard.*] And because of the shutting down of Cobar? As I said before, Cobar was shut down simply because we could not get firewood.

651. Is the country between Cobar and Wilcannia all equally good? It is not equally good; but it is all level grazing country.

652. There are no engineering difficulties in the way of the construction of a railway? None at all. I think the Department know that now. They have had a rough survey made of the whole of it, and have all the facts before them.

653. You are familiar with the whole of the country between the western line and Wilcannia and Wentworth—I mean the country east of the Darling? I know it all.

654. Do you know the route of the proposed line through Forbes? Yes.

655. Do you think that the proposed line from Nyngan to Cobar and on to Wilcannia is the best that can be made? I do. I think that is the first line that should be made; but I also think that the line through Parkes and Condobolin across to the Darling should be made at some future time, and no doubt some day it will be made. I think that the Nyngan to Cobar line should be made at once. It is the most important line that we have, and will connect the enormously wealthy district of Broken Hill with Sydney. I think it is a standing disgrace, as I said the other day at Broken Hill, that no steps have been taken to make that line before.

656. You said just now that you were firmly under the belief that the trade would justify a line from Nyngan to Cobar? I proposed to make such a line myself. That is proof that I am.

657. At that time the mines in and about Cobar were working very much more fully than they have been of late? Yes, because then we were in hopes of getting a railway. We have been buoyed up by promises from every Minister who has been in power that we should get a railway, and the House approved of its being made. Because of those promises we extended our works until we found out that the promises of politicians were not to be depended upon.

658. But there has been no development in the district lately, but rather a going back because of the low price of copper? Other mines have been discovered. Gold-mines are being opened up in every direction.

659. You told Mr. Lackey that if the railway were constructed you did not think the mines would be reopened because of the present low price of copper? Our mines are not shut. It is only the Cobar mine that is shut. Nymagee is still working, and the other mines will undoubtedly go on. Cobar is peculiarly placed. It has an enormous supply of low class ore, but it would be necessary that copper should be £50 a ton before we could employ the thousands of men that we should have to employ to make the mine pay. £50 a ton is below the minimum price of copper. We could work Cobar at that. There are only a few mines in the world that can work copper at a profit at the present time.

660. I suppose all the wool west of Cobar would naturally gravitate to the Darling? No, except when the Darling was in flood. When you have a railway it is open at all times, and though you may not be able to get teams this week, next week, or the week after, you can get them at some time to take your wool, but with the river it is different. It is only open for a few weeks, and if you cannot run in your wool to catch the steamer you cannot send it. You would say "the river is falling and it will take the drays a week or a fortnight to get there, so that I shall not be able to send it," and it would be sent by railway. The river does very little compared with the railway.

661. Is it not a fact that since the railway has been constructed to Bourke a large quantity of wool has been sent by the river? I cannot tell. My station is on the river and I have never yet sent a bale of wool by it.

662. How far are you from the river? I am 9 miles from the railway and right on the river.

663. Supposing the Nyngan to Cobar line were out of consideration altogether, and that it were proposed to make a line from the present Western line through Condobolin, should it go to Wilcannia or to Wentworth? Certainly not to Wilcannia. I should take it down to Menindie, or below Menindie.

664. Which is the more important town, Menindie or Wilcannia? Menindie is a very small town. It has never been a thriving place. Wilcannia has always been the more important of the two.

665. At any rate you do not think that the Forbes line should go to Wilcannia, but that it should go further down? That it should catch the trade lower down. I should take it from the bend of the Lachlan, below Condobolin, straight through to the river, by the best road you could get.

666. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you know what the cost of coke is at Broken Hill at the present time? No, I do not.

667. You have no information whatever upon that subject? Not here. I brought back certain memoranda for comparison, but I cannot recollect the figures now.

668. In the event of the Cobar mine ceasing to work, what would be the other source of revenue to the railway? The traffic from the other mines in the district—wool, stock, tallow, hides, and all kinds of pastoral produce, as well as the whole of the supplies for improvements going on in the district.

669. Without going over any portion of the evidence, or any of those points that have already been worked out by the gentlemen who have examined you, I wish to know whether the line would be a profitable one even if it were not extended? I am quite sure that a line going to Cobar alone, if it did not go a mile further, would be profitable if worked upon purely economical principles in the way that you and I would work it if we had an interest in it, not having expensive stations, and a great number of men hanging about, doing nothing. If economically worked, the railway to Cobar would pay, and would always have paid since the conception of the idea.

670. Can you furnish a statement to the Committee showing the probable earnings of the line and the cost of working it? We have furnished the probable earnings of the line to the Government on several occasions.

671. Will you furnish us with such a statement? Yes, I should be very glad to do so.

672. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] In answer to the Chairman, I think you spoke of the surveyors having taken the line

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line over a difficult portion of the country near "Budd's Hotel," and you recommended a detour;—would that be likely to increase the cost of the line much? No, certainly not. It was one of those points in the laying out of the line which you find are notorious in the immediate district. People called my attention to the matter, and said, jocularly, that they supposed I had got it done to suit my public-house. I said, "Where would you take it," and they said, "Through the back of the 40 acres, and round the hill"; and I saw it in a moment. I did not go over the route; but when it was pointed out to me I saw that a curve would have avoided the ridge.

673. About what length would the curve be? I cannot tell you. It did not look to be a long one, because you could stand at the hotel door and see the plain going round.

674. Would that be less than 3 miles? I think so; but as I said before, I did not go over the ground.

675. Would this detour be to the north of the dam at Budd's? Yes; it would leave Budd's altogether. Budd's is really my property.

676. You also spoke of a mine called the C.S.A. mine;—what is the proper name of that mine? It was a copper mine—the Cornish Scottish and Australian mine. The shares at one time were up to £16.

677. *Mr. Lee.*] What are they now? Nothing.

678. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] In your evidence you threw out a suggestion that the trains on the proposed line, instead of going every day, should run two or three times a week? As often as was necessary.

679. I suppose you are aware that all that time the wages of the maintenance men would be going on? I do not think that we should have those men. I do not know why they are appointed. I never see them doing anything when I pass in the train. I think myself that the work is only to give billets to the unemployed. When I tell you that our tramway, with thirty-two trains a day going over it, only costs us 10s. per mile per month for maintenance, you will understand what maintenance men are required. These men are all sorts of things. They keep all kinds of stores and goods, and in some places they have sly grog-shops. In other places they are accused of putting rabbits over the line for the squatters. I do not say that they do these things; but if they were fully employed they would not be accused of doing them. There are three or four of these men where there should only be one.

680. You think that a large number of the maintenance men could be dispensed with? Undoubtedly.

681. In view of the trains being run on the lines two or three times a week instead of every day? In view of anything. If you ran as many trains as you liked there would be too many maintenance men.

682. Do you think that the Bourke people would consent to an arrangement like this—that the trains should be run three days a week to Bourke and the other three days to Cobar? That I do not know. I would sooner leave Bourke out of the question. They will say, "You want to do all you can for Cobar, but you do not care anything about Bourke."

683. Putting out of sight the fact that the Cobar line is a mere local line, which you contend would pay as that,—do you think that if it were taken through to Broken Hill and the South Australian Border, and a connection made to Werris Creek, it would become a great intercolonial line? I do not know anything about that.

684. I mean, if a connection were made between the western and northern lines at Dubbo and Werris Creek? I would not give an opinion about that. The other line I have studied.

685. Which line? The Nyngan and Cobar line. I know all that part of the country, but I could give you no information about the country near Werris Creek.

686. Are you aware that it is the design of certain officials and gentlemen who have made a study of this matter that a connection should be made between the northern line at Werris Creek and the western line at Dubbo, so as to form a direct line from South Australia to Queensland? I am not. It is a matter to which I have never given any attention.

687. Supposing a line were made from Werris Creek to Dubbo or to Nyngan, and extended from Nyngan through Cobar, Wilcannia, Broken Hill, to South Australia, would it become a great intercolonial line between Adelaide and Brisbane? I think the principal traffic from Cobar and Broken Hill would go to Sydney instead of to Adelaide.

688. I want to know, you being a gentleman of wide experience in the four Colonies, whether such a line would be a successful intercolonial line? It would be, as far as direct intercourse between Queensland and South Australia, or between Queensland and Broken Hill was concerned; but I should take it that a large portion of the trade between Queensland and New South Wales was done in Sydney, and that therefore people coming from Queensland would go on to Sydney.

689. I am referring now more particularly to the trade that might arise between South Australia and Queensland and to the passenger traffic;—would it not be likely to go that way instead of going 500 or 600 miles further by another route? Of course they would take the shortest route for any trade between the two Colonies; but I do not know what that is.

690. If the line were carried out, would you consider that its chief intention? Which line.

691. From Werris Creek to Dubbo, and through Nyngan on to South Australia;—would you consider the intercolonial aspect of such a line its chief recommendation? No; it would be a recommendation. My idea about railways is that a cheap line of railway is the cheapest possible road you can construct and keep in repair, and it gives the greatest advantage to the people holding or cultivating land on each side of it. I think that where it can be shown that a line of railway will pay interest on the capital expended on it, or anything near that, it should be constructed, not always at once, but some time in the near future. I could not give an opinion about the capabilities of country about which I know nothing. I know perhaps less of the country near Werris Creek than of any other place in the Colony.

692. You know that a large amount of bullion from Broken Hill is sent to Port Pirie and brought on to Sydney? Nearly the whole of it is brought to Sydney at the present time.

693. To be used as "stiffening" for ships bound to London? Yes.

694. Would that come by train if the railway were constructed? Yes; it would all come by the railway. It is one of the chief reasons why they are agitating for a railway to Broken Hill—to send away ore and to bring back coke.

695. I understood you to say that our coke would be equal to the English coke, and that it could compete with it? That is what I gathered from a conversation with the mining manager when I was there. They had it tested, and they thought that if a railway were constructed a very large amount of freight would be carried backwards and forwards.

696. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What prices do you pay per ton for the wood consumed in the furnaces, or what have you been paying in the past? An average of about 7s. 6d. per ton.

697.

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697. What price do you suppose you would be able to pay for coal if you got it delivered there? Of course we should get it as cheaply as we possibly could. We have not thought that 7s. a ton for good wood was a very high price. We fancy that we could take it at that price, and in that case we should pay £1 or 25s. for coal.
698. You would not be able to pay £1 12s. 6d.? I cannot say that we should not; but we should not if we could help it.
699. Do you know whether there is sufficient coal at Dubbo to supply your wants? My information about it has been derived principally from Father Curran. He says that when the mines there are opened up and worked they will produce large quantities of coal.
700. Why have they not been opened up? Simply because there is not a large demand for coal.
701. Do you not know that the local consumption would command a fair output if it could be made? I should not have thought so. I should not think the local demand for coal was large enough to justify the opening up of the mines.
702. Do you know where the coal which is consumed round about Dubbo comes from? From Wallerawang.
703. Do you know what they pay for it at Dubbo? I do not.
704. Do you think they pay £1 a ton for it there? I should not be surprised.
705. Do you not think that it would pay the proprietors of the mines at Dubbo to put out the coal when they could get £1 a ton for it, while it is sold elsewhere for 8s. 6d. at the pit's mouth? I have been mixed up with one or two syndicates formed to open up these mines; and the reason why they have never succeeded is because they thought there would not be a sufficient demand for the coal to enable them to make a railway.
706. Do you not know that the Government have promised, that if they supplied a sample of the coal, the locomotives on the line would use it? I have heard so.
707. Do you not know that they have no coal except a little bit that has been dug up for samples? No; certainly not. I have been given to understand that there are excellent seams of coal there, though they are not very large.
708. Cannot you give us the reason why they are not worked? Simply because a company working a coal-mine within 20 miles of Dubbo would have to construct a railway, and capital for the work has not been forthcoming. I have been asked to form a company for the purpose; but I could not see my way clear to do so, because the consumption round about the town would not pay for the outlay.
709. Have you had the coal analysed? Yes; with a very good result.
710. Is not 30 per cent. of it ash? The analysis showed that it was a very fair coal. I am speaking of a property that Mr. Burslem, of Dubbo, was connected with. The property was under offer to some other gentlemen and myself.
711. Did you ever use any off the property that Mr. Penzer discovered? I do not know Mr. Penzer at all in the matter.
712. Have you any idea what was the average number of tons consumed monthly while the mine was at work; I do not mean wood altogether, but merchandise of all descriptions? I could give you that from the reports. I could not say from memory. If I had had an intimation previously that you wished me to give evidence I should have had all these facts prepared; but I only heard by chance that you wanted me, through seeing the Chairman. I am not prepared with any statements, which I might have had if I had been notified in time.
713. Have you ever tried any of the Lithgow coal? No; we have only tried 10 or 20 tons of coal sent from Dubbo.
714. The reason why I asked you whether you could pay £1 12s. a ton for coal was this: My opinion is that you would not get the coal at Dubbo, and putting it at the very worst, the Lithgow coal could be delivered at Cobar for about £1 12s. per ton; it is a very superior coal? What would be the carriage per mile?
715. Nearly a penny a mile? That would give the Government 50 per cent. profit on the hauling power; and I think that is more than any Government ought to have.
716. You said that the English coke was superior to the colonial coke? That is generally conceded; but several of the managers have said that they have tried colonial coke, and that it is nearly as good as the English coke.
717. Do you know where it came from? From two places—from Lithgow and Newcastle.
718. Is not the Newcastle coke superior to any inland coke? I am told that there are mines at Lithgow that could produce better coke than any Newcastle coke. It is better adapted for this purpose. I know nothing of coke or coal myself, except what I hear from other people.
719. What is the lowest price for copper at which you would be able to work the mine, supposing you had to pay 7s. a ton for firewood? £50 a ton for copper—that is to pay fair dividends on the mine.
720. Supposing the price of copper kept so low that you could not start the mine again, could you tell us what would be the population now employed in the gold and other mines that would not be affected by the price of copper? I could not tell you. Gold-mining there is entirely new; but at present there are a good many people employed, though the Cobar people themselves look forward to the day when there will be ten times as many people there. They say that payable mines are being opened up all over the district, and that mines are being discovered which only require machinery to make them pay well. That is partly proved by many of the mines that are already working under exceptional difficulties. It is probable that Cobar itself will be opened again as a gold-mine. We have lodes there, and it is quite a question whether in a few months it will not be reopened and a large number of hands employed in gold-mining.
721. I heard you say that in constructing a line you would in all cases, where you could possibly do it, lay the rails on the surface of the ground. Is your reason for that the fact that when you break up the surface of the ground it never stands the pressure of the sleepers as well as it did before it was broken? I think it would stand after a time; the ground settles down, and gets a cake or skin on it, which is very hard and lasting. My object in laying the rails in that way would be to save expense. I see no reason for raising the line above the surface of the plain, as we have done between Dubbo and Nyngan; it is only throwing away money. Instead of taking the stuff required to level up and make sidings from the tanks they excavated along the line, they let a contract for sinking the tanks at 2s. 6d. a yard. Those are things which I have seen going on under my very eyes.

- R. Barton, Esq.
2 Oct., 1889.
722. Do you think that when this ground has once got a crust on it it stands as well as the unbroken surface does? Perhaps so. I would sooner have the line on the surface if I could get it.
723. Have you not just told us that on the line from Nyngan to Bourke, where there is an embankment and no rush of water, the ground is being dissolved and the rails undermined? If those rails had been put on the surface the surplus would have run over the line and disappeared, but as it was banked up 2 feet 6 inches in height it formed a sort of lake half a mile across, and soaked under the sleepers, making the soil the consistency of mortar.
724. It is not only a saving of money, but it is also much better for the rails to be on the surface than on the embankment? I think it is cheaper and better in every way.
725. Do you not know from your own experience that the soil in that part of the country dissolves when water lies on it or against it? I know the soil of which you are speaking, but it is not that kind of soil there. It is red soil, and will make good embankments and dams if taken out and thrown up. It will never become soft when it has once hardened.
726. Is it not the same formation as that between Nyngan and Bourke? In some places.
727. How was it that the softening which you spoke of occurred there? Because the soil was not hardened down properly. After the trains had been going over it for some years it would have hardened and the water would have soaked under the line.
728. I thought you were speaking of a case that happened a few months ago? No; it occurred soon after the railway was constructed.
729. Do you know that a few months ago a similar thing happened, and that they are now putting in culverts 24 feet wide where they had 6 feet openings? I was not aware of it. With the construction which I suggest no culverts would be required; the water would simply go over the line. There is no wash, because there is no fall on the land.
730. Do you think that the whole of the residents of Cobar, where copper-miners, gold-miners, pastoralists, or agriculturalists, would require 300 tons of produce per day, including coal, wood, and every other necessity? I should not like to answer that question without going into the facts. I have all the data. I have an estimate of the produce of the district in wool, stock, and everything else, and it might be very misleading to answer the question without looking at the figures.
731. You have promised to furnish that? Yes.
732. *Mr. Copeland.*] Can you tell the Committee what was the average yield of the ore during (say) the last six or twelve months that the mine was worked? The last year the mine was at work would hardly be a fair criterion of the average yield of ore, because no development was taking place. We should not have kept open the mine if we had not thought that the railway would be constructed. We instructed our manager simply to take out the ore that was available, but not to carry on any exploring works whatever. The average has been as high as 14 per cent. for the year, and it has been as low as 8 per cent. Some years it would go up to 11 and 12 per cent., and at other times it would come down to 8 and 9 per cent., according to the sort of ore which we were using.
733. Have you not worked out all those good quality ores? Our sulphides are at present a higher class than any we have had yet.
734. Can you say what they are worth? From 7 to 8 per cent. in bulk.
735. Can you say what the lowest percentage would pay? That would depend entirely upon outside circumstances—the price at which we could get our wood and labour, and the quantity we could put through. It would pay us probably to take out 10,000 tons a year when it would not pay us to work 5,000 tons. We must have large works with as little manual labour as possible, using machinery throughout. If we do that we can make the bulk of our ores pay well at what has been the minimum price of copper for many years—£50.
736. If copper were £50 a ton could you pay dividends on 8 per cent. ore? We could.
737. Could you do so without the railway? No; because we could not get fuel. We cannot open up the mine without getting a supply of fuel, and the only way we can get it is by the railway.
738. Are you quite satisfied that there is a large quantity of ore in the mine that would show 8 per cent.? I am quite satisfied.
739. If the railway were constructed you could pay dividends? If the railway were constructed, and the price of copper were £50 a ton, we could pay dividends.
740. To what number of men could you give employment in connection with the mine? 2,000 at any rate.
741. Directly or indirectly? Yes. I am not speaking of their families; I mean carriers, wood-cutters, miners, and outside men.
742. *Mr. Hurley.*] With regard to the annual output of copper, it is represented that 1,905 tons have been put out on the average per annum during ten years. I suppose that is pretty accurate? I have no idea.

THURSDAY, 3 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

The HONORABLE JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Russell Barton, Esq., sworn, and further examined:—

- R. Barton, Esq.
3 Oct., 1889.
743. *Mr. Hurley.*] Representations as to the condition of the Cobar Copper-mine were made in a petition which you presented some few years back;—can you say whether the statements contained in that petition are accurate? I do not know to what petition exactly you refer. A good many petitions have been presented from time to time in reference to the Cobar railway. A *précis* of what has taken place

place in regard to this line was put in my hands yesterday afternoon, but I find that the very first paragraph is wrong. "The first suggestion of a railway from Nyngan to Cobar is contained in the notice of petition from residents of Cobar, presented to the House, 27th August, 1884." The first time that the Cobar railway was thought of was at a large meeting held at the Chamber of Commerce in 1880, from which a deputation waited upon your vice-chairman, who was then Secretary for Works, on the 23rd January of the same year. Numerous petitions with reference to the line were sent in between that time and 1884.

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3 Oct., 1889.

744. An agitation for the railway had been commenced in Sydney four years prior to the time mentioned in the first paragraph of the *précis*? Yes, in 1880.

745. Were you then a Member for the district? I was not, but I moved the resolution at that meeting, and spoke on the subject before Mr. Lackey. Then further down in the *précis* it speaks of *The Daily Telegraph* ridiculing the idea of a railway. But on the 23rd or 24th of January, 1880, that paper had a leading article commenting upon my speech, and strongly in favour of the railway.

746. But since then that paper has been consistently opposed to its construction? Yes.

747. At the time you presented the petition and took such an active interest in the line you had large interests at Cobar? Yes.

748. And you were also representing the district in Parliament? For part of the time. I represented it for seven or eight years.

749. Now you have virtually no interest in the construction of the railway? Nothing beyond a few hundred pounds in the whole of the district. I happen to have a mortgage or a claim of some kind on a public-house there, which I spoke of yesterday.

750. You are prepared to substantiate now the representations that you made when Member for the district? Of course. I never made any representation to the Government, I hope, for my own personal benefit.

751. The eighth paragraph of the *précis*, dated 29/4/86, says:—"Shortly after a petition from the residents of Cobar in favour of the proposed railway was presented to the Minister by Mr. Russell Barton. The petition stated that during the previous ten years the mines had produced an average of 1,905 tons of smelted copper per annum, of the value of £1,444,500, in the production of which there had been expended an average per annum of, for wages, £96,000; for cartage, £15,000; and firewood, £24,700; for railway freight, £5,500; hands employed, 700"? That is immediately in the mine, irrespective of wood-carters and outside men.

752. Continuing that paragraph down to the number of inhabitants in the district, do you believe that the representations made there are accurate? They were perfectly accurate at that time. I obtained this morning from one of our balance-sheets facts bearing that out. I find that we have spent in labour and material on the Cobar mine alone, irrespective of Nymagee and the other mines, over £1,500,000 sterling. Those are figures which speak for themselves.

753. How is that £1,500,000 spent? Principally in wages, and for the material required for the works.

754. Could you give us any idea of the actual return from that expenditure? Yes, I can. We have paid that money out of the mine and £154,000 in dividends.

755. What was the capital of the Company? The nominal capital was £80,000; but it was never called.

756. What amount of capital was called up? I think somewhere about £40,000 in all, from the very first of taking up the land. There were originally 20,000 old Cobar shares, upon which nothing was called—that is to say there was a trifle called on them for current expenses; but in the first year they paid a dividend of 5s., which far more than covered all the cost. That was from ore sold in Port Adelaide, which is not included in my estimate here, because we have no data whatever. That amount was 50 per cent. more than the whole of the expenditure up to that time. Then the mine was incorporated with another mine called the South Cobar mine. That mine had a capital, and it was divided altogether in 80,000 shares, Cobar I think taking 40,000, and Cobar South taking 40,000. I think about £30,000 was called up on the South Cobar, and that was all the capital that was ever called up. The rest has all been made.

757. In conveying machinery from the line to the mines, a very large amount of money has been paid for the carriage. You made a statement to the effect that if the line were constructed, your Company would be prepared to pay double rates? At that time.

758. Do you think that in the event of the construction of the line, and of the mine being properly worked as heretofore, you would carry out that proposition? I think so. I suggested at that time that the Company and the large storekeepers should individually become responsible for double the average freight charged on the line to Bourke; and our own firm, Barton Bros., of which I was a member at that time, together with the Cobar Copper Company, agreed to those terms, and I believe wrote letters to the Department stating their willingness to pay double freight for so many years—five years I think.

759. It says this in the *précis*, 9/6/87: Barton Bros. offered to enter into a bond to pay double rates if the railway were constructed. The Manager of the Cobar Copper Company also offered to pay double the local rate on copper from, and all goods to, Cobar, firewood to be excepted, and the arrangement to continue in force for five years. He was of opinion that others interested would consent to the same terms? That I think is right.

760. Do you think the Company would be prepared to carry out that proposition if the line were constructed now? I should fancy so. I have not heard anything to the contrary.

761. Do you believe that if the line were constructed the Company would put the mine into active work again? Of course. The mine is only in abeyance until the railway is constructed. We are not bankrupt. We have thousands of pounds invested at call, so as to be able to open the mine again at any minute.

762. The low price of copper and the difficulty of carriage prevents you from doing so? Yes.

763. The mine itself is in as good a position to produce a large quantity of copper as it ever was? Quite as good.

764. And you have other expectations? We have other lodes which we have never opened or touched—enormous lodes. The lode called the champion lode has never been touched.

765. You have a large area of land lying in the same district as the gold-reefs? The gold-reefs opened up there, if permanent, run through the whole of the Cobar property.

766. That is a matter of theory? It is a matter of theory, but from the bearing of the present lodes that are opened up they go through the Cobar property.

767.

- R. Barton, Esq.
3 Oct., 1869.
767. From the report of your manager is it anticipated that work can be carried on in the old Cobar mine with advantage to the shareholders for many years to come? I had better, perhaps, in answer to that, read you a paragraph from the last report of our manager to the directors. This was written in the face of the present depression, and the falls in the price of copper, and he mentions that they have almost given up the hope of getting the railway. [*Paragraph read.*] Yesterday I said that at £50 we should go to work and open up the mine again if we had the railway, and this report exactly bears out my statement yesterday.
768. The question of firewood is of enormous importance to the mine? Yes.
769. One ton of good coal is equal to three tons of firewood? Yes.
770. If you could get coal at anything like 22s. 6d. per ton you would prefer it to wood? Certainly, because there is less labour in using it.
771. In your replies to Mr. Tonkin yesterday something was said about the coal in the immediate vicinity of Dubbo;—can you give us any information with regard to the difficulty of getting coal from Dubbo? I do not know that there would be any difficulty given the line from Dubbo. As I said yesterday, I am sure that the reason of those mines not being worked is the large expenditure that would be required between Dubbo and where they are situated. If those mines had been in close proximity to the station I should long ago have formed a syndicate to open them up; but I knew that before we could do anything in the matter we would have to construct 12 or 20 miles of railway over a rough country.
772. So that even if a line were constructed from Nyngan to Cobar before this coal could be of use to you another line of some 20 miles in length would have to be constructed from Dubbo to the mines? I am not sure of that. I am told that between Dubbo and Wellington the coal measures come close to the line. But the coal there was of no use to us without the railway, and as I could see no prospect of the railway I did not open it up.
773. Do you know that the Mines Department have put down several bores between Wellington and Byrock? I have heard something about it, but they would not be between Wellington and Byrock. They would not go beyond 10 miles of Dubbo.
774. At all events within 15 or 20 miles of Dubbo they have been putting down bores? I do not know. I have only heard of one bore near Dubbo. I do not know of anything beyond that.
775. There has been some coal discovered near Dubbo;—do you know the name of the company or the people to whom it belongs? The person from whom we get coal, and with whom we were in treaty about the matter was Burslem. There were some people interested with him in Sydney.
776. Have you any knowledge of the analysis that was made of that coal;—was it satisfactory? We gave it a better test than any analysis. We took 10 or 20 tons of the coal to Cobar, and tested it in one of our furnaces alongside of wood in the other. We found it was admirable coal for all purposes connected with smelting. You could not have a better test than that.
777. It is quite possible that if the mines round Dubbo were opened up it would be to the advantage of the Cobar people to take the coal? That is, given carriage at a reasonable rate.
778. If you could have it delivered at 22s. a ton? Yes.
779. Looking at the character of the country between Nyngan and Cobar, could you say whether, if water were conserved, the land would be suitable for agriculture, taking a range of 10 or 20 miles? Eight or nine years ago I should have said that the finest agricultural country in New South Wales was in the vicinity of Cobar; but having seen what has taken place during the last eight years through the extraordinary droughts which sweep over it, setting at defiance almost the laws of nature in reference to the rainfall, I should be very cautious in answering the question. Undoubtedly I have seen the finest crops of any in the Colony in the vicinity of Cobar in good seasons, but I have seen a rainfall of nearly 20 inches producing not even grass, because of its having fallen at the rate of an inch in twenty-four hours. The rainfall there is equal to the rainfall in places where magnificent crops are produced, and the soil is certainly equal to anything in the world for wheat; but sometimes even the native grasses will not grow for two and three years together, and consequently all the stock die off. I have travelled from Dubbo to Nymagee with the Honorable John Lackey, without seeing a living creature in the way of stock. We saw nothing but one or two crows until we got to Nymagee. That will show you the terrible state of that country during drought.
780. Have you heard from any scientific man, or could you give the Committee any information of your own in regard to the formation of the country between Nyngan and Cobar,—could you tell us whether it is a cretaceous formation? No; I think it is not.
781. Getting outside the boundary reefs? No. After leaving Nyngan you have primary rocks continually cropping up, and therefore you would not be likely to find any cretaceous formation along the line.
782. Is there not for 10 or 20 miles a red porous soil? Yes.
783. Is it not possible that there might be tributaries there leading to underground rivers? It is possible, but where the old seas and bays are covered up it is not possible to tell how far the indentations extend. Even the best geologist could not put his hand down on any particular spot, and say, "Here you will find water, and here you will not." That has been proved lately. We have found water at different depths from the surface, and you may get it at one place and not in another. It is just as if the harbour were covered over with 500 or 600 feet of soil. You would have to go down to the deep parts for water, and if you happened to strike upon an island or headland, or a sandy patch, you would not get it. We have been sinking over undoubtedly cretaceous country, where in all probability in five places out of six we shall get water in abundance; but in other places, where there is exactly the same formation, you may perhaps sink upon a higher bottom, and therefore will not get a water supply. They have been sinking at a place called Yandra, where the formation of the soil is similar to that in which we are boring; but so far their bores have been unsuccessful. They have got no water.
784. Still it is worth while the Government testing that country to see whether it is watered or not? It would be worth while. I discovered a cretaceous formation, and on my representation the Minister sent down Mr. David, and he bore out what I had said. Then some years ago, when Mr. Abbott was Minister for Mines, he gave instructions that a bore should be put down between Byrock and Bourke—but that has not yet been done. For 40 or 50 miles there is a cretaceous formation, and it would be of enormous benefit to the railway and to the stock route if water were found there. It has been proved that on this side of the Darling there is cretaceous country.

785. As a storekeeper doing a large trade in Cobar, did you generally get your goods from Sydney or from other places? I do not know anything about the storekeeping business; I never interfered in it. I was unfortunate enough to put a great deal of money into it, but I never took anything out of it. I never had anything to do with the management of it. I left the business to my partner and all I had to do was occasionally to find a few thousand pounds to put into the sink. R. Barton,
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786. Can you say whether any goods were conveyed up the Darling to Louth and then taken by waggon? Yes; but what proportion of our goods came up that way I do not know.
787. What would be the object of their coming that way? Cheaper and surer freight. Probably the road from Cobar to Dubbo was closed. In a drought or wet season the road is closed and you have to look about for some other way to bring your goods. At one time we got our goods from Hay across the back country. They came up to Deniliquin and were carted from there by teams as far as Bourke, simply because there was no other way to come. It was before the present tanks were sunk, and there was no water on the roads.
788. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you say what is about the area through which the proposed line will pass that has been proved to contain payable minerals or metals? I could not give you that.
789. Is it a large area? A very large area.
790. It has been proved? It has been proved.
791. Is there any basalt through which the line will pass? Yes, there is a strip of country running from about 20 miles north-west of Parkes to about 25 miles north of Cobar. The whole of that country is more or less basalt, containing minerals—silver, gold, copper, tin, and iron.
792. Can you say what are the pastoral capabilities of the company? Yes. In some years the pastoral capabilities are nil. I do not care what improvements the squatters have. I have seen seasons there when the sheep will die whatever the improvements on the land may be; but in a year like this you could not overstock the country. It is subject to those terrible droughts to which that particular latitude all over the world is subject. They can stand one year's drought very well; but when it comes to 2, 3, or 4 years continuously they cannot do so. I have had thousands of pounds expended upon tanks there, and it has been three years and nine months before I have had an inch of water put into them. When the rain falls in quantities that will not fill your tanks the country is utterly useless. In some years the country will take ten sheep to the acre, while in others you could not keep a sheep to 50 acres, and in other years again you can keep a sheep to 4 or 5 acres.
793. Then not much revenue will be derived by the railway from the pastoral resources of the country? On an average it would carry about a sheep to 10 acres on improved runs.
794. Do you know whether there has been much land alienated there? Ever since the first promise to construct a railway to Cobar a great many homesteads have been taken up in anticipation of it; but a large number of these have now been abandoned. The proprietors found that the promises held out year after year were never performed. At one time driving to the Nymagee mine you would see selections with nice little cottages and gardens all along the road; but now you would not see one. They have thrown up their selections because they cannot get the railway there.
795. Because they have no cheap or direct communication with a market? That is it.
796. What is the thickness of the seams of coal at Dubbo? I do not know anything at all about that coal, except that I have been asked to form a syndicate to work it. My objection to doing so is that there is no railway there, and no demand for the coal other than the local demand, which is very small. The seams are said to be 3 feet and 3 feet 6 inches thick. I never went to inspect or see them, nor do I know much about coal.
797. It is also stated that some of the seams were not more than 18 inches thick? Yes.
798. You have expressed an opinion with regard to the construction of railways—are you a professional engineer? Not a bit of it. I have been a railway contractor for some years.
799. What lines of railway have you constructed? I have never constructed any line independently. I was on the South Australian lines some years ago—on the northern line in South Australia.
800. Did you take any personal supervision of that particular line? Yes.
801. Then you must have had some experience in the construction of railways? I have had a considerable amount of experience in matters of that sort throughout the country during the last fifty-one years, as a general contractor, and at times as a road maker.
802. You have stated that you are of opinion that it was only necessary to lay the sleepers down on the surface of the soil. Are you aware that it is the custom of the Department, and of railway engineers generally, to lay the sleepers on metal or ballast of some description? I am.
803. On this particular country you think the ballast could be done away with? I am quite sure of it. We have constructed 20 miles of tramway without using any.
804. What is the weight of the engine on your line? The engine is just sufficient to take 20 or 30 tons in a train.
805. What is the weight of it? I could not answer that.
806. Is it as large as an ordinary locomotive, or is it only a toy? You might call it only a toy, but it is equal to drawing 20 or 30 tons in a train, and 30 trains a day.
807. Do you know the weight of the lightest engines on our lines? No.
808. Would the line to which you are now referring carry an engine of 25 tons? No; it is a narrow gauge, and it is not constructed for that. But if it were constructed so that the load could be spread over it, there is no doubt that the line would carry any ordinary traffic, travelling the same rate as we do. We have used the ordinary soil as we went on to ballast the sleepers instead of using gravel and metal as they do elsewhere.
809. What is the character of the timber between Nyngan and Cobar? Every possible character you could have; but the trees are not very large nor very straight. The timber is small and stunted, as all the timber in the west is.
810. Ironbark? Some; not very much.
811. Is it not a fact that there is a large quantity of pine? A good deal of pine, and a great deal of box, and a sort of blue gum, which is a very hard and durable timber.
812. From your experience as a railway contractor have you any objection to half round sleepers for a railway? I should use them in preference to anything else, because they are much cheaper, and would answer every purpose required. They were used in South Australia in the early days, and were found to answer admirably.

- R. Barton,
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813. *Mr. Lee.*] Fuel is of considerable importance to the Cobar mines? Yes; it has been hitherto the great difficulty.
814. At all events, the cost of fuel would be an important factor in working of the mines? It would be a very important factor.
815. What I should like to ascertain from you is, whether, knowing so much as you do about railway matters, and about the kind of trucks used for conveying stock, you could offer any suggestion to the Committee by which the empty stock trains could be used to carry coke, coal, or goods? I thought that was done at present. I thought the Government had latterly paid a very high price, £15,000 or £16,000 for a patent that was to get rid of that difficulty entirely. I know that some time ago I was asked to inspect a truck made on the combination principle, and looking at it apart from its adaptability to carry goods traffic, I thought it was the best possible truck I had seen for stock; and when I afterwards saw it loaded with goods as an experiment I thought it was just as good for carrying merchandise as it was for carrying stock. If it were not considered strong enough that difficulty could very easily be remedied. The truck I speak of was one invented by Mr. Wilkinson.
816. So far as you know those trucks are not in general use now? I do not think that anything further has been done about the matter. The Evans truck was adopted by the Department, but the Wilkinson truck, which seemed equal to it in other respects, was far better adapted to the carriage of stock.
817. You are aware that the departmental estimate of the cost of running a train, be it empty or full, is 4s. 6d. per mile? I am aware of that; but I do not know how it is got at.
818. At all events that is the departmental estimate? Is that over the mountains, where there are steep gradients and sharp curves, or on level country?
819. It is the average estimate. To bring stock from the country you are aware that it is necessary to run trains empty one way, and that there is a dead loss of 4s. 6d. per mile per train? Yes; but I do not know why.
820. If the trucks could be utilized to carry coal or coke for these large mines at a nominal cost, and I mean by a nominal cost, a cost that would enable the mine owners to purchase the commodity, would it not materially assist the development of the mines? Yes, and I think the development of the railways still more.
821. A great deal of return traffic to the railway would be created in the shape of ore? Of course there would.
822. Is it your opinion that if a combination truck were made that would carry both stock, or goods or minerals, it would be a great saving to the country and an important factor in the development of those mines a long distance from Sydney? There is no question about it. But I do not admit that 4s. 6d. per mile is a fair charge for trains on that level country.
823. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Could you give us the average number of stock trains that would run between Nyngan and Cobar? I could not tell you that at all.
824. You have an idea that this line could be laid down cheaply if trains were not run over it at as high a rate of speed as they are run over trunk lines? Just so. On these lines they have a maximum and an average gradient. The maximum gradient might be 1 in 40, while the average gradient would be less. By having lighter and slower trains it is not so important that you should lessen the average gradient so that the line could be constructed more cheaply. I think that it would serve this district just as well if trains took twenty-four hours instead of twelve hours to go to Cobar.
825. You are supposing that Cobar is made the terminus of the line but you would not say that trains should run at that rate of speed if this were a through line? Certainly not. If I expected the line to go through, and it were an intercolonial railway, I should make my gradients accordingly.
826. You think that if the cost of the construction of the line could be materially reduced, if trains were run on it at a less rate of speed than they are run on the main lines, it would be advisable to run them more slowly? I do, and I have always held that in that way we could construct two miles to one that we construct now. I think that a railway is about the only and the cheapest road that we can make in the interior.
827. Have you any idea what the cost would be of making a macadamised road there? No, nor has anyone else. We could not do it. We could not afford to cart the metal to make the road. I am sure that we could not make such a road for the same price at which you could make a railway. You would have to cart your metal for many miles at a stretch to get over the bad places.
828. *Vice-Chairman.*] With reference to the trucks of which you have been speaking, you think that they could as a rule be utilized for the purpose of carrying stock as well as goods traffic? I am sure they could.
829. That was the object of buying the invention? When I looked at Wilkinson's truck I merely looked at it from a squatter's point of view to see how it would do for the carriage of sheep and cattle. I consider that it is expressly adapted for the carriage of sheep because it is on the end loading principle, so that you can load right through and it makes no difference whether you have 50 or 100 trucks. I afterwards saw it loaded with goods and I think that, though Evans truck is adapted both for carrying stock and merchandise, yet it cannot compare with Wilkinson's as a stock truck.
830. The special merit of these trucks is that they can be used for goods traffic as well as for stock, so that instead of having to haul empty trucks for hundreds of miles into the country in order to bring stock back the trains can be loaded each way? Yes, and I know that the trucks are used in that way in other countries. I have been corresponding with some gentleman in America lately, and I have ascertained the fact that stock trucks are used there to convey goods as well.
831. You know the country well between Cobar and Wilcannia? I do.
832. Do you know the country between Condobolin and Wilcannia? Not so well. I rode across it once with the express purpose of seeing what the line was like.
833. Do you think the country between Condobolin and Wilcannia is as good as that between Cobar and Wilcannia? No. I think the line would be better if it went lower down so as to avoid the stony mulga ridges you meet with between Condobolin and Wilcannia. If you keep to the south you avoid those ridges and get into better country.
834. You are an old resident of the district? I have been there twenty-five years.
835. You have a tolerably accurate knowledge of the whole country and of the Darling especially? I think so.
836. Do you think that if a line is to be constructed to Wilcannia with the idea of eventually going on to

Broken Hill the route from Nyngan to Cobar would be the proper one? I think that that is the best line for the country.

R. Barton,
Esq.

837. And you would recommend that the railway be constructed on an economical basis? Yes, everywhere, in order to enable us to get more railways.

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838. You are sure that the ballast could be taken from the sides of the line? In most places. In some places you would go over $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile of swampy land where the soil would not be good for ballast. The local name for these places is "spew holes." I think it would be wise whenever you came across them to use other soil for ballast. They are invariably low places and would probably require some little ballasting to bring them up to the average level.

839. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Have you read of the report drawn up by Mr. Kirkcaldie with regard to the probable traffic on the lines? No, I have not, because Mr. Kirkcaldie or any one else would not have all the data on which to form an estimate of traffic. A great deal of the stores and supplies of the district were sent to Bourke in order to take advantage of the cheap freights under the differential system. Wright, Heaton, & Co., laid themselves out for this business, and enormous quantities of goods were sent to Bourke and distributed from there instead of from Nyngan. I know that at one time they were sending out a great deal.

840. You think that Mr. Kirkcaldie being a stranger to the district could not have been well enough acquainted with the local circumstances to be able to give an accurate report? I did not read his report. I read some of it and it seemed to me that he was not seized of all the facts. I know some of the parties who gave evidence about the freight before him, and he cut their estimate down one half.

841. You know that the report was an adverse one? I take that for granted by reading some of extracts here.

842. *Mr. Hurley.*] Is it not a fact that round your mine there are some tens of thousands of tons of slag which would be suitable for ballast? Yes.

843. Seeing the great advantage which the mine at Cobar would reap from the construction of the railway; do you think the Company would have any objection to making over to the Government any interest they had in that slag? Not a bit. It would be an immense item in the construction, if we used ballast.

844. The slag would be most suitable for ballast? Very suitable.

845. At Cobar we could get a great deal of ballast from the slag, and about 23 miles out we could get it from a place called Florida. That is the only basaltic formation between Cobar and Nyngan? Yes; but there are lots of other places where, if necessary, you could get ballast. There are large ridges from which you get great quantities of small quartz as they did on the Bourke line—that would be good for ballast if it were required.

846. Could you make arrangements with the Company for giving that slag to the Government for ballast? I am quite sure that the Company would be quite prepared to hand over the whole of their slag to the Government for railway purposes. With regard to the roads, I may say that in dry seasons they are as hard as a metal road, but in wet weather when the trams go through them they become very bad. On one occasion, when it was impossible to take the mails to Cobar, I went to Girilambone and drove to Cobar easily in a day, keeping along the squatters' roads, though they do not like you to do that, as a rule. Although these roads were good, the main roads were so bad, that in some places they would "bog a duck," as they say.

847. Will you have a letter written to the Committee offering the slag to the Government? I shall be very glad indeed to do so, if it would facilitate the matter. It is of no use to us. I have no doubt that they would continue to give it for ballast for some years to come if it were required.

John Harper, Esq., Railway Goods Superintendent, sworn, and examined:—

848. *Vice-Chairman.*] You are in the Railway Department? Yes, I am goods superintendent.

849. Have you any special district? No; I am in charge of the whole of the lines.

J. Harper,
Esq.

850. Are there other goods superintendents besides yourself? No.

851. You have had considerable experience, I take it, in connection with the Western Railway? Yes; I have been twenty years engaged in the goods branch.

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852. You have frequently been over the country between Nyngan and Bourke? Yes.

853. You know the country between Nyngan, Girilambone, Trangie—all that district? Yes.

854. You are aware that it is proposed to construct a line between Nyngan and Cobar? Yes.

855. Have you ever been asked to give any information in reference to that line? Yes; I have reported on it.

856. How long ago? In January, 1888.

857. Did you traverse the line then? Yes.

858. You went through Cobar? To Cobar.

859. Did you go any further? I went out to Billago.

860. That would not be on the same line? No, it would not be on the line of extension to Wilcannia.

861. Have you furnished an official report to the Department? Yes.

862. Have you it with you? Yes; it is dated 9th January, 1888. [*Produced.*]

863. You took evidence, I suppose, when you went out into that district? I met the Progress Committee there, and they laid before me all the facts which they had at their command. They generally admitted that the estimate of traffic taken out by Mr. Kirkcaldie some few months previously was correct.

864. What do you reckon the distance between Nyngan and Cobar? It will be observed that in my report I simply add to Mr. Kirkcaldie's figures, taking all his totals.

865. Then Mr. Kirkcaldie made a report before yours? Yes.

866. Has he been out in the district? No, he never went to Cobar.

867. His was simply a return? Yes; compiled from the different stations at which the traffic came in.

868. A return showing the estimated traffic? No, the known traffic; the then present traffic.

869. What were the results shown by Mr. Kirkcaldie's investigations? I have only one copy of his report here.

870. What did he give as the annual income? £14,683.

871. What would have been the interest on the outlay according to his estimate—is that given also? No, he did not give it; that was dealt with by the late Commissioner. He simply gave the earnings, without showing the working expenses.

872.

- J. Harper,
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872. Have you given the estimate made by the Commissioners? I think you have it at the back of the report which I have handed in.
873. According to this report the construction of the line would make a deficit? Yes.
874. You say that you have been over the proposed line yourself? Yes; I have been at Cobar twice.
875. Did it occur to you that the traffic of the district would be likely to be augmented or increased by the construction of the railway proposed? Not beyond that estimate.
876. Supposing that the railway were constructed further on, to Wilcannia and ultimately to Broken Hill, do you think there would be an increase in the traffic? May I be allowed to venture an opinion as to that extension. I think it would be a great mistake to take a railway that way to Broken Hill and Adelaide. I think it would be far better to follow the Lachlan, and strike the Darling at Menindie. It would be a big mistake to go that way.
877. Which do you call the Lachlan line? Through Forbes, Condobolin, and Menindie, to South Australia. The mileage, I believe, would be less, though the route has not been surveyed. Scaled on the map it is less.
878. Where to? To Silverton. I understand that it is proposed to construct a line to Forbes, and if that is constructed there will be so much less line to be made on this route.
879. What do you estimate will be the number of miles from Orange to Wilcannia? I should not suggest a line from Orange to Wilcannia. I think that is too high up. I would rather tap the river at Menindie. I think we should still lose a lot of the traffic between Wilcannia and Menindie if we had a railway through here. If we had Rowley's map I should be able to illustrate my meaning.
880. A line in that direction is at the present time only constructed as far as Molong? Yes.
881. How far do you estimate it from Molong to Menindie? From Condobolin to Silverton I should imagine would be about 250 miles, and from Borenore to Condobolin it is 119 miles as surveyed. I do not know what the distance would be through to Menindie. The total distance through to Adelaide from Sydney would be about 30 miles less by that route, taking it out roughly by scale, than the distance via Cobar.
882. You have been on the Darling? Yes.
883. The traffic on that river fluctuates with the seasons? I should like to read to the Committee, with your permission, some remarks which appeared in the *Herald* in 1885, when we first began to compete for the trade there. [*Extract from S.M. Herald read.*] A paper emanated from the Commissioner for Railways, and Mr. Kirkcaldie went through the Darling and made certain recommendations. We then started to compete keenly for this traffic, and the very thing predicted here must happen.
884. *Dr. Garvan.*] You have given some attention, I gather, to the rival routes across to the Darling and on to Adelaide? Yes.
885. Is it not a great advantage of the Nyngan and Cobar line that we are much nearer to the Darling at Nyngan than we are by the lower routes? Yes.
886. We have a shorter distance in which to hit the Darling? Yes; but we lose all the trade from the country below. We fight every year for the wool from there, but it mostly goes to Hay and then down the Murrumbidgee.
887. Looking at it from a departmental point of view, with a desire to capture the trade, would the extension of the line from Hay have the required effect? It would if we had river dues. The mileage is less to Wentworth.
888. Do you think the wool coming down the river by boat would unload at Wentworth and go by rail, or continue down stream? I think it would go on.
889. You think that if a squatter sent his wool down to Wentworth there would be a great chance of its going right on? Yes, though they have an uncertain river between Menindie and Wentworth.
890. You may remember that some years ago there was a proposal to go from Hay to Pooncarie;—do you think that would be high enough up the river to catch the trade? No; I think it would be better to strike the river further up. The line would then be nearer Broken Hill, and the trade would be intercepted better.
891. You are introducing another subject now. At the time you made your report Broken Hill was not developed? No; I had not in view an extension of the line at all.
892. The shortest way to Menindie from our present line is from Hay? Yes.
893. Have you considered the expediency of constructing a line from Hay to Menindie? No; it would represent a distance of 880 miles from Sydney to Adelaide.
894. How many to Menindie? I have not got that.
895. We have a line as far as Orange and Molong at the present time, so that we could continue the railway either from Molong or from Cowra, along the Lachlan Valley if we liked? Yes.
896. Suppose we had a Lachlan Valley extension from our Western line at either place, going through Condobolin, we could strike the Darling at Menindie or Wilcannia. The engineering difficulties in either case would be nil. Would you recommend the Condobolin to Wilcannia or Condobolin to Menindie line? I should recommend the line to Menindie.
897. Do you know anything of the intervening country? No.
898. Is there not a long billabong, the Willandra Billabong, on the Menindie line that would give water for railway purposes? I dare say it would, but I do not know it. I have been as far as Hillston, and I have been to Condobolin.
899. If we were to dam the entrance to the billabong would it not in good seasons drive the water back and conserve it? I do not know.
900. Do you know the pastoral character of the country at all? Only by the sheep it carries.
901. Is it as good as the Cobar country? I think it is.
902. Do you know anything about the mineral characteristics? I believe there are some minerals along the route.
903. You calculate upon having a railway to Forbes, so that when you compare the Lachlan Valley line with the line from Nyngan you consider it as going from Forbes? Yes.
904. You think we should take it as a matter of certainty that we shall have a line to Forbes? I do. I think a district like that must have a line directly.
905. As between Sydney and Silverton the Lachlan Valley line would be the shortest? Yes, I think by about 30 miles.

906. As between Sydney and Adelaide the Hay and Wentworth route would be the shortest? Yes, by over 200 miles. J. Harper, Esq.
907. But the Nyngan to Cobar line has the advantage at the present moment of being the quickest available? Yes; there is less mileage to be constructed. 3 Oct., 1889.
908. Looking at the payable character of the two lines—the northern and the middle, as we may call them—do you think that the middle line will pay equally as well as the northern? I think so. I think that as far as Cobar is concerned its mineral development will not be very much retarded because of its being 80 miles from a railway station.
909. Supposing we had the middle line constructed a line could easily be made from Condobolin through Nymagee to Cobar? Yes.
910. Would there be any advantage in it? I do not know whether it would be regarded by the Committee as of sufficient importance to be made.
911. Not taking mining into consideration at all, and considering that we have to make a cheap railway merely to accommodate the pastoral settlement in this district, would a line from Condobolin through Nymagee accommodate a larger area of pastoral country than this line would? Yes, simply because it would accommodate a larger number of people.
912. How far on either side would such a line be of real value to the pastoralists;—20, 30, or 50 miles? Yes, that is not very much.
913. You have given a good deal of study to the traffic which comes from this district? I have.
914. When we make a branch of an acute angle from the main line as is proposed here, we do not get the same amount of new traffic as would be obtained if we branched off at right angles? Necessarily so. We do not offer extra facilities to such a large number of people. The people below do not benefit to such a great extent.
915. There would not be a large traffic area for some distance out of Nyngan;—you would not give any new accommodation? None whatever. The people there would be able to use Nyngan station as well as any station on the proposed line.
916. It is not until you get a certain distance from the existing line that you obtain new traffic? I do not know that it would obtain any new traffic. So far as this district is concerned there is not the least doubt that we get all of it. We lose none of it. But if the line were made lower down we should intercept some of the traffic that now goes down the Murrumbidgee.
917. You think that if the middle line were constructed we should accommodate nearly all this traffic and intercept a great deal that now comes down to Hay and goes by the river? Yes.
918. You were considering this matter in the interest of your department? We want to get as much as we can for the railway.
919. From that point of view, with your hunger for traffic, you would rather see the central line constructed than the northern? Yes.
920. You think it is of importance that we should make a line out to Broken Hill? We should get very little traffic at the present time. The charge for coke in South Australia is 1d. per ton per mile and 1½d. for ore. We could not carry it for that, and we should have to take it 700 miles, while they only take it 300.
921. Some of their coke they get from England;—could they land coke as cheaply from Port Pirie as we could land it from Sydney? I do not think so—not the same kind.
922. We should have an advantage in sending coke there? No; South Australia would.
923. You do not think that if we sent coke from Dubbo it could compete with the coke sent from England? Not unless we come down in our charges. A half-penny a ton would not pay us, because we could not get back loading.
924. It would not pay you unless you could? No.
925. Suppose you had a paying load the other way, you could take coke at a half-penny a ton? That would be another feature. Practically this country gives us no traffic with the exception of live stock, during six months of the year, which has to be carried in a peculiar class of waggon, and during the other six months we carry wool. The coke required to be sent from Dubbo would have to be carried all the year round, and the loading back would not represent the capacities of the trucks.
926. I understand that you have to compete very hard with the steamers when the river is up? Yes; they are carrying wool from Brewarrina to Adelaide for £3 a ton.
927. For what do you bring it from Bourke? For £4 and £5.
928. Even that barely pays? It pays, because we get a good loading. We get £25 a truck. If we did not get it in quantity it would not pay us, but because we get full truck loads it is payable.
929. Do they get full boat loads? Oh, yes. I heard of iron the other day being sold at Bourke at a lower price than it could be bought for in Sydney. A contract was made to bring up goods to Brewarrina, and this was put in to make up the loading.
930. As “stiffening”? Yes.
931. If you have a hard matter to compete with the river at Bourke, it would be still harder to compete with it at Wilcannia? Yes.
932. Do not you think that a line would be able to compete with the river when it is up? Practically we get all the wool from about there.
933. Does it make any difference to you whether stations are owned by persons living in Adelaide or not? It does to a certain extent. People are influenced naturally by their associations, although I cannot say that they are altogether influenced by them, because I know one clip of wool on the Murrumbidgee—the Barrag wool, where all the associations one would think were in New South Wales, which because of the difference of 2s. a ton, was taken to Melbourne.
934. As a traffic line, you do not think the line from Nyngan to Wilcannia would be very productive;—not even if extended to Broken Hill? I should not think any great advantage would be received from it.
935. And so far as the national interests are concerned they would be as well served by the middle line? Yes, better.
936. If we make a line we had better go through Condobolin? Yes.
937. So far as the accommodation of the pastoral interest is concerned in the district, of which Cobar may be taken as the centre, do you think it would be better served by a branch from the middle line than by a branch from Nyngan? You mean the line through Nymagee, parallel to the present line?
938. Yes? I think so.

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939. *Mr. Trickett.*] Have you made any further report since 1888 of the probable traffic of the line? That is my last report.
940. I find this in the *précis*: "1/5/89. The Mayor of Cobar asked the Commissioner by wire to send an officer down to examine and report as to the traffic. Mr. Harper, under instructions from the Minister, undertook that duty"? That is a mistake; I have not been there since 1888.
941. You say that you obtained your information from the Progress Committee? Not the information on which I based my estimate. The information which I used had been obtained six or eight months previously by the Progress Committee and Mr. Kirkcaldie. They went through the books at Nyngan, Girilambone, Byrock, and other places, and the estimate set down was given by the Progress Committee as a fair estimate.
942. Mr. Kirkcaldie worked with them? Yes; in conjunction with them. You will see that they produce the stock reports of that year, and I gave them 32 per cent. addition on the wool and stock.
943. What is the state of the traffic at the present time compared with what it was at that period? Nothing like it. It is not half as great. Of course the mine having shut down has materially affected it.
944. Have you any personal knowledge of the country of which you were speaking, between the Lachlan and Menindie? I have no personal knowledge of it. What I know of it is by hearsay.
945. What is the character of the country? It is represented to me as being of the same description as that between Cobar and Wilcannia, and out west.
946. As good as that? Yes; that is the representation. The number of sheep on it is about the same, and I judge from that that the country must be about the same.
947. When you were in the district I suppose you heard a great deal about the inconvenience from which they suffered? Yes, and experienced it myself.
948. In what time of the year were you there? I think I was there once in June, and on another occasion in January. On one occasion the roads were very bad indeed.
949. That was after rain? Yes.
950. How long did it take to get from Nyngan to Cobar? Twenty-four or thirty hours.
951. At that time was the road impassable for dray traffic? There were some teams on it, but not many. There were very few who would tackle it.
952. What is your opinion about the cost of constructing an ordinary road between those two places? It would naturally be expensive. There are a lot of holes and boggy places, and very little metal could be obtained.
953. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You suggested just now that a line should be made from Condobolin to Menindie;—is that merely your own opinion or the opinion of other officials? It is purely an opinion of my own, arrived at after discussion with brother officers.
954. You know that the line has been made as far as Hay;—would not an extension of that line to Broken Hill, *via* Menindie, serve the country as well as the line which you have suggested? No; it would not serve the Lachlan District.
955. Would not the line from Hay to Menindie intercept that traffic? Yes; it would intercept a lot of it, but it would not bring in the Hillston trade.
956. Supposing there was also a line from Molong to Condobolin, as a feeder to the main line,—would not that serve a large portion of the country? You do not serve the best part of the Lachlan at Condobolin. There is good country down as far as Hillston which would not be served if you stopped short at Condobolin.
957. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you think that the construction of this line would not increase the traffic beyond your estimate? No; most decidedly not.
958. Was your estimate made at the time the mines were working, or when they were closed? If you will refer to it, you will see that I put down the maximum number of furnaces that the mine was capable of working, and the maximum quantity of wood and coal that would be consumed.
959. But do you not think the construction of the line would very largely increase the traffic? Most decidedly; but that is a matter of conjecture, which I do not venture to take into account.
960. Do you know if any of the branch lines that have been made for the express purpose of tapping the country to serve pastoral interests are paying;—do they pay the working expenses and interest on the outlay? Not as far as my knowledge from published reports goes.
961. Then do you think it would be advisable to construct any line purely for that purpose? I certainly should not think so.
962. You are advocating a line, I take it, from Condobolin to Menindie? Yes.
963. What would be the resources of that line? That trade is worth about £3,000,000 a year. That is the last estimate we have of the Darling trade.
964. Is that in wool? It is the value of the traffic—wool, and stores sent in return for wool.
965. It would be an exceptional line, differing from any other branch line constructed for that purpose? I should not regard it as a branch. I should regard it as the main trunk line.
966. What do you call the Hay line? A branch line, and a very bad one, too.
967. If the Hay line were carried on to Menindie, would you regard it as a branch line then? I should still regard it as a branch line.
968. What would be the difference between a line from Hay to Menindie and a line from Condobolin to Menindie? There would be none whatever. I am speaking now of the line running through to South Australia.
969. Could you not go from Hay to Menindie as well as from Condobolin to Menindie? Decidedly.
970. What would be the difference between the two lines as far as the returns were concerned? Even if the Hay to Menindie line were constructed, a lot of the traffic would go down the Murrumbidgee; but a line higher up would catch the traffic. The wool was taken from Hay this year to Melbourne for 32s. 6d. per ton down the Murrumbidgee by steamer.
971. Does not your estimate refer more to the mineral traffic than to the pastoral traffic? It refers to everything.
972. But would not the principal traffic come from the mines? Decidedly.
973. Then if you have to go through country where there are no mines, are you likely to have such a payable line as if you went through a country where there are mines? I should not think so. Mines bring population, and population means traffic.
974. Do you not think that the line from Cobar to Wilcannia will tap a pastoral country as much as the line from Condobolin to Wilcannia will? Most undoubtedly it will tap pastoral country.

975. Would not that be advantageous? Well, there are four or five stations there, and it would be advantageous to them, and would pick up a certain amount of traffic on either side. I think a railway lower down, which would intercept the trade which we are losing now, would be better than a railway which would serve the interests of a given number of pastoralists.
976. Do you know that there are branch lines tapping pastoral country in order to take the wool and stores? Yes.
977. None of these are paying—they are all a dead loss? Yes.
978. Then why do you think that a line from Condobolin would be an exception? Because I regard this part of the country as being capable of carrying a large population not connected with pastoral pursuits. I believe that Menindie could be made the principal town of the Darling. It does not follow that because Wilcannia is larger to-day it will be so always. I believe that Menindie can be made a very prominent place, and then we shall have Silverton beyond.
979. Do you think that that country would carry a larger population than the country between Werris Creek and Narrabri;—is not the country between Werris Creek and Narrabri likely to support a larger population than the country between Condobolin and Wilcannia? I should not like to express an opinion about that, except so far as the line running there is concerned.
980. I mean beyond it? That country I have not seen. I would not like to express any personal opinion about it.
981. Do you think, from your own knowledge, and from the information you have gathered in compiling this report, that the Cobar line will not in a few years pay working expenses and interest on capital? I do not see what is going to make it pay. It might have a development like Broken Hill. If so, it would pay.
982. Without that it would not? Without that, and as it stood when the estimate was made, it certainly would not.
983. And the extension to Wilcannia will not materially increase it? No, I do not regard that as of much importance.
984. Even if it were carried on to Broken Hill? Yes. We should get a certain amount of traffic; but I do not think the long distance over which we should have to carry coal and ore would enable us to compete with South Australia.
985. Do you not think that if fuel could be got near Dubbo we could compete with South Australia? Our mileage then would be a great deal more than from Port Pirie.
986. But it would be all through level country? Not necessarily. I do not think the railway to Cobar would be over very level country.
987. If there is to be no grade more than 1 in 100 would not that be level? Yes.
988. Supposing 1 in 100 were the ruling gradient, could coal be carried from Dubbo to Broken Hill as cheaply as it could be taken there from Adelaide? I should not be prepared to say that. They would still have about 100 miles advantage, which I think would more than make up for the easy country.
989. Do you know the distance from Dubbo to Broken Hill? 470 miles.
990. Do you know the distance from Port Pirie? 249 miles.
991. Then there is a difference of over 200 miles? Yes.
992. *Mr. Copleland.*] You appear to favour a line from Condobolin to Menindie and thence to Broken Hill;—do you not think that there would be room for another line for Cobar to Wilcannia? That would be another question.
993. Do you know the distance between Menindie and Wilcannia? Yes; Pooncarie is 130 miles from Wentworth; Menindie is 220—that is a difference of 90 miles. Wilcannia is 320 miles from Wentworth; Louth is 450, and Bourke 528.
994. What distance is it between Menindie and Wilcannia? 100 miles.
995. Do you not think that there would be scope for a railway from Cobar to Wilcannia and then out to the north-west corner of the Colony where a large gold-field is now being worked—Tibboburra I think is the name of it? Towards Milparinka.
996. Yes;—do you think that if the line were constructed from Menindie to Condobolin there would not be a scope for another line out that way? I do not know the country at all.

TUESDAY, 8 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

John Harper, Esq., Railway Goods Superintendent, sworn, and further examined:—

997. *Mr. Humphery.*] You stated last day that in your opinion it would be better to take the railway from Condobolin to Menindie;—will you give your reasons for thinking that Menindie will be the most important town on the river? My opinion is that we can make an important town at any point where we cross the river with a railway.
998. You expressed an opinion that Menindie would become the most important town there;—had you any special reasons for giving that opinion? None whatever. I regard it simply as in the line of a most direct route, apart from Wentworth, from the Western Line across the Darling; and I think that any place at which the railway crosses the Lower Darling must become the site of the principal town there.
999. Do you know the character of the country? Only from general descriptions; not from my personal knowledge.
1000. You have not been there? No; I simply recognize the river as a big carrier to our railways from the western interior.
1001. I think you stated that the clip of Burragogie wool was being sent by water instead of by rail, owing

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- owing to a difference of 2s. in the freight? Not this year. The difference is greater now. It was two years ago since a difference of 2s. lost us the wool.
1002. What is the rate of carriage from Hay to Sydney? £2 19s.
1003. How much a mile is that? That is an arbitrary rate, fixed for the purpose of competing with the river steamers.
1004. What is the distance from Hay to Sydney? 455 miles to Darling Harbour.
1005. What is the rate from Bourke to Sydney? £4 0s. 3d. and £5 0s. 3d. per ton. for greasy or scoured wool.
1006. How many miles is it? 504 to Darling Harbour. We always reckon the mileage from Darling Harbour.
1007. Bourke is about 50 miles further away than Hay then? Yes.
1008. What is the difference between the freight charged in each case? £1 1s. 3d.
1009. There is no competition, I suppose, on the line from Bourke to Sydney? Yes; there is, unfortunately.
1010. Excepting the water? That is all.
1011. What is the rate from Wagga Wagga to Sydney? £2 12s. 9d.
1012. How many miles is it? 310 miles.
1013. Then you are carrying at a lower rate from Hay than from Wagga Wagga or Bourke? Yes.
1014. Does the rate which you charge from Hay to Sydney (59s.) leave any profit? Yes.
1015. Then the rate from Wagga Wagga leaves a greater profit? Yes.
1016. And from Bourke still more? From Bourke still more.
1017. What is the lowest price at which you could carry per mile? I should not like to express an opinion upon a subject of that kind, because it would be controlled by so many conditions. As I explained before, wool is good loading, because we can get 6 tons into a waggon readily—6 tons of greasy wool. We are controlled by so many conditions that it would be impossible to express an opinion as to the rate at which we could carry.
1018. Assuming that a line is to be carried out between Condobolin and Menindie, what are the probabilities of the traffic increasing? I think such a line would intercept a lot of traffic which at present finds its way to Hay, and goes thence by river to Melbourne and Adelaide—traffic coming from about Paddington station, Mossgiel, and down the Lachlan.
1019. As far as you can judge, would the population along the route be increased? At mining centres, such as Mount Hope, I dare say it would.
1020. Do you know of any agricultural land between those points? I have only been along the Lachlan as far as Condobolin.
1021. You have not been beyond Condobolin? I do not know anything about the agricultural resources of the country beyond that.
1022. What probability is there of new traffic being created by constructing a line from Nyngan to Cobar and thence to Wilcannia? We should get a few clips of wool which we do not get at the present time, by having lower rates; but I do not see anything outside of that.
1023. Would the railway create any new traffic? I do not think it would. No matter how we carry the line, I do not think that we can successfully compete in the carriage of ore to the coast, or of coal to Broken Hill, with South Australia and Port Pirie, as we have 400 miles more to carry those commodities.
1024. Do you think there is a probability of the line from Condobolin to Menindie paying;—would the earnings of such a line be sufficient to cover the cost of working and fair interest on the cost of construction? No; I do not regard it very hopefully. I only speak of it relatively, as compared with the line to Cobar.
1025. Your opinion is that it would not be a profitable line? I do not think so, not for some time to come.
1026. Is it your opinion that the line from Nyngan to Cobar would give a less return than the line from Condobolin to Menindie? Yes.
1027. You think that they would both be unprofitable lines? Yes; that is my opinion.
1028. They would not only be unprofitable at first, but would also continue unprofitable? Yes; under existing conditions. I do not know how those conditions may be altered by irrigation or in other ways; but at present I do not see very much hope of either of them paying.
1029. *Chairman.*] You said that if the line were continued out by Mount Hope it would intercept goods going to Hay and thence by river to Melbourne;—is there any great quantity of goods going down the river to Melbourne or to Adelaide from the northern side of the Murrumbidgee? I handed over to the Sectional Committee the last return of which we were in possession. It was there estimated that the traffic on the Darling was worth between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 a year.
1030. On the Darling? That would be the estimated value of the traffic passing down the river to South Australia.
1031. You said just now that if we had a line to Condobolin you might possibly intercept goods going to Hay, and thence by the river to Melbourne? Yes; I spoke of the section of the country between Cobar, Mossgiel, and towards Hay.
1032. Does the wool from that part of the country go down the river at all? Yes; last year we had the wool from Paddington. It came in from Paddington at Nyngan; but the wool from the two adjoining runs went down the river through Hay. It was brought to Hay; and, instead of being trucked at the railway station there, was taken on board of the steamers, and sent down the Murrumbidgee to Echuca.
1033. You talked of the value of the traffic going down the Darling;—do you know that last year's wool is only just going away from there, or that it was only just going away a short time ago? Yes; but unfortunately it is passing out of our Colony altogether. If we had a railway there, even though the wool is only going away now, we should have some hopes of intercepting it and bringing it to Sydney.
1034. You could get nothing else from the Darling but wool? Nothing else.
1035. So that you might shut the railway up for nine months at a time; you might take the supplies out at shearing time, and bring the wool back; there would be no other traffic? That is the position.
1036. You have been on the Darling? As far as Louth; I have not been on the Lower Darling.

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1037. Assuming that the country is of the same character all the way down the Darling as it is between Bourke and Louth, do you think it would be possible to place small settlers on it? No.
1038. The country must be occupied for a long time, at all events, by the same class of people as those who live there now? By pastoralists.
1039. So that if we had railways to every point on the line it would not increase the population to any great extent? No, I do not believe it would increase the population. Wilcannia I regard as an incidental point on the line.
1040. That is near to the gold-fields? Yes.
1041. *Mr. Cox.*] You say there is no profit from the railway to Hay? Not from the earnings of the line. There is a profit on a particular class of traffic when we get it; but we cannot always get it.
1042. As far as I can learn from the last reports of the Commissioners for Railways, the traffic on the Hay line shows a loss? Yes. I was speaking about a particular class of traffic. There is a profit on it; but we do not get enough of it.
1043. Then the line from Junee to Hay is really a cause of loss to the community? We have always regarded it as so.
1044. By analogy, do you think that the same kind of traffic will result in an equal loss on the line from Nyngan and Cobar to Wilcannia? Yes.
1045. But then comes this view of the question: The people at Hay have an alternative route to the river, while the people in the dry country between Nyngan and Wilcannia have no alternative route; therefore you would be almost sure of the traffic from one place when you would not be sure of it from the other? Not necessarily. I do not know precisely how many years on the average the river is open for navigation; but I think that it is only one out of every five that is not navigable during certain seasons. Generally speaking, we find to our loss that it is navigable at the wool season—at the time when they want to shift their wool. We are suffering from that now. We are losing a lot of the wool that we expected to get this year.
1046. Where is that wool going from—certainly much below Bourke? Some of it is going from as far north as Brewarrina, some of it is coming from the west of Paroo, some from Queensland, and some from Fort Bourke, which is really in the town of Bourke. A portion of the wool from that station is going down the Darling.
1047. It did not do so last year? I am not quite sure; but I fancy that some of it went down last year. They had a river early in the season, but they lost it later on, as far as I remember.
1048. When you were giving your evidence here last Thursday, Dr. Garran asked you whether an alternative route between Molong, Condobolin, and Cobar would be preferable to the proposed line from Nyngan to Cobar; and I think you said that it would? Yes.
1049. Do you know the country between Condobolin and Cobar? No; I know the country between Condobolin and Forbes, and between Molong and Condobolin.
1050. Between Condobolin and Cobar, you cross over what is the dividing range between the waters of the Lachlan and of the Darling. Yes; I know the country down as far as Nymagee, in a southerly direction.
1051. The country between the two rivers is comparatively rough—that is, compared with the country running down the course of the rivers? At Condobolin you would strike a point which I think would almost avoid it altogether. The railway could leave the Lachlan at Euabalong, going to the south of Mount Hope, and thence to Menindie.
1052. You know the country down the Lachlan? As far as Condobolin.
1053. You have not been towards Barragan? No; I have not been north of the Lachlan; but I have been down in the neighbourhood of Hillston.
1054. Have you ever been to Ivanhoe? No.
1055. Are you aware that the river flats extend from the Lachlan, past Willandra, to Ivanhoe? Yes.
1056. When you get to Ivanhoe you get into the scrub country? I do not know that district at all.
1057. Are you aware that between Ivanhoe and Menindie, or between Ivanhoe and Wilcannia, it is very poor scrub country? I do not know. I have noticed, from a return of the number of sheep on it, that it carries, if not as much as the Cobar district, about the same.
1058. You say that you do not think that the railway would create any other traffic than that now in existence? I cannot say that it will.
1059. Are you not aware that in times of drought a very large live stock traffic takes place? It does not pay. We regard the stock traffic in this light: that we have to keep the sheep alive in order to get the wool, and hence we carry them really at a loss.
1060. *Dr. Garran.*] I understood that our railway system has already tested, with two termini on navigable waters, our power to compete with river transit, and in both cases the river transit beats us when the water is up? Yes.
1061. You cannot carry with paying rates from Bourke to Sydney as cheaply as the steamers can carry to Goolwa or Echuca? No.
1062. And it is the same from Hay? Yes.
1063. So that our New South Wales squatters prefer to send their wool to South Australia or Victoria by water instead of sending it along the railway constructed at the cost of the country? Yes.
1064. If we continue the line from Cobar to Wilcannia, we simply make another terminus on a navigable river? Yes.
1065. We shall be no better off with Wilcannia as a terminus than we are with Bourke or Hay? Except when the Murrumbidgee and the Darling are not navigable.
1066. Whenever a river is in a condition to compete with you it beats you? Yes.
1067. Your only chance is when you have a monopoly; and when you get a monopoly you do not raise your rates? Yes.
1068. You have not tried a system of charging the usual railway rate and making a rebate when you have to submit to competition? No.
1069. You have brought down your rates to the terminal stations as low as possible, in order to compete with the river transit? Yes.
1070. And you only get those rates, even though there may be no competition? That is all; they are fixed rates.

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1071. If the line were continued from Cobar to Wilcannia and the river were navigable, would there not be some danger of the traffic between Cobar and Wilcannia that now goes to Nyngan going to the river? I have recognized that as a source of danger, unless we impose river dues.
1072. Wilcannia, although in our own territory, may become an output for our trade? Yes, and I should not be surprised to see us losing a lot of traffic which at present does not go down the river.
1073. Does any produce go along the railway to Bourke to be shipped on the river? Wool?
1074. Yes? No; we do not carry any wool from the east of Bourke to the river.
1075. You have not found so far that taking the line to the river has tended to shunt traffic there? No.
1076. If it has not done so at Bourke why should it do so at Wilcannia? Simply because the competition would be keener at Wilcannia, and there are a number of stations there which for years have sent their wool down the river and will continue to do so. The river there is later than it is at Bourke.
1077. You could only attempt to compete with it there by cheaper rates? Yes.
1078. And you have gone down to almost the cheapest point? Yes.
1079. The river people know that? Yes.
1080. They can go down a little lower? I do not know how low they can go. They will be carrying it for nothing directly, I suppose.
1081. *Chairman.*] The most of them are hawkers? Yes.
1082. *Dr. Garran.*] Hay being a navigable point on the river, even if we continue the line from that place to Wentworth, the produce of our own squattages will still cross the railway and go to Echuca? I should expect that unless we have legislation to compel the steamers to raise their rates in order to meet the charges levied upon them.
1083. We should have to put a prohibitory charge on river traffic? Yes, where we have river communication.
1084. How much can you take on a full load on the present grade between Nyngan and Bourke? It depends very much upon the class of engine;—from 300 to 350 tons.
1085. The engines you run there are of the smallest class? No, we have to run at a high rate of speed.
1086. A high rate of speed is only wanted for the live stock? The traffic is so small that we run mixed passenger and goods trains, and consequently we have to have a good engine to travel at the speed necessary for the convenience of the public.
1087. I understand that you can take from 180 to 300 tons of paying load at one haul? Yes.
1088. Of course you could take as much on the Cobar line? I do not know. I have forgotten the sections on it.
1089. It is proposed to reduce the grades there to 1 in 75? There are no grades between Nyngan and Bourke of 1 in 75.
1090. The grades are easier than they would be between Nyngan and Cobar? Yes.
1091. With your lightest engine at work, how much could you carry over the 1 in 75 grade to Cobar? I should think about 150 tons.
1092. Not more? No.
1093. Do you happen to know what was the maximum trade between Cobar and Nyngan in the best traffic year that you have yet had? In the report which I handed into the Committee I think I have given more than the best trade which we have ever had from Cobar.
1094. How much was it? I have not expressed it in tons. It is expressed in value at £15,000.
1095. Each way, or is that the gross? Both ways, including Nymagee, and giving Nymagee a mileage, which it is doubtful that it would have.
1096. *Mr. Garrard.*] What do you mean by a "a mileage, which is doubtful that it would have"? There is a road which has cost about £7,000, and is supplied with tanks, branching off 12 miles on the proposed route to Nymagee. This mileage has been calculated at a point at right angles from Nymagee to the road.
1097. *Dr. Garran.*] The evidence that the Sectional Committee got at Nyngan, was to the effect that they would not make it at right angles—that the existing road had tanks, and that the Roads Department was inimical to any other? That is shown in my report; but we always make these estimates as favourable as possible.
1098. Then £15,000 is an over estimate? Yes. I have put down so much for wood, but it is questionable whether we shall ever have to carry a ton of it. Then I have also calculated for a lot of fodder, which is now carried up for the horses engaged in connection with the mine. We must either lose one or other of these sources of traffic.
1099. Then £15,000 is exceedingly favourable? Most favourable. It represents the maximum amount of work at the Mines.
1100. Does it include stock driven into Nyngan? It includes many doubtful clips of wool. It is doubtful whether the people will not take their wool elsewhere.
1101. How many full train loads of 150 tons each would take the whole of the traffic both ways? Three trains a week.
1102. Each way? Yes.
1103. Three one way, and three the other? Yes; if you had the traffic all the time.
1104. But very often the traffic is concentrated into two months? Yes.
1105. So that for a long period one train a week each way would answer all purposes? In many cases you might be running with only one or two waggons.
1106. During the time of the heaviest traffic a train every alternate day would be sufficient? I think it would be.
1107. That would be the same as we have on the Jerilderie line? Yes.
1108. So that the payableness of the Jerilderie line would be to some extent an indication of the payableness of the Cobar line? No. We have a population at Cobar.
1109. The Jerilderie line is surrounded by less favourable conditions? There is nothing at all there.
1110. *Mr. Cox.*] You said just now that you thought that when the railway was established the traffic in fodder would cease—why do you say that? Because the horses to consume it would not be required.
1111. Are you aware that there is now a tramway bringing wood to Cobar? Yes.
1112. What brings the wood to the tram? Horses.
1113. Would they not be necessary to bring wood to the railway? I imagine that if the railway were constructed they would use coal at the mine, that being more economical.
- 1114.

1114. In your estimate you have taken that into consideration? Yes; and have shown that it will mean less revenue.

1115. *Mr. Garrard.*] Is the Murrumbidgee always navigable between Hay and its junction with the Murray? Not always; but it is generally navigable when we wish it was not open. After the snow begins to melt, during the wool season, it is almost invariably open.

1116. It is not so liable as the Darling to close up? No; it gets the advantage of the Darling waters. It is banked up by them.

1117. So that you have a continuous competition for your Hay trade which you do not have for the Darling trade? Yes.

1118. *Mr. Lackey.*] Although, of course, the railway loses to a very large extent by good seasons such as this, when the rivers are up, there are intervals of dry seasons when they greatly profit by the traffic? I do not know that when interest on the capital and working expenses are paid we profit much.

1119. It is the case that you have done all the trade in the back country—you did it five years ago, for instance? Yes.

1120. The people out there had exhausted their supplies and could not get any from Melbourne or from Adelaide? Yes.

1121. Do you recollect how long that state of things lasted? As far as I can remember, we had the wool for two years running.

1122. You had also the supplies from Sydney out? For one year. At that time they used to take in very heavy supplies.

1123. You had a large traffic in fodder—oats, and produce of that sort? For the carriers' horses.

1124. And for station horses? Yes. It will be noticed that I say in my report that 75 per cent. of the teams which I met were carrying fodder.

1125. You think it would be wise to pass some legislation with regard to the river traffic which would balance the trade? Yes.

1126. You think that if the country is called upon to expend large sums of money in snagging and keeping the Darling open, river dues should be imposed? Yes.

1127. In that case it is possible that some of the trade which now goes to Melbourne and Adelaide when the rivers are up will come to Sydney by train? Yes.

1128. Have you travelled over the proposed line between Nyngan and Cobar? Yes.

1129. It is tolerably level country? It is a bit broken in places; but it is generally level.

1130. You went along the road I suppose? On one occasion, and on the other I followed to some extent the route of the railway.

1131. Did you ever travel what is called the old Cobar Road from Goolba to Cobar? No; but I have heard it favourably spoken of. I went out to the first tank on the road in going towards Billago. It is the only tank on the road.

1132. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you know what was paid for the carriage of wool from Bourke to Dubbo before the railway was opened? I could not say. I know that it has been as much as £9 and £10 a ton, or at least I have heard so. I have not known any contracts to be made at that price.

J. Harper,
Esq.
8 Oct., 1889.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

APPENDIX.

A.

PRECIS OF PROCEEDINGS RELATING TO THE PROPOSED RAILWAY NYNGAN TO COBAR, WITH SUGGESTED EXTENSION TO WILCANNIA AND BROKEN HILL.

THE first suggestion of a railway from Nyngan to Cobar which I find in the papers is contained in the notice of petition from residents of Cobar, presented to the House, 27th August, 1884, by Mr. Russell Barton, praying for the construction of a line from Nyngan to Wilcannia *via* Cobar.

September, 1884.—This was followed by a petition to the Minister (Mr. Wright) of similar purport, but the request was limited to Cobar.

15/6/85.—It would appear that prior to this instructions had been given to survey a line, for on this date Mr. Secretary Wright gave instructions for the permanent plans to be pushed on as rapidly as possible for submission to Parliament.

16/9/85.—Plan, section, and book of reference were laid on the Table of the House, but before any action could be taken the Ministry resigned.

In anticipation of the action of Parliament the Commissioner instructed the traffic manager to make inquiry as to the prospects of the traffic on the line. Mr. Kirkcaldie replied that, the district being otherwise a pastoral one, the traffic would depend upon the mining industry, which was languishing, and would never again, many alleged, be what it had been. If, however, the mining became a permanent industry there would be a justification for the construction of a line, and in that case it might be well to carry it on to Wilcannia, the distance being very much less than that from Forbes. If, on the other hand, the line to Cobar were not constructed, the line from Forbes was the best, as it would more fairly space the country between the Western line and the Murrumbidgee.

The Commissioner minuted that he might or might not agree with the traffic manager, but Government had presented the scheme to Parliament, and although the policy might be reconsidered when the plans came before the House, the estimate of traffic asked for must be furnished.

3/12/85.—Traffic manager thereupon forwarded report to the effect that 10,000 tons of goods might be expected to go on to the proposed line in the year, two-thirds of the quantity only to Cobar, and the remainder to Hermitage Plains, 26 miles from Nyngan, *i.e.* four trucks per working day to the former, and two trucks to the latter. The up traffic might be estimated at 4,250 tons of copper, 15,000 bales of wool, and 500 tons of general goods, equal to five trucks a-day, the bulk of it to come from Cobar. The live-stock traffic was difficult to estimate. The sheep in the district amounted to about 1,500,000, but the bulk of the sheep sent from Nyngan to Homebush came from the north. Any increase of the traffic could only be looked for from Wilcannia, distant 150 miles through country in most seasons well grassed and watered, but in good seasons the competition of the river for that traffic would render substantial concessions necessary. It was impossible to predict the future of the copper industry, as very conflicting opinions were held with regard to it. After obtaining some explanations from Mr. Hornidge, Mr. Kirkcaldie further reported that that officer's report confirmed his previous conviction that a line to Cobar would bring no new traffic, but it would simply bring that which at present came by way of Nyngan—a traffic difficult to estimate on account of the uncertainty with regard to the copper mines.

29/4/86.—Nothing further is recorded until Mr. Secretary Lyne laid the plan, section, and book of reference upon the Table of the House. Shortly after a petition from residents of Cobar in favour of the proposed railway was presented to the Minister by Mr. Russell Barton. The petition stated that during the previous ten years the mines had produced an average of 1,905 tons of smelted copper per annum, of the value of £1,444,500, in the production of which there had been expended an average per annum of,—for wages, £96,000; for cartage £15,000; and firewood £24,700; for railway freight, £5,500; hands employed, 700. As firewood was getting scarce not less than 28,000 tons of coal per annum would be required. All building material had to be brought from Sydney. The pastoral industry would be benefited in obtaining readier access to a port of shipment, and wool which now went to South Australia, *via* Wilcannia and Louth, would come to Sydney. Many mines which were idle by reason of the difficulty of access would be worked if a line were constructed. The town and district contained 3,000 permanent inhabitants. Other favourable circumstances were stated.

18/5/86.—In May, 1886, a deputation waited on Mr. Secretary Lyne to advocate the construction of the line, employing the same statistics that had been advanced by the above petitioners. The Minister gave the deputation a favourable reply. In August of the same year another petition was presented to Mr. Secretary Lyne, to urge the construction of the line, stating that the railway had been promised by every successive Government since 1879, that permission to construct a line was refused to a syndicate, the Government promising to construct a line at once; that a large traffic was assured; that in reliance on the promises of Government considerable sums of money had been vested in improvements; that in 1884 Parliament voted the money for the line; that the construction of a railway would lead to the development of new copper lodes known to exist in the locality; and that if a railway were not made, large sums of money would have to be expended on the ordinary roads.

7/8/86.—Mr. R. B. Wilkinson forwarded to Mr. Secretary Lyne copy of a resolution carried at a public meeting held at Nymagee, urging upon the Government the necessity for a speedy construction of the line to Cobar.

9/9/86.—On the 9th September, 1886, the plan, section, and book of reference were approved by the Legislative Assembly without a dissentient voice.

15/9/86.—A few days after a petition in favour of the line was presented to the House. In this document the previous arguments and statistics were employed.

8/10/86.—The approval of the plan, section, and book of reference was carried in the Legislative Council by 15 votes to 11.

11/11/86.—The line was formally approved by a minute of the Governor in Council.

20/12/86.—Proclamation was issued under the corporate seal of the Commissioner. The goods manager was deputed to visit the spot with a view to decide the question of station and siding accommodation, and his report was not encouraging in regard to the traffic to be expected. He specially remarked upon the sparseness of the population, and he insisted that the buildings and appliances should be of the most inexpensive character. Nymagee which is 36 miles in a bee line from the nearest point of the railway, sent 93 tons of goods, and received 50 tons per month, and the question of the point to which these goods should be carried on line, would have to be considered. Local opinion on the point varied greatly. At present the traffic went from a point 12 miles along the Cobar Road (53 miles to Nymagee), and here at least temporary accommodation should be provided. From "Hall's hotel" (at 27½ miles) a surveyed road joins the Nymagee Road (Nymagee 46 miles) and here, as there are three wool sheds in the vicinity, temporary accommodation should be provided. A petition was being

being got up to make 38 miles (Muriel's tank) the point for the Nymagee traffic, and if a road could be got, this would suit the Department well on account of the additional mileage. At 67 miles (Budd's) was the nearest point to Nymagee, but the country was broken and there was some doubt as to the practicability of making a road, and moreover there might be difficulty with some of the Crown tenants. At 58 miles (Burrumugga tank) a siding for wool should be put in. Did not think much stock would be carried from intermediate points, and therefore the question of trucking yards might stand over.

Early in 1887, under instructions from the Minister, tenders for the construction of the line were invited and received. But the Commissioner had grave doubts as to the prospects of the line in a financial point of view, and he therefore directed that an officer should be deputed to make exhaustive inquiries as to the traffic to be expected, remarking that working expenses would probably not be less than £13,000 per annum in addition to which there would be interest on the cost.

4/3/87.—Mr. Kirkcaldie undertook the duty of making these inquiries, and reported—(1) that there is not a single acre of cultivated land along the whole route; (2) that the population of Nymagee (1,500) was steady, while that of Cobar had decreased in two years from 4,000 to 3,000, and was still diminishing; (3) that the Cobar goods traffic he estimated would not exceed £4,508 per annum; (4) that the Nymagee traffic would amount to £300 per annum if it left the line at mile 12, but would be £1,100 if it were carried to the further point mentioned in Mr. Harper's report; (4) that passengers, parcels, and mails might produce £1,000; and (5) that the total earnings of the line would therefore not exceed £6,908 per annum. Was quite certain it would never pay interest on cost.

The unfavourable nature of this report becoming known, a deputation waited upon the Minister and represented that the information given by Mr. Kirkcaldie was based upon wrong data. Mr. Secretary Sutherland informed the deputation that the information obtained by the Commissioner was unfavourable to the construction of the line, and that already we had a number of lines which were simply a drain upon the revenue. He was, however, prepared to suspend action in order that the persons interested might obtain what they believed to be more accurate information.

The traffic manager, who was called upon to report, maintained the accuracy generally of his conclusions.

A public meeting was held at Cobar to protest against the delay. It was stated that it could be easily proved by statistics that the line would give a surplus of £18,000 after paying working expenses, and 4½ per cent. on cost, and a committee was appointed to collect information.

15/3/87.—The Commissioner drew the traffic manager's attention to the circumstance that the latter had put down £1,000 as the proceeds of passengers, mails, and parcels, whereas mails alone at £12 a mile would realize that amount.

Traffic manager in reply admitted that he had through inadvertence put down £1,000 where he intended to enter £2,000, and that his estimate must be increased by £1,000.

23/3/87.—Traffic manager further reported that since his previous reports had been sent in he had ascertained that some traffic had gone by way of Girilambone, Byrock, and Coolabah, and that his estimate might be increased (including the £1,000) to £8,412.

29/3/87.—A deputation waited upon the Minister and submitted a statement of estimated traffic (based upon the information collected) amounting to £21,629. Their estimate, they said, was based on present returns and on existing conditions, but the construction of a railway would greatly extend the area of production. The Cobar line moreover was the nearest route to Wilcannia and Silvertown, and the whole country being rich in minerals, a railway would cause new mines to be opened. The mining industry was so hampered for want of the means of conveyance that the Cobar Company had serious thoughts of closing the mine if a railway were not made, and that would deprive 3,000 people of their means of living.

The disparity between the estimates respectively of the traffic manager and the compilers of the statistics being so great, it was thought desirable that there should be a conference between them to discuss the matter.

Mr. Kirkcaldie accordingly met Messrs. Grainger, Barton, Morrison of Cobar, and Leah of Nyngan. In his report Mr. Kirkcaldie stated that the compilers had made their calculations upon a wrong basis, a mistake which they themselves had already discovered. Adopting within certain limits the figures of the compilers' estimate he found the amount did not exceed £14,683, and nearly half of that was firewood, very problematical in his opinion and at the best not very profitable traffic. (It is shown by the Commissioner that we must have an annual traffic of over £23,000 to pay working expenses and interest on cost.) Mr. Kirkcaldie wound up by stating that he could come to no other conclusion than that there was no probability of the line paying for many years to come unless some unforeseen development took place.

April, 1887.—In a minute without date, but written about this time, Mr. Secretary Sutherland remarked that the effort of the previous Government had been to make the Cobar line as cheaply as possible, but a line with ruling grades of 1 in 40, and laid with 60 lb. rails might be cheap to construct, but it was not economical to work, and what was gained in the one way was lost in the other. He had determined to have another survey made with a view to ascertain if easier grades could be found. If that could be accomplished more effective loads might be carried, and the working expenses so reduced as to admit of such a line, even with a limited traffic, being made profitable.

2/5/87.—Mr. Grainger Barton addressed a letter to Mr. Kirkcaldie stating that only a few tons of goods had been received from South Australia by the river, and going into details to show that it would pay better to receive and send goods by railway than to employ the water route.

Mr. Kirkcaldie intimated that he was informed that 60 tons of general goods had come up the river to Louth for stations between there and Cobar, and that such goods must have come by railway if the river had not been navigable.

17/5/87.—Mr. M'Elhone moved that no further step should be taken towards the construction of the line Nyngan to Cobar, but under sessional order the motion fell through.

31/5/87.—Mr. J. Penzer sent to the Minister a statement of "reasons why the railway should be made." (1.) It would cause new copper mines to be opened. (2.) Pine of splendid quality for sleepers could be had all along the line at one-third the cost of hardwood, and fencing would not cost more than £50 a mile. (3.) One train a day would satisfy. (4.) It would be cheaper to send by rail wool which now went by water. (5.) The worst cutting on the line could be avoided by a detour of 15 chains and the grade be at the same time made easy.

1/6/87.—A meeting of the Railway League was held at Cobar, and much indignation was expressed because on the strength of Mr. Kirkcaldie's report (!!) the line was not at once proceeded with.

9/6/87.—Barton Bros. offered to enter into a bond to pay double rates if the railway were constructed.

9/6/87.—The Manager of the Cobar Copper Co. also offered to pay double the local rate on copper from, and all goods to, Cobar, firewood excepted, the arrangement to continue in force for five years. He was of opinion that others interested would consent to the same terms.

10/6/87.—The manager of the Nymagee Company also made—*mutatis mutandis*—a similar proposal.

10/6/87.—Mr. M'Elhone's motion of 17/5/87 (see page 13) was now revived, and was now negatived by 26 votes to 2.

6/7/87.—Mr. Secretary Sutherland stated in the House that the difficulty with regard to this line was that, having grades of 1 in 40, it would require the heaviest engines in the service to work it, and that meant a heavy and costly permanent way. He had been informed that a line could be found with grades of 1 in 100, and if that were so a cheap line could be constructed and light rolling stock be used. A survey with that view would be made. The surveyed line would cost £327,000.

7/7/87.—The following day a sub-leader appeared in the *Herald* commenting upon the above remarks, and stating that an engine of 24 tons would carry a net load on this line of 131 tons, and that the engineers thought it undesirable, in view of this fact to go to the expense of deep cuttings when a cheap surface line would meet all requirements. The estimated cost of the line, moreover, was £250,300 and not £327,000.

As regards the estimate the *Herald* was correct, and the Minister must have included in his statement something more than the mere construction of the line, but as regards the net load it was shown that we had not a single engine capable of hauling a net load of 131 tons up an incline of 1 in 40.

12/7/89.—Mr. Hans Andra addressed the Minister recommending a different route from that adopted by the surveyors, pointing out that by his route the following advantages would be secured—high ground without heavy grades, good water, and no land to be purchased.

Sept., 1887.—The papers relative to the Nyngan-Cobar line were laid upon the Table of the Legislative Assembly.

30/9/87.—The *Daily Telegraph*, in commenting upon the papers, stated that no sane man could read through them without arriving at conclusions adverse to the construction of the line, and that the person who moved for the production of the papers deserved the thanks of the community. The article went on to say that the Commissioner, the traffic manager, and the assistant traffic manager had earned the thanks of the country by their brave performance of duty in persistently contending that under existing industrial conditions of that portion of the Colony, the line could not be made to pay.

APPENDIX.

B

The local paper (the Cobar and Louth *Herald*), replied to this article by abuse of the *Telegraph* and the Railway officers, and by insinuations of "pique and professional jealousy," and other unworthy motives.

19/1/89.—The Engineer-in-Chief forwarded to the Minister Mr. D. C. Simpson's report upon certain proposed deviations of the line which would have the effect of reducing the steepest grade from 1 in 40 to 1 in 50, and of otherwise improving the grades.

The Locomotive Engineer, in reply to the Commissioner, reported that this easement of the grades would have the effect of increasing the hauling capacity of the engines 60 per cent., that is to say, if an engine could haul 100 tons on the original grades she could haul 160 tons on the improved grades.

1/5/89.—The Mayor of Cobar asked the Commissioner, by wire, to send an officer down to examine and report as to the traffic.

Mr. Harper, under instructions from the Commissioner, undertook that duty, and submitted a report of which the following are the chief features: Mr. Harper pointed out the importance of the copper industry in this district, and stated that the Cobar Company was working under a guarantee of a favourable character from the French Copper Syndicate, and while this was in force the output of the mines would not be diminished, but it was only for three years, and moreover, many persons doubted the stability of the Syndicate. There was sufficient ore in the mine to last for many years, but much of it only yielded from 7 to 9 per cent., and that did not pay to work when prices were low. Mr. Harper was under the impression that before long the Company would substitute coal for firewood for smelting purposes. They had used up all the firewood up to 12 or 13 miles from the works, and as 1 ton of coal did the work of 3 or 4 tons of wood, it would now be cheaper to bring the former from Lithgow. That, however, would mean a large diminution of the population, as the means of livelihood of the many men employed in cutting and carting the firewood would be taken away, and these men would have to move elsewhere with their families. Mr. Harper says much of the soil of the district is good, and might grow wheat, but for one drawback, and that an irremediable one—the want of rainfall. It would be folly to talk of growing wheat where there was no certainty of securing a crop in more than one year out of three or four, and therefore, in estimating the chance of the line paying this must be dismissed from the calculation. As a matter of fact the bulk of the traffic from Nyngan to Cobar was wheat, flour, chaff, &c., the freight of which was £3 10s. or £4 per ton. With such an incentive the people would not be slow to cultivate if they did not know that farming could not be a paying undertaking. He was convinced that if the line were opened coal for smelting would be substituted for firewood, and therefore in calculating the traffic the Traffic Manager's item of £7,054 for firewood must be eliminated, and coal and a smaller proportion of firewood substituted. He (Mr. Harper) estimated the traffic as under:—

	£	s.	d.
Traffic other than wood and coal, as shown in Traffic Manager's return	6,131	13	1
Additional copper and fodder do. do.	542	14	3
Wood—7,000 tons, at 2s. 1d.	729	3	4
Coal (say) 4,000 trucks, 16s. 2d.	3,233	6	8
Nymagee traffic.....	1,353	12	0
Total	£11,990	9	4

Or £3,091 10s. less than the Traffic Manager's estimate. Traffic Manager concurred.

The Commissioner minuted that the estimated cost of the line, plus rolling-stock, would be £250,000, interest upon which at 4 per cent. would be

£10,000	
Add working expenses	13,000
Total.....	23,000

Deduct Mr. Harper's estimate of traffic

Annual loss

Even in the improbable event of the Traffic Manager's estimate of £15,082 being realized, there would still be a loss of £7,918.

12/7/88.—A number of residents of Nyngan forwarded a petition to the Premier against the line, on the grounds (1) that it was not wanted, (2) that it would not pay, and (3) that it would paralyze the trade of Nyngan.

14/7/88.—A deputation waited on the Premier to urge the construction of the line. They stated that in 1886 13,433 tons of goods were sent from Nyngan to Cobar, and it might be estimated that not less than 17,535 tons of goods would pass over the line in one year. In the year 1886, Cobb & Co. received £4,370 for carriage of passengers and parcels on this road. * More than 70,000 tons of firewood were used annually at the mine, and the carriage of this alone would prove a source of revenue. The Premier in reply pointed out that out of the population of the district there could not be more than 1,500 producers at an extreme calculation, and the expenditure of £300,000 for that number would be a very large sum per man for the State to pay. He did not mean to say that the line would not be made, but the Government must be clear that they were on solid ground. Parliament had created a power to sift such calculations as had been placed before him. It would be for the Public Works Committee to ascertain if the line would pay, and if it were found that it would not pay, it would be the duty of the Committee to reject the railway.

16/7/88.—Mr. F. B. Martin of Cobar addressed the Minister in opposition to the line which, he maintained, would hardly pay the cost of the axle-grease used. It was a well known fact, he said, that the Cobar mine was nearly exhausted, and if the Minister would obtain from the Chief Inspector of Public Watering Places a return of the teams watered on the Nyngan Cobar road for the last five years, he would see that every month the traffic had been getting less. Mr. Martin closed by stating that he had no personal interest on either side of the question.

16/7/88.—The Secretary of the Nyngan Railway League, in a letter addressed to Mr. Lyne, stated that the opposition to the Cobar line was got up chiefly by the carriers, the forwarding agents, and a few publicans.

Mr. Kirkcaldie remarked thereon that he had no doubt both the advocates and the opponents of the line were actuated by motives of self-interest.

17/7/88.—The Manager of the Cobar Copper Company wrote to the Premier drawing his attention to the offer which had been made to pay double rates on certain classes of goods.

Thereon Mr. Kirkcaldie minuted that even if the Company paid double rates on copper and goods for the mine, still the line would not pay.

23/2/89.—Mr. Secretary Fletcher in minute of this date asked the Engineer-in-Chief to express an opinion as to the desirability of proceeding with the work on the basis of the tenders already received with a view to ultimately extending the railway to Wilcannia. A large amount of labour was available in the country and, Mr. Fletcher said, this work would afford relief to some of the men out of employment.

The Engineer-in-Chief replied that, if Wilcannia were to be connected with our railway system, the Cobar route would be the best. It was almost a straight line to Wilcannia and thence to Silverton, where we could connect with the South Australian Railway. This would give a through route to Adelaide, 15 miles shorter than that by Melbourne, and moreover 771 miles of N. S. Railways* would be used as against 388 miles by the Melbourne route. The lowest tender received was that of Messrs. Hardy and Morton, £121,799 8s. 4d., and it was of great importance that employment should be found for the men out of work and for those who would in a few weeks be thrown on the labour market by the completion of existing contracts.

2/3/89.—Angus and Co., whose tender of £133,747 6s. 8d. was the next above Hardy and Morton's wrote to the Under Secretary intimating their willingness to carry out the contract on the terms of their tender.

4/3/89.—Mr. Secretary Fletcher addressed a minute to the Attorney-General giving the history of the proposed line and asking his opinion as to whether there was anything in the Public Works Act to debar him from accepting one of the tenders before received.

* See Mr. Harper's opinion.

The Attorney-General was of opinion that the P. W. Act did not apply to a case in which all the requirements of the then existing law had been complied with and in which steps had been taken towards a commencement of the work.

7/3/89.—Hardy and Morton wrote that they were *not* prepared to carry out the works of the Cobar line on the terms of their old tender.

30/3/89.—An article appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, not by any means favourable to the line. The article directs attention to the fact that the line passes through some of the driest country in the Colony, and terminates in a township subject to the influences of the fluctuations of the copper market. The project had been persistently opposed by the permanent head of the Railway Department, who felt convinced that this would prove another of the Colony's unproductive railways. Would the present Commissioners, it asks, reverse the decision arrived at, after much painstaking inquiry, by Mr. Goodchap and his assistants? It was proposed to continue the line *vid* Wilcannia to Broken Hill, a distance of 800 miles from Sydney. Was there the smallest probability of this long line securing traffic enough to pay working expenses; and how could Sydney, at twice the distance, compete successfully with Adelaide for the trade? Our past experience of these wool railways had not been encouraging, and it behoved Parliament to deal with this proposal with the utmost deliberation and caution.

5/4/89.—The Engineer-in-Chief submitted revived alternative estimates as under:—Laid with 71½ lb. rails, £267,776; laid with 60 lb. rails, £246,596; and reported, with reference to Sir John Fowler's estimate of £2,500 a-mile for a light railway upon the fallacy of laying down a general rule to be made applicable to all lines, seeing that the conditions which govern expenditure—quantity of earthwork, depth of cutting, nature of soil, cost of conveying materials, &c.—vary upon every line.

8/4/89.—The Crown Solicitor forwarded Mr. Attorney-General Simpson's opinion, to the effect that the provisions of the Railway Act, 22nd Vic. No. 19, having been complied with, it was not necessary to submit this line to the Public Works Committee.

2/5/89.—Mr. B. R. Wise handed in a memo. for the Ministers' information. Mr. Wise stated that he had just returned from a tour in the Western district, where he found all classes of the community complaining bitterly that they were shut out from the markets of the Colony. It was universally admitted that Sydney is the best market if it were accessible. He found wool of the value of £800,000 lying at Wilcannia and stations around, and it had been so lying for the last twelve months; and in the same period 800,000 sheep had died in consequence of there being no means of removing them to other districts. During his stay in Wilcannia, eggs and butter and fodder of all kinds were selling at fabulous prices, and yet Wilcannia was the depôt from which the stations as far back as Cooper's Creek drew their supplies. The demand for agricultural produce in Wilcannia was therefore very great, and if communication with the Western districts were given it would be enormously increased. Wilcannia should be the depôt of all the country west of the Darling, for a large part of the south-west of Queensland, for a portion of the South Australian territory, and even for some parts of the gulf country in North Queensland. He would say nothing as to rival routes, but to bring about this result railway facilities must be given, and if this were not done the western trade would be lost to us and go to South Australia. The locking of the Darling should be carried out, not as an alternative, but as a necessary consequence of railway communication. It would give us the command of the trade and bring traffic to the railway. The locking would throw the water back into anas and creeks a distance of 40 or 50 miles. This would increase settlement and raise enormously the value of Crown lands.

9/5/89.—The Under Secretary forwarded the papers to the Railway Commissioners with a request that they would report on the proposed line Nyngan to Cobar, taking into consideration the question of ultimately extending it to Wilcannia and Silverstone.

31/5/89.—Mr. T. Waddell, M.L.A., applied for an increased grant for the road from Nyngan to Cobar, the present allowance being utterly inadequate.

9/6/89.—Road-Superintendent Adams confirmed the inadequacy of the allowance. In his monthly report he had often pointed out that a railway only would meet this case. The soil was of such a character that after heavy rains it seemed to have no bottom, and horses and drays sank down in it. He estimated that to put the road in proper order would cost £130,000, and to construct a light line would cost very little more.

24/8/89.—His Honor Judge Docker, in a letter addressed to the Minister, stated that he knows the district well, and that independently of any question of the Darling a light line should, in his opinion, be made to Cobar, it being a great mining centre, as well as the entrepôt of a pastoral district. The copper industry was depressed, but there was no reason to doubt that it would recover, and the gold discoveries were creating a new industry. Now, also that the country had been so much denuded of wood for smelting, a large traffic would be done in coal, and it might pay to take the ore elsewhere to be treated. The country between the Bogan and the Darling was eminently fertile, and well suited for cereals, but one essential condition was wanting,—the country was waterless, *i.e.*, without rivers, and the rainfall was scanty and precarious. There was probably no artesian water, and water conserved in tanks was too precious to be used for irrigation. Parts of the country seemed well suited for viticulture, and if water could be got for a little irrigation a trade in wine might spring up. There being no engineering difficulties, a light line should be inexpensive to construct. The length of new line to be laid might be lessened by making Girilambone or Coolabah the point of departure, but the mileage from Sydney would be increased, and the prospect of this line becoming an intercolonial one should outweigh all other considerations.

WILCANNIA AND BROKEN HILL.

Two routes have been suggested—rival routes, I may term them—for railway communication with Wilcannia and the West (1) by an extension of the proposed Nyngan-Cobar line, and (2) by an extension of the proposed Forbes line.

27/7/84.—The first of these was advocated in a petition from residents of Cobar, and presented to the Legislative Assembly by Mr. R. Barton.

Mr. Kirkcaldie in reporting upon this proposal, stated that in his opinion the Forbes route was the best, as it spaced the country better, and would attract business that is now done with Melbourne, via Balranald.

Inspector Hornidge also was of opinion that unless very substantial concessions were made (in rates) we must not hope for any great accession of traffic from the Wilcannia district.

In a petition from persons interested, presented to the Minister by Mr. Barton, it is asserted that the construction of such a line (Cobar) would command the whole of the Middle Darling and Barrier Range traffic.

2/4/87.—On the other hand, Mr. Kirkcaldie in reporting on this subject, said—"No doubt Cobar would be the nearest route to Wilcannia and Silverton, but a railway to the former town would be of no benefit whatever as far as securing the trade of those districts is concerned."

12/6/88.—A paragraph in the *Daily Telegraph* states that public feeling was, that the Cobar route was preferable to that by Forbes, as being shorter and more quickly made, but that the people would be satisfied to have a railway whatever route it might take.

2/5/89.—A memo. by Mr. B. R. Wise, submitted for the Minister's information, stated that he (Mr. Wise) had just returned from a tour of the Western Districts, where he found all classes of the community complaining bitterly that they were shut out from the markets of this Colony. It was universally maintained, that for a large proportion of that country Sydney was the best market if it were accessible. He found wool of the value of £250,000 lying in Wilcannia for want of the means of getting it away, and it had been there for twelve months; and in the same period 800,000 sheep had died of starvation, because there was no way of removing them to country where grass and water were attainable. During his stay in Wilcannia, eggs and butter, and all kinds of fodder, were selling at fabulous prices, and yet Wilcannia was the entrepôt from which the stations as far back as Cooper's Creek drew their supplies. The demand for agricultural produce in Wilcannia was therefore very great, and, if communication were given with the districts further west, would be enormously increased. Wilcannia should be the entrepôt for all the country west of Darling, for the southward of Queensland, and a portion of South Australia, and even for some parts of the gulf country in Queensland. To bring about this result—he would say nothing of rival routes—railway facilities must be given, and if this were not done the western trade would be lost to us and go to South Australia. The locking of the Darling should be carried out—not as an alternative but as a necessary consequence of railway communication. It would give us the command of the trade and bring traffic to the railway. The locking would throw the water back in the anas and creeks for a distance of 40 or 50 miles. This would encourage settlement and rise the value of Crown land "enormously."

2/4/89.—The *Silver Age* in an article of this date, referring to the visit of the Railway Commissioners and to the duty confided to them, stated that surprise was felt that steps in the direction of an effort to secure the Barrier trade were only now being taken. South Australia, it was pointed out, had early recognised the value of the trade, and had carried a line to

to the border. It had been frequently debated whether a railway (in communication with Sydney) to Broken Hill would pay, but the writer believed it only required proper management to make it in time "highly payable", not only to the Railway Department but to the Colony. With an inexhaustible supply of coal at one end we should be able to run our trains cheaply, and compete with South Australia for the traffic.

4/7/89.—The *Sydney Morning Herald* says "there would scarcely be wisdom in constructing a line from Nyngan to Broken Hill or Silverton unless we were sure of a great deal of the trade of the districts referred to. It is purely a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence. We recognise a duty to the west, but it is possible that in doing a little right (to those districts) a great deal of wrong may be done (to the Colony as a whole), as wrong *would* be done if a railway were constructed to the Darling country which would be taken advantage of only in part. Adelaide, the writer points out, "in her proximity to the border", has enormous advantages in respect of the trade. If, "he asks", we establish a railway will those advantages be increased or lessened? "This", he adds, "is the problem to be dealt with, while we see at the same time the necessity of preserving the integrity of the Colony and of keeping our resources within our own border."

The *Western Grazier*, a local paper, published some remarks addressed by a Mr. Donkes to the Railway Commissioner, on behalf of the Wilcannia Railway League. Mr. Donkes quoted statistics freely, but as they were, for a great part, of old date they are not of much value for the present purpose. One fact, however, which he mentioned is worthy of note, viz., that during the year losses of sheep to the extent of 1,000,000 or 1,250,000 had occurred, which might have been avoided if the mean of removing the sheep to another district had been available.

24/8/89—His Honor Judge Docker, in a memorandum addressed to the Minister stated—speaking from an experience of the district extending over twenty years—that few people in Sydney had any idea of the amount of traffic passing through Wilcannia, not only to the Darling, but to the wide country of the Paroo, away to the Queensland border. The bulk of this traffic went to South Australia, and unless we were prepared to acquiesce in the practical annexation (to South Australia) of those important districts, railway facilities should be provided. He was of opinion that if all the traffic, of which Wilcannia was the entrepôt, were carried by railway it would fully justify the construction of a light line. But the soil of the Darling valley was so fertile that, with the help of irrigation, he expected to see that river become the Nile of Australia, and he knew of no country which presented such facilities for a system of irrigation. A railway would not obtain all the traffic. The bulk of the heavy goods would inevitably go by the river when navigable, but the earnings of the railway for wool and fodder would probably make up for the deficiency in rainy weather. Did not see, however, why a revenue by dues or tolls should not be derived from the river, as it was the expensive snagging operations which had rendered it navigable; and this plan should certainly be adopted if the river were locked, which it ought to be. If the river were rendered permanently navigable it would act as a feeder—not a competitor—of a railway. If a line to Forbes had been made, the best route to Wilcannia would have been by an extension from that point to Euabalong, and thence across the country to Mount Hope, but, under existing circumstances, there could be no doubt that Nyngan should be the point of departure. The distance from Sydney would be only some 20 or 30 miles, while the amount of new construction would be considerably less.

C. A. B., 26/10/89.

B.

REPORT BY THE RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 15th July, 1889.

PROPOSED RAILWAY EXTENSION FROM COBAR TO WILCANNIA AND SILVERTON.

In the reference to us of the proposed Nyngan and Cobar line, we were requested to report in regard "to the question of ultimately extending the line to Wilcannia, and thence to Silverton, with a view of connecting it with the South Australian system." We have therefore inspected the route from Cobar to Wilcannia and Broken Hill.

The question of railway communication with Wilcannia, Broken Hill, and the South Australian Border, is of considerable magnitude, yet it is one that cannot apparently remain long undetermined, not only in the interest of the places named, and the Western district generally, but as a means of direct communication with South Australia from Sydney, and probably at no distant date, by the construction of a line between the Northern and Western lines—a direct route from Brisbane. Lines of this character can only be dealt with upon National principles, yet, there is also a commercial aspect.

While Wilcannia and the surrounding district at present depends upon water-carriage for its supplies, and as a means of getting wool to the seaboard, the carriage is uncertain, and it is far to assume that a portion at least of the traffic would go by rail if such a means of transit were available.

The pastoralists are at the present almost helpless in times of drought, and their losses during the past season have been great. A railway would have a material effect on their prospects—by affording the means of selling part of their stock in bad times, or of removing the same to more favored feeding grounds.

The rates now paid for getting the stores used on the stations are excessive, in consequence of the great distances to be travelled to reach the railway at Hay, Nyngan, or Broken Hill.

Another very great consideration is the fact of the marvellous development of the mining industry at Broken Hill, where there is a population of 15,000 souls at present existing, and we were assured it would rapidly increase.

The whole of this trade is out of the hands of New South Wales, and the sympathies of the population are to a great extent with South Australia and Victoria, as the communication with New South Wales is so very difficult.

We were assured by the manager of one of the mines that his railway carriage account amounted to £18,000 per month, and were assured that if a through route existed with Sydney a fair proportion of this traffic might be obtained in spite of our long route. It is probable also that a market would be opened up for coal and coke for our western coal fields.

This route would also be as short from Sydney to Adelaide, (and of course to places north of Adelaide shorter) as that now existing via Melbourne, but the New South Wales Railways would receive a 771 miles proportion instead of 387 miles as at present to Albury.

With regard to our northern system and Queensland, if a line is constructed from Werris Creek to the Western line, a shortening of distance between the North and South Australia of about 400 miles would be effected.

The line is only now being roughly surveyed from Wilcannia to Broken Hill, but making the lines throughout on as cheap a principle as possible, without fencing, it is roughly estimated that it will cost as under:—

Cobar to Wilcannia	£497,000
Wilcannia to Broken Hill.....	390,000
Broken Hill to Cockburn, via the Pinnacles and Thackeringa.....	150,000
	£1,037,000
Interest at 3½ per cent.	£36,295
Rough estimate of cost of working.	51,000
Interest on rolling-stock	3,339
	£90,634
Cost per annum	£90,634

Of course it is impossible to offer a pronounced opinion upon the probable financial success of such a large undertaking from the outset, but there is no doubt ultimately it will be successful, and as it is most desirable to open up communication with remote portions of the Colony of New South Wales, which are at present nearly, if not wholly, commercially connected with our sister colonies, we strongly advise the Government to adopt the scheme, and to commence it in about four sections, so as to get it opened throughout as quickly as possible.

We suggest the route for the line from Broken Hill to the South Australian Border at Cockburn, *via* the Pinnacles and Thackeringa, as the mining industry at the Pinnacles requires the aid of a railway to develop it, and a private company is also being projected to afford this facility; and we would advise the Government not to grant powers to another private company in the district.

The

The Bill now before Parliament for constructing an extension of the present Silverton tram-line to the River Darling, at Menindie, a distance of about 80 miles, regarding which we have been asked to report, is also affected by this scheme. We are of opinion it would be unwise to authorize the line, yet it is desirable that access should be given with the river from Broken Hill; and if the Government decide to make the Wilcannia line, we would advise the rejection of the Bill.

The Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was affixed hereto this sixteenth day of July, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, in the presence of,—

W. V. RLAD

E. M. G. EDDY,
Chief Commissioner.
W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.
CHARLES OLIVER,
Commissioner.

C.

OFFICIAL ESTIMATE OF THE COST OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

Nyngan to Cobar.—Revised Estimate, 15 July, 1889.

Works—Estimate of Engineer-in-Chief		£126,579	0	0
Less fencing portion		10,000	0	0
		116,579	0	0
Permanent Way material, 60-lb. rails—84 miles at £600 ..	£50,400	0	0	
Freight	13,525	0	0	
Loading and unloading, 8,610 at 2s.	861	0	0	
		64,786	0	0
Water supply	4,000	0	0	
Turntable	1,000	0	0	
Interlocking	1,850	0	0	
		6,850	0	0
Engineering expenses and contingencies		19,000	0	0
		£207,215	0	0

Average cost per mile, £2,560.

D.

NYNGAN TO COBAR RAILWAY.

Book of Reference to accompany Parliamentary Plan.

Name of County and Parish	No on Plan	Description of Property	State of Cultivation	Names of		
				Owners	Lessees	Occupiers.
County of Cambeligo—						
Parish of Lynch	1	Great Western Railway		Crown		
” ”	2	Road		”		
” ”	3	Town allotment	Nil	”		
” ”	4	” ”	”	”		
” ”	5	” ”	”	”		
” ”	6	” ”	”	”		
” ”	7	Road		”		
” ”	8	Town allotment	Nil	”		
” ”	9	” ”	”	”		
” ”	10	” ”	”	”		
” ”	11	” ”	”	”		
” ”	12	” ”	”	”		
” ”	13	Road		”		
” ”	14	Crown land	Nil	”	Chapman Bros, No. 1, West Bogon.	
” ”	14c	”	”	”	”	
” ”	15	”	”	”	”	
” ”	15a	Water reserve	”	”		Crown.
” ”	16	Main road	”	”		”
” ”	17	Water reserve; travelling stock reserve.	Nil	”		”
” ”	18	Travelling stock reserve	”	”		”
Parish of Mandetta	19	” ”	”	”		”
” ”	20	” ”	”	”		”
” ”	21	Main road	”	”		”
Parish of Gilgai	22	Travelling stock reserve	”	”		”
” ”	23	Camping reserve	”	”		”
” ”	23a	Travelling stock reserve	”	”		”
” ”	24	” ”	”	”		”
” ”	25	” ”	”	”		”
Parish of Whitbarrow	26	Main road	”	”		”
” ”	27	Travelling stock reserve	Nil	”		”
” ”	28	Water reserve	”	”		”
” ”	29	Travelling stock reserve	”	”		”
” ”	30	” ”	”	”		”
” ”	30a	Camping reserve	”	”		”
” ”	31	” ”	”	”		”
” ”	31a	Travelling stock reserve	”	”		”
” ”	32	” ”	”	”		”
Parish of Boree	33	” ”	”	”		”
” ”	34	” ”	”	”		”
” ”	35	Camping reserve	”	”		”
” ”	35a	Travelling stock reserve	”	”		”
” ”	36	” ”	”	”		”
Parish of Badgerly	37	” ”	”	”		”
” ”	37a	” ”	”	”		”
Parish of Youngee	38	” ”	”	”		”
” ”	39	Conditional purchase	”	Joseph Wright.		Unoccupied.
” ”	40	Camping reserve	”	Crown		Crown
” ”	41	Main road	”	”		”

APPENDIX.

7

Name of County and Parish.	No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of		
				Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
County of Cambeligo— Parish of Youngee ...	42	Travelling stock reserve	Nil	Crown ...	.....	Crown.
" " " "	43	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
Parish of Geweroo	44	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	45	Mulja Creek .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	46	Travelling stock reserve	Nil .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	47	Reserve .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	48	Crown lands	" " " "	" " " "	W. C. Langtree, Florida.	" "
" " " "	49	Water reserve .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	Crown.
" " " "	50	Main road .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	51	Travelling stock reserve	Nil .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	52	Main road .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
Parish of Florida	53	Travelling stock reserve	Nil .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
County of Robinson— Parish of Lambrigg ...	54	Reserve .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	55	Crown lands	" " " "	" " " "	Alison & Sons,	Meryula.
" " " "	56	Bush lands	" " " "	William Alison.	.....	William Alison.
" " " "	57	Crown lands	" " " "	Crown ...	Alison & Sons	Alison & Sons.
" " " "	58	Main road .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	Crown.
" " " "	59	Paddock	Partly cultivated.	John Allen.	.....	John Allen.
" " " "	59a	Travelling stock reserve	" " " "	Crown ...	.....	Crown.
" " " "	60	Main road .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
Parish of Cohn	61	Camping reserve .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	61a	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	62	Forfeited conditional purchase .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
Parish of Yanda	63	Camping reserve .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	64	Bush land	" " " "	" " " "	Alison & Sons,	Meryula.
" " " "	65	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	66	Main road .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	Crown.
Parish of Nyngan	67	Travelling stock reserve	Nil .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	68	Yanda Creek .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
Parish of Linton	68a	Camping reserve	Nil .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	69	Travelling stock reserve .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	70	Main road .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
Parish of Weltie	71	Bush land	Nil	" " " "	Alison & Sons	Alison & Sons.
Parish of Cobar	72	" " " "	" " " "	" " " "	" " " "	" "
" " " "	73	Main road .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	Crown.
" " " "	74	Travelling stock reserve	Nil .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	74a	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	75	Mineral conditional purchase	" " " "	Great Cobar Mining	.....	Company.
" " " "	76	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	76a	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	77	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	78	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	78a	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	79	Road	" " " "	Crown ...	.....	Crown.
" " " "	80	Mineral conditional purchase	" " " "	Great Cobar Mining	.....	Company.
" " " "	81	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	" " " " .....	.....	" "
" " " "	82	Water reserve	" " " "	Crown ...	.....	Crown.

JOHN WHITTON,
Engineer.

7 September, 1885.

E.

INFORMATION REGARDING DISTANCES.

Department of Public Works, Railway Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Sydney, 29 October, 1889.

In compliance with the request contained in your letter of the 11th instant I forward herewith details of the various distances asked for.

Application has been made to the Railway Department for information regarding approximate cost of fares between Brisbane and Adelaide by the Werris Creek, Dubbo, and Nyngan route and also by the present route *via* Melbourne. This, together with similar information regarding goods rates, will be sent you as soon as received.

W. H. QUODLING,

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee, Public Works.

Secretary.

Distance Sydney to Adelaide *via* Melbourne by existing lines of Railway, 1,085½ miles:—

Sydney to Albury	m. ch.	386 0
Albury to Wodonga		3 40
Wodonga to Melbourne		187 0
Melbourne to Serviceton		312 60
Serviceton to Adelaide		196 0
		————— 1,085½ miles.

Distance Sydney to Adelaide *via* Nyngan, Cobar, and Wilcannia, 1,068 miles 70 chains:—

Sydney to Nyngan	m. ch.	377 0
Nyngan to Cobar, 81 miles 50 chains 1 mile 10 chains of existing line		81 50
Cobar to Wilcannia		156 40
Wilcannia to Silverton		135 0
Silverton to Cockburn		20 0
Cockburn to Adelaide		298 60
		————— 1,068m. 70ch .

Distance Sydney to Adelaide *via* Hay and Wentworth, 880 miles:—

Sydney to Hay	m. ch.	454 0
Hay to South Australian border, by scale		243 0
South Australian Border to Morgan		78 20
Morgan to Adelaide		104 60
		————— 880 miles.
		Distance

Distance Sydney to Adelaide *via* Menindie and Silverton, 1,062 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles :—

	m. ch.	
Sydney to Hay	454 0	
Hay to Menindie	210 0	
Menindie to Silverton	80 0	
Silverton to Cockburn	20 0	
Cockburn to Adelaide	298 60	
	<hr/>	1,062 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Distance Sydney to Adelaide *via* Forbes, Menindie, and Silverton, 1,004 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles :—

	m. ch.	
Sydney to Forbes	266 0	
Forbes to Menindie	340 0	
Menindie to Silverton	80 0	
Silverton to Cockburn	20 0	
Cockburn to Adelaide	298 60	
	<hr/>	1,004 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

Distance Wallangarra to Werris Creek Station, 236 miles.

Distance Wallangarra to the junction of Werris Creek to Dubbo trial line, 240 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Distance Werris Creek Station to Dubbo, including 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles of existing line, 154 miles.

Distance Werris Creek to Dubbo from junction of trial survey, 149 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Distance Muscleebrook to Dubbo *via* Cassilis, 161 miles :—

	m. ch.	
Muscleebrook to Cassilis	77 0	
Cassilis to Dubbo	84 0	
	<hr/>	161 miles.

Distance Werris Creek to Nyngan *via* Dubbo, 253 miles :—

	m. ch.	
Werris Station to Dubbo, including 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles of existing line ..	154 0	
Dubbo to Nyngan	99 0	
	<hr/>	253 miles.

Distance Werris Creek to Nyngan *via* Wellington, 279 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles :—

	m. ch.	
Werris Creek Station to junction of trial survey with Great Western Railway, 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ mile north of Wellington ..	150 40	
Wellington Station to Nyngan Station ..	129 0	
	<hr/>	279 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Distance Werris Creek to Nyngan (by scale, direct route), 200 miles.

Distance Wallangarra to South Australia *via* Sydney by existing lines of railway, 1,379 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles .—

	m. ch.	
Wallangarra to Sydney ..	490 0	
Sydney to Albury	386 0	
Albury to Wodonga	3 40	
Wodonga to Melbourne ..	187 0	
Melbourne to Serviceton ..	312 60	
	<hr/>	1,379 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

Serviceton to Adelaide, 196 miles, which, added to 1,379 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles, gives a distance of 1,575 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Wallangarra to Adelaide *via* Sydney and Melbourne.

Distance Wallangarra to the South Australian Border *via* Werris Creek, Dubbo, and Nyngan, 882 miles 10 chains :—

	m. ch.	
Wallangarra to junction of Werris Creek to Dubbo trial line ..	240 40	
Werris Creek junction of trial survey to Dubbo ..	149 40	
Dubbo to Nyngan ..	99 0	
Nyngan to Cobar, 81 miles 50 chains, includes 1 mile 10 chains existing line ..	81 50	
Cobar to Wilcannia ..	156 40	
Wilcannia to Silverton ..	135 0	
Silverton to Cockburn ..	20 0	
	<hr/>	882 m. 10 ch.

Cockburn to Adelaide, 298 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles, added to 882 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles, gives a distance of 1 180 miles 70 chains from Wallangarra to Adelaide *via* Werris Creek, Dubbo, Nyngan, Wilcannia, and Silverton.

Distance Brisbane to Adelaide *via* Werris Creek, Dubbo, Nyngan, Cobar, and Cockburn, 1,414 miles 70 chains .—

	m. ch.	m. ch.
Brisbane to Wallangarra ..	232 0	232 0
Wallangarra to junction of Werris Creek to Dubbo trial line ..	240 40	}
Junction at Werris Creek to Dubbo ..	149 40	
Junction at Dubbo to Nyngan ..	101 0	} 864 10
Nyngan to Cobar, 81 miles 50 chains, includes 1 mile 10 chains of existing line ..	81 50	
Cobar to Wilcannia ..	156 40	}
Wilcannia to Silverton ..	135 0	
Silverton to Cockburn ..	20 0	} 318 60
Cockburn to Adelaide ..	298 60	
	<hr/>	1,414 70

	miles. miles.	
Brisbane to Murwillumbah <i>via</i> Southport ..	60	
Murwillumbah to Casino ..	81	
Casino to Tenterfield ..	87	
	<hr/>	228

Tenterfield to Werris Creek ..	225
Werris Creek to Dubbo ..	154
Dubbo to Nyngan ..	99
Nyngan to Silverton ..	373
Silverton to Adelaide ..	319

Total ..

	<hr/>	1,398
Brisbane to Adelaide <i>via</i> Warwick, Tenterfield, &c., 16 miles longer ..		1,414
Brisbane to Adelaide <i>via</i> Warwick, Sydney, and Melbourne, present route ..		1,508

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

RAILWAY FROM NYNGAN TO COBAR.

REPORT.

THE Sectional Committee appointed to inspect and take evidence in reference to the above proposed railway, beg to report that five of their number visited the district through which the survey for the line has been made, traversed its route, examined witnesses, and obtained information generally in regard to the project. In considering the matter the Committee have had regard to the fact that the Minister for Works, in submitting this question to the full Committee, represented the Nyngan to Cobar Railway as being directly connected with the project to carry the line further on to Broken Hill and the South Australian border, and, with that end in view, the Sectional Committee have conducted their inquiry, and submit the following Report:—

The Sectional Committee left Redfern Railway Station by the 8 p.m. train on October 3rd, and arrived at Nyngan at 11.30 a.m. on October 4th. The Committee met at the Court-house, Nyngan, the same day, when the following witnesses were examined:—J. Prince (Forwarding and General Agent) and A. Adams (Road Superintendent).

On the following day the Committee resumed their sittings, when A. J. Rowling (Stationmaster, Nyngan), T. Barrett (Hotelkeeper), P. Lynch (Forwarding Agent), A. T. Bleatley (Storekeeper), T. H. Rowe (Chairman of Progress Committee), R. T. Clay (Postmaster), A. Mackellar (Manager of Commercial Bank), S. F. K. Lane (Manager of A.J.S. Bank), A. Lyne (Grazier), W. Jurd (Public School Teacher), J. G. Kean (Forwarding Agent), J. Harris (Storekeeper), and H. Brownlow (Storekeeper), were examined. These witnesses gave evidence as to the amount of trade done at Nyngan and surrounding district, the character of the soil and its capabilities, the amount of stock in the district, the population, the trade transacted between Nyngan and Cobar, and also as to the probable results to be obtained from the construction of the proposed railway. The majority of the witnesses examined expressed their opinion that the construction of the railway was desirable as tending to promote settlement and improve the trade of the district. One or two witnesses were hostile, on the ground that the railway, if extended, would injure the trade of Nyngan.

On Sunday, October 6th, the Committee (with the exception of the Hon. Dr. Garran, M.L.C., who returned to Sydney) started for Cobar; and as heavy rain had fallen, they had the opportunity of seeing the condition of the road in wet weather, with the result that they were only able to cover a distance of 27 miles, by continuous travelling, from 10.15 a.m. to 5 p.m., when Hermitage Plains Hotel was reached. The evidence of H. F. Hall was taken, and he was strongly in favour of the railway. Hall's evidence is important as showing that he had prospered in the district upon a small holding, his property proving that the soil was very suitable for the growth of wheat and barley, his average crop being 18 bushels to the acre. He also stated that the district was very suitable for sheep raising; and that, in the drought, his loss was very trifling; and that want of better communication was his greatest drawback. At this place the Committee inspected a fine crop of wheat of over 30 acres, averaging fully 30 bushels to the acre.

On Monday, October 7th, the Committee continued their journey towards Cobar, arriving at Muriel Tank at 11 a.m., when the evidence of F. Malarky, the lessee, was taken as to the stock that watered at the tank, and the general traffic passing by. The Committee proceeded onwards, and reached Budd's Hotel at 3.15 p.m., when the evidence of the proprietor, W. Budd, and of H. Sutherland was taken. At this place the Committee inspected a most luxuriant garden, in which fruits, flowers, vegetables, and wheat were growing. Mr. Budd stated that he generally got three crops out of four; his residence is in the Western Division, which commences about two miles nearer Nyngan than Budd's.

After leaving this place the Committee proceeded to Cobar, which they reached at 10 p.m.

On Tuesday, October 8th, the Committee met at the Court-house, Cobar, when they took the the evidence of W. J. Hogan (the Mayor), F. Mackell (P.M. and Mining Registrar), D. H. Penhall (Mining Agent), Stewart (Stock Inspector), Peter Andrew (Butcher and Farmer), M. O'Neill (Publican and Farmer), C. M. Stewart (C.E.), J. Cotton, and A. Adams (Road Superintendent).

On Wednesday, October 9th, the Committee resumed their sitting at the Court-house, when the evidence of E. James (Storekeeper), H. J. Cornish (Hotel-keeper), H. Simpson (Manager of A. J. S. Bank), J. G. Lee (Public School Teacher), S. A. Fox (Manager of the Commercial Bank), L. Corbett (Labourer), H. Lewis (Auctioneer), T. Duffy (Storekeeper), and C. R. Ferguson, (Builder), was taken; and Cotton, Hogan, and Lewis were recalled. Later in the day the evidence of H. J. Holsten (Carrier), was taken at the Commercial Hotel, and D. R. Kinaine (Post-master), gave particulars as to postal business. On the same day the Committee visited the various gold-mines at Cobar, taking the evidence of Robert Jackson (Manager of the Chesney Cobar Gold-mining Company). They then inspected the large surface works of the Cobar Copper-mining Company, which at the present time are idle. The Committee visited several cultivation holdings, where the crops, vegetables, &c., were of the most luxuriant character. In one instance the oats measured 6 ft. 11 in. in height. Many acres were planted with lucerne, which was fully 3 ft. high; and all this without irrigation.

On Thursday, October 10th, the Committee started at 9 a.m. *en route* for Wilcannia, traversing part of the proposed railway line, and passing through splendid country included in Meryula and Bulgoo Runs, and reaching the Double Gates Hotel, situated on the latter run, 28 miles from Cobar, at midday. Here the Committee examined Mr. A. Fulton (Manager of the Station), as to the character of the country; and a noticeable feature of his evidence is the admission that fully one-half of the run was suitable for agricultural purposes. H. W. David (Store-keeper on Bulgoo Station), and F. Sallaway (Hotelkeeper), likewise gave evidence. Here also a splendid crop of wheat was inspected, and garden produce was also found to be thriving. Journeying onwards the Committee passed through Messrs. Frews and Macpherson's runs, and arrived at Sandy Creek Hotel, 42 miles from Cobar, about dusk. In the evening the evidence of E. W. Meredith (Hotelkeeper), and of John Cameron (Manager of Marfield Station), was taken; and the latter gentleman also stated that half his run was suitable for agricultural purposes. On Friday, October 11th, the Committee left early, and reached Horan's Belarabonn Hotel, Paddington Station, about 72 miles from Cobar, at midday, and Holan's evidence was taken. Here again an excellent crop was growing. Passing onwards the Committee visited the wool-scouring operations on Paddington Station, owned by Macpherson & Co., which is a holding of eight and a half 10-mile blocks. Wool-scouring is here carried on for this and other stations. Mr. Macpherson's evidence was taken, and he admitted that he did no scrubbing whatever on the run, and that the scrub was rapidly growing and spoiling the grass, also that the rabbits were very troublesome. Proceeding, the Committee arrived at Thermungya Hotel, on Nekarboo Run, at 6.30 p.m., 88 miles from Cobar. At 7 a.m. the next day the Committee examined the proprietor, J. Tomlinson (Hotelkeeper), and Sydney Walker (part owner of Nekarboo Run). It may be here noticed that it was shown that wool is being taken from this district to Hay and shipped down the Murrumbidgee for Echuca or Port Victor. Leaving this place the Committee proceeded through Fulham Run, which they reached at 12.15, and examined the proprietor, C. J. Moule. The wool on Fulham Station is shipped at Wilcannia for Adelaide. Here also a fine crop of wheat was inspected, and Mr. Moule stated that the land
had

had not even been ploughed, only harrowed. Leaving here, the Committee arrived at Kew Station, 145 miles from Cobar, at 6:30 p.m. This is a run embracing one 10-mile block, and it was noticeable that the herbage was the best the Committee had seen. Mr. Turner (the owner) was examined, and he seems to have improved his run in many ways and to great advantage, the whole being fenced with rabbit-proof fencing, splendid tanks having been constructed, and storage of grass in silos having been effected.

On Sunday, October 13th, the Committee started on their journey, and the road was so bad that from 10 p.m. to 7 p.m. only 24 miles were travelled, and the Committee camped out for the night at the tanks on Cultowa Runs.

At daybreak on Monday, October 14th, the Committee started again, passing through Cultowa and Murtee Runs, having lunched at Murtee at 12 noon, where the statement of H. Roach, the hutkeeper, was taken. At this place a capital well had been sunk, with good and permanent water. Along the whole route, and especially after leaving Cobar, the Committee noticed the luxuriant growth of grass and herbage; but here—about 20 miles from Wilcannia—the character of the country changed, and the soil, instead of having that red, loamy, rich appearance, was more of a grey marl character, and seemed very poor. After leaving the hutkeeper's, the Committee crossed the Tallywalka, an ana-branch of the Darling, and passed through a lignum swamp and along very flat country until they reached the Darling at Murtee Homestead, driving along its banks, and crossing at Wilcannia at 4 p.m. The Committee then interviewed the Mayor, and made arrangements for taking evidence next morning, viz., Tuesday, October 15th, when they met at the Court-house, and examined O. C. Macdougall (the Mayor), M. J. Darey (Customs), J. R. Holding (Postmaster), H. W. Jackson (Coach Agent, and Editor of the *Western Grazier*), G. H. Doake (Storekeeper and Forwarding Agent), J. C. Tully (Inspector of Stock), and H. F. T. Bode (Railway Surveyor), after which they adjourned until the following day, October 16th, when W. T. Corney (Merchant and Forwarding Agent), F. T. Ottaway (Merchant and Forwarding Agent), F. Lang (Land Agent), J. M. Burns (Dealer), T. Byrne (Publican), J. Booth (Grazier, of Cultowa), E. O'Donnell (Agent), A. W. R. Pratt (C.P.S.), and R. Ashworth (Public School Teacher), were examined, and Tully and Holding were recalled.

The evidence taken at this place was of a very important character, as showing that Wilcannia is the centre of a very large district. An immense amount of trade is done here, and special attention is directed to the detailed evidence on this head, one witness (W. T. Corney) stating his belief that it would be within the mark to estimate the freight inwards and outwards at £80,000, and other witnesses giving confirmatory evidence. The following figures, showing the inward and outward trade done at Wentworth, where the Customs returns are kept, were supplied by the Collector there:—Inwards: For year 1886, 176 vessels, 26,066 tons; value, £191,393. For 1887, 218 vessels, 36,170 tons; value, £283,387. For 1888, 170 vessels, 23,958 tons; value £149,214. For 1889, to 16th October, 1889, 81 vessels, 15,611 tons; value £76,490. Outwards: For 1886, 164 vessels, 26,552 tons; value, £1,015,631. For 1887, 222 vessels, 26,552 tons; value, £1,098,543. For 1888, 173 vessels, 22,718 tons; value, £133,764. From 1st January to 16th October, 1889, 241 vessels, 22,264 tons; value, £581,600. The low figures for last year were owing to a low river.

Wilcannia is also the centre of the trade for the Paroo, Mount Browne, and the south-west corner of Queensland. Evidence was also given here as to the terrible loss of sheep during the last drought. The actual loss was stated by the Stock Inspector at 1,000,000 sheep, and an indirect loss of 750,000 through there being no increase, and it was stated that had a railway existed during the drought 500,000 sheep could have been sent away and saved. Evidence was forthcoming as to the inconvenience and uncertainty of the river transit, and the varying and occasionally exorbitant rates of carriage.

The Committee left Wilcannia at 9:15 a.m. on 17th October, and passed through Netley and Winterega Runs, *via* Caulker's Wells, arriving at Glenlyon Station, 60 miles from Wilcannia, at 2 a.m. on 18th October. Changing to the mail-coach, the Committee at once resumed their journey, reaching Burke's Cave, still part of Glenlyon Run, at 7:15 a.m. Journeying onwards they crossed Yancowinna Creek, on Topar Run, at 1 p.m., passing through Kinchega Run, and reaching the "Gorge," on Stevens' Creek, 17 miles from Broken Hill, at 8 p.m.; thence to Broken Hill, which they reached at 11 p.m., where the Committee were rejoined by the Hon. Dr. Garran, M.L.C.

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On Saturday, 19th October, the Committee met at the Council Chamber, Broken Hill, at 10 a.m., when they examined the Mayor (Z. Lane), C. Chapple, (Carrying Agent), F. Wickham (Government Surveyor) and T. R. Firth (Government Engineer). On the same day the Committee inspected the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's works, and descended Block 11, examining the vast extent of the mine.

Resuming their inquiries on Monday, 21st October, the Committee examined John Bristowe (Accountant of the Broken Hill Proprietary Mine), F. H. Clark (British Blocks Co.), A. Stenhouse (Timber Dealer), T. Coombe (Timber Dealer), W. J. Hanna (Road Superintendent), C. E. Hogg (C.E.), J. Nolan (Prospector), F. Jolly (Mining Manager, Junction Co.), F. J. Odling (Mining Manager, Pinnacles Co.), E. Hornsby (Timber Merchant), and J. Stubbs (Manager of the Bank of Australasia).

On Tuesday, 22nd October, the evidence of Chas. Eley (Traffic Manager to the Silverton Tramway Co.), W. W. Harper (Mining Manager to the Broken Hill Proprietary Co.), O. Maddox (Customs Officer), T. M. M'Kenzie (Storekeeper, Menindie), R. Scobie, W. M. Wetherall (Postmaster), F. Whysall (Telegraph Master), R. M. Gibson (Mining Registrar), and F. E. Randle (Produce Merchant) was taken.

On Wednesday, 23rd October, the Committee again met at the Council Chamber, when the evidence of J. Logan, as to deep-boring operations at Brisbane Blocks, was taken; this being to the effect that silver ore had been discovered at a depth of 1,600 and odd feet.

The Committee left Broken Hill at 11.15 a.m. on the same day, reaching Silverton at 12.45 p.m. Here, evidence was taken at the Municipal Chambers, and the following witnesses were examined:—H. Brown (the Mayor), U. Dudley (Manager of the Umberumberka Mine), C. Ring, (Manager of the Flux Company), F. Spence (Station-master, Silverton Tramway Company), J. J. Collier (Manager of Iron-mine), A. H. Gibson (Carrying Agent), R. Mooney (Sub-Collector of Customs), J. F. Williams (Mining Registrar), and J. Saunders (C.P.S.)

Two members of the Committee (Messrs. Garran and Copeland) here visited the Umberumberka and Thackaringa Mines, obtaining information as to those mines, and rejoining the Committee at Cockburn.

The Committee left Silverton at 10 p.m. for Adelaide, which place they reached at 1.15 p.m. on Thursday, 24th October, and they at once interviewed the South Australian Railway Commissioners, and valuable information was elicited as to railway construction and traffic generally. Adelaide was left at 3.30 p.m. on the same day, and Melbourne was reached at 10 a.m. on Friday, 25th October. On the following day the Committee had an interview with Mr. Speight, Chairman of the Victorian Railway Commissioners, in reference to branch railways and agricultural lines, grades, &c.

The Committee left for Sydney at the earliest opportunity, namely, by express train, on Monday, 28th October, reaching Sydney about midday on Tuesday, 29th October.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.

From the voluminous evidence taken, and personal observation, the Committee arrive at the following conclusions:—

The country traversed between Nyngan and Broken Hill is in no way adapted for road-making, being of a red, loamy, or rotten nature, especially difficult for horse or wheel traffic in wet weather; and it seems apparent that if satisfactory communication is to be opened up and maintained between these points it must be by means of a railway.

The Committee have been very much impressed by the rich character of the soil over the greater portion of the route which they traversed. They found this to be of a rich, chocolate, loamy nature, and admirably suited for agricultural purposes, a very noticeable feature being that wherever agriculture has been undertaken, this year, it has been a very marked success, and the crops, fruits, and vegetables reared, have been of a most luxuriant character. The evidence taken tended to show that an average of three out of four crops could be obtained. The country along the greater portion of the route is well suited for small holdings, combining agriculture with grazing. The smaller pastoral holdings appear to be the best managed, and more under control, and consequently suffer less loss from drought or rabbits.

From a mining point of view the projected line to Broken Hill traverses some very promising fields. Although the Copper-mine at Cobar is closed at present, that

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at Nymagee is still working, and a new one has been discovered at New Burra Burra, near Cobar, which gives evidence of great richness. There are also several promising gold-mines in the Cobar district, some of which are being actively worked. A railway line to Wilcannia would serve what is considered to be a very valuable mineral district known as the Mount Browne District, where 700 miners are already located. Broken Hill, which is the mining centre of the Australasian Colonies at the present time, appears to be marvellously rich in silver and other minerals. It has a population now, of 16,000 and will probably double that number, at the present rate of progress, in a few years. There is every evidence that the mines here are of a permanent character, one mine alone, the Broken Hill Proprietary having an enormous output, that for the week ending 1st August last being 3,179 tons, yielding 455 tons bullion, and many of the other mines showing large outputs and extensive future workings. The evidence of the various witnesses as to actual trade done in imports and exports is truly astonishing, and special attention is drawn thereto, and as evidencing the very large amount of traffic to this place, a perusal of the South Australian Railway Report for 1887-8 shows that nearly one-seventh of the entire railway revenue of that colony for that period was derived from Broken Hill. Two large goods trains, one mixed train and one passenger train, are stated to go daily to and from Broken Hill.

The Committee found Broken Hill to be a well-established Municipality, in which many substantial buildings of brick and stone are to be found. The hotels would do credit to any first class city. The streets are metalled, well laid out, and planted with trees; the population, apparently, thriving and sober.

The sanitary arrangements at Broken Hill have, since its incorporation, been greatly improved, and steps are being taken to give the place a good supply of water. A striking feature of Broken Hill is the fact that the business of the local postal and telegraph office is second only to Sydney, and is double that of Newcastle. The amount already received by the Government from land sold at Broken Hill is £27,425; the revenue from miners' leases and miners' rights from September, 1887, to September, 1889, was £9,362. A very large amount has yet to be received from land.

The town of Silverton is substantially built and well laid out, and its future advancement depends mainly upon the successful development of its mines.

A railway line from Nyngan to Cobar, and thence by Wilcannia to Broken Hill, would go through one of the largest pastoral districts in the colony, as evidenced by the amount of sheep in the Wilcannia district, which is stated by the Stock Inspector to be 3,000,000. In good seasons there is abundance of grass for feed, and in dry seasons salt-bush and edible shrubs and herbage have been found in the past to sustain the stock. The principal losses would probably be through want of water. This difficulty to a great extent could be minimized by the construction of dams and the sinking of wells. Evidence was forthcoming that some of the tanks, wells, and dams which had been constructed, had never been known to give out. The Committee took evidence at various points as to the rainfall, and the following were found to be the figures recorded at some of the places where gauges were kept:—

	For 1887—	For 1888—	To October, 1889—
Cobar	19·14 inches.	9·08 inches.	16·24 inches.
Paddington Station	24·0 ”	7·0 ”	18·39 ”
Nekarboo Station	25 ”	4·2 ”	13·0 ”
Kew Station	25·77 ”	4·29 ”	16·10 ”
Wilcannia	21·99 ”	3·22 ”	10·60 ”
		May to December :	
Broken Hill	No record.	1·77 inches.	15·95 ”

The rainfall for this year is high, consequently the country presents an appearance of special luxuriance.

All along the route the witnesses testified to the immense benefits which would result to the land from irrigation. In certain districts it has been tried in a small way with marked success. The land on either side of the Darling, for a considerable distance from Wilcannia, could easily be irrigated from the river, and rendered permanently productive. The locking of the river would throw the water back into the creeks and ana-branches to distances of from 20 to 50 miles.

The Committee ascertained that throughout the whole route from Nyngan to Cobar, and thence to Broken Hill, ballast for railway purposes was easily procurable, and admirable building stone can be obtained both at Cobar and Wilcannia, and it was also ascertained that no timber, in any quantity, could be obtained for railway purposes along the line.

PROSPECTS

PROSPECTS OF TRAFFIC.

One of the chief features of the enquiry has been to ascertain the prospects of traffic if a line were constructed. At the outset the evidence tended to show that between Nyngan and Cobar the amount of business to be done would not exceed £15,000 per annum, and the statement of Government officials and residents of Cobar (see the Mayor's evidence) seem to agree as to the probable trade. To this must be added the traffic from Nymagee and its mines, which would strike the line about 30 miles from Nyngan, and the probable further traffic from the new Burra Burra mine, about 60 miles from Nyngan. Between Cobar and Wilcannia a pastoral traffic only could at present be relied upon, much of which is now going to Victoria and South Australia, via Hay, and the rivers. In the event, however, of this land being settled by small holders, a considerable traffic will, no doubt, arise. At Wilcannia, which appears to be an important centre of river and back block trade, a very large traffic may be relied upon. The line would probably operate here, as it is stated to have done at Bourke, to intercept a large trade which is now going by river to South Australia and Victoria. It would also command the Paroo, Mount Browne, and South-western Queensland trade. Between Wilcannia and Broken Hill, there are but three or four pastoral holdings, the trade from which is likely to be only trifling. It is probable, however, that a considerable trade in fat stock would be done along this line by stations en route, sending their sheep and cattle to Broken Hill for slaughter. The amount of traffic likely to be derived from Broken Hill is difficult to calculate, but it will be chiefly derivable from the carriage of coke, coal, timber, lime and ironstone, fluxes, ores, bullion, wool, fodder, building material, and general merchandise, the total tonnage of which, according to the statement of the Sub-Collector of Customs at Silverton, amounts to about 2,500 tons weekly.

This traffic is likely to further develop with the increase of population.

The evidence adduced goes to prove that a very large amount of freight is earned along the line of route, the amounts for Nyngan to Cobar being stated to be about £15,000, and Wilcannia about £80,000, while at Broken Hill and Silverton the freight must be enormous, and special reference to the evidence on this point is directed. The Committee could not ascertain the amount earned by the Silverton Tramway Company as the Station-master stated that the books were kept in Melbourne, but that officer's evidence shows that the business is very extensive and remunerative.

In addition to the receipts from the foregoing traffic, it is probable that the line would be largely availed of by pastoralists for the removal of starving stock in seasons of drought, and also for the conveyance of fodder to stations, thus adding further to the receipts of the railway, and increasing its utility to the district.

There is no doubt that the line to Broken Hill, if constructed, would be largely availed of by the travelling public, it being the shortest and most direct route to the Barrier Ranges from Sydney and the important intervening centres.

Some of the witnesses pointed out that a cross country line from Nyngan to Werris Creek, on the northern line, would allow of sheep being sent up in seasons of drought from the western plains to the New England country, and would form a connecting link between Queensland and South Australia, and would probably attract an intercolonial traffic.

SUGGESTIONS.

In conclusion the Committee desire to express the following opinions and make the following suggestions :—

1. That, although Cobar has doubtless many claims to a railway, still, looking at the probable traffic, it would not be desirable to construct a line from Nyngan to Cobar, unless a further extension beyond the last named place was contemplated.
2. The western portion of the colony, especially Wilcannia and the Broken Hill settlement, justifies the construction of a line to the western border via Cobar, Wilcannia, and Broken Hill.

The Committee therefore suggest and recommend the construction of the line from Nyngan to Cobar, as the first instalment of a through line to Broken Hill, for the following reasons :—

1. That the line would serve the Cobar District.

2. Its extension to Wilcannia would tap the trade of the Darling and Mount Browne, the Paroo trade now centred at Wilcannia, and the trade of the south-western portion of Queensland.
3. Its further extension to Broken Hill would tap the trade of the important and progressive mining centres of the Barrier Ranges.
4. The whole would serve as a starving stock line, and it would be a valuable intercolonial line, should a connection be made between Nyngan and Werris Creek.
5. The line would open up a considerable area of valuable agricultural land, and be a means of promoting settlement.
6. It would connect with the line between Port Augusta and Port Darwin.

The Committee desire to state, in conclusion, that the line from Nyngan to Cobar, and its suggested extension to the South Australian border, can be said (as the result of personal inspection and from evidence obtained) to present no engineering difficulties in the way of construction; also, that from the Committee's observations and from information gathered from the Railway Commissioners of South Australia and Victoria, they are of opinion that it would be inexpedient to construct a line, such as the one proposed, without ballast. Although a saving may be effected in dispensing with expensive stations, fencing, crossings, platforms, &c., experience in the neighbouring colonies has shown that it is false economy to attempt any so-called cheap construction of a permanent way.

They consider that the whole line from Nyngan to Broken Hill, if undertaken, should be constructed without delay, and that the work should be let in sections, as it is apparent that New South Wales is being deprived of a considerable amount of its legitimate trade owing to the want of proper and speedy means of transit to the Darling River and Barrier Ranges, and efforts are still being made, and also contemplated, to further attach and secure the trade of New South Wales to other colonies.

W. J. TRICKETT,

Chairman Sectional Committee, Nyngan to Cobar Railway.

31st October, 1889.

MEMORANDUM BY DR. GARRAN.

IN two of the main conclusions at which the Sectional Committee has arrived I entirely concur. In the first place it is clear, from the evidence, that a railway from Nyngan to Cobar taken by itself is not at present justifiable. One train each way on alternate days would in a month take the traffic of a year, and the money the line would cost could be spent more to the national advantage elsewhere.

But there is a justification for immediately constructing a trans-colonial line to Broken Hill. Under any circumstances the Far West has considerable claims. But the sudden development of the mining industry at Broken Hill has precipitated the demand and has fixed the immediate point to be reached. Broken Hill is now, in respect of population, the second city of New South Wales. It has sprung up suddenly within 35 miles of our western border; it has been neglected, and it feels the slight. It will be a great and growing centre of industry for many years, and it ought, for political, as well as commercial reasons, to be linked with the capital without further delay. Broken Hill is at what appears to be the southern end of a mineral belt of country, about 40 miles in breadth, and running north to the Queensland border. Whether this mineral belt extends southward to the Murray is not yet determined, but it has been shown that with the exception of one interval, where the soil is sandy on the surface, the mineral indications are traceable all the way to Mount Browne. It is the opinion of mining experts that this district will be the scene of considerable mining activity, and should paying mines be opened along this route a line running northward from some point of the route between Menindie and Broken Hill would accommodate the whole of this district. At present the whole trade of our north-west goes to Adelaide, and all the prospective trade of that district must go there too unless this portion of the colony is connected with the New South Wales system. It is not to be supposed that the making of a railway will draw to Sydney all the trade that now goes to South Australian ports, for Broken Hill is only 334 miles from Adelaide, and only 218 miles from Port Pirie, while it is distant 670 miles from Sydney by the nearest possible railway route. But there will be a considerable passenger traffic and some trade in bullion and general merchandise. It is not, however, only the trade with Sydney that has to be considered. It is the possible trade

trade with other portions of New South Wales, and especially that portion which lies west of the Blue Mountains. The evidence goes to show that there is room for a large and profitable business in coal, coke, mining timber, and firewood, and a still larger trade in fodder, fruit, and dairy produce. Much that Broken Hill now draws from the west it could more conveniently draw from the east, if only transit were provided. To provide this transit is the business of the State, which, in this colony, has the railway monopoly, and this should be done not only for the sake of Broken Hill, but for the sake of our producers, who are the natural purveyors for the wants of Broken Hill. For want of a railway we are not only losing trade, but we are keeping down the settlement of our lands and the extension of our agricultural industry. The railway, therefore, is a national and an urgent necessity, and should be undertaken with the least possible delay.

But when this is recognized, there still remains the question as to the route by which Broken Hill should be reached. My colleagues, who traversed the route by way of Nyngan and Cobar, have been much impressed by the richness of the country—which they have seen in an exceptionally favourable season—and also with the favourable commercial position of Wilcannia as the focus of the trade with the mid-Darling, and with the country to the north-west; and to these considerations great weight is due. But, if we are to deal with this question as a national one, we must look at it comprehensively, and altogether apart from the present importance of different townships. Happily the problem is not much complicated by existing lines or vested interests. The map of our west is, so far as railways are concerned, almost a *tabula rasa*, and we can deal with it as we please. And on looking at the map it will be seen at once that the most direct line from Sydney to Broken Hill is through Forbes. Distance is an important element in the discussion, because one object of the proposed line is to capture as much as possible of the trade, and as we are already heavily handicapped in respect of distance it would be unwise to increase that difficulty by taking an unnecessarily round-about route. According to the list of distances furnished by the Public Works Department, the distance from Sydney to Broken Hill, via Wilcannia, is 732 miles, while that from Sydney, via Forbes, is 670 miles, the comparison being 62 miles in favour of the Lachlan route. It is indeed argued that the line to Nyngan being already made, it will need less new line to start from that point and go through Wilcannia than it will to open out the Lachlan route. That is true; but it would require still less new line to reach Broken Hill from Hay, via Menindie. From Nyngan to Broken Hill is 355 miles, while from Hay to the same point is only 274 miles, so that if the length of new line were the determining consideration the line to the Barrier should spring from Hay, which would give a saving in construction of 81 miles. It will probably be recognized, however, that the natural extension of the Hay line is to Wentworth and the Border, which would give the shortest through line from Sydney to Adelaide, and that the national line to Menindie is via the Lachlan Valley. Moreover, in measuring distances we might fairly take Forbes as a starting point, because a line to that township has been already submitted, and there is great probability of its being approved, the main dispute being as to the route by which Forbes shall be approached. Even supposing that that line should not be approved, the existing railway system already touches the Lachlan at Cowra. Taking that as a starting point, the line from that township to Broken Hill would be very easy of construction. Cowra is less than 1,000 feet above the level of the sea, and Broken Hill is about the same altitude. The whole of the route between the two is, for railway purposes, practically a level, the lowest point being the crossing of the Darling at Menindie. But neither directness of route nor facilities for construction constitute the chief recommendation of the Lachlan Valley Line. That recommendation from a national point of view is that it offers the maximum opportunities for the settlement of an agricultural population along nearly the whole length of the line. On the Cobar route water can only be conserved in surface tanks or raised from wells, and the area of land capable of irrigation must therefore be limited. Apart from irrigation, cultivation must be precarious. But from Cowra to a point below Condobolin the line would go by the side of a running stream, which not being a navigable river could be dammed at intervals so as to throw the water back up all the tributaries. From that point for many miles westward lies the Willandra Billabong, whose course is parallel with the railway route, and which can also be easily made a line of water storage available for the irrigation of the adjacent land. Between the head of this Billabong and the head of a channel along which the water of the Darling will naturally flow, is a short distance of slightly

slightly elevated land. One witness, indeed, asserts that there is no such elevation as will prevent a continuous canal from the Lachlan to the Darling, but this statement was made without measurement, and might not be confirmed by actual survey. But it is in evidence that without any artificial work the flood water of the Darling runs 80 miles back towards the east. This means that all the way from Cowra to Menindie the railway may run side by side with an invaluable conduit, capable of supplying all the water required for fodder and crops, orchards and vineyards. To the westward of Menindie, the Darling runs backward in creeks to a distance of more than 15 miles, and as it is only 65 miles from Menindie to Broken Hill, there is only a distance of 50 miles between these two points above the elevation of naturally running water. At the present time all the fodder for Broken Hill is brought a distance of 200 miles and more, from South Australian farms, which are dependent on precarious and generally defective rainfall. A great deal of the milk supply too is brought a similar distance. By a railway on the route I propose irrigable farms could be established within 50 miles of Broken Hill, and from that point eastward there could be a continuous line of them all the way to Cowra. The importance and the profitableness of fodder cultivation has been increased by the recent experience gained with respect to ensilage, proving as this does the ease with which it can be made and preserved, and its superiority to hay. The construction of such a continuous line of agricultural holdings right through the heart of our colony, from the western foot of our Blue Mountains to the eastern foot of the Barrier slope, would work a practical revolution in agricultural settlement, and would begin a new era for New South Wales. And the market for the fodder raised would be not only in the mineral district at the terminus of the line, but would be found in all the squattages lying to the north of the Lachlan.

Much of the pastoral trade, too, of Central Riverina which now goes down to Hay for shipment by the river would be intercepted by the route described, and on this point the evidence of Mr. Harper (the Railway Goods Superintendent) is very clear.

So far as coal is concerned, it is true that it has been found some 17 miles from Dubbo, and this coal could be conveniently sent to the west by the Cobar route, and would be available for the mines in that locality. But too little is known at present as to the quantity and quality of this coal to enable us to speak of it with any confidence. We are, however, quite sure of the coal of Lithgow and its neighbourhood, and this will find a market in the far west as soon as railway transit is provided. If the coal proprietors could learn how to make coke equal in quality to that imported from England—and it is reasonable to hope that they will—there will be a still further market for their produce. The line I suggest, made substantially as a trunk line, might cost £5,000 a mile, exclusive of the bridge over the Darling, which would cost not less than £60,000—a gross outlay for 470 miles of (say) £2,350,000; or, allowing for a margin, £3,000,000. But in this expenditure there is nothing to cause alarm, because we have in the land adjacent to the line an asset in the shape of unsold land, which, with time allowed, would defray the cost of construction. If a reserve were made of a few miles by the side of the line, and fairly valued as railway land, and if the surveyed farms were alienated under the “special area” provisions of the Land Act, the instalments of the purchase money would, in thirty years, repay the interest and principal.

I give the preference, therefore, to the Lachlan Valley route over that via Cobar and Wilcannia; firstly, because it is the shortest line as between Sydney and Broken Hill; secondly, because it makes the best connection with our developed western coal-fields; thirdly, because it provides extraordinary facilities for establishing a continuous line of agricultural settlement right across the great plain; and fourthly, because in the area of unsold land adjacent to the line there is a golden opportunity of transmuting that land into railway capital.

If Broken Hill is to be reached by way of Menindie, Cobar will of course be left out, but should the copper-mine be reopened, or should the gold-mines be so developed as to demand a railway, then a branch line could be made at a profit, or the same point could be reached by a line from Condobolin through Nymagee, along a route already known to be metalliferous, and this line could be extended to the Darling. Such a line if hereafter justified would accommodate the country intermediate between the present line to Bourke and the proposed line to Menindie.

ANDREW GARRAN.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

[TAKEN BEFORE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.]

RAILWAY FROM NYNGAN TO COBAR.

NYNGAN, FRIDAY, 4 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).	
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
HENRY COPELAND, Esq.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JOHN HURLEY, Esq.	

The Sectional Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. John Prince, forwarding manager for Great Cobar and Nymagee Copper Mines, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] Are you a resident at Nyngan? Yes.
2. Are you engaged in business? Yes; I am a forwarding manager for the Great Cobar and Nymagee Copper-mines.
3. Do you conduct a separate business also? Yes, as forwarding agent.
4. Are you a justice of the peace? Yes.
5. How long have you been resident at Nyngan? About six years and four months.
6. What is the population of Nyngan at the present time? Close upon 1,000 at present. Normally it is about 850.
7. During the time you have been here has the population increased or decreased? It has varied every year. When Nyngan was the railway terminus the population during the wool season was as high as 1,500. Of late years, since the railway has gone on to Bourke, it has decreased, and the normal population is about 850. As it is now about the middle of the wool season the population is 1,000.
8. Do you know the proposed route of the railway from Nyngan to Cobar? Yes, very well; I have been over it.
9. What is the character of the country? I call it fairly good western country, capable of doing a great deal more than it is now used for.
10. Is it purely pastoral country? Yes, at present. It is also mineral country.
11. What minerals are obtainable? Copper. We have a new copper mine, which has been worked about six months, about 48 miles on the road to Cobar. It is called the Burra Burra, and is owned by a small company. They have just commenced smelting.
12. Is it a large concern? It is not at present. It is just being developed. It promises to be a very good one. Geologically the country seems very favourable for copper and silver.
13. Has any rival route or other route been mooted for the railway between Nyngan and Cobar? No.
14. What is the nature of the country between here and Cobar as regards its suitability for constructing a railway? It is exceptionally good. Ballast is easily obtainable; the gradients are very favourable. It is one of the most favourable countries for railway construction that could be imagined. Gravel ballast can be obtained from the ridges, and stone ballast from the ranges. There are 30,000 or 35,000 tons of good slag at the copper mine which would make exceptionally good ballast, and which could be obtained at a very small price.
15. Do you think it would be possible to make the railway without ballast? I cannot conceive a railway being made without ballast of some kind. I know it has been mooted, but I never saw it in my experience.
16. What is the state of public feeling in Nyngan with regard to this line? As in most young towns, the people are afraid of the trade leaving the town. My own feeling is that perhaps for a time the railway would disturb the business of the town, but eventually it would do so much good to the country generally, that although I hold a good deal of town property, I would like to see the railway carried out.
17. Would the success of the railway depend a great deal upon the mining industry? Yes; I am speaking of the possibility of the railway opening the country beyond Cobar. There is a valuable tract of country without any railway communication at all.
18. What is the position of the mining industry? The Great Cobar mine in its prosperous days was sending about 3,200 tons of copper per year to this town, and there was, I suppose, about 2,000 tons of backloading for the mines and the township. There were about 60,000 tons of fuel required, and some coal was brought from Dubbo.
19. Is the Great Cobar mine closed at present? Yes.
20. What is the reason? The principal reason is the low price of copper. Another reason is the heavy cost of carriage. When the French copper syndicate raised the price of copper our mine was considerably

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in debt; but in a very short time the debt was paid off, and now there are several thousands of pounds available for payment of dividend, or for working the mine in the event of the price of copper going up again.

21. Can you give us any figures to show what would be the probable revenue derivable from a railway between Nyngan and Cobar? The figures were carefully gone through about five years ago, especially in the Railway Department, and as far as I remember it was then reckoned that there would be about 2,000 tons of goods sent to Cobar per annum, and about 3,200 tons of copper sent down here. Then there was a large amount of fuel required, as nearly all the wood around the mining township was used up. The company constructed a tramway a considerable number of miles towards Nyngan to carry wood, and that was working seven or eight years.

22. Was the fact of all the wood in the neighbourhood of that tramway being consumed one of the reasons for discontinuing work at the mine? Yes; I have heard from a very good authority, not connected with the mine at all, that there is quite twenty years work to be done there—not with a very rich class of ore; but if we had fuel at a reasonable rate it could be worked even at the present low price of copper—that is, if the fuel was obtainable at the same price as at first.

23. What was the price? I think 4s. 6d. per ton.

24. Do you know anything about the coal obtained at Dubbo? Yes; we obtained two or three truck loads for a trial. It was thought to be fairly good coal.

25. Was it suitable for smelting purposes? Yes; I understand the coal mine at Dubbo was but just opened, and only partially worked, and the people who sent the coal said that as the mine was developed the coal would be very much better.

26. What is the rate of carriage now between Nyngan and Cobar? £3 15s. per ton. We have paid as much as £10, and even £25 per ton within the last twelve months, during the wet weather. The people in both the mining townships were almost famishing for food.

27. What time do the teams take to get from Nyngan to Cobar? Five days in fine weather, and ten weeks in bad wet weather. You can hardly imagine a worse road in wet weather. If the mine had continued there must have been a metal road made.

28. When the road is bad has there to be a special contract made with the carriers every time? Yes. Although a union has been established here, it has been made so elastic that when the roads get very bad they can charge almost any rate.

29. What are your views as to forming an ordinary road? It would be very expensive. With regard to ordinary roads I have had thirty or thirty-three years experience, and I think it is a very great mistake to make such roads in this country. They are not only very difficult to make, but a large amount of money has also to be spent annually for maintenance, and they are continually fretting away. A railway seems to be the only proper means of communication with a place like Cobar.

30. Is there any possibility of the district being converted into an agricultural district? I do not think it will be a great wheat growing district; but I believe that if a fair amount of water could be obtained for irrigation, it could grow anything. It is the finest district in Australasia. At my own place I have a vine planted only three years ago, and it promises to bear 2 cwt. of grapes this year.

31. What is the average rainfall here? It varies very much. During the last ten or twelve years it has gone down as low as a little over 3 inches. About 13 inches is the general average. This year we have had already about 18 inches of rain.

32. What was the average during the last two or three years of drought? Last year, I am told, was one of the most serious years ever experienced in the district. There was no rain up to the latter end of March, 4 or 5 inches then fell in Nyngan, and there was less in other parts of the district. The previous year was rather a good year. In 1887, there were 5 inches in February, and continuous rain that supplied an immense amount of feed up to June, then the weather dried up. During the whole of 1888 it was very dry, and it continued so until March, 1889. These were fifteen months of the driest weather ever experienced in the district. That has had a bad effect on the prosperity of the district.

33. Now that the season has been so good, are there evidences already that the prosperity of the district will be materially increased? Yes; there are strong evidences of it. The people are more hopeful, and they are beginning to spend money.

34. I gather from your remarks that you are favourable to the construction of this railway from Nyngan to Cobar? Yes; I represent a Company that want it very badly. Although I believe that for a time it would do me an immense deal of harm, eventually the country would be very much benefitted by it.

35. An officer of the Government, Mr. Harper, estimated that the revenue for this railway would be in round numbers, £12,000 a year. That was in the beginning of 1888. Can you say whether or not it is a fair estimate? I know that at the Board meetings of my Company, we thought he had very much underestimated the traffic for the purpose—so it was said—of blocking the railway. I myself saw Messrs. Harper and Kirkcaldie, and they were very unfavourable to the railway. They said to me, "Suppose you had the money, would you build the railway yourself?" I replied, "Certainly not as a commercial matter if it was offered to me; but I think from a national standpoint it should be done at once." They seemed to be under the impression that if the railway was constructed to Cobar and through to Wilcannia, a large amount of wool would drift into South Australia and do the railway great harm; but I pointed out that the river was so seldom available, and was so desperately unreliable that if people established commercial relations with Sydney, there was no doubt that that city would derive the benefit of the traffic.

36. If Mr. Harper states that the revenue would be £12,000 a year;—do you think that is an underestimate? It is very greatly under-estimated, I think.

37. That is for the traffic between the two places merely? Yes.

38. Have you considered the question of this railway being extended beyond Cobar? Yes.

39. What are your views on that subject? I have made some inquiries with respect to the construction of this line to the west from other points, and I have come to the conclusion that the extension from Cobar would be by far the most favourable, and that it would be more easily constructed than any other. The country is very favourable for railway construction, and the railway would reach Wilcannia within a distance of 175 miles. Its further extension to the silver country would be a very great national good.

40. Do you think it would have the effect of bringing traffic from Wilcannia and the other western districts to Sydney? Yes; very largely.

41. Have you had any conversation with graziers or others in the locality of Wilcannia as to whether or not

not they would send their produce by rail to Sydney? No. There is a strange diversity of opinion even amongst pastoralists themselves. They think that a railway will bring a lot of people who will swoop down on their runs and pick out the best parts of the country, and they are doubtful whether or not the railway will be beneficial to them. I think it is really because they have not thought of the railway from a national standpoint.

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42. Is there any railway league in Nyngan? No. The only body is the Progress Committee; and I daresay the evidence of its members would be contradictory. Those who hold interests in the town, and who think the trade will leave it, are opposed to the railway; others think that it will do good.

43. Do you think the Great Cobar Mine would be worked if the railway were constructed? Yes; if they could get fuel at a reasonable price. They cannot obtain fuel within a radius of 10 or 14 miles. That is a very serious thing. Even under the best conditions a copper mine pays away nearly all the money obtained in labour and material, and when the price of copper gets very low the mines succumb. That is the reason why the mine is closed, and not because it is short of copper ore.

44. *Dr. Garran.*] On this railway map before us you see a line from Dubbo to Bourke, and a line from Werris Creek to Narrabri, which it is proposed to continue to Walgett? Yes.

45. So long as the districts between those two railways remain in a purely pastoral stage do you think they are sufficiently provided with railway facilities? I am not well aware of the character of the country, but my impression is that it would bear another railway between the two.

46. Do you not think that a squatter is reasonably well off if he is within 50 miles of a railway station? Yes. I do not think that squatters like to have railways made very close to them, as they think people will then come and overhaul their runs.

47. Looking at the country between the two railways I have pointed out, does the traffic of the western half come here or does it drain down to Dubbo? The Coonamble traffic goes to Dubbo. That saves 100 miles of carriage.

48. They prefer to take a longer road to save railway carriage? Not always; but the roads go in that direction, and people often prefer to go a few miles farther along a road they have been accustomed to travel, and where their interests are centered.

49. Do you get the Quambone business here? No; it goes to Nevertire and Trangie. The Mount Harris traffic comes to Nyngan.

50. How far is that from Nyngan? About 50 miles.

51. Do you get anything to the east of Mount Harris? We do at times.

52. Then this line to Bourke does not sweep any traffic from the east for a greater distance than 50 miles? I might say 60 miles.

53. From how far west does the trade come to Nyngan? As far as Mount Hope. We have a good deal of traffic from there.

54. Does Nyngan get the whole of the Cobar traffic? I do not think I would be right in saying that. When the country got very dry and water was very scarce, a large amount of traffic went for a short time to Coolabah.

55. Is there any case in which it would go to the Darling? I can hardly conceive that there would be.

56. Do you get any pastoral traffic west of Cobar? Yes, from Nekarboo which is about 70 miles away.

57. That would be not more than 40 miles from the Darling? Yes. During the 6½ years I have been here the Darling has only been open for one whole year.

58. When the Darling is open as it is this season how far back to the east will it draw the wool? For a radius, say of 60 or 70 miles.

59. Then we can only guarantee for a railway from Nyngan to Cobar, the trade west of it in years when the river is unnavigable? There are times when the river carriage is immensely cheaper than the railway carriage, but the river is open very seldom and it is unreliable. When the river is navigable our roads are in a very bad condition.

60. Even in a wet season like this are the roads bad for more than a fortnight after the rain? That depends altogether on the season. There were ten weeks during which the roads to Cobar were almost impassable.

61. Is that the longest time you know of the roads being bad? No; I remember another part of the year when the roads were even worse for a longer period. In the Nymagee township, with a population of something like 1,800, there were not more than 2½ bags of flour.

62. If Cobar were a mining township in full swing as it was once, the question of speedy transit would be very important? Yes. Besides the copper there are many gold-mines opened out in the Cobar district, and they promise very well.

63. If Cobar again becomes a mining township, do you think that a railway to it is an absolute necessity? Yes.

64. Supposing copper does not come up to £50 a ton, and Cobar simply remains a pastoral township, would there be any justification for making a railway? A great number of gold-mines are waiting, apparently, for a speedier means of transit. The uncertainty of getting supplies has been so great as to hinder the owners from putting on men.

65. Are any of those gold-mines distinctly profitable? I believe there is a very fair prospect of several being payable.

66. Can you go so far as to say that at present gold-mining has got to such a point as to justify making a railway? Not of itself.

67. Supposing that neither copper nor gold-mining would justify a railway, would the pastoral productiveness of the district itself justify a railway? Yes. If a railway is not made a macadamized road will have to be made, and a road is always a source of expense.

68. Supposing the mines collapsed, would we be justified in making a macadamized road or railway looking at Cobar as a pastoral centre? Not to Cobar only; but it is an absolute necessity for the country beyond. To stop at Cobar would be hardly wise. From a national standpoint I think the railway is an absolute necessity. I consider that a line to Cobar and on to Wilcannia would be justifiable on national grounds even if there were no copper nor gold-mining around Cobar.

69. Would it be possible to find a grade of 1 in 100 between Nyngan and Cobar? Yes; I am almost sure of it.

70. Is the country capable of growing fodder for the supply of the district? Yes.

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71. If it grew more than it wanted in a good season would there be any export? Yes. If a railway were made to the silver country we could compete with Adelaide. We would have no advantage over people on the Darling, but the soil here is capable of growing anything.
72. Have you had any railway experience? Yes; as a contractor, for twenty-five years.
73. What do you think would be the cost of a workable line from Nyngan to Cobar? A light line with station buildings could be put down for £2,500 a mile. A trunk line to the silver country ought to be made more substantial. £4,000 a mile would do.
74. Do you mean by a light railway rails of 40 lb.? No; heavy rails with light construction. I think that to use light rails is very false economy.
75. Do you think that the railway to Bourke has been made needlessly expensive? Yes. I believe that on the railway from Dubbo to Bourke there has been at least £1,000 per mile spent on unnecessary earthworks.
76. Would you recommend similar extravagance on the line to Cobar? No. I would recommend cheap railway stations, constructed of galvanized-iron, which, in this climate, lasts twice as long as it does in Sydney.
77. Is there timber here suitable for sleepers? We have pine which resists white ants; and there is ironbark within a reasonable distance.
78. Have you had experience of tramways? Yes.
79. Would you recommend a tramway instead of a light railway from Nyngan to Cobar? No. It would be a very great mistake, in view of the large mineral traffic that will probably exist. Tramways are not suitable for a greater length than 20 miles. There is no saving in the working of a tramway. The only difference is in the first cost.
80. Do you think that a majority of the inhabitants of Nyngan are opposed to the construction of a railway to Cobar? The opposition comes from people who have an idea that a township necessarily collapses after a railway passes through it. I believe myself that for a time the railway might be detrimental to the interests of the town.
81. Are the people of Cobar unanimously in favour of the railway? Yes.
82. Are the squatters in favour of it? Very many are; and others are against it, for reasons I have already told the Committee.
83. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Was the Great Cobar Copper-mine worked for a considerable time under a guarantee from a French syndicate? No. The Company sold its copper to the French syndicate for £60 per ton, the syndicate restricting the Company as to quantity.
84. Have you heard a report that the high grade ores in the Great Cobar Mine have been exhausted? Yes. There is no other mine on which so little has been spent in prospecting. Owing to the enormous drain upon the mine for carriage both ways, prospecting could never be carried out as it should have been.
85. Do you think that if the railway were constructed, and even if the price of copper were much less £50 per ton, the Great Cobar Mine would be reopened? Yes; I believe it would be reopened to-morrow.
86. Is Cobar a town which depends upon the fluctuations of the copper market? Although it depends largely upon that it does not do so altogether. There is a large pastoral country at the back which draws supplies from Cobar. I believe that the town will hold its own even if gold as well as copper-mining should collapse. Many people are now thinking of taking up homestead leases.
87. Have supplies ever been received at Cobar for South Australia *via* Louth? Yes, I have heard so. Ore has also been sent by that route in times past, I know.
88. In the event of this proposed railway being constructed do you think that any such competition would disappear? Yes, altogether.
89. It has been stated in official evidence that the country between Nyngan and Cobar and Wilcannia is the driest in New South Wales—is that a fact? It is very dry country.
90. In the event of several dry seasons in succession would there be traffic for the railway? From a national standpoint the railway should be made to keep the country open. In dry seasons I am sure the railway would be utilized by the squatters to send away their stock to mountain runs. It would thus save millions of sheep.
91. Do I understand that you consider the line would not pay commercially, as a local line, but that it ought to be constructed from a national standpoint? I do not feel sure that the line would not pay as a local line, but from a national standpoint I think it is essentially necessary.
92. Do you say that the squatters are opposed to the railway, because they fear it might bring settlers on to their runs? I hope that is not the general opinion of the squatters, but I know that that view has been mooted. I believe that there are only a few squatters so stupid as to think that the railway would hurt them; and, as far as I know, the squatters along the proposed line are not of that class.
93. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you think that there are 7 tons of goods sent from here per week to Cobar at present? Yes, and a great deal more. I believe I am safe in saying that the average is 5 tons per day.
94. Is it a fact that the Great Cobar Copper-mine is nearly worked out? No.
95. What is the average weekly tonnage of goods sent from here to Nymagee? About the same as it is to Cobar. There are times not very far distant when we have sent from our own establishment at least 30 tons per day.
96. If the copper and gold industry fail, will there be sufficient back country to support the township? Yes, and a railway.
97. Does not the back country receive its supplies from Cobar at present? No; because the river is open.
98. To what price would copper have to rise before the mine could be started again? I think I have heard them say that if it went up to £48 they could start the mine. I believe that if fuel could be obtained at a reasonable price, operations might be commenced at the present price of copper. At present they pay about 8s. per ton for wood.
99. What is the present percentage of the ore? From about 6½ to 10 per cent.
100. If copper went up to £45 per ton, could you afford to pay 8s. per ton for wood? If copper were sold at £50 per ton the mine would pay dividends.
101. Are you of opinion that it would be necessary under any circumstances to construct a macadamized road, if the Government did not construct a railway? I think I am justified in saying that the Government are constructing some portion of a macadamized road. A first-class road would cost at least £1,800 per mile. I think that a macadamized road especially in a country where there is not much stone is one of the greatest mistakes possible.

102. Do you think the Government would be justified in constructing this line when it is estimated that the annual loss will be £11,100, assuming the mines to be in full work as in days past? I can say that those figures are not correct. From the figures I have seen the country would not lose anything like that sum. In the estimate you have quoted, the Nymagee traffic is under-estimated.

103. How much do you think would be a fair estimate for the Nymagee traffic? I cannot quite remember. I think over £2,000 would be a fair estimate.

104. Does pine make first class sleepers? No, but I believe that it makes sleepers that will not be attacked by white ants. Iron bark would make better sleepers.

105. Is it not a fact that where the iron bolt goes through a pine sleeper the timber immediately splits open? Not always, but a pine sleeper would be nearly as expensive as a sleeper of a better class of timber. Extra chairing would be required. There are immense forests of ironbark about Dubbo, Narramine, and Trangie.

106. If the line were constructed, do you suppose the inhabitants would be satisfied if the Government only ran a train three days per week? I should imagine that the people would hardly express a wish to have trains run more frequently if the traffic would not warrant it.

107. Do you agree with Mr. Kirkcaldie's evidence, that even when Cobar was enjoying the best of its days, and the copper mine was in full swing, four trucks a day would more than supply the demands of the traffic? I have a very great respect for Mr. Kirkcaldie's opinion, but I am quite sure that he commenced his inquiry with a strong prejudice against the line. He was determined that the line should not go to Cobar if he could help it, and he expressed himself to that effect. We have sent more than four trucks per day away from our own establishment, and we were comparatively only doing a small business.

108. *Mr. Hurley.*] You have stated that there is a justification for the construction of the railway, because the geological features of the country indicate the existence of copper, gold, and silver? Yes, combined with the industrial prospects of the district.

109. Are you a geologist? No; but I have made the subject a very close study. I have had considerable experience in mining.

110. Would you desire to set up your opinion on this subject as a geologist? No.

111. Is there a likelihood of the gold mines around Cobar employing a large number of men in future? Yes.

112. Do you estimate that the output of copper was 3,200 tons per annum? Yes, that was when the mine was producing copper largely.

113. If a statement emanated from your board from the Company's books, or any other source, to the effect that the actual output only amounted to 1,905 tons per annum, would you still adhere to your statement? I would say that both statements might be correct. This evidence with regard to the railway was taken six and-a-half years ago, and the output was what I have stated. In later years it has decreased considerably, because the price of copper has come down.

114. If the railway were constructed to Cobar would the people there use Dubbo coal? I am not prepared to say, but I think they would be certain to use it if its quality was very good. As far as I remember, when the Dubbo coal was used at the mine, the report made was that it was not of very best quality, but bad as it was, it would take the place of wood if wood could not be obtained at the low rate at which it was first obtained.

115. Would not there be a difficulty in getting Dubbo coal owing to its distance from the railway station? I think so. The distance is formidable, and that would render Dubbo coal only equal to the Lithgow coal for our purposes. However, it is all carboniferous country about Dubbo.

116. Do you think that the country between here and Cobar is suitable for agriculture? Yes; I believe the larger part of it is.

117. Do you think that the country between here and Cobar is included in the cretaceous formation? Yes; I believe it is.

118. From your knowledge as a forwarding agent, do you think that the estimate of £15,000 per annum for all classes of goods between here and Cobar is a fair estimate? I think the present estimate is only £12,000; I think I am fairly within the mark in saying that where the conditions of the country were what they were previously, there would be from £18,000 to £20,000 per annum of traffic, instead of £12,000.

119. Estimating the cost of the line at £241,661 and the net revenue at £15,000 would there not be a loss of £8,000 a year to the state? I cannot say from memory but I am sure that while there might be a little loss to the country for a number of years it would be nothing like £11,000 per annum.

120. Taking the actual loss at £8,000 per annum do you think that in the face of that the Government would be justified in making the railway? In the first place I do not think there would be such a loss, and secondly considering the chances that exist of the country being opened out and the traffic being very much increased within a short time I think the Government would be justified in making the railway even at a loss of £7,000 per annum for a year or two, as it has parted with so little of the fee-simple of the country.

121. Especially taking into consideration the fact that if the cretaceous formation exists between here and Cobar there are various agricultural areas which might be opened up in the event of water being conserved? I am quite sure it would.

122. Have you heard your Company say that they would be prepared to pay double rates on this railway if it were made as compared with the rates charged on the railway between Sydney and Bourke? I think such an offer was made by the Company and I think they made some sort of offer to construct the line themselves from here to Cobar.

123. Do you think that the future working of the Cobar copper mine depends upon a rise in the price of copper? Not altogether. A rise in the price of copper would assist us under any circumstances, but if a supply of firewood and ordinary stores could be obtained at a reasonable rate it would help us more than anything else.

124. Independently of a rise in the price of copper do you think the mine would resume work? I think the mine would resume work if copper went up to £48 per ton.

125. Are you a shareholder in the Company? No.

126. Do you advocate the line from a national stand-point? Yes.

127. Do you own any land on the route of the railway? Not an acre.

J. Prince,
Esq.

4 Oct., 1889.

Alexander Adams, Esq., Road Superintendent, sworn, and examined:—

- A. Adams, Esq.
4 Oct., 1889.
128. *Chairman.*] What position do you hold? I am a civil engineer and surveyor, and I hold the office of Road Superintendent for the Cobar district. I have held that office for seven or eight years.
129. What is the character of the road from here to Cobar? It is very bad after rain. Two inches of rain makes it thoroughly impassable for teams, or almost anything. There is really no road with the exception of a mile and a half of metalling about 10 miles on this side of Cobar.
130. What has the Department done with regard to that portion of the road? They have formed a road half a chain wide and metalled it for a width of 20 feet. It is drained at the side, and metalled with clay, slate, ironstone, and quartz, obtained in the vicinity. The cost has been about £600 per mile.
131. Has the work been done effectively? Yes; the road will answer very fairly. It will require maintenance now and again.
132. Is the metal of a good quality? It is not the most suitable, but it is the best in the vicinity.
133. Have you had considerable experience in making roads throughout the Colony? I have had much more experience in New Zealand than here.
134. Have you had experience in making roads over country of the same character as that between Nyngan and Cobar? Not quite the same, but still I could form an opinion on the subject.
135. What is your estimate of the cost of making a good road from end to end between those two points so that drays and all sorts of vehicles could go along it at all times? In reply to a telegram which I received from the Secretary for Public Works a short time ago I estimated the cost at £130,000. I had not time to look into the matter properly then, but I have since found that it would cost considerably more than I estimated.
136. Have you any details as to how you arrived at your conclusions? I divided the road into sections of 20 miles. I estimated that the first section of 20 miles from here would cost £62,100—that is the most expensive part of the road. I estimated that the cost of the second section of 20 miles would be £46,900, the third and fourth sections £32,500 each—that would make a total of £174,000.
137. What would cause the great extra expense in the first section? There is no metal to be got along the road.
138. Where do you propose to get the metal? To bring it down from Girilambone by train to Nyngan, and cart it along the line.
139. What is the quality of the metal? Granite.
140. On the other sections where you estimate the cost would not be so much, is there good metal? There is fair metal, but not the most suitable. It consists of quartz and porphyry. I may mention that I have estimated this road for a width of 20 feet. I received a telegram from the Department asking for an estimate for a road 24 feet wide. It would make the cost over £200,000. I considered that a width of 20 feet was sufficient.
141. What would be the cost of maintaining the road you have estimated for? £10,000 a year.
142. After the road was made in the first instance would it last for 12 months? Yes. In my estimate I took into consideration culverts, box-drains, and works of that character, of which there would be a good many.
143. Have you had any experience in railway construction? No; but I have laid out railways in New Zealand, and seen a large amount of construction, though not in charge of the works.
144. Were those narrow gauge railways? Yes.
145. Are those railways constructed on ballasted roads? Yes.
146. From your experience in road making and in regard to the construction of railways, which do you think it would be better to construct between Nyngan and Cobar—a road or a railway? I have no hesitation in recommending a railway. Where a railway can be constructed at nearly the cost of a road a railway is preferable by far. The country between Nyngan and Cobar is very suitable for railway construction. It is nearly level country. It is gently undulating country and a line could be constructed at very little expense. The grades are very easy. I believe there are some pretty steep grades as the line is laid out, but I think the route might be altered. At present it runs over a number of ridges which might be avoided by a detour of half-a-mile.
147. What grade would be obtained by making the diversion you refer to? I think that in several places where at present there is a grade of 1 in 40 to 1 in 50 the line might be made almost level. A grade of 1 in 100 could be easily obtained.
148. Could that be made the ruling grade? Yes.
149. Have you a thorough knowledge of the road? Yes.
150. Can you name any particular place where there has been palpably a wrong grade? Yes, there is a place called Budds Gap where there is a deep cutting through the hill, which might be entirely avoided by a small detour. Then between Cobar and 16 miles there is a series of ridges that could be avoided entirely by keeping to the right or left hand side. There are also other places between Hall's and Budd's.
151. What facilities would there be for obtaining water for the engine along the line? There is a large Government tank about 16 or 17 miles from Nyngan full of water. There are 28,000 yards of excavation in that tank. 40 miles from Nyngan there is another tank with abundance of water, and 20 miles further on there is another Government tank close to the road.
152. As a professional man and looking at all the circumstances would you certainly recommend a railway in preference to a road? Yes.
153. *Dr. Garran.*] Is there at the present time such traffic as would justify the making of a macadamised road 24 feet wide? I think 20 feet wide would be quite enough for the amount of traffic.
154. Has there ever been such traffic as would justify the making of a macadamised road from end to end? I cannot say that there has been, looking at the very large expenditure that would be involved.
155. Could you at a moderate expense patch the worst parts of the road so as to make it equal to the present necessities of the traffic? After a fall of two inches of rain the road is impassable all along. Some places are worse than others.
156. For how long? For a few weeks in summer and in winter perhaps for a month or two.
157. What is the smallest amount of ballast or metal which would give the road a moderate degree of hardness? A depth of 9 inches at the least.
158. How much a mile would that come to? The estimate I have already given is based on that depth.
159. Even if a railway is made would the side traffic be shut off after rain? Yes.

160. Then if we have 3 inches of rain no traffic could get to any of the side stations? Not for the time being. The roads to the side stations would not be cut up very much, and they would dry up quickly. The main road, however, gets so cut up that it becomes impassable.
161. You would still have to make approaches to the side stations? There would not be so much traffic to the side stations as there now is along the main road.
162. In that case the Nymagee traffic would be cut off in bad weather? Yes.
163. What would you estimate to be the cost of a railway between Nyngan and Cobar, the rails to be 60 lb. steel rails, the railway being made as economical as possible in all other respects? Between £2,000 and £3,000 a mile.
164. Do you think that £3,000 is the outside figure? Yes.
165. The estimate of the officials is £2,560 per mile, on condition that the iron work is brought up at 1d., instead of 4d. per ton—do you agree in the main with that estimate? Yes, pretty well.
166. What ballast would you use on the line? I would use the ballast from Budd's Gap. There is porphyry there.
167. Would not the slag in the Cobar Co.'s mine be good ballast? It would answer, but is not so good as the metal at Budd's.
168. Would you make the formation level considerably above the surface level? No.
169. Would you lay the sleepers right on the surface level? I should be inclined to raise it a little.
170. Do you think that the waters, as they collect after heavy rain, might be allowed to go under the rails in broad by-washes? Yes.
171. You think that that would not injure the permanent way? No.
172. Do you think that the railway might be useful as a dam for holding back the water in several places? Yes, but there should be a provision made for a by-wash in the event of too much rain falling.
173. Would not a shallow by-wash under the rails do? Yes.
174. Is the Bourke railway a good model? I think it is a very good line.
175. Do you think that you could cheapen a line from Nyngan to Cobar, as compared with the Bourke railway? Yes, I think there has been unnecessary expenditure on the Bourke railway with regard to station buildings.
176. What is your opinion with regard to the permanent way? The line to Bourke is of a very substantial character. I think that a lighter line might be constructed to Cobar with respect to the rails.
177. What weight would you have? I think from 50 lb. or 60 lb. would answer the purpose.
178. Even in view of a possible extension of the railway to Wilcannia and Broken Hill? Yes.
179. Would such a railway carry all the mineral traffic? Yes.
180. Have not engineers found as a rule that it is foolish to err on the side of light rails? Yes.
181. Do you know any such case? Frequently in the case of tramways, where the rails have been very light.
182. Do you know any case where people have put down heavy rails and they regretted it? No.
183. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What is the width of that part of the road which you had constructed with metal? 20 feet.
184. Is that piece of road of a substantial character, and sufficient to carry the traffic? Yes. It might have been made better, but we had only a limited amount of funds available.
185. With half as much more metal as you put on, it would be a very good road? Yes.
186. Seeing that this road only cost £600 a mile, a road for the whole distance of 80 miles might be made for £50,000? Yes; but it must be remembered that in this case the metal was close at hand. In other cases the metal would have to be carried so long a distance, so that would make all the difference.
187. In constructing a railway over this country would you prefer to have the sleepers above the surface? Yes.
188. Do you not think that it injures the foundation to break the surface of this bad country? I do not think so.
189. Would the only necessity for an embankment be that you think it would be better to have the sleepers laid on an embankment than to have them laid on the surface? I think it would be better to have them raised, but at the same time they might answer on the surface.
190. Have you any objection to half-round sleepers for constructing the line? I prefer the square ones, but I have not had much experience of half-round sleepers.
191. Is it possible to get sleepers along the proposed railway line? I would not regard the timber there as suitable. There is ironbark between here and Dubbo.
192. *Mr. Hurley.*] Did you ask for the expenditure which has been made in metalling a small part of this road? There is a certain amount of money voted every year for roads, and the amount spent on this road was put upon the Estimates.
193. Was it at your suggestion that the money was spent on that part of the road? Yes.
194. Is this bit of road-making an experiment, and do you intend to spend a certain sum of money from year to year? That was the idea. Seeing that money was available it was thought to be desirable to improve some of the worst parts of the road.
195. Is there not another part of the road which is fifty times worse than where you have put this metal? The place where the metal has been put is the worst place.
196. Is it not a wasteful expenditure of public money to spend anything on such a road from time to time? Not in this case. This place where the road was made was exceedingly bad. Teams were bogged there repeatedly.
197. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] In the event of the railway not being constructed, and if the Great Cobar copper mine resumed work, would it be absolutely necessary to make a road between Nyngan and Cobar? It would be necessary to keep the road constantly open.
198. Do you think that the present road patched up would carry the traffic in wet weather? It would be considerably better if certain parts were repaired, but after rain the whole road is bad.
199. In wet weather have teams been stuck up on the roads for considerable periods of time? Yes; from a fortnight to a month. I have heard of their being two months on the road.
200. Was that near the portion where you have been making repairs? Yes; and at other places.
201. *Chairman.*] Do I understand that the expenditure which you have made in repairing a portion of the roads would be of very little use in wet weather, because most parts of the remainder of the road would be impassable? Where the road has been repaired is one of the very worst sections. If the very bad sections were repaired the road would be improved to a certain extent, but still it would not be fit for traffic.
202. In order to carry the permanent traffic would the road have to be made from end to end? Yes.

NYNGAN, SATURDAY, 5 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.
HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. Albert Smith Rowling, Railway Stationmaster, Nyngan, sworn, and examined:—

Mr. A. S.
Rowling.
5 Oct., 1889.

203. *Chairman.*] What position do you occupy? Railway Stationmaster at Nyngan. I have been here three years.
204. What business has been done at Nyngan since you have come here? I have before me press copies of returns made out for the Department at various times. The first is a return dated 24th March, 1887. It is probably for 1886 and 1887. The date has been omitted, but I am of opinion that it is a return for one year. Wool from Cobar and district, which it is supposed would be drawn by the proposed line, is estimated at 7,020 bales, 697 tons 9 cwt., value to the Railway Department £2,597; goods, 130 tons, freight £251 4s.; copper, 169,500 ingots, 1,520 tons, freight £3,756 10s.; goods to Cobar, 2,500 tons; there is no freight given.
205. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What would the freight on those goods amount to? As third-class goods it would be about £8 10s. a ton. The return continues as follows:—Live stock from Cobar and district, 426 trucks, £3,154. Nymagee district: Wool, 4,000 bales, 710 tons, freight £2,580; goods, 45 tons, freight £125; copper, 139,900 ingots, 1,220 tons, £2,971; goods to Nymagee, 1,500 tons; live stock from Nymagee and district, 21 trucks, £160.
206. *Dr. Garran.*] Would you get freight for the whole distance to Nymagee? No, only to the changing station, which is fully a third, if not more, of the distance to Cobar. The next return made out was a return of traffic from Nyngan to Cobar, from 1st July, 1886, to 31st March, 1887. From Nyngan to Nymagee, from Cobar to Nyngan, and from Nymagee to Nyngan. This is a fuller return than the last, as every class of traffic is separate.
207. *Chairman.*] Can you supply the Committee with copies of these returns? Yes.
208. *Dr. Garran.*] How much do the engines carry on the line between Nyngan and Bourke? Thirty loaded trucks. The maximum load on a truck is 6 tons, so that we can carry about 180 tons each time.
209. Is that the maximum? Yes; for the class of engines we are running here.
210. Then at the outside, thirty trains could have taken all the goods which passed backwards and forwards between Cobar and Nyngan during the year, for which you have given us the return? Yes.
211. Then in addition to that you would have had the Nymagee traffic over a little more than one-third of the line? Yes. At present we are receiving freight for 377 miles, on account of the goods which are mentioned in this return, and if the railway were made we would only get the extra freight along the new line.
212. *Chairman.*] Since that return was made up has the traffic increased or decreased? Owing to the depression and the bad seasons throughout the country, the traffic has decreased.
213. Are the returns which you are to supply us with in excess of or under the returns which you have just read? Speaking from memory, I should say that they were slightly under, but nothing material.
214. Was it a good or bad season during that period from 1886 to 1887? It was a very fair season. The drought had broken up about that time.
215. Which is your next return? It is a return showing the coaching earnings for Nyngan station for 1886: 4,591 passengers, £5,321 11s. 2d.; horses, carriages, dogs, £254 2s. 8d.; parcel traffic, £522 7s. 11d. The return for 1887 is as follows:—4,401 passengers, £5,988 12s. 8d.; horses, carriages, and dogs, £236 9s. 11d.; parcel traffic, £609 3s. 4d.
216. What is your next return for goods traffic? A return of tonnage of goods inwards, and the revenue derived from 1st January, 1887, to 19th March, 1888, at Nyngan station. These of course would include all the districts. They are taken out per month. From 1st January, 1887, to 19th March, 1888, 7,993 tons 15 cwt. 3 qrs. inwards. Outwards tonnage for the same period, 8,412 tons 1 cwt. 1 qr.
217. What is the next return? An approximate return of tonnage to Cobar via Nyngan, and to Nymagee via Nyngan, from March, 1887, until March, 1888.
218. Since you have been here has there been a marked increase or decrease in the traffic which you could point out to the Committee? Lately the traffic has decreased. I refer to the last twelve months.
219. Do you mean the general traffic inwards and outwards at Nyngan? Yes. In September, 1889, wool alone was 300 tons less than in September, 1888, but that does not show that the wool is not in the district, because I believe that a very great portion of the deficiency was taken to Coolabah and Girilambone. These are two places which are now open to Cobar and Nymagee, which were not open three years ago. That is one reason for the falling off. Another reason is the bad seasons. A large number of sheep died off owing to the wretched condition of the country.
220. During the period of extreme drought was there a large amount of fodder brought into the district? Yes. I have a return of the forage received at Nyngan from the 1st June, 1888, until the 31st May, 1889, consigned to the various produce dealers. I should say that by far the greater portion of that fodder was consumed at Nymagee and Cobar. The quantity brought from the 1st June, 1888, to the 31st May, 1889, was 5,492 tons 8 cwt.
221. It would appear that in a good season a large amount of wool is sent away, and that in a bad season there is a large amount of fodder brought to the district? Certainly.
222. With regard to the traffic on the railway, does the one compensate for the other? I think you get more out of wool than out of forage;—a good season is the better one.
223. Have you a return showing the traffic at the Nyngan station up to May, 1889? I can give returns to the month of September, 1889. During that month 441 passengers left here inwards and outwards; goods, 1,189 tons, yielding a revenue of £1,868 7s. 10d. In September, 1888, the return for the month was 566 passengers, 2,528 tons of goods, earning a revenue of £2,991 10s. 3d.
224. Are those the best months in the year for traffic? From September to December are about the three

three best months. In the month of September, 1887, there were 303 passengers and 1,147 tons of goods, earning a revenue of £1,787 10s. 10d.

225. Can you give any reason why there should be such a disparity between those years? There was nearly 500 tons difference in the wool of 1887 and 1888. In 1887 the wool was about 364 tons, whereas in 1888 it was 869 tons. In 1889 the wool was very short; that is accounted for by the season. This year the shearing is late. Even if there were as many sheep in the district as there were last year the same tonnage would not be shown during the same months.

226. Would copper be a large item during the months you have quoted? Yes, but it is almost impossible to trace what quantity was sent.

227. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you think that if a line were constructed from here to Cobar it would pay expenses? No.

228. Do you think there would be a very heavy loss? It would be very hard for me to say what the loss might be as there are many branches of the service of which I know very little. I am led to believe, through compiling these returns, that there is nothing to justify the expense of making this line as far as Cobar itself is concerned.

229. *Mr. Hurley.*] Do you think that if an additional $\frac{1}{3}$ of freight were charged for carrying wool between here and the metropolis, such an increase could be made without losing the trade? I think if we increase the freight we would drive more wool to the river.

230. Do you think that wool from the west of this place would be taken from here to Bourke and shipped there on the river? No, but there are a number of stations that lie out towards the river which cart their wool direct to the river. There are stations which used to ship their wool here before, but they are now carting the wool to the river.

231. How do you account for the fact that before there was any railway here, the station owners sought for railway accommodation, and offered to pay increased rates as compared with the river rates for carriage? The only way I can account for it is that the river carriage is very much cheaper. We cannot compete with the river when it is up. I think the only chance of competing with the river is to keep down the freight charges.

232. Is it not a fact that goods are now carried to Bourke for something like the same price as they are carried to Nyngan, although the latter is 100 miles nearer to Sydney than the former is? We carry goods to Bourke at the same price. The charges to Byrock are heavier than the charges to Bourke, although Bourke is 126 miles from here, and Byrock is only 79 miles. We allow Bourke a concession in order to compete with the river.

233. Is it in order to compete with the trade of the other colonies that this low freight charge is made? Yes, certainly.

234. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Have not the rates to Bourke been increased recently? No, I think they are decreased, if anything.

235. Do you think that if the line were constructed from Nyngan to Cobar it would tap any of the river trade? Not much of it.

236. Do you think that if a line were run from Nyngan to Wilcannia, and from Nyngan to Werris Creek, the squatters would avail themselves of the railway to move their sheep in seasons of drought, in order to save them from starvation? I have seen that in the south, but generally the sheep were left on the runs so long, in the hope that the weather would change, that they get into very poor condition, and shifting them about in trains kills them altogether. The stock might be saved by removing them, but I think the owners would want to have them carried at a nominal rate.

237. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you think that the construction of this proposed line would bring any new traffic to Nyngan or to the trunk line? I cannot see where the new traffic is to come from.

Mr. Thomas Barrett, hotelkeeper, Nyngan, sworn, and examined:—

238. *Chairman.*] Are you an hotelkeeper in Nyngan? Yes.

239. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How long have you resided in Nyngan? About eight years.

240. Are you well acquainted with the state of business in this district? Yes.

241. Do you know the country between here and Cobar? Yes.

242. Do you think it would be justifiable expenditure to construct a railway between Nyngan and Cobar? No; there is no traffic on the line, and every year it is getting worse. There is a great deal more doing in a dry season than in a wet one.

243. How many teams are going from here to Cobar? I think that two good teams per week would do all the traffic.

244. Was there much traffic to be done between Nyngan and Cobar in the most prosperous period—when the Great Cobar mine was working? There was a good deal, but three parts of the stuff carried was forage. All that trade in forage is now stopped, because the squatters and carriers want none. I have seen twenty truck loads of chaff in the station yard at a time, but now you will not see one truck load in a week.

245. Would not the ordinary business between two towns like Cobar and Nyngan supply a good traffic for a railway without regard to the dry seasons? No. If the railway went farther into the country than Cobar, the railway might pay. A line from here to Cobar alone will not pay.

246. Are you able to judge of the passenger traffic between here and Cobar? I know that it can hardly keep a decent coach on the line.

247. Have you not heard the returns quoted stating that in September, 1888, there were 566 passengers between the two towns? A great many of those passengers would not go to Cobar. They came from Bourke, and went through the station here.

248. If they came from Bourke why should they get out at Nyngan? They do get out here, and a great many passengers get in at Nyngan from all parts.

249. Does not that indicate that Nyngan is a natural starting point for passengers going into the country? Yes; they start off from all places—at Girilambone, and all the way down.

250. If business is so bad in Nyngan, how does it sustain eleven public houses? I think some must go to the wall. I can answer for myself that business is very slack. The hotels are mostly kept up by the carriers and a few travellers.

5 (a)—B

Mr. A. S.
Rowling.

5 Oct., 1889.

Mr.
T. Barrett.

5 Oct., 1889.

251.

- Mr. T. Barrett.
5 Oct., 1889.
251. Where do the carriers mostly go to from here? They go all over the country—wherever they can get a load.
252. Is there much traffic between here and Louth? Not a great deal. There are plenty of teams waiting at my place, but they cannot get a load to go out with.
253. Do you think that if a railway were constructed a large amount of business now done in this town would cease? Yes; the passengers from Cobar, instead of stopping here for a day or half a day, would go right through, and the carriers would be obliged to leave Nyngan.
254. Do you think if a railway were made right through to Wilcannia it would secure any of the traffic now done on the river? When the steamers could not come up the river it would get all that trade, but the steamers have been running pretty well during the last few years.
255. *Mr. Tonkin.*] How many years is it since you first had any knowledge of the traffic to Cobar? About seventeen or eighteen years.
256. Do you think that in the best of times the traffic to Cobar was sufficient to warrant the construction of a railway between Nyngan and Cobar? There might have been at first, when Cobar was in full fling, but Cobar is now going down.
257. How many teams are there going between here and Cobar? About two or three teams per week.
258. Are there 30 tons of produce leaving here for Cobar weekly? No; 12 tons is as much as there is.
259. Is this a slacker time than any other time of the year? It ought not to be—at this time of the year things are generally pretty lively.
260. Has there been a great decrease in the traffic since the Cobar copper mine closed? Yes.
261. How many teams on an average per week used to leave for Cobar when the mine was in full work? You could hardly tell, because there was so much forage taken. Every team used to go out three parts full of forage.

Mr. Peter Vincent Lynch, commission agent, Nyngan, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. P. V. Lynch.
5 Oct., 1889.
262. *Chairman.*] What business are you engaged in? I am a commission agent.
263. Have you any knowledge of the trade between here and Cobar? From where I live I see the whole of the traffic going in and out.
264. What is your estimate of the amount of traffic? Owing to the mines closing down at present in Cobar, of course there is a falling off in the copper traffic, and consequently in general merchandise there is also a general falling off. I know one firm in Cobar, which used to take out every fortnight or three weeks when the road was passable 40 tons, but that is now decreased to 6 or 7 tons—that is solely owing to the mine closing.
265. What loading did that consist of principally? General merchandise and sometimes corn and chaff.
266. Have you any knowledge of the road between here and Cobar? Yes, a thorough knowledge.
267. Is there any outlet for traffic of any kind between here and Cobar? At present there are different stations. If the line were constructed it would cause outlets and inlets to be established to those different places. Nymagee is an established road.
268. Do you think the construction of this railway would bring more traffic to Nyngan? Yes, it would facilitate the business of the district, and the squatters having better facilities for the dispatch of their stock and wool, and for receiving goods from Sydney, would put more stock on their runs. I am convinced that the number of stock would be doubled. The greater part of the runs are not half stocked at present. During the last few years, when the droughts occurred, the runs have been stocked up to their capacity, and many sheep have had to perish. Valuable horses and cattle were left in the back country to perish, because there was no means of conveying them to some place where there would be a chance of saving their lives.
269. From how far do you think would traffic gravitate to the railway? On the southern side it would come a long distance. A great deal of the traffic that now goes to Hay would come by this line. I think any traffic within 60 or 70 miles would gravitate towards this line.
270. Do you think that if the line were carried on to Wilcannia it would make a material difference in the traffic? Yes, it would open up some splendid country, and people would be justified in stocking up their runs.
271. Would it not possibly be the means of diverting our trade to the river and to the other colonies? That would rest altogether in the hands of the railway department. If exorbitant rates were charged on the railway I dare say some of the traffic would go to the river; but it is not a certainty to get produce down the river at all times. There is stuff going this year to the river which used to come here, but that is owing to the very bad state of the roads.
272. If there was only a very small difference between the rates charged on the railway and on the river, do you think that people would prefer to send their goods by rail? Yes.
273. Has that proved to be the case at Bourke since the railway was opened? I think very few goods go by the river from Bourke since the line was opened.
274. Do any of the stations east or north-east of Bourke send their goods away by rail? At present, owing to the bad state of the roads, I believe some wool is going down that way. A great quantity of goods is going through Coolabah at present, owing to some misunderstanding with the carriers' union.
275. Are the roads in a bad state now? Yes; about Cobar the roads are all bush tracks.
276. Do you think that a railway to Cobar would pay? It might not for the first few years, but it will create a larger population and traffic. It will be the means of setting the Great Cobar mine to work again, and the population there will be doubled. The reason why the mine is shut down at present is the terrible price they have to pay for hauling wood.
277. How long have you been resident in Nyngan? Thirty-one years.
278. Does the proposed railway excite much attention in the town? Latterly it has caused a great deal of discussion. There are men who object to the railway, but for what reason I do not know. Those people blacken the proposal as much as they can.
279. Are there many objectors? Not a great many. As a general rule the people are in favour of the railway. The principal opposition comes from business men on the northern side of the railway line.
280. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What misunderstanding did you allude to as existing between the squatters and the carrier's union? The misunderstanding is not with the squatters and the union, but between the storekeepers and others who are taking goods into Cobar and the carriers' union. The dispute is with reference to the rates for the haulage. The result is that a great quantity of goods which used to go through here are now sent from Coolabah and Girilambone.

Mr.

Mr. Arthur Thomson Bleakley, Nyngan, sworn and examined:—

281. *Dr. Garran.*] How long have you been in Nyngan? Twelve months.
 282. During that time has the season been very good? The early part of the season was bad, but since then it has been good.
 283. Has the change stimulated business in the township? I think we were doing rather more business during the drought, because there was then a very large quantity of forage and feed required.
 284. Then the business people in the township make a profit in good or bad times? Money is more plentiful in good times.
 285. During bad times do the squatters and carriers suffer most? Yes.
 286. Do the storekeepers do good business in bad times? No; we have to give too much credit, and find it is a hard matter to get money in.
 287. Do you think that a railway between Nyngan and Cobar would pay? I am not in a position to say, but I believe it would after a time.
 288. If it were a private speculation would you invest in it? I cannot say that I would.
 289. Do you think that a railway would concentrate more traffic than comes here already? I do. I think that the Great Cobar mine would begin work again and that would employ a large amount of labour.
 290. Supposing the price of copper would not justify the working of the mine, would the railway make a great increase of business? I do not think so.

Mr. A. T. Bleakley.

5 Oct., 1889.

Mr. Thomas Henry Rowe, hotel-keeper, Nyngan, sworn, and examined:—

291. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I was a hotel-keeper in Nyngan until the last two or three days. I first came to Nyngan about ten and a-half years ago. I have been mail contracting and doing other work throughout the district.
 292. What are your views with regard to constructing a railway from Nyngan to Cobar? I would not expect it to pay for a short while; but if the line were carried beyond Cobar there is no doubt that it would pay. I believe that a light line from Nyngan to Cobar only would pay in a very short time. Some new discoveries of copper have been made, and a railway would enable the mines to be developed either with cheap wood or with coal from Lithgow or Dubbo.
 293. The railway would cost £207,360;—do you think that a line from Nyngan to Cobar at that cost would pay interest and working expenses? I think so. There are large numbers of stations on the western side of the line which would supply traffic to a railway. I have heard people connected with those stations say that it would be a great benefit for them to have a railway to Cobar. At present it is impossible for them to get away their stock in times of drought.
 294. Do you think that population is likely to increase between here and Cobar and the surrounding districts? Yes; there is a great deal of good land lying on each side of the line which would be taken up by people who wish to settle.
 295. Do you think that that land is such that it would pay selectors to take it up and cultivate it? I feel confident it would. There are two or three large farms within 28 or 30 miles of this place where they have never missed a crop except once in five years. On another farm they have only missed one crop in six years. The crop grown there has been chiefly hay. I have never seen better fruit than is grown in this neighbourhood.
 296. Do you know of many selectors settled on land in this district? I think there are 35 within 7 or 8 miles of this place. They are making a fair living. They are increasing in number, and they are trying to get hold of more land. Several men were here lately from Victoria to take up land to the west of this place.
 297. During your residence in this district, has it been progressive or otherwise? It has been progressive; but within the last six months trade has been very much depressed—that is owing to the heavy drought from which people have not yet recovered.
 298. Do many carriers come to and go from Nyngan? I think the average is about 4 or 5 per day leaving Nyngan. Those teams come from Nymagee, Cobar, and the surrounding back districts. Several come in from the west of Nymagee.
 299. Do the bulk of the carriers come from the direction of Cobar? Yes; Cobar and Nymagee.
 300. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you think that this district is fairly stocked at present? No; because a lot of stock died during the drought and the stations have not been re-stocked.
 301. Before the last drought, was the country fairly stocked? Yes.
 302. Is the reason for not re-stocking the fact that the squatters fear a drought again? Yes; and because there is no way of getting stock away in case of drought.
 303. Do you think that if there were a railway running from here to Werris Creek, we could find room in New England for all the perishing sheep in this country? Not if the whole of them were removed there; but there are a great many other places besides the New England district. There is very often a good season at Orange when there is a bad season here.
 304. Were not many of the stations taken up and stocked in the first instance when the distance from a railway was twice what it is at present? Yes.
 305. So that the long cartage did not keep back the stocking of the runs? No; but the squatters then had the land on much easier terms.
 306. Supposing no more railways were made at all, would that keep back the stocking of the country? At present it does keep it back. If there was a railway the squatters would stock every inch of unstocked country.
 307. Do you think that more sheep would then be kept within a certain radius of Cobar than are kept at present? Yes; because the squatters could get fat stock to market at a day's notice.
 308. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Is the river at Wilcannia always navigable? No; I have known a whole year when it was not navigable. It is only during nine months of the year that they can get light loads from Wilcannia.
 309. Do you think that if the proposed railway were constructed, the traffic that now goes by the river would be diverted by the railway line? I think that at least one half of it would. I have known teams to be stuck up for three months when they have been loaded with wool.
 310. Have you ever known any stations where they have had to store the wool because they were not able to get it away by the river? Yes; I have known that to occur at Tiltagura, 80 miles west of Cobar.

Mr. T. H. Rowe.

5 Oct., 1889.

- Mr. T. H. Rowe.
5 Oct., 1889.
311. Would the railway benefit that station? Yes. They send their wool this way now, but it is a long distance.
312. Do you think that if a railway were made the squatters would be inclined to pay more than the usual railway rates in return for the benefits they would derive from the railway? I think they would, on account of their being able to get away their produce quicker than they are able to do at present.
313. Do you believe that if the railway were constructed beyond Cobar to Wilcannia and Broken Hill it would be immediately a payable line? Yes.
314. Do you think that if it is constructed to Cobar only it would be worked at a loss for some time? Yes, for a short time; but I believe that Cobar will be a very rich gold-mining district.
315. When the river has not been navigable, how do people obtain their provisions and stores? By means of teams from Hay, 100 miles west of Cobar; to that distance from Nyngan.
316. Mr. O'Sullivan.] Do you think that millions of sheep could be saved in this district during the drought if they could be taken away to the mountainous country by rail? Yes.
317. Dr. Garran.] Are you chairman of the Progress Committee here? Yes.
318. Do you think that the opinions you express are the opinions of the people generally? The people generally in Nyngan are in favour of the proposed railway, and there are only a few opposed to it.
319. Are you the spokesman of the Progress Committee? Yes.

Mr. Ralph Stephen Pemberton Clay, postmaster, Nyngan, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. R. S. P. Clay.
5 Oct., 1889.
320. Chairman.] Are you the postmaster at Nyngan? Yes, since 1883.
321. Has there been much progress in the district since you have been here? For two years after I came here the progress was very marked. When I first opened the Nyngan office, in 1883, my telegraph cash was £40 per week, which meant messages transmitted. The messages received would amount to another £40 a week. Allowing for free matter telegraphed, that would amount to another £10 per week: so that £90 per week would be the receipts for the telegraph office. That lasted from 1883 to 1884, and up till the middle of 1885, when Byrock was opened. In 1884 the postal traffic was enormous. In twenty-eight days we used to sell £100 worth of stamps; that would be in small numbers. The same business was carried on during 1884 and 1885, until Byrock was opened; until that time this was the terminus of the railway. At that time the population of Nyngan was estimated at about 3,000.
322. What happened in 1886? It became droughty then. 1883 saw the end of a very bad drought. I believe it had not rained for two years.
323. To what do you attribute the prosperity of the years 1883, 1884, and 1885? To railway communication solely. This town was a sheep-run until the railway came here.
324. When the railway passed on was there a marked difference? The railway was opened as far as Byrock in 1885. There was no difference felt for the first six months afterwards, but after that there was a gradual fading away. People then began to make Byrock the centre.
325. Was 1886 a bad year? About that period, I think, the drought again set in for fourteen or fifteen months.
326. What has been the business in your department since the railway was opened as far as Byrock? It has been diminishing gradually. I think it has now reached zero. Notwithstanding that, there is great traffic in my department, because there are five towns concentrated here.
327. Is that for the distribution of letters? Yes.
328. Is that business remunerative? Yes; that is what sustains Nyngan. It is foreign traffic. I believe that a railway to Cobar would bring back a certain amount of traffic which we are losing.
329. What makes you think so? There are nine or ten squattages between here and Cobar. I believe that the rapid transit by rail would induce people to settle on the land along there. I think that previous witnesses have overlooked an important fact—that is, that in times of drought a railway would enable squatters to carry water to their perishing stock. I have known water to be brought from Trangie to Nyngan.
330. But would not that be only for household purposes? It might be used in many ways.
331. Dr. Garran.] Are not the sheep scattered all over the country, and how could you carry the water to the sheep, or the sheep to the water, seeing that there is no grass in times of drought? I understand that the railway would pass in the immediate vicinity of the squattages to which I refer. The squatter could bring his stud sheep, cattle, and horses down to the railway line. In that case the railway would only benefit those men whose stations abutted on the railway.
332. What business is done between here and Cobar as regards postage? It is a thing of no moment.
333. Has it fallen back very much since the Cobar mine has been closed? Even when the Cobar mine was in full swing there was not much postal traffic between the two places.
334. Are you in favour of the proposed railway to Cobar? Personally I should be a great loser if the railway were carried to Cobar; but knowing from experience how a railway develops the country, I think it would be a great public advantage to make a railway. The opening of a line to Cobar would develop a great deal of country beyond Cobar.

Archibald R. M'Kellar, Esq., Manager of Commercial Bank, Nyngan, sworn, and examined:—

- A. R. M'Kellar, Esq.
5 Oct., 1889.
335. Chairman.] Are you the Manager of the Commercial Bank at Nyngan? Yes.
336. Can you state in a general way the financial position of the people in this district? People in the town are not, I think, in a very good financial position, but all the large holders in the district are, I think, pretty well to do. The inhabitants here seem to be a struggling population.
337. By the people in the district do you mean the large pastoral lessees? Yes.
338. Do they appear to be on a good financial basis? Yes, taking an average.
339. Have you any business to do with the selectors in the district? Yes, slightly.
340. Are they financially sound? I think so, taking them all through. Of course a selector here cannot manage unless he has capital behind him. A selector coming to the district with no money could not do anything.
341. Do you care to state if any selectors in the district are mortgaged? None are mortgaged to us. I am not in a position to give definite information as to whether or not they are mortgaged elsewhere.

342. Have you been in the town for a long time? Fourteen months.
 343. While the financial position of the people is not what might be called remarkably sound, can we regard it as fairly good for a country town? Yes, for a new town like this.
 344. Is the state of the town better or worse financially since you came here? It is about the same.
 345. *Dr. Garran.*] Is the financial position of the town largely due to its being depressed, as compared with its previous prosperity? I think that the depression is due to the drought. If there is any difference in the financial position of the town, that would be the cause of it.
 346. Is there room here for a town as the centre of a large district? Yes.

A. R.
 M'Kellar,
 Esq.
 5 Oct., 1889.

Sydney F. H. Lane, Esq., Manager of the Australian Joint Stock Bank, Nyngan, sworn, and examined:—

347. *Chairman.*] Are you the manager of the Nyngan branch of the Australian Joint Stock Bank? Yes.
 348. How long have you been here? About five months.
 349. How many banks are there here? Two. There were three until quite recently. There was a branch of the Mercantile Bank here, but it closed about a month ago.
 350. Was that in consequence of a falling off in business? Yes.
 351. By reason of other banks coming here? Perhaps so. There were three banks in existence here for three or four years.
 352. Is the financial position of the town generally a stable one? The townspeople generally are in a very fair position.
 353. Are the free selectors in the district doing well, or otherwise? I understand there are not many selectors in the district. We have about half a dozen of them on our books, and with the exception of one or two they appear to be in very good positions.
 354. Have they been here any length of time? About twelve or eighteen months.
 355. Are their farms largely cultivated? I only know of three selections in the district that are cultivated. I have not had an opportunity of seeing many of the outlying places since I came here.
 356. Is the district progressive or retrogressive as regards banking business? I think the banking business has fallen off during the last few years; but I fancy I can notice a revival—that is, during the last month or two; but perhaps it is on account of the large shearing operations going on in the district.
 357. Do the squatters operate largely on your books? They keep small local accounts for paying shearers.

S. F. H. Lane,
 Esq.
 5 Oct., 1889.

Augustus Lyne, Esq., grazier and agent, sworn, and examined:—

358. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Grazier and agent.
 359. Where is your run? It is all round Nyngan and joins it. It is called Nyngan East run. It is partly selected and partly leasehold. It comprises about 10,000 acres.
 360. What are your views with regard to the proposed railway from Nyngan to Cobar? It certainly would be a benefit to the squatters in the back country; and I believe that if the line were made, a great deal of country would be taken up in small areas for agriculture, and selection would go on to a great extent between here and Cobar. I do not know anything about the country on the other side.
 361. Since the railway has been extended to Nyngan, has it caused much selection? Every inch of land available anywhere near the line has been taken up under the free selection clauses.
 362. Are they doing good business? I think most of the selectors are in a very fair way of prospering.
 363. Do they cultivate much? No, they graze—principally sheep, and sometimes cattle.
 364. How do they manage for water? In some cases they select on the river, where there is natural water; in other cases they have to make tanks.
 365. Is there a large amount of land available for settlement between here and Cobar? I think the whole of the land between here and Cobar, except a few odd patches, is open for selection.
 366. Is it suitable for that purpose? I think so.
 367. What about the want of water? They would have to conserve water there the same as they have to do on this side of the river. They have better means of catching the water out there than we have on this side, because the country there is more or less hilly.
 368. Would not any selector there have to be a man of some capital, or would he not have to be considerably assisted at the outset? Yes; just the same as on this side. If he started with nothing the chances are he would break.
 369. What would be a reasonable amount of capital for a selector to start with? I should think that £1,000 would be required to make a certainty of it.
 370. Do you think that if this railway were constructed to Cobar it would be the means of drawing in a large amount of business that does not now come to the railway? I think a great many selectors would follow the line along and take up every inch of land available.
 371. With regard to existing industries and squattages, do you think it would be the means of drawing wool and stock to the railway? I cannot say. I do not think it would increase the traffic very much. At present the stations generally send their wool to the railway at some point. I do not know anything about the mining industry; but I have heard that there is a large mining industry in the Cobar district which only requires working up.
 372. *Dr. Garran.*] When you first took up your run, which was the nearest railway station? Dubbo.
 373. Do you keep more sheep per acre now than you did then? Yes.
 374. Is that due to your greater proximity to the railway? No; it is due to improving the land by ringbarking.
 375. Has not the extension of the railway induced you to stock your run more? No.
 376. Do you think that the construction of a line from here to Cobar would lead to the district being more heavily stocked? No; except that the selectors would take up the land and improve it more than the stations do at present. Then the land will carry more stock.
 377. Do the free selectors about here keep more stock per acre than you do? Near Nyngan the land has only been taken up about twelve months, and some of the selectors have not stocked up to the present. I think that the land will carry more stock than they keep at present, in proportion to the land they have, when improved.

A. Lyne, Esq.
 5 Oct., 1889.

- A. Lyne, Esq.** 378. Do you think that on the selections more sheep per acre will be kept than under the large station system? Yes; by improving the land, by making water, and ringbarking.
- 5 Oct., 1889.** 379. Do you think that the selectors will go in for cultivating the soil in future? Yes; they are doing it already.
380. Do you think that the prosperity of the country will be advanced by the subdivision of the present holdings? Yes.
381. Does every fresh railway extension tend to develop that change? That has been proved to be the case so far as Nyngan district is concerned.
382. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Can you estimate the number of sheep and cattle which died during the last drought in this district? No; but I have heard that on several stations they have lost about one-third of their stock. Some have lost more and some less.
383. If a line were constructed from Nyngan to Wilcannia, and from Nyngan to Werris Creek, so as to give access to New England, how many sheep could be saved in a drought? I cannot give an opinion; but during the last drought, if the proposed railway had been in existence, pretty well all of the sheep might have been saved if they were removed. However, people have a prejudice against moving their sheep. They very often prefer to leave them to die on the station.
384. Do you think that the railway to Cobar would be likely to pay as a local line within a reasonable period? I do not know any of the figures connected with the line; but I think trade would increase very considerably if a line were made to Cobar.
385. Does the route of the proposed railway run through the leasehold or the resumed areas? Through both, I think.
386. Is it good land for settlement? Yes; I should call it very good land. It requires improvement. The water will have to be conserved and ringbarking carried out. It is very rich soil. With fairly good fortune as to seasons, the selectors could do very well if they started with a little capital.
387. *Mr. Hurley.*] How long have you been in this district? About eight years.
388. Where used the wool be sent to before the railway came to Nyngan? To Dubbo.
389. Are the squattages in a healthier state financially now than they were then? I think they are just about the same.
390. Has the construction of a railway been a great facility in squatting pursuits here? Yes, in one way; but as it brought selectors it was perhaps a disadvantage in another way.
391. Are you aware that cattle trains are run at a loss at present? I have heard so.
392. Do you not think that the pastoralists could pay a higher freight than they are paying at present for sending cattle to market? The present rate is about one-fourth the value of the stock, and I think it is quite high enough.
393. Has not the making of the railway afforded facilities to the pastoralists, while it has been a loss to the State? Yes, that is possibly the case.

Mr. Walter Jurd, Public School Teacher, Nyngan, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. W. Jurd.** 394. *Chairman.*] Are you the Public School teacher? Yes; I have held that position for two years and nine months.
- 5 Oct., 1889.** 395. What is the attendance at school at present? The average weekly attendance is 148. One day this week there were 154 at school. In 1888 the average attendance for the year was 101·9. In 1887 it was still less; in 1886 it was only 75·5.
396. We have had it stated in evidence that the population of the town is falling off very largely? That is not borne out by the attendance at the school. When I first came here the school was a small building, and it was nearly large enough. We have now got a new school building, capable of holding 150 children, but it is not large enough for the present attendance.
397. Are they new comers to the district? Yes, most of them are.
398. Do the same children keep on coming to school? The population has been more settled during the last six months than during the previous year. This year the attendance is more regular than it was last.
399. Are there any other schools in the district? There is a Roman Catholic school, at which, I believe, there is a large attendance. I think there are going to that school about two-thirds of the number which we have going to the public school. It may be a little less.
400. Do you think that the children now attending are the children of people who are settled in the district? Most of them have been here since the beginning of the year. We have had about twelve new comers during the last six months.
401. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] We have it in evidence that the population of the town has decreased;—how do you account for the fact that the number of children has increased? I was not aware that the population had decreased.
402. May it be accounted for by the fact that in the earlier days of the town the pioneers did not bring their families with them, and that they have since done so? That has not been the case since I have been here.
403. How far does your school district extend? Most of the children live within a radius of 2 miles.
404. At your school and the Roman Catholic school there are about 250 children receiving instruction in Nyngan? Yes, fully that; because what I have given is the average attendance. There were nearly 200 children on the rolls last quarter.

Mr. John G. Keane, auctioneer, and Secretary to the Carriers' Union, Nyngan, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. G. Keane.** 405. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Auctioneer and Secretary to the Carriers' Union.
- 5 Oct., 1889.** 406. How long has that Union been established? Two years in June last.
407. Is it merely a local society? Yes; it has been established at Coolabar recently. There is no Union at Cobar.
408. What are your views with regard to the Nyngan-Cobar railway? If the railway goes to Cobar and stops there it will never be a paying line. If it goes through to Wilcannia and Broken Hill I have no doubt it will be successful.
- 409.

409. What is the amount of traffic between Nyngan and Cobar at present? The general merchandise loaded for the township would not exceed at present 12 tons a week from Nyngan to Cobar. At present we have the wool season on, and the traffic in wool is great. We have twenty teams a week from Cobar to Nyngan, and each team averages 5 tons.
410. How many teams carry the outgoing traffic to Cobar? About two. We have lost a great deal of the traffic lately as the main traffic to Cobar now goes through Coolabar. It is about 7 miles shorter from Nyngan to Cobar than from Coolabar to Cobar, but there is a dispute between the storekeepers and the Carriers Union. In dry seasons it is almost impossible to travel to Coolabar, because the tanks are the private property of the squatters, and they will not allow the carriers to use them.
411. Is the road which the teams travel from Cobar to Coolabar in a state of nature? Yes; there is no surveyed road. The teams get through that country fairly well. It is not such good country to travel through as it is from Nyngan to Cobar, and the carriers prefer to travel from Nyngan.
412. If the railway were made from Nyngan to Cobar would the drays be able to travel over the cross roads so as to feed the railway along its length? Yes. The most of the country along the line is better than the road to Coolabar.
413. What number of teams on an average go from Nyngan to Cobar, and come from Cobar to Nyngan during the week at present? About twenty-five teams. We have altogether about 200 teams here making a living from inward and outward loading. The fact of the Cobar mine having stopped lately makes it somewhat worse for the carriers.
414. Do those twenty-five teams come here from the west? Yes; from the direction of Nymagee and Cobar. I think they are making a fairly good living. The teams have from nine to twelve horses, very few less than nine. I think the largest teams earn from between £300 and £400 a year gross earnings; the others something less.
415. What is the rate per ton for carriage between Nyngan and Cobar? At present it is £3 15s.; that is low.
416. How high have you known it to be? From £12 to £14 per ton; I have known it to be £12 last year in the wet weather. Only very strong teams can carry goods in wet weather. Only a few of the carriers work energetically. When £12 a ton is charged they can only carry light loads, and they require to have extra horses.
417. What does the outward traffic generally consist of? General merchandise, rock salt, and so on during the wool season. During the dry seasons there is an immense quantity of forage going out.
418. When the wool season ceases is there a marked falling off in the traffic? Yes a great many carriers then turn their horses out and go away tank sinking, fencing, and to other work.
419. At present can two teams a week do all the work between here and Cobar for outward loading? Yes. The majority of the carriers bring in wool and go out to the stations empty.
420. Are there any selectors? Yes, that is where the extra carriers come from. When the wool season comes round the selectors use their horses for carrying wool.
421. If the railway were constructed would there be any difficulty for graziers and others in getting their produce carried to the line? None whatever; they could get to the line in the worst of weather.
422. Have you ever considered the question of extending the railway beyond Cobar? Yes that has always been my view of it. That is the only reason why I would advocate the railway. I think that the business which would be brought from Wilcannia and that district would enhance the profits of the railway very much. I am quite sure that a railway from Nyngan to Cobar alone would not pay.
423. From whom does the opposition to this railway come in Nyngan? Generally from a few people who hold property and who seem to fear that if the railway goes to Cobar it will damage Nyngan.
424. Do the carriers as a body object to the railway? Yes.
425. *Dr. Garran.*] What is the longest time you have ever known the traffic to be stopped between Nyngan and Cobar for horse teams? I do not know that it has ever been permanently stopped. The longest time that the traffic has been delayed has been a fortnight.
426. During periods like that would it have been possible for a team with half a load to get through? I think so.
427. We are told that sometimes supplies runs so short at Cobar that food is sold at famine prices;—do you know that to be a fact? I have known things to be sold at very high prices, but I attribute that more to the people in Cobar themselves than to the state of the roads. My experience during the last few years is that people in Cobar do not order enough stores.
428. Is that due to carelessness? It may be carelessness or some other reason. I do not know any reason why they should only have a fortnight's stock in hand.
429. If they kept a month's stock of necessaries at Cobar there would never need to be a famine? Yes.
430. If they waited until the roads dried up would they ever have to pay £12 a ton for the carriage? Sometimes for two or three months the road is in a bad state.
431. During three months of such weather what would be the average cartage? About £9 per ton or very nearly three times the usual rate.
432. What is the lowest rate you have ever known? 25s. per ton.
433. Could the carriers make a living at such a rate? No, it was a cut-throat business.
434. If a railway were made could those teams of waggons and horses compete with a railway? It would not pay them to do so. I do not think there need be any fear of competition.
435. If the Government treated this proposed railway as a branch line and tried to raise the rate 25 per cent. higher than those on the trunk line would the teamsters then have a chance of competing with the railway? They would never be able to compete with the railway. I know no instance where teamsters do compete with the railway.
436. How high could the Government raise the rates without provoking the competition of teamsters? They would have to go very much above the present rates. For instance, we can get goods carried from Dubbo to Nyngan, a distance of 100 miles, for about 10s. a ton, and we are paying £3 15 per ton to have goods carried by teams from here to Cobar.
437. *Mr. Copeland.*] How many of the 200 teams connected with the Association are working direct between here and Cobar? Between Nyngan, Cobar, and Nymagee, there are about 150 teams. The average number of horses to a team would be seven or eight. There are not more than twenty engaged between Coolabar and Cobar. The rate of cartage from Coolabar and Cobar is £3 per ton. There is a difference

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- difference of 8s. or 8s. 6d. per ton in the trainage of goods from Nyngan to Coolabar. The carriers prefer travelling from Nyngan.
438. What number of tons come from Cobar to Nyngan per week? From 60 to 70 tons.
439. How many tons are sent from Nyngan to Cobar per week? About 15 tons at present.
440. Are 150 teams engaged all the year in taking that amount of loading backwards and forwards? Certainly not; the teams diminish very greatly after the wool season.
441. Is very much food required for those teams? In dry seasons there is, but not at present. The food that is used in dry seasons is obtained from Orange, Bathurst, and Sydney, and in dry seasons there is an immense traffic here in supplying that horse feed.
442. If a railway were constructed would that traffic cease? Yes, in dry seasons.
443. Is the feed consumed at Cobar taken out by those teams? Yes.
444. What is the cost of carriage to Nymagee from here? £3. Nymagee is 67 miles from here, and Cobar 80 miles.
445. *Mr. Hurley.*] Is it correct to state that in good weather three first-class teams could do all the trade between here and Cobar? Yes; no doubt that is the case.
446. How is it that you state that 150 teams using 1,200 horses are employed in carrying on this trade? The teams I have named are engaged in bringing in wool, and not in carrying on the ordinary traffic between here and Cobar.
447. Do you look upon £3 15s. per ton as a fair charge for cartage? It pays exceedingly well under certain circumstances.
448. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Are not some of the goods which are used at Cobar sent from Girilambone? Not to my knowledge—it must be a very light traffic, as there is no open road there.
449. Seeing that the traffic to Cobar is divided at present, is the ordinary traffic between Nyngan and Cobar at the present moment a fair criterion as to the ordinary trade between the two places? Certainly it is not. This is the worst season we have ever had. What I have said as to the traffic is based entirely on the season.
450. Is your Carriers Union organized as a Trade Union? We are organized under the Friendly Society's Act.
451. What dispute had the storekeepers with the Union carriers as to the rates of carriage? There was a dispute between the carriers and the forwarding agents.
452. What was the cause of the dispute? They loaded with non-union teams which carried goods for 30s. a ton. The carriers objected to that. They formed a union and that was the cause of the strike.
453. Did not some dispute occur which diverted the traffic to Coolabar? That was not caused by any dispute; it was caused by the rate of cartage during wet weather. The majority of our carriers were out in the interior, and we had to depend upon a very few carriers. The result was that they asked for higher rates. The agents gave them those rates, but the storekeepers objected to it, and diverted the trade to Coolabah. They made arrangements with private teams.
454. If the railway were made to Cobar would it be likely to secure all the traffic now going on between Coolabah, Girilambone, and Cobar? It would certainly secure all the traffic from Coolabah.
455. And also from Girilambone? The traffic is coming chiefly all this way.
456. You spoke of teams earning from £300 to £400 a year;—do the carriers keep horses and pay all expenses out of that sum? Yes; carrying in this district is a long way from being a profitable occupation.
457. Would it pay to run a train three times a week to Cobar if the line were made? I have no doubt it would pay. It would not pay at once to run direct to Cobar. One train a month would do for the traffic at present so far as all the stuff we have to send out is concerned.
458. *Dr. Garran.*] What is the distance from Coolabah to Cobar? 7 miles less than the distance from Nyngan to Cobar.
459. *Mr. Tonkin.*] When the wool season is over would three teams be sufficient to do all the work both ways between Nyngan and Cobar? Yes; if the copper mines are idle.
460. That would be 18 tons per week each way? Yes.
461. Yet you fancy it would pay to run a train three times a week to Cobar? Yes; taking the whole season into consideration. In dry weather it would be necessary to have a train every day to Cobar.
462. If there is a drought, or if the mines improve, do you think that a railway would pay? Yes.
463. By the construction of this railway you will not bring any new traffic to Nyngan? No; except by new settlement.
464. *Mr. Copeland.*] How many teams were at work when the mines were in full work? I think 150 teams were going backwards and forwards regularly then. Since the mines have been closed the loss to the teamsters has been very considerable.
465. Do you think if the copper mine were reopened and in full work it would again give employment to 150 teams? Yes. Each team would carry 5 tons.
466. Would they be likely to be fully loaded both ways? Yes; there were 700 or 800 people employed there when the mines were in full work.
467. Is there any chance of growing feed between here and Cobar? Yes; in good seasons we have most prolific crops.
468. Has irrigation been attempted at all? Not for growing crops. There is some slight irrigation going on for gardens and orchards. I have seen tremendous crops of hay in this district, some yielding 5 tons to the acre.

Mr. Richard Harris, storekeeper, Nyngan, sworn, and examined:—

Mr. R. Harris.
5 Oct., 1889.

469. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Storekeeper.
470. *Mr. Hurley.*] How long have you been resident in the district? Since 1872. I have been engaged in mining, hawking, and storekeeping.
471. Do the storekeepers look upon the construction of the proposed Nyngan to Cobar line favourably or unfavourably. Some of them look upon it favourably and others unfavourably.
472. Is that from a selfish point of view? It is a certainty that the storekeepers would derive some benefit from the construction of the line.
473. Would that be a temporary benefit? Yes.

474. Would it be injurious to the town hereafter if the railway were constructed? I imagine it would be. *Mr. R. Harris.*
475. Do you think the railway would be a profitable investment? I do not think it would pay for a long time. It requires more population. *5 Oct., 1889.*
476. Do you think that the land is suitable for inducing population to settle? I do not think so.
477. Do you think that there is any likelihood of the district between here and Cobar giving work to a large population? I do not think so. The New Burra Burra Copper-mine has just been opened out.
478. Why do you think there will not be a population settled upon the country, along the line? The seasons are so dangerous here that I am afraid they would perish. The first two years that I lived in Girilambone, we had only 13 inches of rain in two years.
479. Do you think that if water were conserved, or if artesian wells were sunk, people would settle on the land between here and Cobar? There is no doubt that that would change the appearance of things considerably.
480. Do you think it would not be conducive to the benefit of the State to construct this railway line? No.
481. Are the selectors about this district in a progressive state or are they going back? In the neighbourhood of Nyngan I believe they are in a progressive state, but we have not many here.
482. Financially are they particularly healthy? Yes.
483. Does not that show a good prospect? Yes; but there is a difference between the land here and the land between here and Cobar.
484. How many selectors are there about Nyngan? I suppose that within a few miles of Nyngan there are fifteen or twenty. There is room for thousands here if there were plenty of water. However, two or three years might pass away before a man could get enough water to fill a tank.
485. Did not the first selectors here have difficulties to contend with? We have always had the River here.
486. Is there not room for increased population here? Yes, any amount. Those already settled on the banks of the river are in fair circumstances.
487. Are there any unemployed in this town? I do not think there are many.
488. Is the business done here healthy? I have heard nothing to the contrary so far as stores are concerned, but some of the public-houses seem to be changing hands.
489. Is there not sufficient inducement, considering the consumption of the district, for an agricultural class to settle here? I am afraid there is not for some time.
490. Why should you have to depend upon Bathurst and Orange for your grain and fodder? They have a better rainfall there.
491. Do you attribute it to a want of education on the part of the people with regard to agriculture? The people about here are like myself; they know nothing about agriculture.
492. Then may not the failure of agriculture be attributable to the want of knowledge on the part of people here? It may be, but I think it is attributable to the uncertainty of the rainfall. People do not like to take the risk.
493. *Chairman.*] Do I understand that you are not opposed to this railway from a selfish point of view? Yes. I have no interest whatever in the town except the stock I have got.
494. *Mr. Copeland.*] How many of the fifteen or twenty selectors in this neighbourhood are west of Nyngan on the Cobar road? There may be two or three, perhaps four.
495. What do the men in the immediate neighbourhood of Nyngan do? They have gardens, and they cultivate a little. They grow very small patches of wheat.
496. Is there flour in the district? There is none nearer than Dubbo.
497. Did you ever hear of wheat being sent from here to Dubbo? Not from Nyngan, but I believe it has been sent from along the Cobar road.
498. Do you think that any of the country between here and Cobar would be fit to take up for any other purpose than for sheep? I think agriculture would be very uncertain.
499. Are you in business in a large way? No, in a small way. I have no business connection with Cobar.
500. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you know the country well between Forbes and Mount Hope? Yes.
501. Is it level country? Yes; it is similar to the country between Nyngan and Dubbo.
502. Is it fairly watered? Yes, by the Lachlan.
503. Could you take a railway down the valley of the Lachlan with great ease? Yes.
504. Do you know the country from Forbes to Molong? I was through there once many years ago. I imagine it is pretty hilly.
505. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Which do you think would be the better route to take a line to Broken Hill; the route from Cowra through Forbes, Condobolin, and the valley of the Lachlan, or the route now proposed from Nyngan to Cobar? I should say that the route from Forbes is the better one.
506. Why? Because there is so much agricultural country about Forbes.
507. Is it watered well enough to be relied upon as agricultural country? I think so.
508. Is there very much water between the Lachlan and the Darling? No.
509. Then you could only depend upon the agricultural country as far as the Lachlan? There is a lot of agricultural country about Condobolin.

Mr. Albert Brownlow, storekeeper, Nyngan, sworn, and examined:—

510. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Storekeeper.
511. *Mr. Copeland.*] Have you any business connection with Cobar? I have a small business in Cobar.
512. Are you favourable or adverse to the construction of the proposed railway from Nyngan to Cobar? I have been very favourable to the railway, but at present I am slightly unfavourable to it.
513. Why have you changed your opinion? On account of the present state of Cobar. The mine has collapsed; but if it should revive I would still be in favour of the railway.
514. Would not the construction of the railway be likely to revive the mine? I am certain it would.
515. Are there not other copper-mines in the district which would be benefited by the construction of the line? Yes; I have heard very favourable reports of the New Burra Burra Mine.
516. Would not the construction of the railway give the people cheaper supplies and greater facilities for getting stores? Yes; that is a great object at present, especially in wet weather. There must either be a macadamized road or a railway made.

Mr. A. Brownlow.
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Mr.
A. Brownlow.
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517. Do you think that the people of Cobar would be willing to pay a fair price for carriage by rail in comparison with what they are paying now for carriage by horse teams? In the past they were quite prepared to do so, but since the mine has been shut down I would not like to say what their opinions are.
518. Do you send much merchandise out to Cobar? I have a team constantly working between here and Cobar. During the busy time I had to employ other teams, but now I cannot find enough for my own team to do.
519. What is the average charge for cartage from here to Cobar? It varies very much. A few months ago, in wet weather, I had to pay £12 per ton. At present it is less than £4 per ton.
520. Would a railway making three trips a week do all the cartage that is necessary at present between here and Cobar? At present one train per week would do.
521. Have you any knowledge of the increase or decrease of the population of Nyngan? I cannot tell what the population is at present; but about eight or ten months ago I was one of three selected by a committee to ascertain how many people were in the vicinity of Nyngan. At that time there were 1,052.
522. *Dr. Garran.*] How often have the storekeepers at Cobar run short of supplies in consequence of the bad state of the roads? I have received no end of telegrams from a man in charge of my store at Cobar, mentioning certain goods which were exhausted, and which should be sent out at once. At the same time I have had those provision on the road, and they would probably take a fortnight before they reached Cobar, on account of the state of the road.
523. Is a fortnight the longest time you have had a team on the road? Yes; but I have known other teams to be twice that length of time on the road.
524. How often does this short supply occur? Whenever we have heavy rain.
525. Would 1 inch of rain make the road impassable? No, but 4 or 6 inches of rain would prevent teams from getting through.
526. Is it the custom to keep the stores short-supplied with goods, trusting to fill them up from Nyngan? Every storekeeper is not in a position to keep a large supply.
527. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What sustains Cobar during the time that the copper-mine is shut down? There is a certain amount of business done outside the town altogether. It is a very good pastoral district. That is all they have to depend upon with the exception of the gold-mines which are working.
528. How is it that you have not a larger population settled around Nyngan? I think it is progressing very favourably.
529. Is this place suitable for the growing of fruit? Yes; I do not suppose you could find a better district in New South Wales, provided we get anything like a favourable season.
530. Under these circumstances how is it that people have not gone in more for fruit-growing? We have scarcely had time yet. I think that oranges and grapes would grow to great advantage in this district.
531. Has the opportunity of growing fruit not been seized because of the apathy of the people? It requires a capitalist to go into the business extensively.
532. Do you get your supplies of fruit from Sydney now? Yes.
533. Have you sold much fruit here yourself? Yes; I have imported 15 tons of fruit here in one month from Rydal.
534. Might all that fruit have been grown in the district? Yes.
535. Do you think there is a very good opening here for that industry? I am quite sure of it.
536. Is there anything else that would induce the settlement of a large population here? There is no doubt that very good wheat and oats could be grown here. There is not the slightest doubt that if we had irrigation this would be a very prosperous part of the country.
537. Have you noticed many unemployed about this district? I have been quite sick of their calling in for something to eat; but during the last month I do not think I have seen one. At present, during the shearing season, any one willing to work can obtain employment. No doubt the unemployed will be here again, as they come annually. When they spend their cheques they cannot get work, and they must either starve or beg.
538. Is the financial position of this town healthy? It is not too healthy.
539. Is not that chiefly attributable to the fact that there are a greater number of people in business than there are customers? It is attributable to the past drought.
540. *Mr. Copeland.*] What sort of fruit thrives well here? Principally oranges and grapes. Various other kinds of fruit do remarkably well. Figs will also grow here.
541. Has any one ever attempted to preserve fruit, or to make raisins? I have heard of its being done, but not to a great extent.
542. Have grapes been grown on a large scale? No, it is merely an experiment.
543. Has the fruit industry been merely experimental so far? Yes; it takes some trees five or six years to grow to maturity.
544. Has ever wine been made here? It has been made on a small scale.
545. Have almonds been tried? Yes, they grow well. Pumpkins and melons grow without any cultivation. Potatoes grow here, but they do not seem to do as well as in other places.

HERMITAGE PLAINS, MONDAY, 7 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

The HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

HENRY COPELAND Esq.
JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. Henry Fisher Hall, hotelkeeper, Hermitage Plains, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
H. F. Hall.
7 Oct., 1889.

546. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Hotelkeeper, farmer, poundkeeper, post-master, Hermitage Plains. I have lived here nearly eleven years. I took up a selection of 320 acres, and I had a conditional lease, all fenced, of three times that area.

547.

547. Does the route of the proposed railway pass near your property? Yes. There is a deviation of about 40 paces from the original survey near my property.

548. What does the traffic between Nyngan and Cobar generally consist of? Teams conveying wool and copper to Nyngan, and outloading containing supplies for Cobar. The traffic has not been very large lately, since the railway went to Bourke. Before that the traffic was tremendous. Now, however, a great deal of the traffic goes to Coolabar, and the Budgery wool now goes to Girilambone.

549. How much cultivated land have you? 30 acres under wheat, and a little oats and barley. Those crops are very successful. It is about eight years since I put in the first crop, and I was more or less successful every year until last winter, which was exceptional, owing to the want of rain. Oats, as a rule, are not so successful as wheat. I have had wheat 4 feet 6 inches and 5 feet high when the oats were not 18 inches high. I have had good crops here when the crops at Dubbo and Wellington have been a failure.

550. Is this district peculiarly suitable for the growth of wheat? Yes, we have ample rain here in the winter time with the exception of a few seasons—barley does well if sown early. The crop is growing from the time it is put in until the warm weather comes on, and it is then fit to cut.

551. Have you a ready market for this produce? Yes, as chaff but not as wheat. Mr. Kirkcaldie, in his report, said that there was not an acre of land under cultivation in the district between Nyngan and Cobar, yet at that very time I cut 3 acres of wheat which averaged $27\frac{1}{2}$ bushels to the acre. I sent about 50 bushels to Wellington to have it ground, and I hold a certificate from the proprietors of the mill there to say that my wheat is of a very superior class, and that the land which produced it must be admirably fitted for wheat producing, as the wheat carried a thin husk, with a large amount of flour.

552. You produce to the Committee two special certificates of merit from the Cobar Pastoral and Agricultural Association for wheat grown by you, and for flour made from that wheat, in June, 1888? Yes. It was grown in 1887, and when I took it to Nyngan, the representative there of Wright, Heaton, & Co., offered me 4s. a bushel for it, when, at the same time, the market value of wheat was only 2s. 3d.

553. Could this class of wheat be grown generally in the district? Yes.

554. Is the soil easily tilled and prepared for the growth of wheat and barley? Yes. The soil is a rich chocolate soil, of good depth.

555. During the time you have been here have you been successful as a hotel-keeper and farmer? Yes, until within the last two or three years. As a farmer I have been successful right through. As a hotel-keeper for the past three years, owing to the general depression, I have done little more than feed the unemployed. Up to the last two or three years there were a good many people staying at my place, because improvements were being carried on, and work was plentiful.

556. What amount have you expended upon permanent improvements of the property? About £2,500. When I started I had a few hundred pounds. I am well satisfied with the prosperity I have enjoyed here, and the most of the property which I possess has been earned here.

557. Are there many other farmers near you? There is one within 12 miles of Nyngan—there is another between here and Girilambone. There is another selector who has a fruit garden only. There is a selector on the Nymagee road who selected lately.

558. Seeing that the soil is so good how is it that land is not more generally taken up? In the first place it takes a certain amount of money to conserve water. I have often tried to persuade carriers to take up land in this neighbourhood, but it is only latterly that they have seen the mistake they have made in not doing so. The wave of selection is gradually coming up in this direction. Eleven years ago I could go from Nyngan to Dubbo and from Nyngan to Parkes, and I could take up 640 acres anywhere, but now you could scarcely get a selection between Nyngan and Parkes as the land is nearly all taken up. I am certain that the reason why there is not more selection here is that we are so far away from settlement owing to the want of railway communication. There are at present great difficulties in getting goods and produce in this district from the present railway station. In wet weather the roads are impassable, and in dry weather the dust is almost as bad as the mud. To show the difficulty there is in getting wool and produce to market I may state that I have known a load of 7 tons of wool to have remained on the road nine or eleven weeks in consequence of wet weather setting in. There are many other instances of a similar character. From the amount of traffic that goes along this road and which now goes to Coolabar, I am sure that a railway from Nyngan to Cobar would be a financial success.

559. What is the present rate of carriage from here to Nyngan? £1 15s. per ton.

560. Do you think that if the railway were made the people in the district would immediately want the rate of railway carriage reduced? No, it is not the rate of carriage we look at so much as the certainty of getting our goods.

561. Is there much passenger traffic between Nyngan and Cobar? It has been sufficient to keep an opposition coach running for the last two or three years.

562. Who is the nearest neighbour you have engaged in grazing? A Mr. Lowe, $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles away. He has a large station, I think he shorn 120,000 or 130,000 sheep this year. He sends his wool to Girilambone.

563. Did he lose many sheep during the late drought? No; last year he lost a few, but nothing considerable.

564. Were not the losses of this district very heavy during the drought of 1887-1888? No, they were very light. They only suffered from want of water, and there was plenty of feed in the shape of scrub.

565. *Mr. Copeland.*] What rent do you pay for your conditional lease? 2d. per acre. The land which is not under cultivation I use for grazing purposes—2 acres will feed a sheep if ringbarked and properly supplied with water in ordinary seasons.

566. What weight of fleece do you get? On an average $6\frac{1}{2}$ lb. From some sheep I get 7 lb. and 11 lb. from others. Last year I sold my wool in the grease at $8\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb.

567. Would it not pay others to select this land for the purpose of grazing sheep? Certainly. I can keep more sheep in proportion on my holding, and of a better class than can be kept on the larger holdings. This country is more suitable for small holdings than large holdings.

568. Can you say what rent the squatters in this neighbourhood are paying? No, I do not think the squatter is in as good a position to pay rent as I am unless he puts more water on his run and subdivides his paddocks.

569. How many bushels of grain per acre do you estimate you can get? Twenty bushels at a very low average.

Mr.
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- Mr. H. F. Hall.
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570. Do you think that if the land were sown early in the year, so as to get the benefit of the winter rains, it would be a reasonably safe speculation to grow wheat here? Yes. I would recommend ploughing in March, and sowing before the first rains come.
571. Do you have any frost here? Yes, but it would not interfere with the growth.
572. If a railway were made here do you think there would be a probability of other persons growing wheat? Yes, it would be the means of opening up the country.
573. Why have you not grown more wheat yourself? Because the cost of carriage is so great. I can get imported wheat landed here cheaper than I can grow my own wheat and send it to Dubbo to have it ground. Pumpkins and melons thrive here. Grapes are a thorough success, but they require watering. Two Frenchmen have a selection near Nymagee, and they have about 2 acres of land under grape vines;—one year they made £200 by a sale of their grapes besides some wine. Mr. Lowe has a splendid vineyard and orchard in which he grows apricots, plums, and peaches. He has tons of grapes.
574. Have you or anyone else attempted wine-making or raisin-making? No. The caretaker at the Government tank has cultivated 10 acres of wheat and oats this year, and there is a splendid crop of 10 acres of wheat at Budgery, 7 miles from here. It does not require a large quantity of seed per acre to grow grain here. I use $1\frac{1}{2}$ bushels to the acre. The ground is so strong that it does not require to be deeply ploughed.
575. Do you think that the proposed route is the best for a railway between Nyngan and Cobar? Certainly.
576. Do you ever have any travellers westward of Cobar coming this way? Not latterly, but they used to come.
577. *Mr. Tonkin.*] It does not pay you to grow a crop for wheat, but it pays you very well for chaff? Yes.
578. What is the average tonnage you get per acre? From 30 cwt. to 2 tons. I have obtained £10 a ton this year;—that is a good price.
579. Why do you not grow more chaff here? Because the cost of carriage eats away the profit.
580. Is there plenty of land available in this district which would grow very good crops? Yes.
581. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Does the proposed line between here and Cobar run on the leasehold area or the resumed area? At Budgery it runs through the resumed area. The next 10 miles block adjoining this place is all resumed area.
582. Do you know of any mineral country in this neighbourhood? Yes; 15 or 16 miles from here there is a reef which gave very good indications of gold. I sank 30 or 40 feet upon it, but I could not afford to sink any farther. On the side of the road about two miles from here gold has been found. All round the ridges there is more or less gold to be obtained on the surface, but not sufficient to pay. $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of that spot which I have last mentioned a reef was found, which, according to assays, ran 2 oz. and some dwt. to the ton. Four gold and silver leases were taken up there. £400 has been spent in sinking two shafts, 60 feet each, 190 feet apart, and each driven 60 feet towards one another, without striking the reef.
583. *Mr. Hurley.*] What is the distance from here to Nyngan? 27 miles. The distance from here to Girilambone is from 21 to 22 miles. The country between those places is very much the same; but the country between here and Girilambone is not so level as between here and Nyngan. It is more favourable country for taking a railway between here and Nyngan than between here and Girilambone.
584. Will the construction of a railway give an increased value to your property? Yes.
585. If you were disposing of this property what would you ask per acre for your freehold, independent of the improvements? Some little time ago I offered to sell at £3,000. The improvements have cost me £2,500.
586. Would you be prepared to take 100 per cent. on what it has cost you in payments to the Crown independently of your improvements? No.
587. Can you say anything in relation of what you have read or heard with regard to the construction of this railway? The Government were most antagonistic to it and at the time Mr. Kirkcaldie came up here he reported upon the whole line from Nyngan to Cobar without seeing it. He reported that there was not a single acre of land under cultivation, while at the same time I had a magnificent crop of 20 acres. At the same time Dawson had a good crop, and there were numerous crops around Cobar. Mr. Harper came past at the same time and he tried to persuade me that there was not sufficient rain. I wanted him to visit my cultivation paddock but he would not do so. Those reports did us a great amount of injury. When the reporter of *The Daily Telegraph* visited this district I wanted him to go down to my paddock and see what this western country could produce, but he would not go. Soon afterwards he tried to damn this country.
588. What distance are you from Nymagee? $42\frac{1}{2}$ miles in a direct line. The land is perfectly level until you get within a few miles of Nymagee.
589. Would this be the nearest point to Nymagee? It would be the nearest practicable point in the event of the railway being constructed.
590. If the railway were made, would you be prepared to pay twice the rates of carriage now charged between Dubbo and Bourke? I would indeed.
591. Do you think that the line is likely to be productive of benefit to the country? I certainly think so. We should think of the future generations who will derive a benefit from it.
592. *Chairman.*] What is the distance from Coolabar to Cobar? 73 miles, I think.
593. Are there any selections between Nyngan and Hermitage Plains? Only Dawson's, Lyon's, and my own.
594. *Mr. Hurley.*] With regard to the value of the land which you took up under the conditions of the Act of 1884, if you were disposing of that land now, do you think that you would be asking a higher price for it than it is worth, if you demanded £4 an acre? No. I believe that the land is worth more than £4 an acre.
595. Is the crop of wheat and barley which we have seen an average crop? Yes. The year before last I reckon I had over 2 tons of hay to the acre. Admitting that I had only 1 ton to the acre in previous years, the return would have paid the expense of clearing the land.
596. Were the people whom you have supplied with food who have been travelling up and down the road as unemployed, been people who would be likely to settle down upon the land as agriculturalists? No doubt many of them would be if they had a helping hand. At the time free-passes were given from Sydney we had a lot of men of the loafing class about the neighbourhood,

597. Would persons with a small capital find plenty of room here to make a living as agriculturalists? Yes. This country is admirably fitted for keeping pigs. The pigs run wild through the bush. I have 30 or 40 pigs here, and they live all through the dry weather, without getting much food.

Mr.
H. F. Hall.
7 Oct., 1889.

Mr. Francis Malarkey, lessee of the Muriel Government Tank, made an affirmation, and was examined:—

598. *Chairman.*] What position do you hold? I am lessee of the Muriel Government Tank, 40 miles from Nyngan, and 40 miles from Cobar. I have been here about six years, and I came here at first in the employ of Wright, Heaton, & Co. For three years and four months I have had a lease of this tank.

Mr. F.
Malarkey.
7 Oct., 1889.

599. During the year 1885 to what extent was this tank used? During the January, 1885, it was used by 64 head of cattle, 830 stock in teams—that is horses drawing the waggons. There were no sheep.

600. *Mr. Copeland.*] How many teams would those represent? There are 10 horses in a team, so there would have been 83 teams. There were also 496 mail horses for that month.

601. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do those figures represent each time that a horse goes to drink? Yes. In February, 1885, there were 200 sheep, 900 stock in teams, 12 saddle horses, and 448 mail horses.

602. *Chairman.*] Now give us the returns for the winter months? In July, 1885, there were 25 head of cattle, 67 stock in teams, 5 saddle horses, and 96 mail horses. In September, 1885, there were 102 stock in teams and 112 mail horses.

603. During those months the stock were able to get water along the road? Yes.

604. Since then has there been an increase or a decrease? A decrease, which has been gradual, from 1885 up to the present time. In January, 1888, we had 464 horses, 170 head of cattle, 3,830 sheep, and no mail horses. February, 1888, 660 horses, 108 cattle, 4,000 sheep. July, 1888, 336 horses, 1,043 cattle, 620 mail horses.

605. Was it a very dry period in 1888? Yes. In January, 1889, there were 588 horses and 118 cattle; there were no sheep nor mail horses. February, 1889, 647 horses, 18 head of cattle, 196 mail horses. July, 1889, 85 horses, 96 cattle. August, 68 horses and 14 cattle. 12s. 6d. were all the fees I collected then, and I have to pay £55 a year rent.

606. Was the reason for this great falling off the plentiful supply of water all about you? Yes.

607. A great many teams pass here without calling at the tank at all;—can you tell us how many? No.

608. *Mr. Copeland.*] How many teams have you in your books for one year? My books show that approximately there were 577 teams of horses and 116 teams of bullocks, which watered at this tank during the year 1888. Those figures do not include a number of teams which passed the place without watering. Those teams were not always loaded. When they go out for wool, they go out empty.

609. On an average what would the horse teams and the bullock teams carry when loaded? About 5 tons for each horse team, a bullock team might carry a little more. In 1888 the greater number of the teams would be loaded, because they were carrying horse feed to Cobar. In 1888 they were bringing smelted copper and a few tons or cwts. of stone from the gold mines at Cobar.

610. The carrying capacity of all those horse and bullock teams, supposing they were all loaded, would be about 3,415 tons? Yes, that is including the traffic both ways.

611. *Chairman.*] Would this be all traffic that the railway would serve if a railway were constructed between Nyngan and Cobar? Yes.

612. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] In addition to the teams which have passed your door, is there much stock driven from here to Nyngan for the purpose of moving them by rail? Not since the railway was opened to Bourke. In March, 1888, 11,588 sheep passed here.

613. Would that be a fair average? It is more than the average.

614. Are you prepared to give a rough estimate of the number of unloaded teams which passed here? Last season was a dry season, and there were very few unloaded teams.

615. Would we be near the mark in saying that one-fifth of the teams that watered here were empty? Only about 5 per cent. of the teams were empty.

Mr. William Budd, innkeeper, between Nyngan and Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

616. *Mr. Hurley.*] Are you the proprietor of Budd's Hotel, on the road between Nyngan and Cobar? Mr. W. Budd. Yes; I have been here about twelve years.

617. Do you hold some land here? Yes; I have a selection that I am converting into a freehold. I have 40 acres. I have the most of it under cultivation, to which the land is well adapted.

7 Oct., 1889.

618. Do you not think that a more suitable line for the railway could have been surveyed in this neighbourhood, instead of taking it so close to this ridge? The last survey was made to the north of the original survey, and it seems to avoid the hill.

619. Is the soil in this district the same as you are cultivating? Yes.

620. If your land were not improved, would you be willing to sell it for £4 an acre? No.

621. Is there much traffic on this road? The traffic has died off since the Cobar mine has been closed. Previous to that there was a great deal more traffic here than on any other road in the back country.

622. What do you pay for freight from here to Nyngan? About £3 or £3 5s. per ton. I have known the freight to be £20 per ton.

623. Would you be prepared to pay £1 a ton for goods brought by rail as against £2 15s per ton for goods conveyed by drays? Undoubtedly so.

624. Are there any other selectors within a radius of 10 miles from this place? Yes. There is a selection within 5 miles of this place, but it was only taken up last year. There is no cultivation carried on here except by a few squatters, who have a little cultivation.

625. To what do you attribute the fact that there are not other selectors here besides yourself? The great obstacle is the last Land Act, which debars a small selector from taking up any land within a reasonable distance of the main road.

626. Is there not also the inconvenience of not being able to get to market easily? Yes; the selector does not like to be off the main line of road, but there is no chance of getting land near the main road.

627. *Mr. Copeland.*] How is that? The land has been all secured by the squatters.

628. Does the leasehold area lie on both sides of the road? Yes; and where that is not the case, there is a leasehold area on one side of the road and travelling stock on the other side. That debars anyone from selecting on the road between here and Cobar. Then the western division begins about a mile or three quarters of a mile from here, so that there is no possibility of getting land within a reasonable distance of the main road.

£29.

- Mr. W. Budd. 629. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you taken any part in testing this district for minerals? Yes; I have done a lot of prospecting at different times. There have been other parties doing the same, but the results have not been satisfactory. We have prospected principally for silver and gold. We have got very good indications of both. We could not carry on operations without assistance from capitalists. We are only poor men, and we went to the full extent of our means.
- 7 Oct., 1889. 630. Do you think that the land would be capable of supporting a population in comfort if there was a railway? Yes.
631. *Mr. Copeland.*] What kind of fruits and vegetables do you grow in the garden adjoining this house? Peaches, apricots, mulberries, and grapes. They all thrive—the grapes do remarkably well, and so do figs. We have to irrigate them in the very dry seasons. We grow splendid cabbages, turnips, onions, and cauliflowers. I have grown cabbages which weighed 24 lbs. I grow carrots. Celery does remarkably well. In dry seasons we have to water the vegetables, but we do not irrigate the vines.
632. How many acres have you in your cultivation paddock? 32 acres under crop. I have 10 acres of oats and 22 of wheat.
633. What yield do you get from the oats and wheat? I generally cut the oats and wheat for hay. I expect to get $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons of hay to the acre this year. The height of the oats at present is 5 feet 6 inches.
634. What time were the cereals sown this year? Before the commencement of the rains—the first was sown in May.
635. Did you have any crop last year? No; it was a failure, owing to the drought.
636. From your experience during thirteen years, how often do you reckon you can get a crop? I think we ought to get three crops out of four.
637. Would it pay you to cultivate on those terms? Yes; I believe it would.
638. What price per ton do you expect to get for your hay? On an average, since I have been here, I have got £10 per ton—that would be a return of £20 an acre. I am now clearing another 10 acres of land which I have leased from a squatter. I intend to make up the area of my cultivation to 40 acres.
639. If a railway were constructed would you send your produce into Cobar by railway? Yes; that is my intention.
640. Would you send your produce eastward? Yes; I would send it wherever I could get the best market. They are paying £15 per ton for chaff in Cobar now.
641. *Chairman.*] Do you think that if there were improved communication it would induce settlement in this district? Yes; there are many people who would select land here if they had an opportunity of doing so—that is, if they could obtain land on the same conditions on which I obtained the 40 acres which I hold. If there were a railway settlers would have facilities for getting their goods to market.
642. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Are there no homestead leases in this neighbourhood? There are some within 20 miles of this place.

Mr. Hugh Sutherland, saw-mill proprietor, near Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. H. Sutherland. 643. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Saw-mill proprietor. I have a mill within three miles of Budd's Hotel. I saw with a license. I cut cypress pine. I saw it into logs and boards for building purposes.
- 7 Oct., 1889. 644. Do you get a ready sale for your timber? Not during the last few years. There has not been very extensive building going on, so that the mill is not kept in full work all the year round.
645. Is this pine timber suitable for railway sleepers? It is the most durable timber in the country for house building, but it is not good for sleepers. It is impossible to drive spikes into it without splitting it.
646. Do you know any timber within easy reach of the projected railway line which would be suitable for sleepers? No, not of the dimensions and quality required by the Government.
647. Do you know of any ironbark near Nymagee which would be suitable for sleepers? I know there is a large quantity of ironbark which would be suitable for sleepers. That timber is within 40 miles of Cobar, and I think there is some even nearer than that to the line. The timber I speak of would be within 23 miles of this place.
648. Have you prospered or otherwise since you have had your saw-mill? I just kept my own. I have been engaged extensively in other matters, in which I have sometimes lost and sometimes won. I think it has been overlooked that if a railway were made there would be a large timber trade in connection with it. If there was a railway, instead of having my mill out in the bush I would have the mill in Cobar, and I would have the timber carried along the railway. There is good timber all along the surveyed line.
649. What demand would there be for the timber in Cobar? The railway would cause buildings to be erected.
650. Do you think that a railway would promote settlement along the line or near it? I am sure it would. In a few years all the land available would be taken up in homestead leases. People are now only beginning to find out the value of those leases. Several have been taken up lately near Cobar. Seven or eight have been taken up about 20 miles north of this place. I have heard several people express their intention of taking up such leases. I believe that the country around Cobar is superior to most of the land in the Colony for settlement.
651. Do you think that a man taking up a homestead lease in the western division could make a good living and prosper on it? Yes, I consider that a man could make £500 or £600 a-year on one of those homestead leases, and at the same time make provision against drought.
652. *Mr. Tonkin.*] If the railway were constructed would there be any probability of your being able to send sawn timber to market to the eastward of this place? Yes. If a railway were made I could cut a great deal of timber and get it easily to market. There would then be a great quantity of timber required for Cobar itself. I have been twenty-five years in this part of the country, and I know that one of the worst things that could ever happen to a town is to be always promised a railway which is never constructed. Such a state of things retards the progress of a district very much, because people who own property will not improve it until they see if a railway is really going to be made. That has been the case in Cobar, and if a railway were constructed there is no doubt great improvement would be made at once.
653. Do you think that the construction of a railway would induce other saw-mills to start work. I am confident of it. I believe that Nyngan, Wilcannia, and Broken Hill could be supplied with timber from this district.

COBAR, TUESDAY, 8 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.,

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.,

EDMUND WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.,

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

William Joseph Hogan, Esq., solicitor, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

654. *Chairman.*] Are you Mayor of Cobar and also a solicitor practising here? Yes; I have been here about nine years. W. J. Hogan,
Esq.
8 Oct., 1889.
655. What is the population of Cobar at the present time? About 1,500. That is a considerable decrease as compared with former years. During the last three or four years the population has varied from 3,000 to 4,000 people.
656. When did the sudden falling off in the population occur? When the copper syndicate failed to carry out its contract with the Great Cobar copper-mine. When the mine ceased work there were 400 or 500 men employed there. Those men, with their wives and families, went away.
657. Seeing that the proposed Nyngan to Cobar railway is estimated to cost, in round numbers, £250,000, do you think that the return from the railway would pay interest on the expenditure as well as working expenses? If it were made to Cobar I do not think the railway would immediately pay interest on the money expended. Myself and others have often urged upon the Public Works Department the necessity of making a light line of railway from Nyngan to Cobar, which should be as inexpensive as possible, by doing away with fencing and other things. We were of opinion the construction of the railway would increase settlement, and that the line would pay in the near future. Then we thought the line would be regarded as necessary as one section of the railway to Broken Hill.
658. At a public meeting held in Cobar in 1887, it was estimated that the line would give a return of £18,000 per annum;—can you tell us how that estimate was arrived at? That estimate was afterwards cut down. Some wrong data had been given. The figures were checked by Mr. Kirkcaldie, and certain reductions were mutually agreed upon. I think that the figures which the people of Cobar would like to place before the Committee are the figures which were certified to by Mr. Kirkcaldie as correct.
659. Is the country in and about Cobar rich in minerals? Yes, very rich.
660. What other minerals are there besides copper? A great deal of capital has been spent in developing gold-mines in the immediate vicinity of Cobar. The Chesney-Cobar Gold-mining Co. is now in active operation. They have crushing machinery now at work. The Occidental gold-mine is also in operation, and there are the Great Cobar and several other gold-mines. Those mines have been recently started.
661. What is produced in the district? Wool is the great product here. The district is also a very good one for fattening sheep and cattle. Agriculture is carried on on a limited scale.
662. How is it that agriculture is limited, seeing that the soil is so very good? It is owing to the want of means to get to market. Cobar does not supply a sufficient market, and for want of railway communication we cannot compete with other places.
663. How many crops, over a series of years, can be relied upon in this district? Three out of four, I think.
664. What cereals are produced here? Wheat grows splendidly. It fills out well and comes to maturity.
665. Could you get three good crops of wheat out of four? Yes; wheat is almost a certain crop, except in a very bad season. Lucerne grows admirably; so do oats. I do not think much attention has been given to the growth of other cereals.
666. What is your opinion with regard to the following statement with regard to this district:—"It would be folly to talk of growing wheat where there was no certainty of securing a crop in more than one year out of three or four, and therefore, in estimating the chance of the line paying, this must be dismissed from the calculation"? I would say that that is an error, and that it is against the experience of the people in this district.
667. Do you think that the reason why people do not cultivate more land is because they cannot send their produce to market? Yes.
668. Have you seen any indications of a desire on the part of people to settle more largely in the district than they have up to the present? I know that many people would be inclined to settle here under the present Land Act if they had railway communication.
669. Do you think homestead leases would be taken up to a considerable extent? Yes; I believe that five or six years after the railway was made every acre of the resumed areas between here and Wilcannia would be taken up and settled upon.
670. Do you think that a railway would draw traffic towards Sydney which is now going in another direction? Yes.
671. Are the people of Cobar unanimously in favour of this railway? I think so. I know some business men who some little time ago were not in favour of the railway, but now they are all in favour of it.
672. What has become of Mr. F. B. Martin, who was a strong opponent of the railway? I do not know such a person. I do not think he was ever in business here. Cobar has suffered from time to time, owing to the high rates charged for the carriage of goods. We have paid £30 a ton for the carriage of goods from Nyngan to this place.
673. Do you think that the people would want a daily train, or would they be satisfied with less? I think they would regard a service of two or three times per week as ample. That would be sufficient to meet the wants of the district for some time. The train need not run faster than 15 or 20 miles an hour, and it might be run in the day-time. It would not be necessary to fence the line.
674. Can you give us the names of any persons in Cobar opposed to the railway? I do not know one individual who is opposed to it.
675. How long has Cobar been incorporated? About seven years.
676. What is the amount of rates per annum? Something over £400 or £500. That is expended on the streets. We also have a lighting rate.

- W. J. Hogan, Esq.
8 Oct., 1889.
677. Are there any manufactures carried on in Cobar? No. I may say that when I came here nine years ago Cobar was a very small place indeed. None of the Government buildings which we have now were then erected, and since then the place has considerably increased in prosperity.
678. What is the amount of public money that has been spent on buildings in Cobar? About £25,000, including the reservoir built for the purpose of water supply.
679. Is there not a great quantity of agricultural produce brought here from Nyngan? Yes.
680. Why is that produce not grown here? That produce is brought here in time of drought. The people here who have gone in for any agriculture have not carried it on as their particular business. They have generally grown produce for their own use.
681. How long is it since crops have been grown? For the last five or six years.
682. Is there any noticeable increase in the area cultivated? I think there is a noticeable increase this year. Without counting the stations, there would be about 200 or 300 acres. There is a fair quantity of fruit, consisting, of oranges, apples, peaches, and lemons brought here from Sydney by rail. Several persons have formed orchards here, and I know one man who this year has planted 2 acres of fruit trees. Apricots, peaches, and grapes do very well here. I do not think any wine has been made in the district, with the exception of a little made on a small vineyard near Nymagee.
683. Can you hold out any hope of being able to export anything from Cobar except copper and wool if the railway be constructed? If a railway were carried further west towards Broken Hill I think there would be a certainty that we could successfully grow wheat and hay in this district for exportation to the west.
684. *Mr. Hurley.*] Were you one of a deputation which waited on the Premier in 1888 to make certain representations with regard to the proposed railway? Yes.
685. Do you remember a statement being made to the Premier (*vide Appendix*)? Yes; the Cobar people did not make that statement in a loose way. They made it after the figures had been carefully collected.
686. Did the deputation think they were justified in making the representation I have referred to, in view of the revival of the works of the Great Cobar Copper Company? Yes; the Company offered to make a private line.
687. Did you believe that that was an honest offer? Yes; it was refused by the Government. I believe it would have been carried out if the Government had given their sanction.
688. Do you think that private capital could be found to make the railway now, in the event of the Government refusing to build it? I would not like to say that, but I believe it is possible.
689. Do you think that settlement on large holdings, such as homestead leases, is likely to be productive of benefit in giving traffic to the proposed railway? Yes.
690. Would it not be better to settle a small agricultural population on the land? I should say that those who take up homestead leases on the resumed areas would not be debarred from carrying on agricultural as well as pastoral pursuits.
691. Have not people who have cultivated some of the land between Nyngan and Cobar done so very successfully? Yes; for instance, at Hall's place.
692. Has not great apathy been displayed by the people in this district in not entering upon the cultivation of the soil? I think cultivation would have been entered upon with more spirit if the railway had been made.
693. You have said that increased population would be settled by the construction of a railway;—where is that population likely to settle? On the resumed areas of the different runs of the district.
694. Would settlement on those resumed areas be likely to be productive of benefit to the persons who settle there? I think so. I think that is proved by the fact that the good-will of one of those homestead leases, without improvements, was sold for £5,000, and shortly afterwards it was sold again for £10,000.
695. Does not the further development of the Great Cobar Copper-mine depend altogether upon a rise in the price of copper? Yes; I have heard the mining manager say that with copper at £50 per ton, and with a railway, the mine would pay well.
696. Have you been down the Great Cobar-mine? Yes. I should say that the mine has got an inexhaustible supply of ore. It is not of a very high quality; but judging from what I saw myself, and from what I have heard from the miners underground, there is a good supply for several years to come.
697. Do you think that if a railway were made it would be the means of putting the mine into full work? I believe it would keep the mine in full work for many years to come.
698. What minerals have been found within a radius of 10 or 12 miles of Cobar? Very rich and large deposits of silver have been found. They are working a mine now at Mount Billygoe, 20 miles from here. Gold-mining seems to be developing into an important industry, and, of course, there is copper.
699. Is Mount Billygoe likely to pay dividends? They have found rich veins, and they are at present searching for the lode. They have paid no dividend. The shares have gone up considerably. The shares were originally £5 each, and they have sold as high as £400 since. I think the gold-mines in the vicinity of Cobar are likely to turn out well for the investors. They only require time and capital.
700. Is there a large quantity of goods brought to Cobar from Louth? No.
701. Do you think that if the railway were constructed to Wilcannia it would meet with competition from the river? I cannot say. I am informed that the country in places between here and Wilcannia is better than the country round Cobar.
702. If a railway were constructed to Cobar alone, do you think it would be a business mistake? No. At present I do not think it would pay; but if it were constructed as a light line, as advocated by the Cobar people, it would pay in the immediate future.
703. What do you mean by a light line? Something lighter than the main trunk line, on which the train would travel at the rate of 15 or 20 miles an hour.
704. Do you think that five goods trucks could be worked with a train three times a week? Yes.
705. That would be equal to 75 tons of goods per week? Yes; if the mines were in full swing. The Company have always led me to believe that if they could get a railway made to Cobar they would double or treble their former output of copper. They would put up more furnaces and would have a refinery at Lithgow or some other place.

706. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Are you aware that the railway line between Nyngan and Cobar runs through leasehold areas all the way, except across Budgery and a portion of Meryula? Yes; but the resumed areas are not far from the leasehold areas. W. J. Hogan,
Esq.

707. Do you think that people are likely to settle on the resumed area some distance away from the line? I think so, judging from what I have seen in other places. When I came to Cobar first, the railway was not made to Nyngan and there were hundreds of thousands of acres of vacant land between Nyngan and Dubbo. Now I do not think you could get a decent farm between those two points, all the vacant land having been taken up by selectors. That is owing wholly to railway communication. 8 Oct., 1889.

708. Would it be a fair criterion of the normal state of Cobar to judge it by its present circumstances? Not at all. I have not seen Cobar so depressed during nine years as it is now.

709. *Mr. Tonkin.*] How far does the western trade gravitate in this direction? About 50 or 60 miles. It mostly goes to the river at present.

710. Do you think that if the railway were constructed the traffic would be brought this way instead of going by the river? I think it is likely that we would get some of the traffic. I do not think the railway would have the effect of directing more traffic towards the river. I think most of the people who are settled there are connected with Sydney, and if they had facilities for trading they would prefer to deal with Sydney rather than with Adelaide.

711. If the railway were constructed only to Cobar, would it attract any of the western traffic? There is a good stock route in this direction, and I believe we might have a considerable return from stock.

712. Would more wool come this way? We might get a little of it.

713. Is there any truth in the statement that the whole of the payable ore in the great Cobar Copper-mine is worked out, and that nothing is now left except 6 or 6½ per cent ore? I believe the statement is utterly unfounded.

714. Do you think that the construction of this railway would start the Great Cobar Copper-mine again if the price of copper did not raise to £50 per ton? I think copper would first have to rise in value.

715. *Mr. Copeland.*] You stated, in reply to Mr. Hurley, that a homestead lease in this district had been sold for £5,000, and that it had been shortly afterwards resold for £10,000? What I should have stated was that under the Act of 1884 two 10-mile blocks of 64,000 acres each were sold, and that the good will, without improvements, brought £5,000, and that it was sold afterwards for £10,000. It was not a homestead lease.

Thomas C. K. M'Kell, Esq., Police Magistrate, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

716. *Chairman.*] What position do you occupy? Police Magistrate, Warden, and Acting Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages. T. C. K.
M'Kell, Esq.

717. *Mr. Copeland.*] Can you furnish the Committee with particulars as to the business done in this district in connection with your Department? Yes; I hand in the following returns:— 8 Oct., 1889.

MINES.						
		Applications.		Acreages.		
Mineral leases	1880	10	410	...	} Copper and iron.	
"	1881	6	320	...		
"	1884	4	120	...		
"	1886	1	80	...		} Lime.
"	1887	2	100	...		} Copper.
"	1887	8	280	...	} Copper and silver.	
"	1888	195	7,355½	...	} Silver and copper—	
"	1889	26	850	...	} principally silver.	
Gold	1880	5	90	...	.. Silver.
"	1881	1	10	...		
"	1882	3	75	...		
"	1883	3	75	...		
"	1884	1	25	...		
"	1887	39	258	...		
"	1888	42	370½	...		
"	1889	19	131	...		

Sums received from all sources:—

1885, £2,396 13s. 5d.; 1886, £3,924 14s. 1d.; 1887, £4,434 8s. 7d.; 1888, £8,852 19s. 6d.; 1889, £6,657 8s. 11d.

	Mineral licenses.	Miner's rights.	Business licenses.
1885.....	15	92	6
1886.....	3	14	...
1887.....	13	139	1
1888.....	107	302	92
1889.....	33	160	12

Revenue received:—

1887, £488 10s.; 1888, £3,334 2s.; 1889, to September 30, £604 5s.—86 Leases accepted.

I may state that mining did not come into full operation in this district until October or November, 1887, when there was a rush for silver and gold mines. 880 oz. of gold were sent to Sydney last month from two claims.

718. Was that the first gold sent away? Yes.

719. What is the population of the town? About 1,500 or 2,000.

720. What are the figures as to the births, marriages, and deaths? There were 100 births in 1888, eighteen marriages, and forty-seven deaths. The population was larger that year than it is this year. This year, so far, there have been seventy-one births, nineteen marriages, and thirty-seven deaths.

721. Can you account for the fact that the average rate of births is maintained, although the population has decreased? I suppose it is owing to the husbands having left their wives and families behind, while they went to seek employment elsewhere.

- T. C. K. McKell, Esq.**
8 Oct., 1889.
722. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you think that the large number of marriages this year, as compared with last year is an indication of the return of prosperity? Some people might not think so, but I do.
723. How many applications have been made for silver and mineral leases? All the leases since 1887 up to the present time have been for silver and gold, with the exception of about twelve.
724. Are any of the silver leases being worked? Yes.
725. Has any machinery been erected on them? Gold-mining machinery has been erected. The silver and gold leases are mixed, and are within a mile of the town.
726. What are the indications up to the present as to the success of silver-mining? Billygoe is the only place which seems to produce any silver.
727. Then we cannot regard silver-mining as one of the established resources of the district? No; a great many of the leases were taken up as silver leases, but they are really gold leases. I have always recommended them to be granted as gold. There is no machinery erected at Billygoe. They have been sinking there for some years. Some thousands of pounds have been spent there. It is worked by a Melbourne syndicate, which has been floated into a company of 5,000 shares. It was first of all a company with 100 shares of £5 each. Silver was obtained by assay at the rate of 600 or 700 oz. There was a rush for the shares, and £5 shares sold at £420 and £450 a piece.
728. Do you think that gold-mining is likely to be successful in this district? Yes.
729. *Mr. Tonkin.*] How many people are engaged in gold and silver mining in and about Cobar? About 100 or 150 people.
730. Does that include the Billygoe mine? No. I may mention that a splendid new copper-mine, called the Burra Burra, is now being opened, and it employs twenty men. During the last few months £4,000 or £5,000 has been spent on that mine.
731. Do you think the people engaged in gold and silver-mining are making a living? They are getting good wages.
732. Is the township of Cobar maintained by anything else except mining? There are squatters in the surrounding district.
733. Have there been times here when the road has been so bad that provisions have gone up to a very high price? Yes; we have been next door to starvation.
734. *Mr. Hurley.*] What is the number of public-houses in the town? Nine or ten.
735. What revenue is derived from all the licenses in the town? £270, and about £20 or £30 additional for transfers. In order to show the large amount of increased work caused by the rush of mining business, I may point out that in 1887 the revenue received in my office was £4,433 from all sources. In 1888 it went up to £8,952. During the portion of the present year which has expired up to date, £6,670 has been received.

Mr. Diggary A. Penhall, Mining Manager, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. D. A. Penhall.**
Oct., 1889.
736. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? Mining Manager. I have been in this district about five years. I was supervising surface work on the Great Cobar Mine for the first three years that I was in the district. Previously I had been for three years in the Mount Hope mine in the same position. During the last two years I have been well acquainted with the whole of the gold-mines near Cobar.
737. Are you a practical miner? Yes; I have been engaged in the business all my life.
738. Can you speak as to the probable success of the Great Cobar Mine in the future? During the late rise in the price of copper the manager was enabled to do a great deal of exploring, which he did to the east of the main lode. They came across one shoot or bunch of copper which lasted about eighteen months. That was very rich ore.
739. Do you think that is likely to last? I think so. Such bunches are often thrown from the main lode. If this is only a bunch there can be no permanency in it; but I think it indicates the existence of a large lode. I believe other discoveries have been made, but this I am speaking of I saw myself several times. It extended from the surface downward and it is not worked out. It is from 4 to 15 feet wide. Some of it near the surface yields 45 to 50 per cent. of copper. It went down from 8 to 10 fathoms below the surface.
740. Knowing that this class of ore is in existence, do you think that at such a low price as £50 per ton the mine would give employment to a large number of men? Yes; probably 600 men would find employment.
741. Considering the number of men there would be required to cut firewood and do all the other kind of work, do you think that the Company would be in a position to employ 2,000 men? I think they would employ at least 700 or 800 men, but I hardly think that they would employ as many as 2,000 men if copper only brought £50 per ton.
742. What is your opinion as to the permanency of the gold-mines? I have never seen in all my experience any more permanent looking lodes than there are in this district. In this district we have a large lode running for 2½ miles, with a width varying from 1 foot to 120 feet. It is over 100 feet wide for some 9 or 10 chains in various places, and for 5 and 6 chains in other places—that is on the surface.
743. What mines have gone down any depth which are likely to prove dividend paying? At the north end of this large lode we have the Jubilee claim which is likely to be dividend paying. They have not yet had a crushing. 6 dwts. to the ton would pay a very nice dividend from that mine. The next is the Tunnel claim, where there is a large outcrop of auriferous matter. There are millions of tons there, and gold is visible from one end to the other. It is a little over 16 chains in length, and there are portions of it 130 feet wide. I have no doubt that will be dividend paying. The Chesney-Cobar mine has produced from crushings a little over 4 ozs. to the ton. The first crushing was done in small lots in Sydney. A crushing of 27 tons went a little over 2 ozs. to the ton. The gold is worth over £4 an ounce. The next claim where any crushing has been done is the Occidental. This claim is a 5-acre lease along the lode. On the surface the lode is from 100 to 120 feet in width, and the gold can be seen in the stone from one side to the other. There is no doubt this will be a dividend paying mine if it would only go 5 or 6 dwts. to the ton; but the crushings which have taken place of 300 or 400 tons have never gone less than 10 or 11 dwts. to the ton. Some crushings have gone 1½ oz. to the ton. The quality of the gold is equal to that of the Chesney-Cobar gold. There are about 100 men employed on the gold-mines in this district, and the rate of wages is from £2 15s. to £3 per week.
744. With copper at £50 a ton, could the great Cobar Copper-mine pay a dividend from 8 or 10 per cent. ore? Yes.

745. Then the ore you have spoken of is exceptionally rich? Yes; but this being carbonates, it is only a small proportion to the other ore in the mine which would be smelted with it.
746. With such rich ore in the mine, why cannot they work the mine advantageously now? Because they have to pay too much for firewood.
747. If the railway were constructed, do you think that mine could be set to work advantageously to the shareholders? Yes; even with copper at £50 per ton.
748. Would you be surprised if that mine gave employment to a population of 2,000 souls? No.
749. Do you know of the existence of porphyry in this district which is likely to be of commercial value? Yes; there is some 100 miles from here; also 45 or 50 miles from here, between the Nymagee mine and the proposed railway line. There is also porphyry in large quantities at Billygoe, within 20 miles from here.
750. Is there a large demand for fodder in this district? It is almost impossible for stock to live here without bringing fodder to the district in dry seasons.
751. Do you think that enough supplies for the horses could be raised in the district? Yes.
752. Why have not persons entered into that speculation? The people who selected land here generally selected the rising ground, which is stony, in the belief that there were valuable copper lodes in them. There are only one or two instances in which people selected low land which would grow corn, and then they selected for the purpose of keeping stock and not for cultivating it. There is no doubt that the land is suitable for agriculture.
753. Do you think that the railway would pay if constructed to Cobar? I do not think it would pay just now if constructed to Cobar only; but if it were constructed to Broken Hill it would be one of the best paying lines in the country places.
754. *Mr. Copeland.*] How long is it since gold was discovered in this vicinity? About sixteen years ago; but a great rush took place about two years ago.
755. During the whole of that time have only 800 or 850 ozs. been obtained? I think there must have been a great deal more than that obtained. There must have been 1,000 or 1,200 ozs. produced. I heard the evidence given by the Warden; but I am sure what I say is correct.
756. Do you not think that there has been a very small yield of gold as the result of working 2½ miles of auriferous country for the last two years? It would be if it were taken from 2½ miles of country; but, as a matter of fact, it has only been taken from about 2 chains in length. The stone taken from the Occidental mine was only about a chain or so in length. The Chesney claim was only worked about 100 feet in length, and they had such difficulty in getting in timber and getting to their good stone that they had to crush a lot of surface stuff to fill-in time and keep the battery going, and very little of their good stone has been put through the mill.
757. How is it that the men who were engaged in the Great Cobar mine when it stopped are not now employed in gold-mining? They were copper miners generally, and a copper miner would sooner travel 100 miles to work in a copper-mine than work in a gold-mine on the spot. Another reason is that there is not sufficient capital in the district to work this length of lode, nor have we been able to get in sufficient capital from outside to work the whole of the lode.
758. You have had visits from capitalists from various parts to inspect the mines;—how is it that they are not prepared to spend their capital in developing them? A great number of them were inclined to invest capital in the mines, but in my opinion they were asked too much for the mines then in existence. In many instances they were not fairly dealt with. The people who had the mines generally thought so much of them that they wanted all the money and all the mine. Those people were not able to work the mines themselves for want of capital.
759. How wide is the Jubilee Reef? From 5 to 15 feet—between two well defined walls. There has been no crushing from that mine that I know of.
760. What would it be likely to yield, taking it in bulk? At least ½ an oz. to the ton.
761. With better appliances might the field show better results? The saving appliances at the mill were not sufficient for the saving of gold or putting the stone through.
762. What was the assay of the tailings? From 3 dwts. to 16 dwts.
763. Where did you have experience in gold and quartz mining? Six years at Hill End. I had no gold-mining experience before that. I went there in 1870. I have been on many others since that time.
764. Which mines do you think are payable, judging from their indications? The Jubilee, the Chesney-Cobar, the Occidental, the Great Cobar, and one claim at the Peak.
765. Have you seen any indications of other gold deposits in the neighbourhood of Cobar? Yes; at Billygoe, where there is rich stone. There is gold and silver there. It is in quartz and ironstone.
766. How much gold or quartz has been obtained at the present time from Mount Billygoe during the recent working? About 500 or 600 ozs. of silver, and perhaps 30 ozs. of gold.
767. Have they proceeded to erect furnaces or gold-saving appliances of any kind there? No; the mine is not sufficiently opened out.
768. Do you think that this mine at Mount Billygoe has any connection with the lodes here? I think the lodes here would strike a little to the west of Billygoe.
769. Is there a reasonable chance of mineral deposits—gold, silver, or copper—being discovered all the way from here to Billygoe? Yes. I have found silver and gold for 4 or 5 miles north of Cobar towards Billygoe. I have found it by assaying. Samples have been sent to me, but the returns are not very high. They were taken, however, from the surface.
770. If the railway were constructed, would the companies take advantage of it for conveying their machinery? Yes, and also for supplies.
771. Do you know anything of the country south of Cobar? Yes; I know the Nymagee and Hartwood mines. I know that the shoots of ore there are going down with the same permanent appearance as they have near the surface. I went down the Nymagee mine to the 600 feet level, and I saw there a lode of solid ore 15 or 16 feet wide, and at that place it was not opened the same length as it had been on the levels above. I had been in the other levels previously, and the mine looked very much better last year than it did four or five years before. I think that the general percentage of ore in Nymagee is a little over 10 per cent. I think that Nymagee will give employment for a considerable period. If it had not another ton of copper ore in it, I believe it would be one of the best mines in the district, leaving out the Broken Hill Proprietary mine.

Mr.
D. A. Penhall.
8 Oct., 1889.

- Mr. D. A. Penhall.
8 Oct., 1889.
772. Are you referring to the future? Yes; to what is in sight in the mine now. Nymagee is about 65 miles from here.
773. Has copper, gold, or silver been found between here and there? Gold has been found at Mount Bee, but it has not been proved whether or not it is payable. It is in quartz and ironstone. It has only lately been taken up. At Bebinda, between Nymagee and Hermitage Plains, a lode of copper and silver has been found. There are indications of very large mineral lodes of silver, gold, and copper.
774. Has the ground been opened up? No; the mines have not been opened to any large extent—perhaps 10 or 12 feet. Leases have been taken up.
775. Does that indicate that the discoverers place some value on it? Yes.
776. Is there anything to the west connected with Cobar? To the north-west we have a very large outcrop of iron. That is an indication of something.
777. Does it contain anything else besides iron? Only copper.
778. Is there any limestone in the vicinity? I do not know.
779. Is there any limestone in the district? Within 75 miles there is one of the largest outcrops of lime I have ever seen in my life. Between here and Nymagee, within 40 miles, there is plenty of limestone. That is about 25 miles from the proposed railway line. Near the Nymagee mine there is a lead lode—carbonate of lead—14 feet wide, and I know it to be over 500 feet in length, but not all of it the same width.
780. Is it correct that a crushing of 446 tons from the Occidental mine gave 300 oz. of gold? I understand that it yielded 400 oz. of gold.
781. Do you think that Fort Bourke Hill, where the gold is now being worked, is likely to yield more mineral treasure than the Great Cobar Mine Hill? Yes.
782. *Chairman.*] Is there not a mine called the C. S. A. mine in this district? That is where I stated there is a great outcrop of ironstone and copper. That is the claim of the Cornish, Scottish, and Australian Mining Co.
783. What is being done there now? Nothing is being done except sinking and driving to prospect for copper.
784. Is it at a stand-still now? I believe it is. It belongs to the Great Cobar copper-mine, of which it is a branch.
785. What about the North Cobar mine? It adjoins the Great Cobar mine. It has been idle all the time I have been here, and it was idle for some time previously.
786. How far are the Great Cobar Company's workings from the boundary of this mine? Some 400 or 500 feet.
787. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Where do the miners come from who are working on the gold-mines here? The most of them came from Victoria or the gold-fields of New South Wales. There are very few copper-miners working along the whole line of reefs.
788. What has become of the majority of the men who worked at the Great Cobar mine? They are scattered all over the Colony. Some have gone to Broken Hill; a great many to Queensland; and there are a great many among the Sydney unemployed.
789. Have they taken away their wives and families with them? A great number have taken away their wives and families with them, and a great many have also left their wives and families behind them. That may account for the large number of births in Cobar notwithstanding the decrease in the population.

Thomas C. K. M'Kell, Esq., Police Magistrate, Cobar, sworn, and further examined:—

- T. C. K. M'Kell, Esq.
8 Oct., 1889.
790. *Chairman.*] Do you wish to make any additional statement? I have been acting as Land Agent for some time. When the Act of 1884 came into existence it prevented a great deal of land from being settled upon, as it was locked up from people who often came to me and wanted to take up holdings of 640 acres. If an Act had been passed, opening up the country within a radius of 10 or 12 miles of the town, many men would have taken up from 40 to 1,000 acres, and the district would have been thickly populated. This country will grow almost anything.

Mr. James Cotton, Inspector of Stock, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. Cotton.
8 Oct., 1889.
791. *Chairman.*] What position do you hold? Inspector of Stock for the Cobar district. I have been in the district since 1880, and I was appointed to my present position in March, 1882.
792. Have you any returns of the stock in the district? Yes, for the last four years. Those returns apply to a district extending 50 miles to the west and about 70 miles to the east, 50 miles north, and about 65 miles south. According to these returns, in 1884 there were in the district 2,111 horses, 4,754 cattle, and 904,303 sheep. In 1885 there were 1,931 horses, 3,811 cattle, and 1,043,813 sheep. In 1886, 2,002 horses, 6,395 cattle, and 1,198,951 sheep. In 1887, 2,058 horses, 7,896 cattle, and 1,573,484 sheep. In 1888, 2,482 horses, 7,927 cattle, and 1,608,447 sheep.
793. These returns show an increase, between 1884 and 1888, of 704,144 sheep, 3,173 cattle, and 371 horses? Yes.
794. If a railway were constructed between Nyngan and Cobar, do you think it would be of great utility to the owners of this stock? Yes; it would enable the station-holders to get their supplies at very much less cost, and to get their wool away at a much lower rate of carriage. It would also enable them to save the lives of many thousands of stock in drought. They could get them away to other places where there would be more feed. I am certain that could be done to a very great extent. I know one station where 50,000 sheep died because they could not be got away.
795. In ordinary seasons, is this a very good district for grazing purposes? Yes. It is not particularly good in one way—it takes a large extent of country to feed stock; but the quality of the pasture is extremely good, and there is absolutely no disease here.
796. Do you think if there were better means of communication there would be many applications for homestead leases in this district? I feel persuaded there would be.
797. Do you think that a person taking up such a holding would do well on it? Yes, in places.
798. Is this a good country for the formation of tanks or dams? Yes, extremely good. I never saw a better

better holding country. The water question has been solved in this district. It only means a certain amount of expense in excavation. Mr. J. Cotton.

799. Do you know many people who have comparatively small holdings up here and who are keeping sheep profitably? As the Act was only passed in 1884 it would be premature to express an opinion. There are a great many people looking for small holdings who would follow the railway line. 8 Oct., 1889.

800. Have you any further returns which you wish to submit to the Committee? Yes, in this district fencing has been erected over a length of 3,750 miles, at a cost of from £32 to £45 per mile, making a total expenditure of £142,500. Then a large amount of excavation has also been done for tanks and dams, amounting to 6,122,280 cubic yards, at 1s. 3d. per yard. That would cost £382,642 10s. Lately my district has been extended on to the Darling frontage, and about a month ago I visited the Paroo district, and I had an opportunity of seeing some of the artesian bores there. The people there made many inquiries with respect to this proposed railway, as they are very anxious to avail themselves of it. They would cross to Tilpa, and possibly would connect with the railway at Barnito.

801. Even under present circumstances do you regard the Cobar district as a progressive district? Yes, the figures show that.

802. Do you think that a railway from Nyngan would improve its prospects? Yes, I have no doubt about that. I have done a little agriculture myself. I have a piece of land about 4 miles out on the Wilcannia Road, and I have had 5 acres of lucerne sown there during the last four years which has never been watered except by rain. It has very nearly kept me in horsefeed. The drought was not able to kill the lucerne.

803. Do you think that if the railway were constructed it would bring a large amount of traffic from the direction of Wilcannia, which would otherwise go by the river? Yes; there is great uncertainty with regard to the river traffic, and heavy insurance has to be paid.

804. *Mr. Copeland.*] How many acres would it take to feed a sheep in a season like this? One sheep to 4 acres would be perfectly safe. I do not think that acreage would be necessary this season; but I am calculating upon leaving some grass for next season.

805. What is the average carrying capabilities of the country? Four years ago I thought it was not safe as a general thing from year to year to have more than 1 sheep to 8 acres; since then I think the country has improved by stocking. I think the grass has improved as well as the scrub, and I would put the carrying capability of the country at 1 sheep to 6 acres.

806. Is it your experience that the country does improve by the depasturing of stock? Most decidedly.

807. Is the country fully stocked at present? No; I think it would safely carry one quarter more than it does now. Ringbarking and scrubbing doubles the carrying capability of the country.

808. Is it judicious in the general interests of the country to permit the wholesale ringing of pine trees for instance? I think that portions of the timber might be left here and there for building purposes, but, apart from those belts of timber, the sooner the rest of the country is ringed and scrubbed the better. It costs about 1s. an acre for ringing. Where timber is not very thick and the scrub not very bad you can get land scrubbed and ringed for 1s. 3d. per acre.

809. Is the pine scrub increasing very rapidly in this district? Yes, all to the south.

810. What are the edible scrubs? Mulga, emu bush, berrigan, and leopard wood. There are others, but they are hardly worth mentioning. No effort is made to propagate these edible bushes. In the western district they are dying out in parts because the rabbits have been ringing them. The edible herbage consists of cotton and salt bush and crow foot. Cotton and salt bush are not so plentiful as they used to be, but grass is taking their place.

811. What is the average rainfall in the district? The following are the records which I have kept for the last four years.:-

RAIN RECORD, AS SUPPLIED TO GOVERNMENT ASTRONOMER.		
1885—16·01		47 rainy days during year.
1886—18·33		48 rainy days during year.
1887—19·14		66 rainy days during year.
1888— 9·08		24 rainy days during year.
Mean rainfall, 4 years, 15·64		46 rainy days during year.
January, 1889—·73	May, 1889—3·00	September, 1889—·26
February, 1889—1·35	June, 1889—2·50	To Oct. 9th, 1889—·81
March, 1889—·08	July, 1889—·38 .....	.....
April, 1889—5·55	August, 1889—1·58 .....	.....
		Total.....16·24

812. What yield do you get from your lucerne? About 2 tons per acre in the year. It is profitable to cultivate lucerne.

813. Is there much land in the district which would grow lucerne as well as yours? I think so, but settlement in the vicinity of Cobar is barred by the forest reserves and an enormous common of about 100,000 acres.

814. Would it be judicious to cancel the common and throw it open for settlement? I would cancel about two-thirds of it. I am sure many people would take up land to enter into cultivation.

815. Is the land on the common as suitable for agriculture as yours is? Yes.

816. Do you think that growing lucerne would be a profitable occupation? Yes; and there would be no difficulty in finding a market. It could be kept in the dry seasons.

817. Do you think the country is now fully watered? No; I think it will pay to again subdivide the country and make it into smaller paddocks, putting water into each paddock. It would then carry more stock.

818. How many acres do you think should be in a paddock? At present the country is divided into 16,000-acre paddocks. I think the paddocks should be 8,000 acres.

819. May we assume that if ringbarking is carried out the quantity of wool which would be carried by railway would be double what it is now? Yes.

820. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] If a large portion of the common were thrown open for settlement, where are the settlers to come from? There are a good many about here now who would be only too glad to avail themselves of it.

Mr. J. Cotton. 821. Do you think that sufficient fodder could be grown in this district if settlers took up the land to supply its wants in times of drought? Yes; and I believe it would be remunerative.

8 Oct., 1889.

822. Where would the squatters take their stock in dry seasons by the railway? They could take them from here to Orange, and from there on to the mountains. There is a tract of country from Orange right down to the Victorian border that is always available. I have been there myself in times of drought with 15,000 sheep. If a railway were constructed from Nyngan to Werris Creek, it would give another outlet for starving stock.

823. How far is the Paroo district from Cobar? It is about 120 miles from here to Tilpa, on the Darling, between Wilcannia and Bourke. From Tilpa it is 60 miles to Paroo. If the railway were taken to Wilcannia, it would serve the people in the Paroo district.

824. Have artesian bores been attempted in this district? No.

825. Do you think it is a place where artesian boring would succeed? I have not had sufficient experience, but from the character of the country which I saw at the Paroo, where the bores were put down, I am inclined to think that in the immediate neighbourhood of Cobar the country is not of a character where artesian water could be obtained. It is outside the cretaceous formation.

826. Will the line from Cobar to Wilcannia go through leasehold areas or resumed areas? It will go through a portion of both.

827. Which is the larger portion? I believe there is very little difference. It would probably pass through most of the leasehold portion.

828. Do you think homestead leases are likely to be taken up along the line of the railway on the resumed areas, even if they are some distance from the line? I think that is very probable.

Mr. Peter Andrews, butcher, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

Mr. P. Andrews.

8 Oct., 1889.

829. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Butcher, at Cobar. I have a farm 3 miles outside of the town. It is a freehold, consisting of 640 acres and 320 acres. I have held it about eleven years. A portion of it is fenced. I have 37 acres cultivated, chiefly with lucerne. I have 21 acres under oats, and 17 acres under lucerne.

830. What kind of crops have you got? I do not think the lucerne could be beaten on this side of the Blue Mountains. The crop of oats did not come up last year, but it came up this year. It is a very fair crop.

831. Do you irrigate that land? No.

832. Is your present crop a fair average crop? Yes.

833. What do you do with the lucerne? I sell it in Cobar. From my experience I think all the flats about here are suitable for agriculture. It costs about 30s. an acre for clearing land. I get about £4 a ton for the lucerne—that is the price at all times.

834. During the drought which occurred lately how did you get on with the lucerne? During that drought I cut it three times in eighteen months.

835. What labour do you employ on the farm? Just myself and four brothers.

836. How many tons to the acre could you get of this lucerne? I never weighed it, but I kept the Cobar Company going a long time with it. As it is now, I could take 4 tons per acre off it and sell it green.

837. What do the oats yield? Not more than 1 ton per acre. I grew a crop there three years ago which would yield 2 tons to the acre. 15 acres of it grew 7 feet high, and it was immensely thick.

838. Are there any others in the same locality carrying on farming business? Yes, there are three, besides several others who have a few acres, but they do not carry out agriculture to a large extent.

839. Are their crops generally good? It depends upon the season. If the season is not good they have no crop.

840. Is their land as good as yours? I do not think they are in such a good place as I am. I am on a flat place.

841. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you get £4 a ton for the lucerne in its green state? Yes.

842. Can you get a market for that now when there is plenty of grass? No. What I cut now I shall make hay of.

843. What price do you get for it as hay? £8 per ton.

Mr. Michael O'Neill, farmer and innkeeper, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

Mr. O'Neill.

8 Oct., 1889.

844. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a licensed publican, but my choice occupation is that of farmer. I have a farm within half a mile of the town. It is 120 acres in extent, and I have had it for nine years. I have 30 acres under cultivation, and that is about all that is fit for cultivation. I have grown sorghum here over 10 feet high, and generally grow hay. I have grown nearly every kind of crop. I have lucerne and wheat at present and a little oats. I have got very good crops off the land, except last year. I got a fair crop last year, but not nearly what I expected. From 20 acres in 1887 I got nearly 40 tons of chaff, and I used some of it green for the stables. I had oats and lucerne sowed together. They do well.

845. In dry seasons do you have a ready sale for your produce? Yes, I sold £100 worth last year. I got £7 or £8 a ton for it. I sold some of it green this year at £5 a ton. That was a return of £10 per acre for one cutting. Some of it was mowed three times within twelve months.

846. Have your operations as a farmer been successful? Yes, very, and I should cultivate more if land were available.

847. Is there plenty of land in the neighbourhood suitable for cultivation? Yes; a great deal of it is more suitable than mine. My land is too high. I made drains into the land I cultivate so that one inch of rain puts two inches on to it.

848. What did it cost you to clear this land? An average cost would be about £6 an acre, including first ploughing.

C. M'D. Stuart, Esq.

8 Oct., 1889.

Charles M'Donnell Stuart, Esq., civil engineer, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

849. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a civil engineer, employed in the Railway Department of New South Wales. I am re-surveying the railway line from Nyngan to Cobar. I am camped about 50 miles from Nyngan. I have completed the survey 25 miles out near Hermitage Plains.

- 850-1. What is the object of this resurvey? To pick up the old line, and to make deviations in order to cut out some of the worst gradients on the line.
852. Have you come across any heavy gradients? Not on the part I am surveying. It was not necessary to reduce a single gradient there. The highest gradient up to that point is 1 in 75. I am almost certain that I can get a ruling gradient of 1 in 75 in any place between Nyngan and Cobar. From my observations, and from the sections others have shown me, I have come to that conclusion.
853. What is the character of the country through which the line runs? There is not a heavy cutting on it.
854. Is the soil of a soft character? The cuttings are of a hard character but they are very shallow. The upper surface is hard gravel so far as the drill holes go, with a sort of shaly rock in the bottom.
855. As far as you have come is there good material for ballast for a railway? I think it is very fair material. It is quartz rock. There are little mounds on the Cobar side of the Hermitage Plains, the upper surface of which would be suitable for ballast, but I cannot tell what it is like below. It is mixed with quartz and a sort of bastard granite. I think that would do very fairly for ballast.
856. What kind of a line would this be to construct? An exceedingly easy line.
857. What would be about the lowest estimate of cost per mile? If 60lb. rails with square sleepers are used, I should say £3,000 per mile.
858. Do you think the box-timber along the line would be useful for sleepers? I do not think it is good enough, and the pine is very bad. I have heard that there is ironbark to be obtained on this side of Dubbo.
859. How long will it take to complete the resurvey? It will be finished before Christmas. Of course the deviations take a much longer time than picking up the old line.
860. Have you had any experience in ordinary road-making? Yes.
- 861-2. Have you examined the piece of road which has been made not far from Cobar? Yes.
863. What kind of stone is used there? It looks like sandstone.
864. *Mr. Copeland.*] What difficulty would there be in getting a grade of 1 in 100 on this line? The other surveyor told me that the surface rises generally in bad places 1 in 50—that is easily turned into 1 in 75, but to make it 1 in 100 would run you into 10 feet cuttings, and to make a deviation the curve would be as bad as the cutting. Muriel Tank is the place where you cannot get a better grade than 1 in 75, without going to extra expense which would more than counterbalance the difference in grade.
865. Is there no way of starting farther back and making a longer deviation, so as to avoid the sharp curve? No, the difficulty is in the shape of the hills.
866. What would be the difference in the hauling power of an engine working on a grade of 1 in 75 as compared with a grade of 1 in 100? It is a question I have not gone into exactly, but on a grade of 1 in 75 you could take twenty loaded trucks.
867. How many could you take on a grade of 1 on 100? Probably five trucks more.
868. Are you quite sure that you could not obtain a grade of 1 in 100 on one or two places where it is necessary? You could by putting in a small cutting, 10 feet deep, and probably half a mile long, running out to nothing at each end.
869. In how many places would that occur? Probably half a dozen. I cannot say for certain until the levels are taken.
870. As an engineer, do you not think it would pay to have those cuttings so as to have a ruling grade of 1 in 100? I think it is scarcely necessary, considering the traffic that is likely to go over the line.
871. Do you think there is any quantity of suitable ballast near Budd's Hotel? Yes.
872. In the line you have surveyed what is the shortest curve you have laid out? Forty chains, that is the junction of Nyngan.
873. Is there nothing less than that? No; the next curve is 180 chains.
874. *Mr. Hurley.*] Would the slag from the Great Cobar Mine be suitable for ballast? Yes.
875. Is there plenty of it? Yes; I should say there must be 15,000 cubic yards.
876. From your observation do you think that the first survey was made at haphazard? I do not think so.
877. Do you think care was exercised? Yes; I think the surveyors went in as direct a line as possible. At that time the ruling grade was considered to be 1 in 40.
878. Did they not go over the hill in front of Budd's? Yes.
879. Do you avoid that and obtain a grade of 1 in 75? Yes.
880. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You have stated that if you obtain a grade of 1 in 100 you would require 3 miles of cutting 10 feet deep? Yes; that is only an assumption to a certain extent.
881. What would be the approximate cost of the three miles of cutting? It would add, I should say, £10,000 to the cost of the line. It may take more than that.

Alexander Adams, Esq., Road Superintendent, Cobar, sworn, and further examined:—

882. *Chairman.*] You are a civil engineer and surveyor employed in the Public Works Department? Yes.
883. In what branch? Roads and Bridges, and I have charge of the construction of tanks. I have charge of what is called the Cobar district.
884. How long have you been engaged in the formation of roads in this Colony? Nearly eight years.
885. Was the piece of road which has been metalled about 10 miles from Cobar made under your superintendence? Yes.
886. What kind of stone has been used there? It is a mixture. It is partly quartz and ironstone, and partly schist. It is not very hard. Portion of it is soft, but the quartz and ironstone is hard.
887. How did you come to select that particular piece of road for metalling? It was one of the worst portions of the whole line of road in wet weather. Another reason was that the stone was quite close at hand, so that the work could be done at small expense. There was only a limited sum of money available for the purpose. It cost £600 per mile, or £900 altogether.
888. How long did the first mile take to construct? It extended over a considerable time. The contractors were very slow, and took from two to three months over it. I think four months elapsed from the time they started until the work was finished.

A. Adams,
Esq.
8 Oct., 1889.

- A. Adams, Esq.
8 Oct., 1889.
889. How long will the road last? The ruts will require to be raked in again in a few months, until the road is perfectly consolidated.
890. What is the thickness of the metal? Six inches.
891. Are not the cart wheels going right through the metal already, and sinking very deep? They are cutting through the blinding on the top, they are not cutting through the metal yet.
892. If the road is not thoroughly attended to, will it not soon get out of repair again? Yes, if it is left for a long time without the ruts being raked in again.
893. Seeing that the metal is only blinded on the top if a dray or heavy team goes on to the side, will it not have the effect of forcing the stone out sideways? I do not think so; there is not sufficient inclination for that.
894. You sent in an estimate to the Department of what it would cost to make a road from Nyngan to Cobar right through. What was the amount of that estimate? £130,000. Since then I have estimated the cost again, and I have had a better opportunity of ascertaining whether or not metal could be obtained at certain places along the road. I have found that the metal could not be got at two places where at first I thought it could be. For a width of 20 feet I now estimate that the road would cost, £174,000.
895. Would that make a road of the same character as the portion we have just been speaking of? No; the road would be metalled heavier. There would be 9 inches of metal.
896. Has not this portion of the road which you have made a slope from end to end, and is it not, therefore, well drained? The ground is almost level, but there is a slight fall, sufficient to carry off the water.
897. In many other parts of the road between Nyngan and Cobar, would it not be much more difficult to make a road than at this particular part we have been speaking of? Yes; but I think a certain amount of fall could be obtained in most places.
898. If a road were made right through even with 9 inches of metal would it not have to be constantly looked after? Yes.
899. What would be the cost per annum of keeping a road of that kind in repair? £10,000.
900. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Have there been many heavy teams over that portion of the road which you have made? There have been teams carrying 8 or 9 tons and some even more.
901. Have they cut through that metal? No.
902. Do you not think that that is very good? There has not been a very great amount of traffic during that time.
903. The Chairman asked you why you did not blind the outside of the road. Did you ever see that done? Yes. I have seen one section done in that way at Bourke.
904. What is the blinding put on for? The metal is too sharp and cuts the horses feet. A little blinding makes it easier for the horses.
905. Did you get instructions from the Department as to whether or not you were to blind the road? I recommended that it should be done and it was approved of.
906. Is it not the wish of the road superintendent to keep all the traffic in the centre of the road? Yes.
907. Do you think that 6 inches of metal is enough for that road? No, I do not think that less than 9 inches should be put on.
908. How many Government tanks are there between Nyngan and Cobar? Three. The first is about 19 miles from Nyngan. Its cubic measurement is about 28,000 or 29,000 yards. The proposed railway line runs within a few hundred yards of it, so that the engines could water there. The second tank is Muriel Tank, 40 miles from Cobar. The line goes quite close to that. The excavation is about 12,000 yards. The water has been over the excavation about 6 feet. That tank will hold 6,075,000 gallons of water. The first tank will hold 5,645,000 gallons. The third tank is called Booroamugga. That is about the same area as the second tank. The railway line also goes near that tank.
909. Do those tanks now hold more than the average amount of water? They could not hold much more than they do at present.
910. Have those tanks ever been so low that they were not able to supply the water required for stock? Not since I have been in the district, and I have been here when there was a severe drought. I have very seldom seen the excavations since they were filled.
911. Are they silting up at all? Two of them may have silted up to a small extent, but the third one has not.

COBAR, WEDNESDAY, 9 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).	
HENRY COPELAND, Esq.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. Edwin James, general merchant, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. E. James.
9 Oct., 1889.
912. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? General merchant—member of the firm of Barton and James. We do a very large business here. I am a Justice of the Peace. I have been in Cobar about seven years.
913. How many storekeepers are there in Cobar at present? About seven. The same number were here twelve months ago. There were not so many storekeepers here two years ago.
914. How do you get your goods from Sydney? Now almost entirely from Coolabah.
915. What freight do you pay by rail from Sydney to Coolabah? £9 6s. 8d. per ton for third-class goods. I think the other rates are about £6 13s. 10d. for second-class goods. The rate from Coolabah to Cobar for cartage vary very much. It varies from £3 10s. up to £10 which we have paid within the last six months. It depends upon the weather and the state of the roads. If the carriers can manage to work with the union we have to pay pretty stiffly. We also get goods from Nyngan, from Bourke, and from the river. We get the largest quantity of goods from Coolabah at present owing to the way in which we were treated during the wet weather. The main portion of our goods used to be brought from Nyngan. We had over 50 tons lying at Nyngan and the union tried to corner us for £10 per ton. I ordered the Department to truck

truck everything and send it on to Coolabah and I have not got 1s. worth more from Nyngan than I could help. Mr. E. James.

916. Which do you think is the best route to Cobar, Nyngan or Coolabah? The carters prefer the Coolabah road as is evidenced by their taking lower rates by that route. They prefer it first because it is shorter and they have nothing to pay for water there. The road from Coolabah is said to be 15 or 16 miles shorter than from Nyngan. 9 Oct., 1889.

917. What is the freight from Sydney to Cobar by way of Coolabah? 1½d. per lb. in fair weather and 2d. per lb. in wet weather—that is £13 10s. in fine weather, and £18 10s. per ton in wet weather.

918. What did it cost by way of Nyngan until you were stuck up by the carriers union? About the same.

919. You say you also bring some goods from Bourke? Yes, that is on account of the differential rates. Occasionally it cost us less to bring our goods by way of Bourke than if we took them off the railway at Nyngan. We can send a truck of third-class goods to Bourke for £29 12s. whereas if we unloaded them at Nyngan it would cost us £50.

920. How much per ton would goods cost you by way of Bourke? We get the goods *via* Bourke at a cost of £11 per ton at the outside.

921. What do the goods which you bring by way of the river cost you? About £5 10s. per ton.

922. What is the distance to the river from here? About 65 miles to Louth. Those goods come from Adelaide.

923. If carriage is so much cheaper by way of the river why do you not avail yourself more of it? Because the river is very uncertain. Barton Brothers had about £800 worth of stock on the river for about two years.

924. Can you tell us what you pay for carriage of goods over certain periods by all routes to Cobar? I can give the figures for fifteen months. Railway freight about £2,500, cartage about £2,320. That does not embrace large quantities of goods bought here such as fodder in dry seasons, that is brought from Nyngan by the carriers, and when we have been short we have purchased it.

925. Are there other business firms in Cobar in as large a way of business as you are? I think not. One or two may be within grip of us. There might be about two doing the same amount of business.

926. What value of goods have you disposed of in about sixteen months? About £35,000 worth.

927. Was that amount of business exceptionally high or low? It was exceptionally low, which is to be accounted for by the mine closing.

928. Do you regard Cobar as a sound place for doing business? I think so.

929. Have you any reason to be dissatisfied with your business here? No. The system is very largely a credit one.

930. What is the reason for the town very nearly running out of provisions on one occasion? The road from Nyngan to Cobar was impassable. I offered the mail-man £20 per ton to bring in a ton as he liked.

931. Was the road from Coolabar in as bad a condition? Yes; the Coolabar is quite as bad as the other road in wet weather.

932. Do you keep large stocks here? Our stock is about £12,000 or £15,000.

933. What were the chief commodities which you ran out of at this particular time? Sugar, oatmeal, and other general goods. We ran out of about four lines.

934. Did that happen more than once? The town was short of supplies before.

935. Was that owing to the storekeepers having too small stocks? No; we generally keep a good surplus on hand, but at that time the stations ran out also, and then they crowded in for their supplies. Such a thing could not be provided against except by keeping enormous stocks.

936. What is the state of business in Cobar at present as compared with what it was a year or two ago? It is unquestionably slack.

937. What are your views with regard to the proposed railway? It is utterly impossible for Cobar to hold its own, to look for any progress, or to compete against the river traffic unless railway facilities are given to us. Taking the road superintendent's estimate of £120,000 or £130,000 as the cost of making a road, it is plain that it would be cheaper to construct a railway.

938. If a railway were constructed, would you invariably bring your goods by rail in preference to the river, regardless of the difference in freight? If the river gave a market in preference to the train I should take the river, but the river is very precarious and all our relations are so bound up with Sydney that it would take a great deal to force the trade of this district to Adelaide or Melbourne.

939. Is Sydney the best market for this district? Unquestionably; and if there were a railway running here with a certainty of the delivery of goods, I do not think there would be any business done in either of the other colonies, notwithstanding the river traffic.

940. Do you think the place where it is proposed to put the railway station at Cobar would be suitable? Yes.

941. *Mr. Copeland.*] What is the nature of the dispute between you and the carriers' union? The union refused to load at that time under £12 per ton.

942. At what rates did you then get your goods brought from Coolabah? £8 per ton.

943. Do you deal in farm produce? Yes, very largely, but fortunately this year we have not required it.

944. What quantity have you been in the habit of bringing by rail? During the summer we were getting from 6 to 10 tons of chaff a fortnight, and about 100 bushels of oats, and perhaps 100 bushels of corn.

945. What have been the ruling prices? I have sold up to £18 per ton, and as low as £11 per ton. I do not think it has gone lower at any time. The average price is £13 10s. Oats are 5s. 3d. to 8s. per bushel of 40 lb.

946. Should the people in this district be able to produce all that is sold here? Yes. They could not grow maize here. There is a great deal of maize imported in dry seasons from the Clarence. It cannot be grown on the river here, because the rainfall is too small. The general selling price of maize is about 7s. per bushel. It has gone up to 10s. 6d. and 11s.

947. What does the cartage cost you from Louth? £3 10s. at present.

948. Do you not think it would pay the people to grow maize at Louth by irrigation and send it here? I do not think that, with the expense of irrigation, they would be able to compete against the Clarence districts. £3 10s. per ton for cartage from Louth is lower than usual.

949. Have you found any improvement in business on account of the recent gold discoveries here? Yes; a marked improvement.

Mr. E. James, 950. If it were not for the gold discoveries would not the town be in a much more depressed state than it is? I think so.

9 Oct., 1889. **Mr. O'Sullivan.]** Taking all the expenses attached to bringing goods from Adelaide by river, and adding to that the cost of insurance and cartage from Louth, would that make the cost of obtaining goods from Adelaide anything like the cost of obtaining goods from Sydney by way of Coolabah? It would not approach the cost of obtaining the goods from Sydney by one-half.

952. Being actuated by mercantile instincts would you prefer to pay high rates to obtain goods from Sydney rather than pay low rates to obtain goods from Adelaide? Certainly not if I could be sure of obtaining the goods quickly, but the river traffic is very uncertain, and you have to take all the risks connected with it. There are special bills of lading by the river.

953. Can you purchase your goods as cheaply in Adelaide as you can in Sydney? In certain lines better.

954. When the river is navigable and there is no great risk would you, like other people, go to the market where you could get the goods cheapest? Certainly.

955. Then there is a possibility of the river being a rival to the railway? I think the railway would then be a rival to the river. The railway would cut off a very large portion of the traffic which goes by the river now, and it would add greatly to the output of produce from the stations. A lot of the stations along the river this year have been getting their supplies by the river, and sending their wool down the river.

956. What was the price of some of the articles of which the supplies ran short? The price of sugar would not go above 6½d. per lb. I heard that it went up to 8d. per lb., but that certainly did not occur in our business. The price of oatmeal never went above 6d. a lb. to my knowledge.

957. Was there a general rise in the price of most articles? Yes; flour was very high. Flour was sold at £3 10s. per bag during the last six months.

958. Are you still at variance with the carriers' union? I am working without the union.

959. Are you utilizing the local carriers? Yes. I would like to add a remark or two as to the evidence tendered at Nyngan. If the Nyngan returns are intended as any criterion of the Cobar trade they would be utterly fallacious, inasmuch as in the first place Coolabah has done a very large traffic. Then, on account of the differential rates, large quantities of goods were sent to Bourke for Cobar, and those goods would not be included in the Nyngan returns. Then the fodder used here in very large quantities last season would not be included in the Nyngan returns as trade with Cobar, because Nyngan has been the depôt for purchasing from the agents, and the fodder sent to those agents would be taken simply as trainage to Nyngan. There have been hundreds of tons of fodder obtained during the past year.

Mr. Henry J. Cornish, innkeeper, Cobar, sworn and examined:—

Mr. H. J. Cornish, 960. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a publican, and I have been here these seventeen or eighteen years.

9 Oct., 1889. 961. Have you any other interest in the district? Yes; I am a large landed proprietor in what is called Cornish Town, which is named after me. I had 64 acres which I cut up into a township. I have 300 acres 5 miles from here, and I have several allotments in the town.

962. Are you farming any of this land? I did farm for a couple of seasons 10 acres in Cornish Town, growing lucerne and oats. The result was very good.

963. What is the nature of the country between Cobar and Coolabah? It is very much the same as the country between here and Nyngan.

964. What is the difference in the distance between Coolabah and Cobar and Nyngan and Cobar? About 20 miles.

965. If the railway went to Coolabah instead of to Nyngan, would that suit Nymagee? It would be a gross injustice to the Nymagee people and the people about Gilgunyah. It would be too close to Bourke, and too far away from the people to the south; because one of the largest mineral countries will be the Melrose district, and it would be a serious injustice to them to have the railway junction so far towards Bourke.

966. Do you approve of the site of the proposed railway station at Cobar? I would like to see the station there, if it was merely for my own purposes, but to suit the town and the district generally I think it would be better to place it on a rise to the north of the town—it would then have the advantage of the reservoir, and it would be accessible to all the roads from the surrounding districts. It will also be a benefit for travelling stock which always come from the Queensland border. Furthermore there would be swampy country in the neighbourhood of the station.

967. Has there been any public meeting here to consider the site of the station? The people of Cobar look upon the railway as something merely dangling before their eyes, and they have not considered the question of the station. They would be glad to get the railway under any circumstances.

968. **Mr. Copeland.]** Are you interested in any mining? Yes, very much. I have been so from the very first. I am a carpenter, but I have always dabbled in mining, always living on gold-fields, and occasionally working as a miner.

969. What mines are you particularly interested in? The first I took up was the C. S. A. mine which now belongs to the Great Cobar Company.

970. Are you interested in the New Burra Burra Mine? I am indirectly interested in it with a few friends. The C. S. A. mine is 7 miles to the north.

971. Has much copper been taken from it? Not a great deal, but what was taken was of excellent quality.

972. What did it yield? Some 60 per cent. and some 40 per cent., but it was a very narrow lode, about 18 inches on the surface. It went down 3 feet and then cut out. It consisted of carbonate ore, very clean. Our original Company sank a shaft 200 feet and drove 200 feet. The Cobar Company drove another shaft on an ironstone lode not far from it. They never got much ore; they got traces of ore and gossan. They suspended work at the mine when they suspended work on the big mine.

973. If the mine should be reopened, do you think it would be a payable lode? Yes; if a little capital were expended. It would help to smelt the large sulphate ore which they have here. They could bring it here very easily with a tramway.

974. Where did you smelt the ore previously? We sent it to Adelaide by steamer. The Cobar Company never

- never had much ore to smelt from there. I am interested in several gold-mines—the Cobar King adjoining the Jubilee, the Occidental, the Peak prospecting claim, and the Bee Mountain. At the Peak prospecting claim there is a shaft down 100 feet, and a drive has been put in some distance. The vein is improving at the bottom. There will be a crushing to-day, and I am quite satisfied that 10 dwt. per ton would yield a fortune; it is so easy to get. They are not veins here; they are great lodes. Where they have driven 20 odd feet they have not come to the wall.
975. Are you sending the whole of the stuff 20 feet wide to the mill? Yes; we are not dressing it at all.
976. How deep have you sunk? Something over 100 feet.
977. What have you done at the Occidental mine? In the old shaft, which I sank many years ago, it is 100 feet wide. We have driven a cross-cut 59 feet. I had crushings made in Melbourne of four loads of stone, taking them separately to see which ore had the most gold, and it ranged from 14 dwt. to 2 oz. 8 dwt. per ton. There were four bags of each; that was about 4 cwt. each. That was out of the cross-cut.
978. Was that a fair average sample of the whole 59 feet? Yes; I did that for my own guidance, as I was largely interested in the mine.
979. Are the gold deposits improving as they get deeper? They are improving very much. We have sunk another shaft west of that, and we have had crushings here.
980. Are there any other mineral deposits in this district? Yes; silver exists in the district.
981. Is there any particular place where a payable deposit exists? Some fifteen years ago, myself and John Collis prospected what is called Collis's Ranges, between Byrock and the Bourke Road.
982. Is that ground taken up now? I think a company called the Bald Hill Company have taken up some ground there, and they are sinking a shaft on it.
983. How far would the proposed railway from Nyngan to Cobar be of service to Billygoe? It would unquestionably be nearer for them to go to this railway, and it would be a much better road than to go to Coolabar.
984. *Mr. Hurley.*] Would an advanced value be given to the lands you own by the proposed railway? It would enhance the value of town allotments generally. The line as surveyed does not go through my land, but it will enhance the value of some of it.
985. What is your opinion with regard to the value of the Great Cobar mine? I think that no child now going to school will see the end of it.
986. Have you been down the shaft? Not for the last two years.
987. Do you think there is sufficient ore there of a profitable character to keep the mine going for the next twenty years? Yes.
988. What keeps the mine back? The low price of copper. If the railway were constructed the woodcutters could bring in wood at a cheaper price than the Company used to get it for with their own tramway.
989. Do you think that this will be a dividend-paying gold-field? I have always thought so.
990. Seeing that only one season out of four or five causes a failure of the crops in this district, how is it that people do not go in for cultivation? When the silo is brought into operation, I think the crows-foot and other good winter grasses will be reaped and turned into hay.
991. *Mr. Tonkin.*] How far is it from Nymagee to Melrose? About 55 miles.
992. Is that country auriferous? Yes; there are lodes in all directions. There are a great many copper and silver lodes.
993. Do you think that the proposed railway would tend to develop that part of the district? I am positive it would.
994. How far would Melrose be from the nearest point of the proposed railway? About 100 miles.
995. Is that portion of the country fit for settlement? Yes; I daresay. It is in the Central Division.
996. What is the extent of the commonage about Cobar? About 100,000 acres.
997. Do you think it would be beneficial to the township if that reserve were cancelled and the land thrown open for settlement in small areas? Yes; I think it would be taken up. I think it is a great mistake in the Land Act not to allow small areas within the population radius.
998. Would the making of the railway induce people to take up that land? Yes; carriers would locate their families around the immediate neighbourhood if they could get small areas.
999. Would a great deal of the land be fit for agriculture? Yes, in the valleys.
1000. Do you think the proposed railway would pay working expenses and interest on the capital invested? Yes, if the mine were in full swing.
1001. Do you think that if the line were carried on to Wilcannia and Broken Hill it would pay? Yes; it would open up a good market for produce.
1002. Do you think that you would take advantage of the line to carry your goods to the river? No; the river is so uncertain that if a man depended upon it he would be broken in less than five years.

Mr. H. J. Cornish,
9 Oct., 1889.

Mr. Edwin James, general merchant, Cobar, sworn, and further examined:—

1003. *Chairman.*] Do you wish to correct your evidence with regard to the railway rates? Yes. I find that the railway rates from Sydney to Coolabar, for third-class goods, are correct as I gave them—that is, £9 6s. 7d. per ton. The rates for second-class goods are £6 13s. 10d. per ton; first-class goods, £5 7s. 6d. per ton; and for class B goods, £2 13s. 9d. The rate of insurance on the river is 5 per cent. from Adelaide to Louth. It varies according to the class of goods; but that is a fair average.

Mr. E. James,
9 Oct., 1889.

Ernest Hamilton Simpson, Esq., Manager A.J.S. Bank, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

1004. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Manager of the A.J.S. Bank, Cobar. I have been here about eighteen months.
1005. Can you give the Committee some figures with regard to the wages paid for mining? Yes. During the time I have been here, or during the last twelve months, the amount paid away in gold-mining amounts to about £13,704; that is through the Joint Stock Bank, and it has been paid for wages. In copper-mining, for the last six months about £18,500 has been paid.
1006. From the point of view of a bank manager, is the state of business good? Yes, fairly good
- 1007.

E. H. Simpson,
Esq.
9 Oct., 1889.

- E. H. Simpson, Esq., 1007. Has it improved or fallen off since you have been here? Up to the time of the closing of the Cobar mine business was decidedly improving. Since then of course there has been a slight falling off, but not so much as one would expect.
- 9 Oct., 1889. 1008. Is there very much credit given in the town? No; I think the town is in a fairly solvent condition, and it compares favourably with any other town in the Colony.
1009. Are bills generally met? Yes.
1010. Would you care to state whether the bank holds many mortgages over property in the district? Not more than is usual in the way of business in a place like this. The banking business will compare favourably with that of any other town of the same population. I have had experience in other country towns, and this town compares very favourably with them.
1011. You look upon the place as a progressive place? Yes.
1012. Have you noticed any marked improvement in consequence of the gold-mining? Yes; the town has improved decidedly since the reefs were discovered.

Mr. John George Lee, Public School Teacher, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. G. Lee, 1013. *Chairman.*] What position do you hold? Public School teacher. I have been in Cobar nine months.
- 9 Oct., 1889. 1014. How many children attend your school at the present time? One hundred and fifty-two. These are the first two weeks of the quarter, so that there is a smaller number than I would expect. I think the proper number would be about 186 children. Last quarter the average attendance was 115·9. There were 186 on the books at the end of last quarter.
1015. How many were attending school when you arrived here? On January 14 there were 103.
1016. Has not the population fallen off since you came here? Not the school population. A few of the residents have left the district.
1017. Did a large exodus take place before you came? Yes, as I have heard.
1018. Are there other schools here? The Convent school and one private school.
1019. Is the health of the children good or otherwise? It has been good during the last nine months. Looking over old returns I see that it was not good before then.
1020. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How many children were attending school during the prosperous times of Cobar? During last quarter the attendance was most numerous.
1021. How many were attending two years ago? One hundred and forty-eight.
1022. Do you think that 150 is a fair percentage of children for 1,500 people? I think there ought to be more children. The attendance at the other schools would account for the number of children not being in proportion to the population.

Shelley A. Fox, Esq., Manager of the Commercial Bank, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

- S. A. Fox, Esq., 1023. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Manager of the Commercial Bank. I have been here five months.
- 9 Oct., 1889. 1024. Can you tell us how does the business of your bank compare at present with the business done a year, or two years, or three years ago? The position at the present is about the same as it was previously, from a banking point of view. About four years ago, when the copper-mine was in full swing, business appears to have been better than it is now.
1025. What is your chief business here? The business people in town principally do business with us. We have a mining business as well.
1026. Is business prospering in the mining industry? Within the last twelve months there has been a marked improvement in gold-mining. During the last eighteen months or two years I consider that there has been an outlay on gold-mining of at least £20,000.
1027. Have you sent any gold through your bank to Sydney? About 500 oz. during the five months that I have been here. It all came from the Chesney-Cobar mine.
1028. Do you do a large advancing business in the district? We do a fair share of it.
1029. Do you often have to enforce your securities? No; I consider the position of the district is sound. For the last eleven years I have been in country districts in banks—at Wentworth, Bega, Bombala, and Delegate.
1030. As compared with places like Bega, do you think that this is a sound business place? Yes.
- 1030½. Bega is a prosperous place? Yes.
1031. Are bills given to the bank generally met, even at the present time? Yes.

J. Hogan, Esq., solicitor, Cobar, sworn, and further examined:—

- J. Hogan, Esq., 1032. *Chairman.*] Do you wish to add to your evidence given yesterday? Yes. From inquiries made at the Convent School in Cobar, I have ascertained that for the year 1888, about 150 children were on the roll. For 1889, there were about 100. At a private school in town I think there are about thirty or forty at the present time. With regard to the capital value of land rated within the municipal boundaries, I have since referred to the books, and I find that the capital value for this year amounts to £9,854 13s. 6d. Striking a rate of 5 per cent. on the capital value would give about £492 18s., and the moiety we would be entitled to from the Government would be £246 9s., or a total of £739 7s. of rates for the year. The capital value of property for 1888 was £10,586, and the rates on that would be about £529 6s. The subsidy on that would be pound for pound, so that the receipts for 1888 would have been £1,000, supposing that the rates had been paid in full and the subsidy obtained. The value of property has decreased somewhat this year, owing to the depression.
- 9 Oct., 1889. 1033. Is the Great Cobar mine included within the municipal boundaries? There are about 160 acres excluded. The mine has been exempted by proclamation, otherwise they would have opposed the incorporation of the town.
1034. What is the financial position of the municipality? We have a good credit; I think it borders on £400.
1035. Have you never borrowed? No; we have obtained temporary accommodation at the bank sometimes. We have never borrowed on debentures. The ratepayers pay up fairly well. The arrears for 1888 were inconsiderable.

1036. What is your opinion as to the proposed site for the railway station? I have not given the matter full consideration, but I think the site is suitable. The Government town surrounds it, and if the station were built there, no doubt a large revenue would be derived from the sale of land. I think it is as convenient for the town generally as any other place would be. Whilst the common is a great benefit to the towns people, and whilst I should not like to see it given back to any grazier in the district, I think it would be conducive to settlement if the common were cut up into small areas of from 40 acres up to 1,000 acres, and if some inducement were given to people to settle on it and cultivate it.

J. Hogan,
Esq.
9 Oct., 1889.

1037. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How is it that pipes have not been laid from the reservoir into the town? I should like to know myself. We have been urging the Government a long time to lay the pipes, so that we may get the advantage of the water. The fault lies entirely with the Government.

1038. *Mr. Hurley.*] Has the slag from the Great Cobar mine been used for the purpose of metalling your streets? Yes. I wish to add to my evidence that people are largely availing themselves of homestead leases in this district. The owners of Meryula Station have applied for permission to ringbark.

1039. *Mr. Copeland.*] Has the Minister given his consent? I do not think so. Mr. McPherson has also applied for permission.

1040. Do you think it would be desirable to allow all this timber to be destroyed? No, I am in favour of preserving the large pine timber.

1041. Should not the Municipal Council submit its views to the Minister on the subject, as it is the duty of the Municipal Council to preserve the supply of timber to the town? It is outside the municipal boundaries. The applications have only just been made, so that it was impossible for the Municipal Council to take any action. I have no doubt some action will be taken.

1042. When once the timber is ringbarked is it not absolutely destroyed? Yes, and it is very easy to kill pine timber.

Mr. Laurence Corbett, labourer, sworn, and examined:—

1043. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is your occupation? I work at anything I can get to do.

1044. What is your opinion with regard to the Cobar common? I should like to see it cut up into small areas. In the event of a railway being made it would be more beneficial if cut up into small areas than if allowed to remain as a large grazing area.

1045. Would you take up a selection yourself? Very probably.

1046. Would you be prepared to work on such a selection? Yes. I think that from 40 acres to 200 acres ought to be the limit.

1047. Are there any more working men of your stamp who would be prepared to take up land? I think so.

1048. *Mr. Copeland.*] Have you had any farming experience? For eighteen years.

1049. Have you done any farming in this district? No; but I think it could be done.

1050. Do you think that the climate would be favourable, and that there are portions of the common that would be fit for cultivation? Yes.

Mr. L.
Corbett.
9 Oct., 1889.

Mr. Hopkin Lewis, auctioneer, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

1051. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Auctioneer.

1052. *Mr. Copeland.*] Have you had any practical experience of mining? Yes; I have worked—mining for copper and gold. I have had twenty years experience.

1053. Are you connected with the New Burra Burra mine? Yes; I am a large shareholder. It is a proprietary mine.

1054. What work have you done on the mine? We have sunk one shaft about 90 feet and another about 20 feet.

1055. Are they both on the lode? Yes.

1056. Has it much underlay, or does it go down vertically? We have no defined walls. In the bottom of the downright shaft there appears to be a wall on the eastern side, but we are not certain about it. I should take it to be the foot wall. We have no cross cuttings, and I do not know the width. The width of the outcrop is from 5 to 6 feet, almost level with the surface. It is very level country.

1057. How wide have you proved it at the bottom of the shaft? In some places 5 feet wide, and in some places 7 feet wide. We have not done any tunnel driving.

1058. Have you had any copper smelted? We are smelting now—we have one furnace erected, and we have about 5 tons of metal there. The yield from the ore varies from 50 per cent. down to 4 or 5 per cent. Some will go 60 per cent. The average, with a little dressing, is about 15 per cent.

1059. In what formation is the lode? Porphyry on one side and granite on the other. The outcrop shows for scarcely any distance on the surface. The two shafts are not above 30 or 40 feet apart.

1060. Is there any other outcrop? No; it is a very large lode. The bearings are north-west by south-east.

1061. Is there any silver or gold in it? Yes, I have seen gold in it, and it assayed 6 ounces of silver. I should imagine there is a little percentage of lead. We have not had it assayed for gold.

1062. How many tons will the furnace put through per week? From 35 to 40 tons.

1063. Have you seen sufficient to convince you that at the present price of copper it is a payable lode? Yes.

1064. Have you any intention of erecting more furnaces? Yes. Unfortunately, it is a very small company, and we had to purchase the mine in the first place. We will open up the mine before we erect any more furnaces.

1065. If the mine should go ahead, and the railway be constructed, would you send your copper and get your supplies by the proposed railway? Yes; the nearest point from the mine to the railway is about 5 or 6 miles. We would strike the railway about 4 miles on the Nyngan side of Budd's hotel. The whole of our copper and stores would travel about 46 miles on the proposed line.

1066. Have you seen sufficient to warrant you in expending money on the mine? Yes; we have spent about £5,000 already. That includes the purchase of the mine. We have spent about £2,500 or £2,700 in developing the mine and erecting a furnace. We employ about twenty men. The land is held on a mineral lease. We have 120 acres, and pay 5s. per acre rent. There are applications for selections all round

Mr. H. Lewis.
9 Oct., 1889.

- Mr. H. Lewis.** round us. It is in the central division, and the applicants have taken up conditional purchases. Several 40-acre selections were refused.
- 9 Oct., 1889. 1067. Is the land immediately abutting on your claim purchased land? It is taken up in selections. It was taken up about twelve months ago.
1068. That will not bar mining? No; all the minerals are reserved.
1069. There will be nothing to bar the lode being worked through those properties? Nothing at all.
1070. What wages are you paying your men? About £2 15s. a week for ordinary miners. Labourers get 7s. per day.
1071. What is your total wages sheet? About £220 per month.
1072. Do you think the mine will develop into a much larger concern than it is at present? Yes, it is bound to do so.
1073. *Mr. Hurley.*] Is the land between you and the proposed line of railway suitable for the construction of a branch line? Yes. The country is similar to what it is between Nyngan and Cobar.
1074. *Mr. Copeland.*] What class of ores have you in your mine? We have carbonates of various kinds, —oxide, grey ore. There is no sulphuret ore yet, as we are not sufficiently deep.
1075. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You say that £5,000 has been spent on the mine—has that money been supplied by Cobar people or outside speculators? There are only six Cobar people in it, and the money is supplied by them.

Mr. Thomas Duffy, storekeeper, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. T. Duffy.** 1076. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Storekeeper, at Cobar. I have resided here very nearly ten years.
- 9 Oct., 1889. 1077. Have you prospered in the district? Yes.
1078. Can you give us any information as to the freight collected between Nyngan and Cobar for the last two or three years? A great proportion of the forage and of class A goods is consigned to Nyngan, and purchased in the first place by Nyngan people; they are then resold to the Cobar people, to teamsters, and to stations in the back country. One-fourth of the goods in that class which are consigned to Nyngan are really used in the Cobar district, and ought to be credited to this district, and not to Nyngan. The consumption around Nyngan itself would be very small.
1079. By which way do you get your goods? The bulk of them come by way of Coolabah.
1080. What do you pay for railway carriage to Coolabah and Nyngan? The average would be about £70 a month. I have often paid £120 a month.
1081. What do you pay per ton from Coolabah to Cobar? Three years ago I commenced to get my goods from there. I then had a special contract to keep the teamsters continually loaded at £3 per ton. Afterwards I got a special contract at 35s. per ton. I got goods from Bourke when there was a disagreement with the carriers, but otherwise I never got anything from there. It is 98 measured miles to Bourke. Some goods come here from Byrock, but I never got any from there.
1082. Would it be better to construct a line from Coolabah to Cobar than Nyngan to Cobar? I think it would be better to construct the line from Nyngan to Cobar, because there would then be less haulage on the railway. I think there are 47 miles between Nyngan and Coolabah, and 65 to 70 miles from Coolabah to Cobar, while there would only be a distance of 80 miles direct from Nyngan to Cobar.
1083. If it were not for the dispute with the carriers would you still have brought your goods from Nyngan? Not regularly. I have had a good many small lines brought from Nyngan, but the bulk of my stores come from Coolabah. If it were not for the Carriers' Union I might have a great deal more brought from Nyngan.
1084. Have you any other interest in Cobar besides those of a storekeeper? Yes; I have invested a good deal of money in mining.
1085. Have you had sufficient confidence in the place to invest your savings in this locality? Yes.
1086. Do you know the country between Cobar and Coolabah? I travelled over it on one occasion. There are no Government tanks on that road—the land is very good. It is as level as between here and Nyngan—in fact, more level. There would be no engineering difficulties in making a railway. I believe that the distance is about 65 miles from Coolabah to Cobar, and the distance from Nyngan to Coolabah is about 47 miles. I think most storekeepers would prefer to get their goods by rail, at a little extra cost, rather than by the river, which is unreliable.
1087. *Mr. Hurley.*] Are there any conveniences for receiving goods at Coolabah? No.
1088. *Chairman.*] Would a line from Coolabah to Cobar suit the Nymagee traffic? Not so well as a line from Nyngan. I do not think it would be judicious to allow the common to go back into the hands of any grazier.
1089. Do you think it would be desirable to open the common to free selection? I would prefer to see a portion of it open for free selection.

Charles R. Ferguson, Esq., journalist, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

- C. R. Ferguson, Esq.** 1090. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Journalist, at Cobar.
- 9 Oct., 1889. 1091. Do you produce a specimen of stone taken from a quarry which you hold? Yes. It is on Crown lands, about 8 miles from Cobar. It is freestone. There are two kinds of stone there. The stone on the surface is pretty hard, but underneath it is soft. I have a building in course of erection in which this stone is used, and it is suitable for building purposes. I have had a lot of masonry work done with it. There is an unlimited quantity of this stone. There are several other places where the stone can be obtained. I have some stone in a building which I am now erecting which I got less than 4 miles away. That is not in such large quantities as the stone I now exhibit, and it has not been opened out. The freestone quarry is west of Cobar, on the proposed line from Cobar to Wilcannia.
1092. Would it be suitable for railway ballast? Yes; there is an immense quantity of it. The outcrop is about half a mile long. The other stone, about 4 miles distant, is near the railway line, on the town common. It is about a quarter of a mile outside the population boundary. Stone has been used in the mine for masonry purposes, but I think mine is the only building in which the stone has been used. There is no trouble in quarrying this stone, and it would be suitable for kerbing and guttering.

1093. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What is the depth of each layer of this stone? From 4 to 12 inches; it comes out in 8 or 9 feet blocks. It is on Mr. Leslie's run, and I think it is on a leasehold area. It is about 2 miles from the Government tank. C. R. Ferguson, Esq.
9 Oct., 1889.
1094. *Mr. Copeland.*] How many acres does the outcrop of stone cover? About 40 acres. It can be got at several places on the hill; it is all equally good.

Mr. Hopkin Lewis, auctioneer, Cobar, sworn, and further examined:—

1095. *Chairman.*] Do you know if there are any other valuable mineral deposits in the district which have not been mentioned? Yes; there is fire-clay. We have bricks made of it at the Burra mine, which the smelters say they never saw anything like, with the exception of English bricks. There is any quantity of that fire-clay within $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile of the Burra mine,—that is about 4 miles from the proposed route of the railway. Mr. H. Lewis.
9 Oct., 1889.
1096. Is there any limestone? Yes; but it is in a different direction. It is about 4 miles from there, and nearer to Cobar. It is about 26 miles from Cobar. There is a good deal of this limestone. Limestone can be got within 5 miles of this town, and there is limestone about 20 miles from the Nymagee track, and fire-clay also. The lime there is equal to anything in the Colony.
1097. Have you used those materials at all? Yes; we use them at the mine. The firebrick is the best brick there is in the Colony. We have used the fire-bricks in the furnace, and they stand remarkably well. The fire-clay is 12 or 15 feet below the surface, and we have sunk into it about 12 feet, but we have not cut through it. The deeper we get the better it is.
1098. *Mr. Copeland.*] Is there undoubtedly a large deposit? Yes; there would not be the slightest difficulty in obtaining all the bricks which might be required along the line of railway.
1099. Where does the deposit of limestone occur? It is on ridgy country,—on very low hills. It is patchy in places, and you cannot quarry it out; it runs along the surface in horizontal layers.
1100. Is there an outcrop in several places? Yes. We have only got it at one place at the Burra; we have just taken it off the surface.
1101. Do you find that it is good lime? It is very passable lime, but it is not the best of lime.
1102. Is this shell lime? Yes; it is to be found in places there. During the time I was mayor I may state that several applications were made to me to know if the common could be selected in small holdings. I am confident that if a portion of the common were resumed, there would be any amount of selections.

Mr. H. J. Holston, carrier and contractor, Cobar, sworn, and examined:—

1103. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Carrier and contractor. I carry principally between Cobar and the neighbourhood, and Coolabah. The distance between here and Coolabah is about 70 miles. I carry for Oakden and Brown of Lerida Station, Mr. Leslie of the Amphitheatre, and Mr. Smith of Mocalamba. I bring supplies back again from the town. Mr. H. J. Holston.
9 Oct., 1889.
1104. Are you a member of the Carriers' Union? No.
1105. What do you get a ton from Coolabah to Cobar? The prices vary according to the roads and the weather. My contract price is £3 per ton from here—that is a constant price. I mostly get return loading. The rate was as high as £12 last winter. The lowest rate has been £2. £3 is my lowest rate.
1106. What is the character of the road between Coolabah and Cobar? It is a good road in fine weather, but it is a very bad road in wet weather. It is similar to the road between Nyngan and Cobar.
1107. Is there any water on the Coolabah Road? There is no public water, with the exception of one tank 13 miles out on the Bourke Road.
1108. Would the route from Coolabah to Cobar be a better one than from Nyngan to Cobar? As regards the cost of making a railway, I believe the Coolabah line will be the cheapest, on account of the shorter distance. The cost per mile will be about equal. 70 miles is the distance I travel, but the railway would come 7 or 8 miles shorter by cutting off an angle. The route to Coolabah would be out of the way altogether for the Nymagee people, and it would be no good to the New Burra Burra mine.
1109. What rate do you get from Nyngan to Cobar for cartage? It was only £2 4s., for copper teams were then very plentiful. I had made an arrangement with Mr. Barton in Cobar, and my return trip was to be at the rate of £3 10s. per ton.
1110. You apparently got a better rate for carriage between Coolabah and Cobar than between Nyngan and Cobar? That was only for copper. The copper price to Coolabah is much smaller still, it is only 32s. I was not referring to copper.
1111. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do you say that the Company gets its copper carried for 32s. per ton? Yes; they pay various prices to Nyngan. At the time I am speaking of they were paying £2 4s. a ton to Nyngan. They then had teams under contract. They would reduce the price on anybody wanting a load.
1112. Are there any rocks that would do for road metal between here and Cobar? Yes; but it is very patchy. In two or three places there are rocks which would do for road metal or ballast for a railway. The timber is very inferior, and like that on the Nyngan Road. There is no ironbark or red gum. There is no suitable timber for sleepers.
1113. Would a railway route from Coolabah be more convenient for the Billygoe mine than the route from Nyngan? Yes, much more convenient. There are no other mines opened out in that direction, with the exception of the Bald Hills mine. It would not benefit them a great deal, because they are close to Byrock. There is only one creek on the road and there is no water in it except after heavy rain.
1114. *Mr. Hurley.*] What is the character of the land between here and Coolabah? It is similar to the land between here and Nyngan. The majority of it is not open to selection. Patches of it would be fit for agriculture.
1115. *Mr. Tonkin.*] If a line were constructed from Coolabah to Cobar would it be of advantage to anybody on the southern side of the proposed line from Nyngan to Cobar? It would be of no use whatever.
1116. Are there any mines or any industries between here and Coolabah? There are nothing but stations.
1117. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Does the road to Coolabah go to a large extent through leased land? Yes. There is a public road through, but it is only a chain or so wide. The roads followed by the teamsters are generally through private or leased lands.

Mr.

Mr. Robert Jackson, manager, Chesney Cobar Gold-mining Company, Cobar, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. 1118. *Chairman.*] Are you the manager of the Chesney Cobar Gold-mining Company? Yes.
 R. Jackson. 1119. How long has the Company been formed? The first annual meeting was held on the 31st
 August, 1889.
 9 Oct., 1889. 1120. When did they commence operations? January, 1889. When I came here the shaft was 94 feet
 deep. It was merely a shaft. People had been working here before the Company was formed. They
 might have been at work two years before the Company began working.
 1121. Do you hand in a statement showing the expenditure, and the men employed on the mine? Yes,
 it is as follows:—

EXPENDITURE, 31st August, 1889.		£
Plant and Machinery		2,770
Tank and Drains		3,150
Wages		1,773
Mining Material		1,589
		£9,282
MEN EMPLOYED.		
Miners		24
Battery.....		11
Pump		2
Whipping and carting		4
Wood splitters and carters		8
		49

By the last Directors' report the erection of other thirty-five head of stamps is contemplated, besides the Huntingdon, at present in course of erection.

1122. At the present time are you erecting a Huntingdon mill? Yes, a five-foot Huntingdon mill. We have fifteen head of stampers at work now.
 1123. Are you in constant work with this battery? Yes, we run all the week round, day and night, with three shifts. That has been going on ever since we started, at the latter end of April. We have four shafts down, but at present we are only working two. The deepest of the shafts we are working is between 120 feet and 130 feet. We are at present sinking two shafts. The other shaft which we are working is 90 feet deep. There are two separate bodies of stone—one is the western run of stone, and there is a very large body of it, that is No. 2 shaft, which is 90 feet deep. I am crushing some of that stone now.
 1124. Is there more than one reef? Yes, I know of five reefs.
 1125. Are they connected by these shafts? No, they are entirely separate. I have started a cross cut from the deepest shaft at a depth of 100 feet. I have a reef of solid quartz there, 4 feet thick. The eastern reef varies from 6 feet to 6 inches.
 1126. What is the width of the other reef you are working? I cannot say. At present we have it 12 feet wide. I am crushing from that reef.
 1127. Is that a continuous reef? It is as far as we can see. We are merely prospecting it.
 1128. *Mr. Copeland.*] Have you driven along the eastern reef? Yes, 170 feet.
 1129. Have you crushed everything between the walls? We have not found the wall of the western lode.
 1130. Are you crushing all that you are working? Yes.
 1131. Have you assayed the tailings from the battery? Yes. What I have assayed myself yielded, I reckon, 2½ dwt. or 3 dwt. I have had some tried by other gentlemen in the district, and they said they found strong traces of gold.
 1132. Have you had any assayed by recognized assayers? Yes, in Melbourne; and it gave 2 dwt.—that was the loss in the tailings. The blanketings only gave me 4 dwt., which is not worth saving. We have little or no pyrites. There is nothing to hinder thorough amalgamation, and no burning is required.
 1133. Have you weighed the quicksilver? My loss has been very light. I have lost about 50 or 60 lb. of silver since I started—that is a trifling loss for the quantity of stuff which has been put through.
 1134. How far do you intend to sink the main shaft? It will depend upon the prospect. At present we have a very good prospect.
 1135. When you have sunk a shaft will you put on more men? In all probability I will, if the prospects warrant it, and when we get more crushing power,
 1136. You will not put up more crushing power until you prove the lode? If this large body continues as it is I think it will warrant the Company making a beginning. If they do not put up the whole thirty-five head I think they will put up other fifteen head.
 1137. What area have you? 700 or 800 yards on the reef.
 1138. Have you any water down below? None. The country is changing at present in the shaft. The best material we have had hitherto is a sort of quartzite, carrying very fine gold, but now we can see gold freely in the stuff broken down.
 1139. Do you anticipate that the mine will turn out to be profitable? Yes; I would not have come here if I did not think it would pay.
 1140. Do you think that the mine will last through many years? It ought to. It all depends upon the depth, and I have not the slightest doubt that it will go down.
 1141. In that case will there be employment for a large number of people? Yes. Along the line they have found gold everywhere on the surface, and they consider it to be payable.
 1142. That is not proven yet? No; but they have found excellent prospects four miles to the north and south, which, if proven and payable, ought to give full work to a great many thousand people.
 1143. Do you anticipate that that will be continuously payable? No; but it will be found payable occasionally.
 1144. Do you find the gold in shoots? I cannot tell, but so far as I know it is.
 1145. Have you carried the gold for the whole of 170 feet? No; unfortunately we encountered a very large slide away to the south. In rising we struck the same thing, and also in going south.
 1146. Did you get the reef on the other side of the slide? No; we have not found the reef yet. I have travelled over a bit of the country here. I have been away to the south-east, and I believe that is going to be a large field for minerals. I will not say for gold, but I have not the slightest doubt that there will be copper and silver found away to the south-east—between here and Mount Hope there are 50 or 60 miles of country that would be dotted over with mining townships if they had facilities for settlement and prospecting.

Mr.

Mr. Daniel R. Kenane, Post and Telegraph Master, Cobar, sworn, and examined.

1147. *Chairman.*] Are you postmaster at Cobar? Yes.

1148. Have you prepared a statement showing the business done at the Post Office here for the year 1888, and also up to the present time? Yes. The particulars given in that statement are correct to the best of my knowledge.

Mr.
D. R. Kenane.
9 Oct., 1889.

1149. It appears that the business has not fallen off in any way during the last six months? Yes. The following is the return :—

MONEY ORDER AND GOVERNMENT SAVINGS BANK BUSINESS FOR YEAR ENDING DEC., 1888.

No. of Orders issued	2,195
No. of Savings Bank Deposits	541
No. of Orders paid	496
No. of Savings Bank Withdrawals	123
	3,355
	£ s. d.
Commission on Money Orders	88 8 0
Amount of Orders issued	8,134 14 4
Amount of Savings Bank Deposits	4,586 10 1
Amount of Orders paid	2,123 8 8
Amount of Savings Bank Withdrawals	2,374 11 8
Remittance Chief Office	7,359 9 7
Total	£24,667 2 4

MONEY ORDER AND GOVERNMENT SAVINGS BANK BUSINESS FOR NINE MONTHS ENDING 30TH SEPT., 1889.

No. of Orders issued	1,519
No. of Savings Bank Deposits	328
No. of Orders paid	437
No. of Savings Bank Withdrawals	188
Total	2,472
	£ s. d.
Commission on Money Orders	59 17 0
Amount of Orders issued	4,940 11 2
Amount of Savings Bank Deposits	2,499 10 7
Amount of Orders paid	1,633 11 7
Amount of Savings Bank Withdrawals	3,841 10 11
Remittance Chief Office	2,014 0 8
Total	£14,989 1 11

POST OFFICE.

	£ s. d.
Postal revenue for 1888	1,134 13 0
Postal revenue for half-year ending 30th June, 1889	604 7 3
Number of letters registered in 1888	2,333
Number of letters registered for nine months ending 30th September, 1889	2,063

MAILS.

To and from Nyngan and Cobar	Three times a week.
To and from Bourke and Cobar	Once a week.
To and from Nymagee and Cobar	Twice a week.
To and from Louth and Cobar	Once a week.
To and from Gilgunnia and Cobar	Once a week.
Private bags on Bourke-Cobar Road.—Yanda Creek, Coronga Downs, Tindarey, Wilgaroon, Curraweena, and loose mail for Mount Billagoe.	
Private bags on Nymagee-Cobar Road.—The Priory and Millera.	
Private bags on Cobar-Nyngan Road.—“Nairn” Burra Mine.	
Private bags on Louth-Cobar Road.—Buckwaroon, Pulpulla, Booroondara Downs, Wuttagoona.	
Private bags on Gilgunnia-Cobar Road.—Lerida, Bulgoo, Central Block C, Thule, Wirlong, Belford, Lachlan Downs.	
Back Country Mails towards Wilcannia (Cobar-Nekarboo line).—Springfield, Kaleno, Tiltargara, Nekarboo, Fulham Park, Kew, Paddington, Sandy Creek.	
Cobar-Barnato line.—Tambua, Gidgee, Innesowen, Tiltagoona, Mulga Downs, Bulla Bulla (two or three Government tanks on this road).	

TELEGRAPHS.

Revenue for 1888	£914 10s. 11d.
Number of messages transmitted in 1888	12,636

Returns for nine months ending 30th September, 1889 :—

Number of messages transmitted	8,674
Revenue	£597 8s. 1d.

1150. How long have you been here? About nine years.

1151. How does the business compare now with what it was some years ago? There was more business about four or five years ago, better than it is now.

BULGOO, THURSDAY, 10 OCTOBER, 1889.

[The Sectional Committee met at "Doublegate's Hotel," Bulgoo Station, at 12 noon.]

Present:—

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. Alexander Fulton, manager of Bulgoo Station, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
A. Fulton.
10 Oct., 1889.

1152. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Manager of the Bulgoo Station for the Bank of New South Wales. The homestead is 28 miles distant from Cobar. I have been here about six months. I was managing Springfield, the adjoining station, for about seven years.

1153. How do you get your goods to and from Sydney? By rail to Nyngan and thence by team. We suffer great inconvenience during wet weather. A short time ago it was almost a case of starvation with us. We could not get flour at any price last May. It takes about eight days on an average in very favourable weather to come from Nyngan here. In bad weather it is impossible to travel on the road.

1154. What is the longest time you have known goods to be on the road from here to Nyngan? Three months. Lately they were two months on the road. It is all right in fine weather.

1155. What is the average rate per ton for carriage? £6 from Nyngan to this place. A short time ago I paid £14 per ton.

1156. Do you always get your goods from and send them away, by Nyngan? Yes, unless I get stores from the Cobar storekeepers.

1157. If the railway were extended to Cobar what would be the advantage to you? It would be an advantage in the carrying of the wool downwards and in getting goods up here. It would also be a great convenience for travelling.

1158. Is not the road between here and Cobar quite as bad as the road between Cobar and Nyngan? No;—there are one or two bad places. We are now mending one place. Mr. Oakden and three or four of us are spending £30 or £40 in making a road across a cowl.

1159. Would the railway to Cobar be any advantage to you in removing stock in time of drought? Yes. We would be likely to avail ourselves of it for that purpose. We could not do so when there is drought all over the country like there was last year, but that is a very rare occurrence.

1160. Do you know the surveyed line for the proposed railway from Cobar to Wilcannia? Yes, I know it very well. It is a flat country all the way out to the Meadows—33 miles from Cobar, where there are a few little hills. There could not be an easier country for a railway.

1161. Is there any timber in the locality suitable for railway sleepers? There is only pine timber and fair box;—there is no iron-bark.

1162. Is there any stone along the line suitable for ballast? There is a great quantity of stone on the rises along the line. It is a flaky sort of stone, but it does very well for building.

1163. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Where do you get your stores from? *Via* Nyngan and Cobar. We get none from South Australia or Victoria by the river. We are about 123 miles from the river, and there is no road. We could get to Louth, which is only 100 miles away.

1164. Are there many other stations here held by the banks? Not many;—there is Wittagoona and Baden Park.

1165. Do many other stations like yours send their wool to Sydney and get their stores from there? Yes, the adjoining stations do.

1166. If the railway were taken from Cobar to Wilcannia would it be a great accommodation to all the stations along the route? Yes. It would not benefit us as much as it would benefit others, because the homestead would be 26 miles away from the railway.

1167. If a railway were constructed from Nyngan to Werris Creek, do you think that the station owners would avail themselves of that line to remove stock in time of drought to the mountain runs? Certainly they would. I went through three years drought the first time I came up here, and I would have done anything to get the sheep away. At present we have to stand by and see the sheep and cattle die.

1168. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Are there any minerals about this district? Yes, I think I am going to find a gold-mine in Bulgoo before very long. I know of gold having been found within 10 miles of here. There are no men working at mining about here at present.

1169. Will the construction of a railway to Wilcannia secure a traffic that now goes by the river? Certainly, there is Marsfield for instance. All their stock goes to Hay and Balranald. If we had a railway here they would use it—then there is Mount Murchison, which also sends its wool to Balranald.

1170. Supposing the river were half the cost of railway carriage, do you think that any of the stations would avail themselves of the Sydney market? I cannot say. Most of the people whose stations are along the river, have their wool sheds right on the river close to the steamers. It would be farther for them to carry their wool to the railway stations.

1171. Is the river navigable every season? Certainly not, it is very treacherous.

1172. When the river is not navigable would those people use the railway? Certainly. I have seen them myself bring wool from Nelyambo.

1173. *Mr. Copeland.*] How many acres have you on your run? 124,000 acres—62,000 in the leasehold, and 62,000 acres in the resumed areas. This year we have 25,000 sheep on the run. We lost a lot since last year. With lambs and everything we will have about 32,000 sheep on the the run. We have had a good lambing this year, about 50 per cent. This is an exceptionally bad year. Last year 52,000 sheep were shorn on the station.

1174. What rent are you paying? 1d. per acre for the leasehold, and ½d. per acre for the resumed area. The run will carry more than one sheep to 4 or 5 acres in good seasons, but in bad seasons it will not carry half that many. The average would be one sheep to every 5 acres. The average is about 400 bales per annum. This year I have 263 bales, averaging a little over 4 cwt. each.

1175. Is the difference between the number of sheep you had last year and the number you had this year on account of the number lost by drought? Yes.

1176.

1176. How many tons of wool have you to send away this year? About 50 tons. In a fair average season we would have 400 bales—that is about 80 tons.

1177. What do you pay for carriage between here and Nyngan? I believe Wright, Heaton, & Co. are paying about £4 2s. 6d. per ton, but our arrangement is to carry the wool right through to Sydney.

1178. Have you any cattle on the station? No.

1179. Do you consider the run is heavily stocked at present? No; it would carry another 10,000 sheep.

1180. Are you cultivating any land? Yes; 16 acres—some wheat, a little oats, and a small patch of lucerne. They are cultivated for hay. The yield is about 1 ton of hay per acre. Some years we get nothing, other years we get a splendid crop. This year we expect to get nearly 2 tons per acre. The wheat is now about 3 feet high, but it is somewhat late.

1181. What month did you sow in? In May, after the rain commenced.

1182. Do you think that you would have had a better crop if you had sown before the rain commenced? Yes, in April. The lucerne is flourishing. I am irrigating that from the tanks. It is now about 1 foot high, and it has only been sown since July.

1183. Are you satisfied that if reasonable precaution were taken to sow before the rain commenced that you could rely upon having a profitable crop? Yes.

1184. Out of the 164,000 acres which you hold, what proportion do you think could be utilised for cultivation if the land was cleared and sown before the rains commenced? Fully half of it.

1185. Would it not pay to cultivate in order to feed your sheep in case of drought, stacking the hay or making ensilage? I am afraid not. Although we have successful crops at times, the seasons here are bad as a rule.

1186. Do you anticipate that you will stock up the run? Yes, by the natural increase.

1187. Do you think that the grass or herbage has improved by the depasturing of stock? Yes; we have blue grass, Mitchell grass, crow-foot, and other natural grasses. There is no salt-bush here now. It has all gone since the sheep were put on. The pine scrub is rapidly increasing.

1188. Is that owing to the feeding of the sheep? Yes; I think the sheep press down the seeds of the pine. We have the emu bush, the mulga, the leopard wood, the rosebush; these are the most edible scrubs for sheep. The scrubs which are no value for sheep are yarran, sandal wood, budda, and the pine.

1189. Are the edible bushes increasing or decreasing? I think they are pretty stationery. The pine is the only thing which I notice is encroaching. There is no method that I know of for propagating those edible bushes.

1190. Have you any homestead lessees on the resumed area? None.

1191. Would much of the land on the resumed area be fit for homestead leases? I think so.

1192. Are there many yarran flats on the resumed area? Yes; but it is a good deal rougher than the Committee have seen—it is rather hilly.

1193. Is there as good land on the resumed area as on the leasehold area? Yes, in places.

1194. Do you think the country is sufficiently watered by tanks? We have five big tanks on the leasehold area, and two or three little ones. The leasehold area is divided into two paddocks. There are a couple of small horse paddocks.

1195. Would it not be more beneficial to divide it into smaller paddocks? Yes; the most profitable size would be 5 miles square with a good tank in the centre.

1196. If the bank consented, would you not have a considerable amount of work to do in excavating additional tanks? I would have one more tank to excavate, and I would have the fencing to do. I do not intend to do any ringbarking, but I intend to do some scrubbing if I am allowed.

1197. Would ringing and scrubbing materially improve the capabilities of the run? It would carry a quarter as many stock again if the pine were all rung. It would cost 8d. or 9d. an acre to scrub the land, and the same to ring it.

1198. In that case your yield of wool would increase 25 per cent? Yes; and that would give additional carriage to the railway.

1199. How many men do you employ on the whole run? Six. That is about the average number all the year round. I pay £1 to 25s. a week with rations to the men I employ. They are all Europeans except a Chinese cook. There are 25 horses on the run and 25 dairy cows.

Mr. Henry W. Davis, storekeeper and bookkeeper on Bulgoo Station, sworn and examined:—

1200. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Storekeeper and bookkeeper on Bulgoo Station for the last seven or eight years, with little intermission.

1201. Can you give us some information as to the rates of freight between Nyngan and Bulgoo? The station stores from Rowan & Co. cost, for carriage, £6 9s. per ton from Nyngan to Bulgoo. £3 is rather a high rate from Cobar to Bulgoo. We sometimes get it for £2, or sometimes 30s. from Cobar to Bulgoo. £8 may be put down as the rate of carriage from Nyngan to Bulgoo for this season. I have known it to be as low as from £5 to £6.

1202. How many teams a year are employed in bringing the station supplies from Nyngan to the Station? One dozen teams. The extreme loading would be 5 or 6 tons each team. The total quantity of goods would amount to about 50 tons during the year, at an average price of £5 or £6 per ton.

1203. Do you frequently employ your own teams to bring supplies in addition to those teams? Sometimes, but not frequently. There is generally a bullock team engaged. It goes into Cobar for goods. Sometimes we send wool down with our own teams and bring goods from Nyngan, but not often; 50 tons a year would cover the whole.

1204. Have you hawkers bringing you supplies of various kinds? Yes, six or seven last month. A great many come during the shearing time. We had fifty hands engaged this year, and the shearers generally buy from the hawkers.

Mr. Favel Sallaway, publican, sworn, and examined:—

1205. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a publican. I have lived here for two years, but I have been in the district for ten years.

1206. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you carried out any agriculture? Yes; this is the second year I have tried it.

1207. Do you consider that your crop is a satisfactory one? Yes.

Mr.
A. Fulton.
10 Oct., 1889.

Mr.
H. W. Davis.
10 Oct., 1889.

Mr.
F. Sallaway.
1208. 10 Oct., 1889.

- Mr. F. Salloway.
10 Oct., 1889.
1208. Have you any knowledge of boring for water? Yes, in mining. Since 1853 I was never off the gold-fields.
1209. Have you heard the opinion expressed, or have you formed the opinion yourself, as to this country being in a cretaceous formation? I do not say that that is the case here; but I believe we are very close to it, and that within 10 miles we could get water by boring.
1210. Have you had any evidence of it from personal observation? Yes; at Tiltagoona I saw a well where a man had sunk 90 feet. The water rose to 60 feet in the shaft. It is good soft fresh water, and the well is now being used.
1211. If that well had been bored deeper do you think it would come across an underground river? Yes. 30,000 sheep were watered there, and it has given a constant supply to many others. The country here is very similar.
1212. Would it give an enhanced value to your land if water were obtained here? Yes.
1213. Have you grown anything else besides what is now growing in your paddock? Yes; I have grown cabbages, melons, cauliflowers, peas, sufficient for ourselves and all who pass; and we have given bags of them away. The land we have cultivated is very prolific.
1214. Will the passage of the present Land Bill prevent settlement? I think so.
1215. Will the people within a radius of 10 miles gain an advantage by the construction of a railway to Wilcannia? Yes; it would be a great advantage.
1216. If you were selling out what value per acre, exclusive of improvements, would you place upon your land? I would want £5 an acre for it.
1217. Is there an abundance of land the same as yours within a radius of 15 miles of your holding? Yes; there are a great many more favourable spots.
1218. Where do you get your goods from? Sometimes from Sydney and sometimes from Cobar. I have got no goods by the river. I believe a contractor at Barnito got goods by the river.
1219. Would the railway obtain that kind of traffic? Yes.
1220. Is there any timber or ballast along the proposed railway line? There is plenty of box and plenty of ballast, consisting of loose slaty rock. There are indications of copper about here.
1221. Have you been through from here to Wilcannia? Yes; all the country is very nearly the same as it is here, and all very nearly the same value. It is better for agriculture the nearer you get to the river.
1222. *Chairman.*] Do you know where the line is surveyed from Cobar to Wilcannia? Yes.
1223. What is the nature of the country along there? From 10 miles out of Cobar to Barnito, which is 50 miles from Cobar, the country is stony and ridgy, and it cannot be avoided by the railway; but from Barnito all the way to Wilcannia it is all flat country like what it is in this locality.
1224. Is this crop you have in now the first crop that you have had? Yes.
1225. How many crops did you plant before that? Only one.
1226. Will this be a rich crop? It will not be an extraordinarily rich crop, but it will pay me.
1227. Is there any quantity of country in this locality suitable for growing wheat and oats? Yes; any amount far superior to mine.
1228. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you irrigate your land? No.
1229. Are they leasehold or resumed areas in this vicinity? Leasehold areas.

SANDY CREEK, THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER, 1889.

[The Sectional Committee met at the "Sandy Creek Hotel," at 8 p.m.]

Present:—

The HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. Edward W. Meredith, hotelkeeper, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. E. W. Meredith.
10 Oct., 1889.
1230. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Hotelkeeper.
1231. How far is it from here to Cobar? Forty-two miles.
1232. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How long have you lived in this district? Eleven years; I was formerly employed on Barnito Station.
1233. In what direction do the teams go from Barnito Station? They shear at Nelyambo and send the wool down the river.
1234. Which way do the teams generally go in this district? Most of the teams go from here to Cobar—no teams pass my door going towards the river. There is no main road from here to the river. The people about here obtain their goods through Cobar.
1235. When was your crop sown which you have adjoining the hotel? The last week in July.
1236. Is it in good condition? Yes, it is very good.
1237. Have any other good crops been obtained from that paddock? Yes; I believe three or four, about 2½ tons to the acre, were obtained in succession. It only failed once, and that was last year, on account of the drought.
1238. Do the crops fail entirely frequently in this district? Once in three or four years.
1239. *Chairman.*] Are you acquainted with any part of the surveyed line between Cobar and Wilcannia? Yes, with a portion that runs from Mulga Downs, which is about 45 miles from Cobar, to Barnito, which is about 60 miles from Cobar.
1240. What is the character of the country? Very flat and suitable for a railway. In parts it is well timbered with pine. There is a pretty fair quantity of box.
1241. Is there material suitable for ballast? Yes, in different places not far from the line.
1242. If a railway were constructed from Cobar to Wilcannia would people between this place and the railway line avail themselves of it? Most certainly.
1243. What stations do you know of that would be served by it? The Barnito, the Meadows, Springfield, Bulgoo, Mulga Downs, Inisowen, Tiltagoona, Bulla Bulla, Tiltagara, Pool Poola: these are all near the line.
- 1244.

1244. Are those all large grazing runs? Yes, fair sized runs—generally there is a large quantity of stock on them. A large quantity of wool would be sent away from those stations by the railway, and a large quantity of stores would be brought back.

Mr. E. W.
Meredith.
10 Oct., 1889.

1245. Have you heard any graziers in the district say that if a railway were constructed they would utilise it in sending away their stock in times of drought? No, but from what I know of the stations there is no doubt they would do so.

1246. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do you think there is much land in the neighbourhood fit to grow crops like your own? Yes, there is any amount of land like that in the district.

1247. What proportion of the land in the district would be fit for cultivation like yours? About one-third if it were cleared.

1248. Have you ever tried to grow grain allowing the wheat to ripen in the ear? No—it is always cut for hay.

1249. Would there be any market for hay in Wilcannia? There is always a market for hay and chaff in this district.

1250. If a railway were constructed right through would you be able to find a market in Wilcannia for any produce you could grow here? Yes.

1251. Do you know whether the goods which go up from the river go from Sydney to Hay and then come here? No; I think all the goods come from Adelaide, except a little. I think the wool also goes down to Adelaide.

1252. So that in the event of constructing the line through to Wilcannia we should simply be enabling the people to send their wool to Adelaide? No; they would send their wool to Sydney if a railway were made.

1253. Do you think they would send their wool to Sydney if they could send it by the river cheaper? There is no doubt that if a railway were constructed the squatters and graziers would send their wool to Sydney, and they would not send it out of the Colony.

Mr. John Cameron, manager of Marfield station, sworn, and examined:—

1254. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Manager of Marfield station, the property of Fartiere and Company. That station is about 40 miles south of the proposed railway to Wilcannia.

Mr.
J. Cameron.
10 Oct., 1889.

1255. What is your nearest point at present for sending wool and produce? This year we have sent it into Wilcannia on account of the river being up; that is a distance of about 60 miles. We usually send it to Hay. The distance by the river is shorter, and the freight a little cheaper, but very little, down to Port Victor, in South Australia.

1256. What number of sheep have you on your station? About 17,000, but we are bringing a lot of 24,000 on just now. I am now going to inspect 12,000 more, with a view to purchasing them. Our number of stock is low at present owing to the drought which killed our flocks right and left. We hung on to them to the very last. We kept them alive for fully twelve months on nothing else but the scrub, but then they had to go.

1257. What is the extent of Marfield station? About ten 10-mile blocks.

1258. Before the drought what number of sheep had you on the station? 86,000. The number actually lost was about 69,000; that was during the year 1888 and part of 1889.

1259. How are you off for water on the station? We are right enough; we have really good tanks all the way round. The sheep did not die for want of water but for want of feed.

1260. Have you made any efforts to grow produce for the sheep, or to save the pasture while it was good? Not so far.

1261. Is the run divided into small paddocks? We have a number of small paddocks for stud purposes, and so on; the ordinary paddocks are 5 and 6 miles square.

1262. What is the character of the bushes that sustain the stock in drought? Principally emu bush and mulga. We cut down a mixture of all sorts—hop bush, &c.

1263. Did they die because they ate up all those shrubs? There was not sufficient substance for them. They appeared to do well enough for a time, but I think after a certain time that sort of food tells upon them—they require a little grass with it.

1264. During that time would it have been practicable for you to have moved any part of the stock to other parts of the Colony? It would have been impossible; there was no feed anywhere.

1265. Supposing there had been a railway, within 40 miles of the station would it have been of any use for you to move the sheep? Yes; we would certainly have shifted them to wherever we could hear of feed—that is if there was no sale for them at the time. I had several letters from Mr. Fartiere asking me if I could not shift some of them, but it was an impossibility.

1266. If the railway were constructed would the wool and stock be sent by it in preference to the river route? Most certainly for 40 miles.

1267. What other runs are there within a reasonable distance of the proposed line of railway which would be served by it? Baden Park, which consists of about 3½ 10-mile blocks, and then there is Terawynia consisting of about eleven 10-mile blocks. There are about 30,000 sheep on the first named run and about 120,000 sheep were shorn on the second run this year. Then there is Mount Manara, consisting of about four 10-mile blocks—there are 21,000 sheep on that run at present. There is Kilfera run consisting of about thirteen 10-mile blocks, 80,000 sheep; then Nekarboo run, consisting of about three 10-mile blocks. They shored about 13,000 sheep after the drought, but they have been buying since. The area of a 10-mile block is 64,000 acres.

1268. With regard to the runs you have mentioned did they sustain great losses during the drought of 1888–1889? The majority of them did.

1269. Do you know what were the actual losses? I cannot say for certain, but I think they are about as follows. On Baden Park the losses were about 6,000. I do not think that Terawynia had any losses to speak of, as they had a shower of rain in the right time. The same happened with regard to Albemarle station. At Mount Manara the losses were about 9,000. Kilfera lost about 30,000. They started to shift some of the sheep during the drought towards Orange. They travelled them right through, but they did not succeed for want of pasture and water. On the Nekarboo station they lost about 13,000 or 14,000 sheep.

Mr.
J. Cameron.
10 Oct., 1889.

1270. If there had been a railway do you think the owners of those stations would have moved away their sheep during the drought? Yes, I have heard the owners say more than once that, if we had had out here the railways which are made about Sydney and Melbourne, they would have shifted away their stock, instead of allowing them to die on their hands.

1271. What does it cost your station per year for carriage, by teams, of your wool? From Marfield to Hay it cost £6 16s. 1d. per ton.

1272. What would it cost per ton to bring it to the nearest point on the projected railway line from Cobar to Wilcannia? At the outside it would be about 30s. We send away about 130 tons of wool from our station in a good season. This year we will be bringing in a great lot of goods for station purposes, because we are wire-netting our run. The ordinary average would be about 10 tons of goods per annum.

1273. Is any portion of your run suitable for agriculture? About half of it.

1274. Even in ordinary seasons? In good seasons.

1275. Have you many rabbits on your run? Yes, any number. The drought killed a lot, but they are now increasing very rapidly. I am working at them now with bi-sulphide of carbon, but it is very expensive and very slow. The bulk of the country is now undermined with rabbit burrows. They were very bad up to the time of the drought of 1888. I think they were gaining upon us. We had from eighty to 100 rabbiters on in 1888.

1276. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do you cultivate any land? Yes; there are about 31 acres in this year—19 acres of wheat and 12 acres of oats. I sowed in the beginning of May. It is a beautiful crop this year; it is now about 4 feet 6 inches high. We will cut it for hay, and I expect to get 1½ tons to 2 tons per acre. I think this country is better suited for wheat than for oats.

1277. Would it not pay to cultivate more land? Yes; I am sorry I have not put in more than 100 acres.

1278. Would it not pay to cultivate land so as to provide food for sheep in time of drought? Yes; especially for stud sheep. It is my intention to cut some natural grass this year.

1279. Have you tried ensilage? No; but I am thinking of going in for it. I think half of our run would be as suitable for cultivation as the portion I have cultivated.

1280. Have you any homestead leases on your run? No; the resumed area is the roughest part of the run.

1281. How many acres does it take to carry a sheep in average seasons? One sheep to 6 acres.

1282. Do you find the grazing capabilities of the land improved by depasturing sheep? Yes; when a lot of the low scrub and other stuff is taken off grass and other herbage comes up instead.

1283. In a few years will the land be capable of carrying more stock than at present? Yes; the sheep help to harden the country, so that the water runs into the tanks and the feed is also improved.

1284. Are you ring-barking any country? Not so far, and we have no intention of doing so. We scrub our horse paddocks.

1285. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Where do the stations you have mentioned send their wool? The Terawynia wool goes to Adelaide, the wool from Mount Manara, Baden Park, and Kilfera goes to Hay and thence to Sydney. Terawynia station belongs to Melbourne people.

1286. In the event of the railway being constructed from Cobar to Wilcannia do you think those stations instead of sending their wool by the river would send it by train to Sydney? If the railway were cheaper most decidedly they would send it by the railway.

1287. If the carriage was a little cheaper by the river than by railway, do you think they would send their wool to Adelaide instead of to Sydney? I think the railway would have the preference, because it is so much quicker.

1288. Will the stations you have mentioned be better served by the proposed line than by the Hay railway? Yes.

1289. Does any of the wool that goes to Hay go to Deniliquin and to Melbourne instead of to Sydney? Some of it goes to Melbourne, but the bulk of it goes to Sydney. If the proposed line were made probably the whole of it would go to Sydney.

1290. *Mr. Hurley.*] During the eleven years that you have been engaged on stations did you ever experience so bad a drought as that of 1888–89? No.

1291. Did you ever experience a season before that would cause you to send your sheep away from the district? Yes, once before. If a railway were in existence we would have had to use it twice to send away the sheep.

1292. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] If a railway were in existence during the drought could you have brought up some fodder, and thus have saved the sheep? We could have helped them for a week or two, until we could have got them into the train. I daresay we could have fed some of our stud sheep, but it would not pay the station to feed all the sheep.

1293. If a railway were constructed from Nyngan to Wilcannia, and from Nyngan to Werris Creek, would the pastoralists avail themselves of it to remove sheep in times of drought? Yes, I think so.

1294. *Mr. Hurley.*] What number of hands have you employed on the station under your supervision? On an average we have about twenty men.

1295. What would be the average wages paid to those men? £1 a week and rations.

1296. So that for £50 a week that station is managed? Yes, at present.

1297. *Chairman.*] How far are you from Cobar by road at present? 149 miles.

1298. So that a railway to Cobar would be of no advantage to you at present? No. I do not think we would send our produce this way. It is a very rough track.

PADDINGTON, FRIDAY, 11 OCTOBER, 1889.

[The Sectional Committee met at "Belaraboon Hotel," Paddington Station, at 12 noon.]

Present:

The HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. Michael Honan, publican, sworn, and examined:—

1299. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Publican; I keep the "Belaraboon Hotel."

1300. How many miles is this place from Cobar? About 72 miles.

1301. How do you get your goods here? Sometimes *via* Wilcannia from Adelaide, when the river is up; sometimes from Cobar. At present the cheapest route is from Adelaide by the river. However, that is not reliable, because sometimes there is no navigation for six months in the year. The surveyed line of railway from Cobar to Wilcannia is between 25 and 40 miles from this place.

1302. If that line were constructed as far as Cobar, would it be of any advantage to you? Yes; Sydney is the place where we all wish to get our goods from, because we are known to the merchants there, and we would rather deal with them.

1303. Would it be a greater convenience if the line were constructed to Wilcannia? Yes; I should deal direct with Sydney, and we would then be sure of getting what we wanted.

1304. Do many teams pass here? Yes; a great many. At present they come to the Paddington wool-scouring. After the wool is scoured it is taken to Hay and sent to Victoria or Adelaide.

1305. How far is Hay by road from this station? Close on 200 miles.

1306. Would the railway be of any advantage for getting scoured wool away? Yes; it would be quite close to the railway.

1307. Is this a central scouring place for the district? Yes; all the pastoralists wish to have the wool scoured, because it saves carriage and brings a better price at home.

1308. Is there much wool scoured at this establishment? Yes; they are getting wool at present from Fulham station, very close to the proposed railway line. They also get wool from Nekarboo station, 28 miles from here, and within about 14 or 16 miles of the proposed line. They are also getting it from Tiltagara station, 15 miles away. Then there is Mr. M'Pherson's station—Keewong.

1309. Is the carriage to Hay very expensive from here? £7 15s. per ton. It is a distance of 220 miles.

1310. Is this a good district for agricultural purposes? It is a very good country for agriculture, when there is anything like a fair average rainfall. It will grow anything with any country I have ever been in, and I have travelled in England, Ireland, and part of the Continent. I planted the crop which I have now growing a little over four months ago. We have had 9 or 10 inches of rain since then. The crop consists of wheat and oats. The oats are only an experiment, and I have sown 5 or 6 acres of them. It is a very satisfactory crop of oats. Some of them are now 5 feet 2 inches high. I expect about 43 cwt., to the acre of oats for hay.

1311. *Mr. Copeland.*] What is the height of the wheat crop? The average is 4 feet 9 inches. It is as good as you could find in New South Wales. I expect that will go fully 2 tons to the acre.

1312. How long have you been in this district? I have been in the district three years altogether.

1313. Do you think that your crop will be a fair average crop in a good season? I am perfectly certain of it.

1314. Is it difficult ground to work? No; the ground was lying fallow when I took it in hand—it had been partly cleared. I ploughed more than half of it and let it lie for a short time until the rain came; then I sowed it all myself. The area of the field is nearly 20 acres. It is not very laborious work to cultivate the land. The clearing is the principal part.

1315. Have you a good supply of water? I have a very good tank which was constructed before I came here. During the last drought it never went within 7 feet of the bottom—that is very exceptional in this district. The tank has been sunk deep so that evaporation is not so great as it would be if there was more superficial area.

1316. Is your land a fair sample of the country round for agricultural purposes? I fancy it is about the worst of it, because it is rather hilly.

1317. Are you unable to extend your present area? Yes. I do not know whether this is on the resumed or on the leasehold area. There are no homestead leases about here.

1318. Would you be glad to select an additional 600 acres if you could at £1 per acre? I would indeed.

1319. What do you expect to make out of the land you have cultivated;—how much per acre profit? Fully £15 per acre.

1320. Do you think, if this land were open for selection, there are other people who would enter upon cultivation? Yes; it only wants to be tried with a little capital.

1321. What would it cost per acre to clear your land? £20.

1322. *Mr. Hurley.*] If you were selling, what value would you place upon the land, apart from the improvements? £4 per acre.

1323. Is the land around you for a distance 10 miles equal to what you have got? Yes; provided it is cleared and worked.

1324. Is the market limited? We have a ready sale amongst the squatters without going to any market.

1325. Do you think that the western country has been faithfully represented or misrepresented when it was stated that it was of no use whatever? I believe it has been misrepresented. I have demonstrated that clearly here.

1326. Is there plenty of room in this district to give settlement to a large settled population? Yes; hundreds of thousands could be settled here.*

1327. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Supposing you had had this crop here last year, and you had gathered it, what do you think you would have cleared? £1,500 or £2,000 on 20 acres alone.

1328. In what direction do most of the teams go that pass your door? Most of them to Wilcannia and Hay. Wilcannia is 120 miles distant and Hay 210 miles.

1329.

* NOTE (on revision):—I meant "the whole western district" when I said hundreds of thousands could be settled there.

Mr.
M. Honan.
11 Oct., 1889.

Mr. Honan. 1329. If the railway came within 40 miles of your homestead, would it tap the trade that now goes to Wilcannia and Hay? I am certain it would. It would be cheaper. The teams from Wilcannia and Hay are not a certainty at present. We sometimes have to wait for two or three weeks.

11. Oct., 1889.

Charles R. M'Pherson, Esq., proprietor of Paddington Station, sworn, and examined:—

C. R. M'Pherson, Esq. 1330. *Chairman.*] Are you part owner of Paddington Station? Yes; the whole run is called Paddington, and it consists of about eight and a half 10-mile blocks. At present there are 50,000 sheep on the station. At the beginning of last year I had 102,000 sheep on it. I lost about 30,000 during the drought, and I sold a great number—about 18,000.

11 Oct., 1889.

1331. Where do you send your wool to market? This year it is all going to Hay—that is about 180 miles distant. If the river were navigable it would go to Melbourne. When the river is not navigable it goes to Sydney. In years like last year most of the wool would go to Cobar. The freight from here to Nyngan at present is about £5 10s. per ton. During the drought I paid as much as £12 per ton. At present the freight to Hay is £7 10s. per ton, and from Hay to Melbourne the freight £3 10s. per ton.

1332. At present, when the river is up, which is the cheaper mode of sending your wool to market? It is very nearly the same sending it by Nyngan to Sydney in good seasons. I do not believe that there is more than a shilling or two difference either way.

1333. Supposing a railway were built to Cobar, would that be any advantage to you for sending away your wool? Of course it would be.

1334. What quantity of wool did you send away during 1888? About 60 or 70 tons of scoured wool of our own.

1335. Did you scour for anybody last year? No; I had not any water to spare.

1336. Before the drought, what number of bales did you send to market? I had not lost any last year, and I sent away something like the same quantity as I did the year before. It was after shearing that we lost a great number of our sheep.

1337. If the railway were made to Cobar, would you avail yourself of that means of transit in preference to any other? Yes.

1338. What is the character of the country on the surveyed line of railway between Cobar and Barnito? It is all undulating scrubby country—the same as the country between Cobar and Sandy Creek. It is fairly level country for the construction of a railway. If the railway were made to Wilcannia it would be only 30 miles across to the railway from our shed.

1339. Do you grow any grain on your run? Yes; we grow some wheat for hay. We have 100 acres under crop at present. It will be a very fair crop this year. I expect to get about 1½ tons per acre.

1340. What is your opinion of this country as to its suitability for agriculture? Without irrigation I do not think it is fit for farming.

1341. Have you grown crops all the time you have been here? Yes; ever since 1880.

1342. What has been the average good crops during that time? If I count this season, I have had three good crops during all that time. There were only two years during that time that I had nothing to cut.

1343. In nine years you have had three first class crops? Yes.

1344. *Mr. Copeland.*] With the exception of two years, the other crops were ordinary crops? Yes; very patchy.

1345. *Chairman.*] Is there any other portion of the run suitable for growing crops of the same character? Yes.

1346. What extent of your run do you think is suitable for growing crops? I can hardly say. I think that the only place where you are likely to get a crop with safety is on a flat where you can get drainage from the high land—ground that gets soaked with rain.

1347. Is there not a large extent of this kind of country on this run? No.

1348. How many acres are there of that character of country? It would be hard to guess.

1349. Is the whole of your run fenced? No; there are about five and a half blocks fenced. About three blocks are not fenced nor improved.

1350. On an average, how many hands have you got employed on your run? About twenty hands all the year round; at shearing time far more. We have then, for about six weeks, sixty-six extra hands.

1351. If there had been any means of getting your stock away during the heavy drought, would you have availed yourself of it? Most certainly.

1352. Would a railway from Cobar have been of any use to you for that purpose? Yes; I could have got them to Cobar. I might have sent away 20,000 sheep. I should say that the same proportion would have been sent away by other graziers around here, and within 50 or 60 miles of the Cobar railway station.

1353. Have you suffered very much from the rabbits? Not so far, but they are getting very thick now. Before the drought there were a good many rabbits here; but I do not think they were ever thick enough to affect the feed. I think they are beginning to affect the feed now. We are growing wheat now for the purpose of poisoning the rabbits. We poisoned a lot last year, but when the drought came we could not afford the grain.

1354. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Where do you get your goods from? By rail to Hay. I usually get them from Sydney.

1355. *Mr. Copeland.*] Have you any homestead lessees on your run? No.

1356. Are the resumed area and the leasehold area about equal in quantity and quality? Yes.

1357. Do you think there is any likelihood of homestead leases being taken up on your run? No; I am not a bit afraid of it.

1358. Would you not be afraid of it if the railway were brought here? No.

1359. Would it not be possible for a homestead lessee to cultivate several hundreds or thousands of acres of land similar to what you have? They might in time; but there is so much country between us, further down, that I think it would be some years before we would be troubled with homestead lessees.

1360. Still there is land for them to take if they wanted it? Yes.

1361. What has been the rainfall for the last few years? The rainfall since 1878 has been as follows:—1878, 16·27; 1879, 18·55; 1880, 11·26; 1881, 11·98; 1882, 13·63; 1883, 11·25; 1884, 9·74; 1885, 17·73; 1886, 17·30; 1887, 28·35; 1888, 7·97; in 1889, up to date, there have been 18·39 inches.

NEKARBOO, SATURDAY, 12 OCTOBER, 1889.

[The Sectional Committee met at the "Thurmungya Hotel," Nekarboo station, at 8 a.m.]

Present:—

The HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).	
HENRY COPELAND, Esq.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. John Tomlinson, hotelkeeper, sworn, and examined:—

1362. *Chairman.*] Are you the proprietor of the "Thurmungya Hotel?" Yes.
1363. What is the distance from here to Cobar? About 96 miles.
1364. How long have you been here? Four months. I rent the premises I occupy and 80 acres of land, and I cultivate a paddock of 6 acres. I have a crop of wheat growing which I planted on the 5th June, which is very late, nevertheless it is doing very well, and on an average it is about 3 feet high. It is of very equal growth, and I reckon that it will yield 2 tons of hay per acre. I have also growing, cabbages, lettuce, carrots, parsnips, turnips, radishes, onions, rhubarb, beet, potatoes, cauliflower, peas, broad and French beans, pumpkins, cucumbers, and watermelons—they are all doing well. The soil is very easily worked. I am also growing peaches, apricots, apples, mulberries, quinces, figs, and grapes—everything is looking healthy. I think this soil is peculiarly suitable for grapes.
1365. Have you got an exceptionally good bit of land? No, it is all alike. All the flats are like this, and suitable for cultivation. In good seasons even the sandhills are as good as any other part.
1366. If there were better means of communication do you think more people would settle out here? Yes.
1367. Do you think that the people would avail themselves of the provisions of the Land Act with regard to homestead leases? Yes. I know I would. I have heard many say they would do the same.
1368. If there were smaller holdings than homestead leases provided for, would there be more settlement? Yes, because there are many men who cannot go in for homestead leases. It would require a great deal of money to take up 10,000 acres and fence it in.
1369. Is water conservation easy here by means of tanks or dams? Yes.
1370. Were you in the district during the drought of 1888–1889? Yes.
1371. Were the people who had built dams provided with water then? Yes; those who had good big tanks. Some of the squatters had very small tanks, and they did not last long enough. It is necessary to sink the dams deep in this country.
1372. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Which way do the teams go with wool? They generally go to Nyngan from here. I never knew any to go from here towards the river until this year. Mr. Moule, of Fulham station, sent his wool that way this year. I get my stores from Cobar, and I pay £8 per ton for cartage. If the railway were made from Cobar to Wilcannia it would not cost me one-fourth what it costs now to get my goods. I think the people about here would avail themselves of the railway if made.
1373. *Mr. Tonkin.*] How deep would you have to go into this red soil before you would get into a formation that would not hold water? You could not get into anything that would not hold water. The only risk would be that you would strike rock.
1374. Does the red soil go right on to the rock as a rule? Yes.
1375. What is the depth of this soil? Lots of these tanks are 12 feet deep, and it is all good soil right down to that depth; 12 feet is about the deepest.

Mr. J.
Tomlinson.
12 Oct., 1889.

Sydney Walker, Esq., part proprietor of Nekarboo station, made an affirmation, and was examined:—

1376. *Chairman.*] Are you part proprietor of Nekarboo station? Yes; it is distant from Cobar about 100 miles. The extent of our holding is four 10-mile blocks. We have on it at present 11,000 sheep, about forty horses, and thirty head of cattle. For the last three or four years since we stocked up and had the country improved; we have shorn about 30,000 grown sheep, and about 12,000 or 14,000 lambs. There would be about 40,000 or 43,000 sheep on the run at shearing time.
1377. What has been the cause of the falling off in the number of sheep? The drought of 1888–1889. We had about 30,000 grown sheep on the run when the drought set in, but when we mustered last April we could not muster more than 11,000 sheep, so that we lost 19,000 grown sheep, and also 80 per cent. of the lambs from 14,000 ewes.
1378. What efforts did you make to save your stock? We tried scrub-cutting, but not with very great success. Owing to the great season we had during the previous year we had a very large supply of dry grass. The country was looking wonderfully well. We consider that what sheep we did save were saved by the amount of old pasturage which was left, although it was very dry.
1379. How long have you held this station? Nine years.
1380. What has been your experience with regard to the growth of scrub during that period? It has increased. We have burnt off a good deal in patches, owing to the great amount of grass there was in 1887.
1381. Does the increasing growth of scrub spoil the pasture? Yes, very much.
1382. Why do you not seek to reduce it? On account of the expense that we have been put to in improving the country, and the uncertainty of our tenure hitherto. The improvements we have made consist of tanks, fencing, homestead, wool sheds, yards, and all the ordinary station improvements.
1383. Now that the land law has been amended, do you think you are likely to go in for improvements in the way of scrubbing and clearing? If we could see any hope of getting rid of the rabbits, I should say we would be hopeful enough to make improvements. I think the rabbits are the greatest difficulty we have ever seen out here and I have been in the western division within 100 miles from here for the last twenty-two years, and I have seen a great many droughts.
1384. Do you intend taking steps to reduce them? It is a question so beset with difficulty that we are waiting at present to see what can be done.

S. Walker,
Esq.
12 Oct., 1889.

- S. Walker, Esq.
12 Oct., 1889.
1385. What is the carrying capacity of this country? It was put down by the appraiser who appraised it under the 1884 Act as 8 acres to a sheep. I think that is fair.
1386. What quantity of wool do you send away per annum? About 400 bales will be the average for the last five years. We send our wool nearly always to Nyngan, occasionally to Hay. These places are equi-distant. For the last two years £6 10s. has been the union rate of cartage to Nyngan.
1387. During drought or bad seasons what do you pay for cartage? We then pay fancy prices. It was as high as £12 10s. per ton last year. We had great difficulty in getting cartage, even at that high rate.
1388. Where do you get your supplies from? Principally from Sydney. We get some from Cobar.
1389. Would it be any advantage to you if a railway were constructed to Cobar? Yes, a very great advantage. The freight would be considerably reduced and it would always be a certainty. We could always get to Cobar. But the country between Cobar and Nyngan is not suitable to cattle which are used to this part of the country. They immediately fall off when they pass Cobar.
1390. Have you ever considered the question of getting stock away in an extreme drought if you had the means of doing so? Yes; but it is hopeless for us out here to do anything of that kind. If there was a railway to Cobar it would be a perfect God-send to us in that way.
1391. Do you think that during the heavy drought of 1888—1889 you could have got a number of your sheep away? Yes, we could have saved all the wethers.
1392. Do you know the surveyed line of railway from Cobar to Wilcannia? Yes; I know it from Cobar to Paupooloe Lake—that is about 100 miles from Cobar.
1393. What is the character of the country there? It is mulga country,—good useful grazing country. There are small rises and there would be no heavy cuttings. Here and there there is sandstone rock, but there are very easy grades and the character of the country is similar to the country traversed between Double Gates and Paddington. The nearest point from our station to the surveyed line is about 40 miles. There could be a direct road opened.
1394. Therefore that extension would be a still greater benefit to you than if the line were made only to Cobar? Yes.
1395. Have you any cultivation on your run? We grow a little wheat, about 13 acres for horse feed—the wheat grows well. We have not done well as a rule—the drought has been against us but this year we have a very good crop. As we cut it green we cannot tell what the yield will be. Every part of the run where there is not stone or rock would grow good crops if there was sufficient rainfall.
1396. Have you many tanks? There are six large tanks ranging from 4,000 yards to 15,000 yards. There are several smaller ones. It is all good holding ground. Until last year we never had one of them empty after they had once been filled.
1397. What rent are you paying? Half-penny per acre for the leasehold and something under that for the resumed area.
1398. Do you think that this country is suitable for homestead leases? A great deal of it would be suitable if there was access to market.
1399. Have you heard anyone express an opinion that they were likely to take up homestead leases? I have heard teamsters and others say so.
1400. Does much wool go from here to the river? Not so far as this. Between here and Cobar very little goes to Wilcannia.
1401. Speaking generally, do you think that a railway to Cobar, with a possible extension to Wilcannia would be a benefit to the district? It would undoubtedly be a great benefit to the district and it would promote settlement, thus increasing the revenue derivable for railway freight.
1402. Do you keep a rain gauge? Yes. In 1887 the rainfall was 25 inches, in 1884 a trifle over 4 inches—this year we have had 13 inches.
1403. *Mr. Copeland.*] Is your run fully stocked? No, it is only about one-quarter stocked. If fully stocked it would carry 40,000 sheep in its present state.
1404. Do you think it would improve the carrying capability of the country if it were scrubbed and the timber ringbarked? There is not the slightest doubt it could be improved very much. You could then put on one half the present stock in addition, if you could not double the stock. I believe that ringing and scrubbing has been done out here at about 1s. 6d. by Chinese gangs.
1405. Have you any intention to do any ringbarking and scrubbing? We have not made any application. We would like to do so if we saw things were hopeful.
1406. How many men do you employ? About three or four on an average all the year round—that is irrespective of shearing and lamb marking.
1407. *Mr. Hurley.*] Do you think that the blocks you hold are in a cretaceous formation? I think it is hardly probable that artesian water can be obtained here. Water has been got at a comparatively shallow depth.
1408. In excavating tanks what do you pay per yard? About an average of 1s.
1409. Have you ever tried ensilage? We made a little experiment but hardly enough to say whether it would succeed.
1410. If successful would it be a great benefit? Yes, for horses and cattle.
1411. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do the runs to the west of you avail themselves much of the river for the carriage of wool and stores? North-west of us they do, but scarcely to the west.
1412. If a line were constructed from Cobar to Broken Hill do you think that those people would be induced to utilise the line instead of sending their wool and stores by the river? I think so because the river is very uncertain. Of course if the water carriage were certain nothing could compete with it, but it is so risky that although we are within 100 miles of Wilcannia we have never used the river.
1413. If this railway were constructed would you not have some inducement to stock your run heavier? Yes, we could remove stock if necessary.
1414. Where does the wool from the stations to the north-west of you go to? Generally speaking either to Nyngan or Hay. More goes to Nyngan than to Hay.
1415. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is the reason for the pastoralists here sending their wool to Hay? I suppose it is the water carriage when they reach Hay.
1416. Do they place it on board steamers at Hay for Melbourne and Adelaide? Yes.
1417. In a dry season if a line were constructed from Nyngan to Wilcannia would it give you a cheap and speedy means of obtaining fodder? Yes, that would be amongst its other benefits; by that means we could maintain alive many thousands of sheep.
- 1418.

1418. If an extension of the railway were carried from Nyngan to Werris Creek would it be a great advantage to pastoralists here? Yes, a very great advantage.
1419. If the railway were carried to Wilcannia and Broken Hill would it give access to a good market for pastoralists for slaughtering purposes? Yes.
1420. Are the pastoralists out here generally satisfied with the recent land legislation? I think the new Land Act is regarded as favourable here. It gives fixity of tenure, which is a very great boon, and which has relieved us all out here.
1421. Are the pastoralists, therefore, likely to initiate improvements on a large scale? No doubt that would be the case if the rabbit difficulty could be disposed of, or if some hope could be given to us with regard to that difficulty.
1422. What is the best method of disposing with the rabbit difficulty? Wire netting is the only method that has proved at all successful, and that is not altogether a success. I should be very glad to have my run fenced if I had the money to do it.

S. Walker,
Esq.

12 Oct., 1889.

Charles G. Moule, Esq., part proprietor of Fulham Park Station, sworn, and examined:—

1423. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is the name of the station of which you are part owner? Fulham Park, it adjoins Nekarboo Station.
1424. Is the evidence which you are able to give similar to that given by Mr. Walker? It is almost exactly the same.
1425. What are the dimensions of your run? Three 10-mile blocks. I have 15,000 sheep on it, twenty-two horses, and no cattle. It is 115 miles distant from Cobar. The rainfall is about the same as it is on Mr. Walker's station.
1426. Where do you send your wool to? Hay, as a rule. This year I sent it to the river at Wilcannia. It is the first time I have done so for five years. From Wilcannia it will go to Melbourne. I do not get stores from Melbourne, but from Hay.
1427. Are there many other pastoralists around you who send their wool to Wilcannia? In a year like this the wool goes to Wilcannia, but generally it goes to Hay.
1428. If a railway were constructed through this district, would the pastoralists who now send their wool from your neighbourhood to Wilcannia and Hay, be induced to send their wool to Sydney? Undoubtedly they would.
1429. Would they be likely to allow the cheaper rates by river to weigh against a more speedy and certain access to the sea port? The wool would go the cheapest way.
1430. Is not time an element? You would have to balance that.
1431. Considering the river is very uncertain, and that the wool may be stuck up there for months, if not for years, would you take that risk for the sake of getting a lower rate instead of sending it by a speedy certain means to Sydney? No; it would go by train at once.
1432. Do your views represent the views of the pastoralists around you? Yes. I wish to say something with regard to the rabbits: After the rabbit subsidy was discontinued we started poisoning on our own account with very great success. I would have gone on with that if we had had any encouragement. When I sent in my claim I had the voucher returned to me—it was only for £10, but still it was discouraging. I had to be at the loss of that money, and I would not go on any farther. The men whom I had employed rabbiting had gone away, so that I could not follow up the matter, and a squatter's word would never be taken by those rabbit inspectors. We had to go and swear before a magistrate that certain work had been done, and if a rabbitier said anything against us we were defeated. The operation of the Rabbit Act was very unsatisfactory. We were forced to pay 6d. per scalp although we could get the work done for 4d. per scalp—the inspectors told us that unless we paid the men 6d. per scalp we would not be paid any subsidy. We could easily have got the work done at 2d. or 3d. per scalp at the same time.

C. G. Moule,
Esq.

12 Oct., 1889.

KEW, SATURDAY, 12 OCTOBER, 1889.

[The Sectional Committee met at Kew Station at 8 p.m.]

Present:—

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Keppel A. Turnour, Esq., owner of the Kew Station, sworn, and examined:—

1433. *Mr. Copeland.*] Are you the owner of the Kew station? Yes.
1434. What is the area of your run? 64,400 acres. It is all leasehold area. I have on it at present 10,500 grown sheep and 6,000 lambs. The latter has been the increase for this year.
1435. Did you lose any sheep during the drought last year? 1,500.
1436. What is the distance from here to Cobar? About 140 miles. We are 65 miles from Wilcannia. I believe we are about 30 miles from the proposed railway route.
1437. How much wool did you send away last year? About 18 tons. Last year I had less sheep than I ever had before, because I sold almost all my sheep in the face of the drought. Last year I sent away 89 bales of wool, but the year before I sent away 199 bales. The year before I had 15,000 sheep.
1438. Where did you send your wool? The clean wool went by the river for shipment at Port Victor, South Australia—The remainder I sent to be scoured on Priory Station.
1439. What do you pay for cartage to the river? £3 15s. per ton.
1440. How much from the river to Port Victor? 37s. per ton.
1441. Where do you get your stores from? Wherever we can get them cheapest—generally in Wilcannia.
1442. What do you pay for your stores coming back? I have paid all prices. The average price is between £3 and £4. It varies from £2 10s. up to £5 per ton.

K. A.
Turnour, Esq.

12 Oct., 1889.

1443.

- K. A. Turnour, Esq.
12 Oct., 1889.
1443. How many tons of supplies do you get to the station during the year? Last year I had 40 tons of wire netting. The year before that I had 15 tons of fencing wire—23 tons of wire netting came by Balranald and the rest I got by Nyngan.
1444. If the Railway were constructed by Nyngan to Wilcannia would you be likely to make use of it to send your wool to market and to get your stores? Yes, if I could get them cheaper by rail than by river.
1445. If the river were up would you make use of the railway to send your wool to Wilcannia? That would depend upon the cost.
1446. If the railway were built would you still continue to use the river under ordinary circumstances? If the river were navigable and it would carry my produce cheaper I would send it by river. On the other hand if the river were not navigable I would send it by the railway. Generally speaking there is no river and therefore the railway would be availed of.
1447. If the railway were constructed and a drought were imminent would you be likely to make use of the railway to get rid of your stock? Certainly. That would be a very great advantage and would make all the difference to the people out here. I believe it would go a great way towards insuring us against loss of stock by drought, and no doubt it would materially enhance the value of my holding.
1448. Do you anticipate that freezing works would be established if the railway were constructed? Yes. We should always be able to see far enough ahead by carrying a fair amount of stock to have a surplus of fat sheep which we could send in to be frozen, and thereby we would be able to relieve our runs in case of dry weather.
1449. Where would be the most suitable place for a freezing depôt? Wilcannia is our centre and I believe it would be a grand one.
1450. How many people do you employ generally to work your station during the year, exclusive of shearers? Three.
1451. In addition to that, have you had contractors putting up fences and so forth? Yes.
1452. What is the rate of pay? I pay £1 a week, and during shearing time 25s. a week; and if they stop with me a year I give them £5 bonus—they get rations.
1453. How many men have you shearing? Ten; I have not enumerated three house servants.
1454. Do you consider that your run is fully stocked at the present moment? No.
1455. Do you think that the run is improved to its utmost carrying capacity? Certainly not.
1456. Is it your intention to improve it further by ringbarking and scrubbing? Yes, that would fully treble its carrying capacity—that is by adding more water and making smaller paddocks. I would spend money in that direction on account of the new Act giving us a longer lease.
1457. If the appraisalment is satisfactory do you intend to improve? Yes.
1458. What is the edible herbage on your run? Salt and cotton-bush, and a variety of other herbs. There is coarse grass but very good grass. Crow-foot is good grass, but it only lasts during the winter months. We have mulga, rosewood, hopwood, puntu, a few wilga kurrajong and ballar trees. We have no pine scrub. To deal with the rabbits we have put up wire-netting. I spent thousands in killing rabbits, but I am afraid with very little effect, before I put up the netting.
1459. Has the netting been very beneficial? Certainly. I do not think it has had a fair trial. The netting was put up during the drought, and we have not suffered so much from the rabbits since the drought broke up. The rabbits all died out during the drought and they have never recovered. I believe the netting is efficacious—it enables me to deal with my own rabbits, instead of with other people's.
1460. What is the largest number of rabbits you have killed in any given time? 24,000 in one month.
1461. How many were killed altogether? 315,000 actually killed. The Government did not pay for all the scalps. This is the smallest station in the western division. At present, the rabbits are no trouble at all to me.
1462. We notice that a great many of the trees and bushes have been ringbarked and killed—is that the work of the rabbits? Yes.
1463. Has that very materially increased the quantity of grass? Yes; it has given it a much better sward, and I believe it has sweetened the country, but that has to be proved.
1464. As you keep a rain-gauge will you give us the record for the past few years? In 1887, 25.77 inches; in 1888, 4.29 inches; of that 1.24 inches fell from the 19th December to the end of that month. The heaviest fall in winter was .82 inches in May, when nothing would grow. The record up to date of this year is 16.10 inches. The drought really broke up at the beginning of April.
1465. Have you any purchased land on the run? Yes; 200 acres, of improvement purchases. The only cultivation I have is the garden. There is about one acre of lucerne which has grown well this season. I only put it in this year, and so far it seems to thrive.
- 1466-7. Have you much land that would be equally suited for cultivation? The land *per se* is suitable, but I cultivate this particular piece of land because of its vicinity to the water. All the land on the run is practically as good as that which I cultivate. The character of the soil here is a light loam with a good sub-soil.
1468. Leaving out the question of irrigation, have you a large amount of land as suitable for cultivation as the land on which your crop is now growing? Yes, I have only watered this crop once.
1469. What vegetables do you find thrive? Root crops, particularly turnips, parsnips, carrots, and beet. Potatoes seem to grow remarkably well, and also cabbage, lettuce, onions, and all kinds of vegetables and fruit trees—apricots and vines do the best, quinces do very well.
1470. Did you plough the land in which you sowed lucerne? Yes; not deep. I have never tried wheat or oats.
1471. How many horses and cattle have you on the run? 53 horses and 87 head of cattle, including calves. The horses and cattle thrive well except in drought.
1472. Have you cut any grass for ensilage? Yes, 35 tons. I have constructed two silos and a stack.
1473. Have you had any experience of it yet? No, but I believe it will be good. It has cost about 5s. or 6s. per ton to conserve it, and it will cost about 3s. to take it out of the pits and throw it to the sheep. I believe that we took off $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons of grass per acre. We took it where the grass was best.
1474. Do you intend to cultivate more lucerne under favourable circumstances? Yes.
1475. What is the most effective mode of destroying the rabbits that are left on the run under present circumstances?

ci cumstances? Carbon; and in summer time, when it is dry, fencing off the tanks with wire netting, so that the rabbits can come down to the water but cannot get out. We then kill the rabbits inside the netting. When we administer the carbon we pump it down the burrows with a machine and set fire to it.

K. A.
Turnour, Esq.
12 Oct., 1889.

1476. Do you know anything about the nature of the country along the proposed railway line? I know the surveyed line from here into Wilcannia; it is all flat country. It is flatter country than the Committee has travelled over.

1477. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you a good many tanks on your run? Yes, they cost me all round 1s. per yard.

1478. Is the character of the country about here similar to the country between here and Wilcannia? Yes, it is perhaps better as you go to the river.

1479. If the country were more generally known would a more favourable opinion be formed with regard to it? Yes, if people could live out here cheaper than they can at present.

1480. Is there a large area suitable for people who wish to make homes for themselves? They could make a living under suitable circumstances. I refer to small graziers particularly. I do not say anything about agriculture, because I know nothing about it.

1481. Is there any metal along the line suitable for ballast? I think so;—there is a granite formation.

1482. Has there been any attempt at artesian boring in the district? No. I have heard people say that we would probably get artesian water here, but I do not think it has ever been tested.

1483. Do you believe that the railway would be a great benefit to persons living within 50 miles of it? Yes, and I also believe that it would open up the country. At the same time I do not think the railway would compete with the river if it were navigable. We will never have a population out here unless people are able to get away their stock, in order to avoid the terrible risk of the loss of stock.

1484. There is a proposition to construct a railway from Werris Creek to Nyngan, which would bring you into immediate contact with New England;—do you think that this district would send sheep in times of drought to those districts? That would depend upon the cost of transit.

1485. Do you think that the proposed railway to Wilcannia would tap any of the trade of the Paroo country? I think it would tap a portion of it.

1486. Where do you send your wool to when the river is not navigable? We store it at Wilcannia. The dirtiest of it is scoured, and sent to Sydney for shipment by way of Nyngan.

1487. Is Nyngan your natural place for the despatch of wool when the river is not navigable? For scoured wool it is, because it is scoured nearer Nyngan.

1488. How long is your wool stored before you can get it away to the sea port? About three or four months. Up to this year I have not had it stored for a great length of time.

1489. How often during the time you have been here has the river been navigable? This is the first time for three seasons.

1490. If the railway were constructed to Wilcannia, and there were anything like fair rates, would you be likely to take advantage of that railway to send your wool to Sydney? There is no doubt I would. If there were a railway, sooner than store wool at Wilcannia with the uncertainty of the river, there is no doubt people would avail themselves of the railway. On the other hand, if there were a good river, no one would think of using the railway.

1491. If the railway were taken over to Broken Hill do you think there would be a good market there for the sale of fat stock? I do not know, but the chances are that there would be. We would be in a better position to supply that market than others, assuming that there were some conveniences for putting live stock into trucks. Assuming that Broken Hill will increase, and be available for us, that line would open up a new trade altogether for us. I believe that at present Broken Hill absorbs all the local surplus stock.

1492. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Where do you send fat stock to now? To Melbourne or Sydney—I have sent them to both places. I send to Melbourne by Deniliquin. It costs about 2s. 8d. to send them to the Melbourne market, and 2s. 4d. to the Sydney market.

1493. If you had to drive the stock only 20 miles to the railway, would not that be much cheaper than sending them to Melbourne? Yes.

1494. When the river is navigable, what time does it take to deliver your wool at Port Victor? About six weeks.

1495. Are there always vessels there ready to take your wool? Yes.

1496. If the railway were constructed so that your wool could be delivered in Sydney in one week, would it not pay you better to pay a little extra freight, so that the wool might reach the London market quicker? I think so. Although, if an owner were independent of the banks altogether, he might prefer to wait a week or two longer for his money, and send the wool by the cheapest way.

1497. Independently of that, is it not an advantage to get your wool to the first sale? I do not think so. I do not think the opening sales are the highest.

1498. Would the construction of this railway tend to make Sydney a larger port for the export of wool than it is at present? I have not the slightest doubt about that. It would not only intercept a lot of river traffic, but also a lot of traffic that goes to Balranald and Hay, which invariably goes to Echuca.

1499. In sending your wool by the river have you to store your wool for three months as a rule? Yes. There is a question which is of great importance,—that is, the fitful nature of the river when there is only a fresh coming down and it will only last for a certain time, the owners of the boats take advantage of it and they say "We will not take your wool unless you can give so much freight." It is only when there is a permanent river for a certain number of months that there is any competition, and you get your wool down cheap.

1500. Taking all these things into consideration, do you not think that if the railway were constructed that a very large percentage of the wool that now goes by the river would go by rail? Yes.

1501. Even if an extra rate were charged by the railway? Knowing how uncertain the river is, if the railway would take the wool at a relatively reasonable price, I do not think people would store their wool. But if there is a certain river for months to come, I do not think the railway would be in it.

1502. Is there any difference in the freight charged by the vessels which leave Sydney and Adelaide for London? I believe there is a difference in favor of Sydney, but I do not know.

1503. *Chairman.*] What has been your experience as regards the healthiness of this climate? It cannot be beaten.

MURTEE, MONDAY, 14 OCTOBER, 1889.

[The Sectional Committee met at Murtee Run, at 1 p.m.]

Present:—

The HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).	
HENRY COPELAND, Esq.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. Henry Roach made the following statement:—

Mr.
H. Roach.
14 Oct., 1889.

1504. I have been a shepherd on this and other runs in the district for the last ten years. The seasons are the only drawback to the prosperity of the country. During the drought of 1888, 10,000 sheep were lost by starvation on Murtee run. On the adjoining run of Belleru the loss in the same year amounted to 55,000 sheep. Near my hut a good well has been sunk to a depth of 40 feet. There has always been about 6 feet of water in the well, which can be pumped out in about an hour and a half. If the well is allowed to rest for an hour or so afterwards the water regains its former level. The water is of excellent quality. In the 8-mile paddock on Murtee there are several lagoons which have never been dry since the drought of 1885. They did not even go dry in the drought of 1888. With proper conservation permanent water could be kept on the run. All the wool from the run is sent to Melbourne for shipment, and I believe the same is the case with most of the runs in this locality, as most of the owners are either Melbourne or Adelaide people. The wool is stored until the river rises and becomes navigable. In some cases the delay extends over a very long period. I do not think there would be much use for a railway here, as after the wool season is over there would be little or no freight. If the Darling were locked the freight could go to Bourke, and thence to Sydney. The owner of Murtee run has cut a stack of natural grass upon one or two occasions, but the horses did not seem to care for the feed. We have never cut the grass for the purpose of feeding sheep. I do not know of many places on the run where a well could be sunk with such good results as in the case before referred to.

WILCANNIA, TUESDAY, 15 OCTOBER, 1889.

[The Sectional Committee met in the Court-house, Wilcannia, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

The HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).	
HENRY COPELAND, Esq.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Ormond C. MacDougall, Esq., Mayor of Wilcannia, sworn, and examined:—

O. C.
MacDougall,
Esq.
15 Oct., 1889.

1505. *Chairman.*] What position do you occupy? I am Mayor of Wilcannia, and will have been two years in that office next February. I have been an alderman for three years. I have been a resident of the district for twenty-three years, but I have been away at intervals.

1506. What business do you carry on? Stock and station agent.

1507. How does the wool and the bulk of the other produce of the district go to port? It is taken by river when the river is open. At other times, since the Broken Hill railway has been made, it is conveyed to Broken Hill. When the river is open the goods always go by the river. On some of the stations they keep the wool rather than send it to Broken Hill.

1508. What is the freight from here down to the port by the river? To Morgan, the nearest railway station on the South Australian border, it is 25s. to 30s. per ton. This is exceptionally low, and the steamers are not paying expenses. I do not know what the railway freight is, but Morgan is about 100 miles from Adelaide.

1509. Is there very great inconvenience when the river is not navigable? Yes.

1510. How long has wool been kept here for want of transit? Something over two years—that was exceptional. I have known it to be frequently kept for twelve months. As much as can be stored is stored in the town, and the rest is stored on the station.

1511. Does not that cause great loss of interest to the grazier? Yes; and a certain amount of risk, too.

1512. If a railway were constructed from Nyngan here, do you think it would always be availed of for the transit of wool? It is impossible for me to say, but I have heard several of the station people say that they would always avail themselves of the railway, as there would be no re-shipping and re-loading, but it would be straight ahead work, and they would always be able to get away their wool, and save insurance.

1513. What is the population of Wilcannia at present? Between 1,000 and 1,200. The population has been at a stand-still for about three years. Prior to 1884 it was an increasing population.

1514. What is the reason of its remaining at a stand-still? On account of the Land Bill no improvements were going on on the stations.

1515. If the railway were made what would be the chief commodities which would be sent from here to Sydney? Wool would be the principal. Sheep would also be sent; probably, if irrigation were carried out, fruit would also be sent.

1516. In times of drought would live stock be sent by the railway? Yes, in very large numbers. It would be hard to say what number of sheep would have been saved during the last drought. The loss of stock here was then very great. One station, only 70 miles away, lost about 32,000 sheep out of 42,000.

1517. What do you think of the fitness of this district for agricultural purposes? With irrigation, it is suited for agriculture. The soil is good enough to grow anything.

1518. Where land has been watered does it bear out that statement? Yes.

1519. Has the district been tested for the growth of various fruits? Yes, they thrive very well. Grapes, oranges, peaches, lemons, and apricots do well. The soil is very good for the growth of lucerne. Wheat has only been grown for hay, and it has been very successful under irrigation.

1520.

O. C.
MacDougall,
Esq.
15 Oct., 1889.

1520. Has irrigation been carried out very extensively? No.
1521. Has any successful attempt been made to carry out artesian boring? Not close to this place.
1522. How often has the river been closed to navigation during your residence here? That has been the rule, not the exception. The river has been sometimes up for three or four months, or six months. I have known it to be navigable for twelve months.
1523. In a season like this, when there is abundance of natural grass, has any of it been saved as ensilage with success? Yes. They have only gone in for ensilage this year. At Nettalie station they have 200 tons of ensilage.
1524. How do the people view the present Land Act? They think it is a great improvement on the last one. I think advantage will be taken of the present Act to make improvements.
1525. Do you think that homestead leases will be taken advantage of? I do not think there will be much settlement under those leases until there is better access to market. The want of a market is the great difficulty.
1526. Is there any probability of auriferous deposits being found within 50 miles of this place? There are prospects here. On the Mount Browne road, 100 miles away, there are favourable reports as to the prospects.
1527. Is the building stone which is used in this town obtained in large quantities here? Yes, there is any quantity of it 3 miles from the town.
1528. Is there any timber available for railway sleepers here? No; there are no ironbark forests. The largest timber are the gum trees grown on the river.
1529. Is there any ballast to be obtained between here and Broken Hill? Yes.
1530. Where do the people in this town generally get their stores from? From Melbourne, I think.
1531. Would not a great deal of that trade continue if you had a railway from Sydney? I do not think so. People would be able to get their goods at such short notice from Sydney that it would pay them better to get their goods there.
1532. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What price is paid for the carriage of goods from here to Broken Hill? I think the lowest price is about £9 per ton, and up to £20.
1533. Since the railway was opened at Broken Hill have the squatters stored their wool? Yes. That is on account of the high charge for cartage from here to Broken Hill.
1534. If this railway were constructed, do you think the squatters would utilise it to carry their wool to Broken Hill instead of to Sydney? The stations around here would certainly go to Sydney. Those nearer to Broken Hill might go there, although, even in that case, it would depend upon the rate of freight.
1535. Has much wool been sent this season from Broken Hill to here? No; but I believe some is going now, because some people are afraid that they cannot catch the river.
1536. How far west of this place does wool come to the river instead of going to Broken Hill? From Cuthawarra, 50 miles from here, to the river. I cannot speak about the others.
1537. Are the runs about here fully stocked? They are not half stocked at present, owing principally to the late drought.
1538. If the railway were constructed would it tend to increase the stocking of the runs, seeing that the squatters would be able to remove their stock in case of drought? Yes.
1539. Do you think the station owners about here could have reduced their losses by preserving food in abundant seasons by making hay or using silos? I do not think they could go in for ensilage or hay to a sufficient extent. A station with 200,000 or 300,000 sheep would require a great deal of ensilage.
1540. Would you be surprised to hear that there are plains between here and Cobar where there is more than one ton per acre of natural feed which could be made into hay? I think there are very few places where one ton to the acre could be obtained.
1541. *Mr. Copeland.*] What is the total value of rateable property in Wilcannia? The estimated capital value is £206,480;—it has decreased of late years. The total amount of rates collected comes to nearly £2,480. We get on fairly well in collecting the rates. The town is financially sound, and the corporation is sound also.
1542. Have you borrowed much? We have £8,000 for the Government water supply, which cost us £10,500.
1543. What is the acreage of the common? About 22,000 acres.
1544. Is there any demand for land about the town for the purposes of cultivation? No, on account of the population having decreased, and on account of all the work having been stopped. A good deal of traffic has gone to Broken Hill, but I think the principal cause of the depression is the Land Act of 1884.
1545. When wool is sent by the river, en route to Sydney, where does it leave the river? Probably at Goolwa.
1546. Is there any tallow or hides sent away from here in addition to the wool? Yes; the quantity of hides would not be a great deal. There is a lot of sheepskins in addition to the wool. I believe that a lot of rabbit skins and kangaroo skins have been sent away.
1547. Do you think any business would be done in freezing meat if a railway were made, and there were a freezing establishment at Wilcannia? Yes.
1548. Would it be any benefit to the town if the river were locked at various places? Yes, there is no doubt about it—it would benefit the whole district. Some few years ago an attempt was made to form a company for that purpose.
1549. Was it thought that the river could be maintained in a navigable state all the year with the aid of locks? Yes.
1550. In that case would not the river obtain the whole of the traffic? I suppose so.
1551. Would it not be useless to make a railway to Sydney, and to lock the river at the same time? I do not suppose that both would pay. I do not know what traffic would be obtained from Broken Hill—but I suppose there would be a good deal.
1552. Has there been any expression of opinion from the Municipal Council or ratepayers as to the construction of this railway? The expression of opinion was very much in favour of the railway. Statistics have been prepared at various times, and the people of Wilcannia are pretty well sick of asking for the railway.
1553. How many months out of the year is the river unnavigable? Sometimes we have no river for twelve months—sometimes for a longer period.

- O. C. MacDougall, Esq.
15 Oct., 1889.
1554. In ordinary seasons how long does the river last? On an average, I do not think the river is open two months in the year—taking one year with another.
1555. Prior to the establishment of Broken Hill—when the river was not navigable—where were goods sent to and obtained from? Even previous to the construction of a railway to Broken Hill, goods were carted from Kooaringa, 100 miles from Adelaide.
1556. Is there any ore sent from Broken Hill to Wilcannia? No.
1557. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Is the river Darling entirely dependent on rain in the country through which it runs? Yes.
1558. In an average year is it navigable all the year round? No; it is not true, as stated by a correspondent in an Adelaide paper, that the river usually has three rises—one due to the tropical rains in the early part of January to April, the second from August to September, and the third about Christmas time. That is certainly not a correct statement of the condition of the Darling River in an average year.
1559. What outlying places trade with Wilcannia? Milparinka, Tibooburra, and Mount Browne; there is also a great deal of Paroo trade. I think that the railway would tap the trade of those outlying places.
1560. Is this an important point for the overland stock trade from Queensland? Yes, it is a regular centre. Nearly all the stock going to Victoria come here.
1561. Would any of that stock be diverted to Sydney by a railway? The principal stock that comes here is cattle. I do not suppose that many of these would go by railway. No doubt large numbers of sheep would go from here to Sydney by rail.
- 1561½. During drought would there be a considerable trade in fodder to this district? Yes.
1562. If the railway were taken on to Broken Hill would it serve to carry fat stock to the population there? I do not think so. I think there is enough fat stock in the neighbourhood of Broken Hill to supply the wants of the population there, as well as the prospective population. I think the greater part of the traffic would be all the other way—to Sydney.
1563. Where is the ore coming from which is now being shipped on the river here? I think that is a secret; I believe it comes from some place within 50 miles of Wilcannia.
1564. Have the tradesmen here to keep up a large supply of stores, for fear of the river falling? Yes, very large supplies, and they therefore lose interest on their money.
1565. If a railway were running to Sydney would not they be likely to use that railway instead of keeping large supplies on hand? Yes; I should think so.
1566. *Chairman.*] If the railway were constructed how many times a week do you think a train would serve the requirements of the district? About twice a week.
1567. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Suppose the river were navigable from here to Bourke by means of a lock, do you think Bourke would be utilised to send wool to Sydney? Yes; it might.
1568. How far is it to Bourke by the river from here? About 400 miles—220 miles by the road.
1569. Is there a good deal of wool produced between here and Bourke? Yes.
1570. Would not Bourke be then used as a centre? The people here would use it in preference to sending it to Broken Hill.

Michael John Darcy, Esq., Sub-Collector of Customs, Wilcannia, sworn, and examined:—

- M. J. Darcy, Esq.
15 Oct., 1889.
1571. *Chairman.*] What office do you hold? Sub-collector of Customs, stationed at Wilcannia. I have been here a little over thirteen years.
1572. What is your system of collecting Customs? The only figures I can give you are the actual collections. The export and import values are not taken here. They are all taken at the Border station. The following is a statement of the Customs collections at Wilcannia for a series of years:—

	£	s.	d.
From 22nd August to 31st December, 1876	1,978	14	4
For year ending 31st December, 1877	5,604	10	6
" " " 1878	16,074	7	7
" " " 1879	11,815	0	11
" " " 1880	11,275	18	8
" " " 1881	13,394	13	2
" " " 1882	16,390	14	2
" " " 1883	13,846	13	11
" " " 1884	14,282	1	0
" " " 1885	11,311	10	6
" " " 1886	13,283	0	5
" " " 1887	21,378	19	2
" " " 1888	10,535	12	9
March quarter, 1889	1,337	0	3
June " " 	2,250	15	8
Sept. " " 	5,969	18	7

9,557 14 6

1573. I notice from this return that in 1887 the collections were very high? Yes; that was the largest amount ever collected here.
1574. What was the reason for that? The *ad valorem* duties had a great deal to do with that, and it was an open river all the year.
1575. What is the reason of the fluctuations in the collections from year to year? Principally the state of the river. When the river is not navigable, and supplies have been used up, people have to live upon what they can get. All improvements cease, and the trade is taken to other places. If it is a bad season they cannot export at all, and they only import what is necessary to keep them alive.
1576. What is the tendency of public opinion here with regard to the railway? It is that if we had a railway the people would take advantage of it on account of its certainty. Before the present rise, which took place in June, we had a dry river for nearly eighteen months. You could ride across the river in some places quite dry. Four or five years ago we had a long drought.
1577. When the river is in a good navigable state, what is the average time for getting goods from here to the nearest railway station? Nothing goes near the New South Wales railway; it either goes to Morgan, taking six or eight days to get there, while other steamers turn round at Wentworth and go up the

the Murray to Echuca. It takes a fortnight to get to Morgan if there are stoppages. It is about three to one to go to Bourke by river as compared with the road. There is not much sent up here by the river to Bourke. Hardly anything has been done to improve the river from here to Bourke.

1578. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How far up the river do the steamers go? As far as Walgett sometimes. A great deal of the trade that is stationed above Bourke would, of course, go by way of Bourke. Goods go up to Louth for some of the stations from here, but that is rare.

1579. From what distance do stations send their wool into Wilcannia from the eastward of this place? 70 or 80 miles. Mount Manara is about the farthest. They take their station stores from Wilcannia when they send their wool in here. The stores come from South Australia or Victoria.

1580. Do you think that this part of the country is financially a portion of Melbourne, geographically a portion of South Australia, and politically a portion of New South Wales? Yes; but lately one of the merchants has been importing largely from Sydney.

1581. What is the cost of carriage between here and Morgan? It depends on the state of the river—just now it is very cheap. If it is a low river the freights are raised. The railway freight from Morgan to Adelaide is about 25s. per ton.

1582. Is the railway to Bourke losing the amount of freight which is carried on the river here? Yes; it is a rare thing to see a boat pass here. Before the Bourke railway reached Byrock the steamers were laden for Bourke whenever there was a probability of their getting up there, but traffic has almost ceased between here and Bourke since the railway was made. I do not think much traffic comes here from Louth. I think for fully 100 miles from Bourke the trade is Sydney trade.

1583. Do you think that if a railway were made here it would cause the trade to be centralised more in Sydney than it is at present? Yes. Since the Silverton and Broken Hill district was opened it has taken a lot of trade away from this place. The following telegrams from Wentworth, which have been sent to me by the Customs' officer stationed there, show the amount of trade which passes up and down the Darling River. [*Vide Appendix.*]

Mr. James R. Holding, Post and Telegraph Master, sworn, and examined:—

1584. *Chairman.*] What office do you hold? Post and Telegraph Master. I have been in Wilcannia for two or three years.

1585. Have you any data as to the business done at the Post Office? I think 1888 is a fair average year. The revenue for that year was as follows:—The sale of stamps, £1,720; telegraph revenue, £1,325; money order and savings bank business, which includes revenue and public moneys, £16,350. The gross total, taking it approximately, is £19,425. The business here has been larger than that in previous years. Wilcannia is now feeling the depression which is general throughout the Colony, and I do not think that the business this year is equal to the business done last year. The sale of stamps extends only to my own postal district. I do not supply other offices except Milparinka, which is not included in the figures I have given.

1586. Was the year 1887 a prosperous year in your Department? Yes? I believe it was to a considerable extent. Although my residence in Wilcannia only extends over a short time, I have known the whole of this district from 1865. I have seen it in good and bad seasons. Previous to coming here I was seven years at Menindie—that was prior to the finding of silver in the Barrier Ranges.

1587. Is this a district which quickly revives in good seasons? Yes. It is very much depressed by drought, and it is proportionately raised by good seasons.

1588. What is the proportion of bad seasons to good seasons? It seems almost three bad to one of good seasons. The duration is very variable. There may be three years of indifferent seasons, and there may be one and a half to two years of good seasons. I think it would be safer to speak generally, and say it is very erratic. I have taken observations for Mr. Russell, and also for water conservation.

1589. What is the record of the rain gauge? It is as follows: Rainfall taken by J. R. Holding, Postmaster, Wilcannia* :—

1873.....	11 inches 4 points.	1881.....	10 inches 82 points.
1874.....	11 " 22 "	1882.....	8 " 35 "
1875.....	11 " 47 "	1883.....	6 " 86 "
1876.....	5 " 65 "	1884.....	7 " 65 "
1877.....	12 " 20 "	1885.....	18 " 37 "
1878.....	12 " 22 "	1886.....	12 " 0 "
1879.....	14 " 30 "	1887.....	21 " 99 "
1880.....	10 " 80 "	1888.....	3 " 22 "
1889, to September 30th, 10 inches 60 points.			

1590. Are the deposits in the Savings Bank pretty regular? Considering that this is not a weekly wage part of the Colony I think they are fairly regular.

1591. Have the withdrawals been fewer lately than before? The withdrawals between the last twelve or fifteen months have been rather heavier than they were previously. I think the depression caused people to withdraw money not previously touched.

1592-3. Do you notice any revival now owing to the good season? Very slightly; the people have hardly recovered yet. It is considered that the cessation of improvements on the stations, and doing away with the rabbit business, has had a good deal to do with reducing the amount of money in the district.

1594. What do you think of this district for agricultural purposes? I think it is excellent. I have just come from a garden which has been in existence for the last twenty years, or more, at Wentworth. They grow magnificent oranges, lemons, sugar-cane, hops, and all the fruit which it is possible to grow, with the exception of a few fruits liable to damage by frost.

1595. What kind of grain do they grow there? At present, along the Darling, there are crops of wheat, barley, and oats. They have been grown almost entirely by rainfall. The average yield will be from 1½ to 2 tons per acre of hay. The soil has not been manured or irrigated.

1596. Is the fruit irrigated? Yes. Vegetables grow to an unlimited extent, but they require watering and constant attention. The fertility of the soil on the Darling is remarkable. It is very easy to clear and cultivate. The only difficulty in a good season like this is to keep down the natural herbage in gardens.

1597. *Mr. Hurley.*] From what you have observed elsewhere, do you think that cultivation could be carried on round Wilcannia by means of irrigation? Yes. 1598.

* NOTE (on Revision) :—To 1887 the records are from Mr. Russell's book; for 1887, 1888, and 1889 they are my own.

- Mr. J. R. Holding.
15 Oct., 1889.
1598. If people apply themselves to agriculture and gardening, would there be any need to import produce here? Most decidedly not.
1599. Why do the people show such apathy? There has been no encouragement given in any shape or form, by legislation or otherwise, for such a thing. Free selection seems to have given rise more to sheep-farming than to anything else.
1600. Has land monopoly shut out that class of persons? Yes, I think so.
1601. Is it not more likely that people have not been educated to those industries? Yes, probably that has been it more than anything else. I know many instances where intelligent men with a knowledge of the subject have done well by cultivating the land. I have been from Wilcannia to Wentworth, a distance of 600 miles by water, and I have seen cultivation at various places along the river, both gardens and cultivation paddocks. Along the river in places there is grass from 3 to 4 feet high in its natural state, and I have seen thistles and marsh-mallows 6 feet high.
1602. Have the German population applied themselves particularly to fruit-growing and gardening? No; they are more particularly Scotch and English—the Scotch first.
1603. *Mr. Copeland.*] What is the rainfall at Wentworth? I think it is very much the same as our own, an average of about 9 inches a year. The rainfall is in such small quantities that it does not do the good it would if we had the inches divided into regular falls.
1604. Do you think the people at Wentworth labour under as great difficulties in raising crops as you do here? No, we are at a great disadvantage, in having far less water to work upon. Irrigation is dependent on the river. Crops are being raised all along the river by the natural rainfall this year.
1605. If they produce crops there with 9 inches of rain, should you not be able to produce crops here? They do not do so. Nine inches of rain will not do. There is more irrigation done at Wentworth than at any township in the west, as far as I can see.
1606. Then they do depend upon irrigation, and not upon the natural-rainfall? Yes; they have to depend upon irrigation. Crops are only grown without irrigation in a good season like the present one.
1607. What number of failures of crops do they have there through want of rain? I should say that there is one good crop in three generally along the river from Wilcannia to Wentworth.
1608. Is that remunerative? They hardly look to it for remuneration; it is grown more as an extra.
1609. How is it that farther eastward—for instance about Cobar and even westward of that—they can get three good crops out of four by depending on the natural rainfall without irrigation? I do not know how that is, unless it is that our district is very much drier, and that the soil is less retentive of moisture.
1610. What number of letters have been posted here since last year? The approximate numbers for 1888 are as follows:—Newspapers, 47,361; packets, 6,396; letters, 122,859; total, 176,616. Those are the numbers posted here and sent away. I cannot state how many were received here.
1611. Is that an increase or decrease on the previous year? I think it is a decrease. Since Broken Hill has been opened it has diverted a large amount of traffic from this part of the district.
1612. In which direction do the mails come? My mail routes are Broken Hill, Booligal, Bourke, Menindie, Wanaaring, Milparinka. Sydney letters go and are received by Bourke.
1613. If a railway were constructed, would there be a considerable saving of time in the carrying of mails? I can hardly say. There ought to be. Our present average time is four days to Sydney and Melbourne, and rather less than three to Adelaide. The mileage of these routes is 1,080 approximately.
1614. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you believe it would be possible for a farmer to make a living here if he had a good piece of ground without irrigation? I am quite positive he could not without irrigation.
1615. Is there not a time when hay is at a very high price? Yes; but that is in a bad season when there is no rain, and the river is closed to navigation.
1616. What is the highest price? Chaff has been £35 to £40 a ton.
1617. Could a man, without irrigation, grow one good crop out of three? Yes.
1618. Would not that pay him remarkably well if he could get an average of £5 per ton for chaff? Yes; if it cost him nothing to grow the hay in a good season.
1619. If he could get £15 for it in a bad season, that would leave him an average for three years of £5 per ton;—would not that pay a man remarkably well? Yes; it would pay him, supposing the stuff did not deteriorate in the meantime. Here it is liable to deterioration.
1620. Are there any means of irrigation besides the river? Yes; the river does not affect the wells apparently.
1621. Then, a certain amount of irrigation for 20 or 30 acres on a farm could be carried on by that means? Yes; I have always been of that opinion, but irrigation by means of wells has not been fairly tried yet.
1622. Is any portion of the common fit for cultivation? Yes; I think the most of it is.
1623. Would it be a great advantage to the town if half of that common were resumed and thrown open to selection in areas of from 50 to 250 acres? It would be a great benefit to the district.
1624. If a railway were constructed to Broken Hill, would it be possible for the farmers to find a good market for their produce? Yes; but I do not think that they would require to go there for a market. There would be a better market towards the Queensland Border, where they cannot grow anything.
1625. If the river were locked, so as to make it navigable to Bourke, it would be an advantage? Yes; and it would be a great assistance to irrigation, ideas respecting which are getting very prevalent. The greater part of the land from here to Bourke could be applied to agriculture. Although in some things the bad seasons do affect the growth of vegetation, I have not found that they affect it to any great extent. During the last drought there was a crop sold to a station for horse feed, at £15 an acre, of wheat or oats. It was grown by irrigation, 5 miles from Wilcannia.
1626. Is lucerne grown on the banks of the river? At Murtee station, 7 miles from here, I believe there is a large crop of it. Just below Menindie, there are 8 or 9 acres of it growing there. They have a steam-plant there for pumping water. At another station they have a centrifugal pump, and people there were preparing to plant lucerne. The soil here is well adapted for lucerne growing, I believe.
1627. What mail routes have you from here to Sydney? *Via* Bourke, Booligal, and Broken Hill.
1628. Which is the most expeditious? *Via* Bourke in the ordinary seasons. It takes about three days and a fraction. The mail goes twice a week. The mail goes to Broken Hill twice a week, and to Melbourne, *via* Booligal, three times a week. I have a total of seventy-nine mails each week in and out. The Melbourne and Sydney mails are the heaviest, but I cannot say which is the largest.

Mr. Henry V. Jackson sworn and examined:—

1628½. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? A commission agent, coach agent, and editor of the *Western Grazier*. I am agent for Cobb & Co., and Wright, Heaton, & Co.. I have been in the western district nine and a half years. I was living at Nyngan for six and a half years. I was at Nyngan about two and a half years ago when Mr. Simpson was surveying the Cobar line. At that time I was opposed to the railway to Cobar. A great number of people in Nyngan were likewise opposed to the railway to Cobar. We were of opinion that it would depreciate our property at Nyngan, for the reason that the railway would do away with the team traffic between Cobar and Nymagee and Nyngan. I think there are some people over there who are of the same opinion to-day. I notice that a statement was made before the Committee at Nyngan, that the traffic in coaches between Cobar and Nyngan had fallen so low that the coaches did not pay. The competition on that road has become so severe that the subsidies have become too low to pay. There are likewise other vehicles continually running between those places conveying passengers and parcels. The traffic must have been considerable to enable those men to compete as they have done. When I came to Wilcannia, two and a half years ago, the town was fairly busy. There was a good deal of traffic on most of the coach roads, especially from here to Broken Hill. I should reckon that the light traffic represented by passengers and parcels on all the coach lines in and out of Wilcannia at that time amounted to something very considerable per annum. It has fallen off since, but I do not think I am at liberty to mention any amount.

Mr. H. V.
Jackson.
15 Oct., 1889.

1629. What lines do you represent? Wilcannia to Bourke, Wilcannia to Mount Browne, and for some time I represented from Wilcannia to Hungerford. Other agents represent the lines from here to Wentworth, to Hay, and to Menindie.

1630. Which way do passengers from Sydney come here? Either from Bourke or from Hay. The traffic is pretty evenly divided between the two places.

1631. How many miles is it from here to Hay? 250 or 260 miles, and 230 miles from here to Bourke. We bring a considerable number of parcels by the coaches.

1632. If this proposed line were constructed, would the passengers by the Hay and Bourke coach routes be carried by that railway? Yes.

1633. Do you think that that passenger traffic would be an important item in the revenue returns of the railway? Yes; there would not only be the right through traffic, but also a great deal of in and out traffic between here and Cobar, and also between here and Broken Hill.

1634. Do Wright, Heaton & Co. do much forwarding business here? No, very little. Prior to the railway being opened to Broken Hill there was considerable traffic between here and Bourke in dry seasons; but the road is so much longer than the road between here and Broken Hill, and the cost of carriage is so much higher to Bourke, that the traffic has gone away altogether.

1635. What is the average freight per ton from here to Broken Hill? In a bad season it goes up to £20 a ton and more. I do not know what it is now, but it probably goes down as low as £4 per ton.

1636. Is there very much traffic between here and Broken Hill in merchandise? Not in a good season; there only is when the river is down. There is not much imported here from Adelaide; the bulk of the trade is done with Sydney or Melbourne.

1637. Is all the trade at Broken Hill with Adelaide? No; a considerable quantity is obtained from Sydney and Melbourne, but it is sent to Adelaide to be forwarded—that used to come at one time *via* Bourke.

1638. Do you think that the construction of the proposed line would open out the district, and that it would ultimately pay working expenses and interest on the outlay? In the first instance, I think the construction of the line should be a question of doing the greatest good to the greatest number. The railway will undoubtedly effect that object. Any opposition to the railway is probably a selfish opposition. The construction of a railway promotes settlement effectually.

1639. Do you think that it would induce this portion of the Colony to become more attached to New South Wales, instead of having Victorian proclivities? So far as that sentiment goes, I do not think there is such a large amount of antagonism to New South Wales amongst the people here as has been represented. It may be the case in a large centre like Broken Hill, where there is a large number of Victorians and South Australians; but among the general body of the people here, and the pastoralists, I do not think that feeling prevails.

1640. Is it your opinion that if this railway were constructed it would be an immense benefit, not only to the district, but to the Colony at large, and that it is a national undertaking? Yes; that is exactly the light in which I look at it. Although, for the first few years the receipts from the railway would not be as large as we would like, it must be remembered that there would be large increase of land revenue owing to increased settlement. I am perfectly satisfied that there would be an increase of settlement. We have proof of that in the case of the Bourke railway, where settlement has increased all along the line.

1641. Could the district be sufficiently served by locking the river up to Bourke, instead of making the railway? That would be a great boon to the district; but it would hardly do what you anticipate.

1642. If the locking were done in addition to making the railway, what would you think of the proposal? That would be still a greater boon. I would point out that in the traffic I have mentioned, the traffic by coach is a very small item; a great amount of traffic is done by teams, waggons, buggies. From this town alone a large trade is done with Mount Browne district and others. Mount Browne is a large mining district.

1643. Would the construction of a railway give an impetus to mining? Yes; there is no doubt it would.

1644. Would it be any advantage to this district to carry out the railway only so far as Cobar? I do not think so. To be of any use it would have to come to Wilcannia.

1645. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What are the opinions of the people here with regard to this proposal? Public opinion is generally very much in favor of the railway. Any opposition to it arises from other causes, not connected with the question of the line paying or not paying.

1646. Would this railway run through resumed or leasehold areas between here and Broken Hill? I cannot tell; but that would not make any difference. The resumed areas that would be open for settlement would not be so far distant from the railway line, as not to come within its scope, so far as getting to market is concerned.

1647. Do you think that some of the resumed areas, 20 or even 50 miles from the line, would be likely to be settled upon? Certainly, if the country is good enough.

1648.

- Mr. H. V. Jackson.
15 Oct., 1889.
1648. Are you aware that the pastoralists in dividing their runs have chosen the better half for the leasehold area? Yes.
1649. From which city, Sydney, Melbourne, or Adelaide, do the commercial travellers come? I have seen more Sydney commercial travellers here than any others. I know that because I have been store-keeping myself.
1650. Is that an indication that trade would naturally gravitate towards Sydney? Certainly.
1651. Would this railway intercept the north-east Darling trade and take it to Sydney? Yes; it would take a great deal of it. It would not take some of the Paroo trade. There is a portion of the Paroo trade that lies at an angle nearer to Bourke than to Wilcannia. The railway would intercept a large amount of trade which now goes to Adelaide and Victoria. It would do a large amount of trade in the corner of this Colony where the Queensland and South Australian borders meet in the direction of Fort Grey.
1652. Do you think that hotel-keepers, storekeepers, and station managers would prefer safe and reliable communication with Sydney to the cheaper and precarious traffic by the river? I think so. It would pay them much better to pay a few shillings or pounds more to get goods from Sydney quickly, and so keep a small stock on hand, instead of having to lay in a stock of £25,000 worth, perhaps, in order to provide against a drought.
1653. What would be the effect of placing a river duty on the steamers coming up? We are opposed to that decidedly at present, because the river being so uncertain, and the Government not doing anything to make it navigable, it would be unfair now to place charges upon what is our only natural highway.
1654. How far does the influence of Wilcannia extend with regard to wool and stores? It extends a great distance across to the southern corner of Queensland. Some of the stores here load teams for places very distant from here.
1655. Is that trade likely to be secured by this railway? Yes; it would be increased.
1656. *Chairman.*] You have had a long experience of the Cobar and Nyngan district as well as this district. What has been your experience as to the prosperity of those who have come to those districts, especially as small holders or farmers? There are great differences in the quality of the men who settle on the land. During the six years I resided at Nyngan a number of selectors settled there, and most of them were able to get along very fairly. In two or three instances they did very well, especially when they went in for fruit growing. I knew two instances where fruit growing proved very successful.
1657. Notwithstanding the difficulty of access to market, do you think that good plodding men could get on very well? Yes. The difficulty here is that when you take up land the river is a very uncertain means of access to market, and a man who is only able to take up 100 acres probably has not sufficient capital to enable him to buy a plant to irrigate the land sufficiently.
1658. Do you regard Sydney as the best market for wool and other produce? Yes; it is cheaper than any other port.

Mr. George H. Doake sworn and examined:—

- Mr. G. H. Doake.
15 Oct., 1889.
1659. *Mr. Copeland.*] What business do you carry on? A general business—general stores, and we are forwarding agents for our customers.
1660. Can you give us a general idea of the amount of goods forwarded at Wilcannia during the present and previous years? The inward tonnage to Wilcannia has been 9,600 tons on the river alone. The outward tonnage from Wilcannia has been 8,900 tons—that is since June of the present year up to the present date.
1661. Has that been the period during which the river has been navigable this year? Yes.
1662. Do these figures include wool and all other articles? Yes.
1663. Can you give the Committee any figures for previous years? I can for the years 1881 to 1883. The outward and inward tonnage of Wilcannia during those three years amounted in round numbers to 209,000 tons. The value of that tonnage was £3,606,000. During the years 1881, 1882, 1883 the imports from South Australia were 77,158 tons, of the value of £1,049,346. The imports from Victoria during the same period were 35,020 tons, of the value of £233,785. This was a total tonnage of 102,178 tons, of the value of £1,283,131. The exports during the same period were: South Australia, 74,497 tons, value £1,990,441; to Victoria, 32,467 tons, value £322,596.
1664. During that period was there any business connection with Sydney at all? Apparently very little, because it is not given in the returns. I have been doing some business with Sydney since I started here. I can scarcely say what proportion. I would like to do business with Sydney, because it is decidedly the best and cheapest market.
1665. If the railway were constructed from Nyngan to this place, do you think that business would go in the direction of Sydney more than it has done hitherto? Most unquestionably. Sydney offers every advantage.
1666. Is it your principal business to supply the surrounding squatters? Yes; and the district generally.
1667. How much agricultural produce comes here during the year? The quantity is very considerable, but I do not know how much. There is practically no fodder produced here. The chief fodder consumed here consists of chaff, oats, bran, and pollard. Some people use wheat. A great deal of that fodder comes from Victoria, and a large amount from South Australia also.
1668. What is the general through rate of freight? It varies from £4 10s. to £7 10s. per ton. In the case of measurement goods it has cost me as high as £10 per ton. That is from Melbourne, Adelaide, and Sydney.
1669. Do goods come through for about the same rate? Melbourne and Sydney cost a little more—about 12s. per ton in the case of bulk and heavy goods. With measurement goods it comes expensive. The dues at Adelaide are very heavy; they are worse than at Melbourne; and Melbourne is four times worse than at Sydney. I refer to harbour dues.
1670. If a railway were built do you think that you would get your goods from Sydney at a much lower rate? No, we would not expect a lower rate. When the railway Commissioners were here we gave them an average rate of about £6 per ton as being fairly satisfactory.
1671. Would you be satisfied to pay the same rate at present, provided you were sure of getting your goods

goods when you required them? Yes, it would be very much better, as it would save interest on the value of the stock. We have to keep double the stock which we would keep if we had communication with a sure market.

Mr.
G. H. Donke.
15 Oct., 1889.

1672. From which port do you get the cheapest freight—Sydney, Melbourne, or Adelaide—for wool to England and goods back from England? I should certainly say from Sydney, because the tonnage is much larger there, and the expenses of shipping there are less than at any other port.

1673. Do you think that if a railway were constructed there would be an increase in the population of the district by homestead leases being taken up? I think common experience proves that wherever railways are made, and facilities are given for communication, increased settlement always takes place. I do not think that can be doubted for a moment.

1674. Do you anticipate that Wilcannia would become restored to its former prosperity if the railway were built? Wilcannia could never recover the entire scope of her first business, which included country away into Queensland, a great deal of which is now supplied from Bourke. But so far as the vast country surrounding here is concerned, and the south-west of the Queensland country, there is no doubt the trade there is very large, and it must vastly increase, and there is no doubt that that business would still flow to Wilcannia. When the river is open we still send stores right into Queensland.

1675. If a railway were constructed here, do you think that the people generally who are situated like yourself, would utilise the railway, not from patriotism, but because it would be most convenient and most profitable to themselves? Certainly, and on no other grounds.

1676. If the river were locked at various points would it not be only in accordance with human nature for people to utilise the cheaper mode of carriage by river instead of using the railway? People would naturally take advantage of the lowest rates, but the scheme you refer to would involve the locking of the Murray as well as the river Darling.

1677. Suppose you had a railway at your door and you were a squatter, would you not prefer to send the wool by water instead of by rail? I do not think that the difference in the rates between the two modes of transit would be very great after you take into consideration the heavy charges for insurance on the river, and shipping, and transhipping. I think an answer to your question is furnished by the experience in connection with the Bourke railway. Bourke district is quite as open to the influence of the river as we are, but it is a rare thing to see a bale of wool coming down from there.

1678. If the river were locked from here to Bourke so as to give a depth of 7 or 9 feet of water, would not that answer all your purposes with regard to reaching the Sydney market? I do not think so. The freight from here to Bourke would be £2 or £3 per ton, and then the railway rates from Bourke to Sydney would be £6 15s. per ton, and that would shut us out altogether.

1679. During the drought what is the highest price you have known to be paid for fodder? Last year fodder was up to £40 per ton.

1680. Is it not strange that the people of the district have never tried ensilage in order to save fodder for a dry season? Yes, it is.

1681. Are they taking advantage of this good season for that purpose? I have heard of only one or two cases. There is no agriculture in the district. I am quite satisfied that the district is suitable for agriculture.

1682. Do you think there is an opening for an agricultural population to settle on the soil? So far as growing grain for green feed and for chaff is concerned we can grow it excellently; but what the character of the grain would be, if it were grown for export, I do not think has ever been tested. It would be a great advantage if grain were grown for fodder.

1683. Have you heard any opinions expressed in regard to the increase of the rabbits in this district? Their increase is self evident. When coming across the country from Broken Hill by Burke's cave, they were as thick as ever.

1684. Are there many unemployed about this town or district? I do not think so. There are always a few. The bulk of the unemployed are those who move from station to station. There is very little for the ordinary working man to do here just now. The bulk of them have gone to Broken Hill, and other places. They were driven away on account of the stagnant condition of the place.

1685. Is the country within 50 miles of this place suitable for fruit growing? I am sure that no better fruit can be grown anywhere than in the valley of the Darling. All the fruit consumed here is conveyed a considerable distance. When the river is open it is brought from Bourke and Adelaide.

1686. Is it not strange that people here do not supply themselves with fruit? I do not think so. Owing to the isolated character of the district there are very few people here who could say that they are settled.

1687. Looking at this proposed railway do you believe that as a national investment it would be remunerative? I believe it would. I do not think the railway when constructed will pay right away, because the country is recovering from such a condition of stagnation and impoverishment as would render it impossible to expect the railway to pay at first. There has been no money spent in this district for the last five years. The population has been gradually leaving the place, consequently the district is not anything like what it was four or five years ago.

1688. Do you think that this place is suited for building up any manufactures? If a railway were made I see no reason why this should not be a large centre for the export of dead meat. With refrigerating cars on the railway this should be one of the largest centres of that industry in N.S.W. There is no reason why this country should not compete with America or any other country in fruit growing and preserving.

1689. Have you everything here which is necessary to render a place prosperous with the exception of population? That is certainly the case. I believe that the railway would pay interest on the cost of construction if it were carried from Nyngan right on to Broken Hill. I believe that there will be a population of 50,000 at Broken Hill. Then there are the Albert Gold-fields. A number of discoveries have recently been made at Mount Browne, where there is every prospect of payable gold being found. There are no means of testing the minerals here because there is no chance of getting machinery at fair rates. Machinery is going up to Milparinka, but before it reaches there it will cost an enormous sum.

1690. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] From telegrams received from Wentworth, I find that steamers have cleared for Wilcannia with 9,642 tons, and that steamers have left Wilcannia for Wentworth with 8,932 tons. Were those steamers loaded to their fullest capacity? Yes.

1691.

- Mr. 1691. May we take it that 9,642 tons of stores have come up here this year? Yes; I expect that is it.
- G. H. Doake. 1692. Would the freight going down be mainly wool? Yes.
- 15 Oct., 1889. 1693. Is it the practice of the steamers to do a little trading on their own account on the river? Yes.
1694. Does not that interfere with the business people of Wilcannia? I do not think it matters very much; I do not care about it. I do not think it is worthy of notice.
1695. You say that people here would buy in Sydney because it is the cheapest market;—taking the transit by water, which would be the cheapest market? I think we have an answer to that question in the case of Bourke. Bourke has the same river and the same markets open to it as we have. The cost of transit by water is just the same. A steamer will carry freight to Bourke for the same price as to Wilcannia, yet I do not think 100 tons of goods have gone to Bourke by the river during the present year.
1696. Is it the practice of owners of stations here to reside on them? Not as a rule. The bulk of them are in the hands of managers. I have no doubt that the construction of a railway would tend to increase settlement in the district, and would give a home character to it, which it cannot have in its present isolated condition.
1697. If you had a railway from Sydney to Wilcannia, would you be in a position to compete with Broken Hill for the trade of the Mount Browne district? Certainly. The sympathies of that district are more with Wilcannia than with Broken Hill.
1698. Are goods brought up to famine prices here often, owing to the river not being navigable? Yes. When the rates of freight become very high, prices must go up accordingly.
1699. What has been the price of sugar, wheat, and potatoes at those times? Those goods were costing us 2d. to 2½d. per lb. to get them forward here during the drought. That would cause famine prices to be charged for those goods. That put a charge of £20 per ton extra on sugar. Flour was sold as high as £35 per ton. At Milparinka I believe it was sold for £4 or £5 per bag. Very few potatoes came because they could not stand the carriage. They went up to about four times their ordinary price. Most other stores rose in price in the same way. If we had a railway such a thing would not occur.
1700. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What is about the average freight of wool from here to the nearest shipping port,—Adelaide or Melbourne? The rates vary very much according to the condition of the river. This season wool has been taken down f.o.b. to Port Victor for 50s. to 55s. per ton. At other times it costs about £4. The average cost would be £4 per ton. The freight varies from £4 10s. to £7 10s. You have to add to that river insurance amounting to 40s. or 50s. per cent. on the declared value of the wool, which increases the rate of tonnage by about 3 to 3½ per cent.
1701. If we take the amount of goods which go up and down the river, and charge £4 per ton as railway carriage, would not that make up almost sufficient to pay the required amount of £90,000 for interest and working expenses of the proposed railway? The amount of wool held over last year in this district was estimated at 27,000 bales, representing a value of £330,000 lying in sheds and other places round about there. There were 8,000 bales stored in Wilcannia alone.
1702. Has not this year been an exceptional year with regard to the quantity of wool going down the river? A large amount of wool went down to Broken Hill last year.
1703. Did not more than the ordinary yield of wool from the district go down this year? Yes; but on the other hand, the returns of wool from the stations this year are at least one-third less than they would be in a fair average year, because there has been a loss of about 1,000,000 sheep. Under these circumstances the amount of wool sent during the present year would not be very much above the average.
- 1703½. Then the figures which have been given show that if all the traffic went by the proposed railway, and if freight were charged at the low rate of £4 per ton, the traffic here alone would be sufficient to pay working expenses and interest on cost of construction? Yes.
1704. What would be the difference in the amount of stock which you would have to keep on hand if you had railway communication with Sydney, as compared with the amount of stock which you now have to keep on hand? Less than one-half.
1705. How far from here eastwards is wool carted into Wilcannia to go by the river? Between 80 and 90 miles. Beyond that it goes to Nyngan or Bourke.
1706. *Chairman.*] In what state is the river now? It is navigable. It is falling slightly, but there is a further rise behind it just now.
1707. What is the rate of freight of goods at the present time from ports up the river? The competition for wool backwards is so great that the boats now carry up goods for as low a price as £3 to £3 10s. per ton, but that is not the normal condition of things. The actual freight for wool down to port is about 30s., but that is unusually low. If the river went down rapidly the rate of freight would go up rapidly. The bulk of our boats are about 3 feet draft when they are loaded. When there is a deep river they load down deeper.
1708. If the river went down rapidly would the great bulk of this season's wool be left behind? I think it would go to Broken Hill on account of the ruling prices. I do not think it would be held over.
1709. You know that the railway freight to Bourke from Sydney is about £6 15s. per ton, and this place is 150 miles farther from Sydney than Bourke is? Yes.
1710. Would you as a storekeeper be willing to pay say £6 10s. per ton for railway freight? Not if I could get it lower.
1711. Then you would prefer to use the river? Yes; a man will prefer to have his goods carried by the cheapest route. But, notwithstanding that Bourke has all the advantages which we have, the people at Bourke find it to their advantage to pay £6 10s. or £6 15s. per ton to get their goods by rail rather than by the river. Therefore, it must be advantageous, or the river would be used as much as ever. The tonnage of our firm inwards for the three months ending October, 1889, is 350 tons. This is exclusive of station indents, which amount to considerably more—times are now bad, but in good times this tonnage would be more than double. If I had regular communication by railway I could do with about £8,000 less of permanent stock and capital.

Mark J. C. Tully, Esq., Inspector of Stock, sworn, and examined :—

1712. *Mr. Copleland.*] What position do you occupy? Inspector of Stock for the Wilcannia district, which extends about 150 miles northwards, about 70 miles westwards, and about 70 miles southwards. It takes in about 100 miles around Wilcannia. I have held this position for nearly five years. I know the whole district thoroughly, and I have lived in it twenty-three years. M. J. C. Tully,
Esq.
15 Oct., 1889.

1713. What extent of country carrying stock will be influenced by the proposed railway? There are about 30,000,000 acres of pastoral country which would be influenced by the railway. That is within about 200 miles northward of the railway—about 90 miles southward and about 60 miles to the south-westward. That is taking in the country from the Queensland border and north-west, and leaving out all that goes direct to Broken Hill and Silverton, or direct to Bourke. That would make an area of 30,000,000 acres.

1714. What stock does that area of country contain? At present there are rather over 3,000,000 sheep, between 17,000 and 20,000 head of cattle, and about 9,000 horses. The horses are mostly used for station purposes. There are only two or three stations on which they have from 1,000 to 3,000 head of cattle. The figures I have given include all the working cattle.

1715. Is the stock increasing or decreasing in the district generally? The stock had increased until about eighteen months ago, but there was a very considerable loss during 1888-1889. There must have been a direct loss of at least 1,000,000 sheep, and an indirect loss, through the want of an increase, of 750,000 or 1,000,000.

1716. If a railway had been in existence, would the squatters have made use of it to have saved some of that stock? Yes; hundreds of thousands would have been taken away.

1717. Was the stock increasing to a satisfactory extent before the drought? Yes; very much so.

1718. Has the carrying capacity of the country been increasing generally since the country has been stocked? Yes.

1719. Is it likely to increase if the squatters spend more money in improvements and in making smaller paddocks? Yes. I should say that during the next five years we should have at least one-third more stock than at present. I do not think that ringbarking would pay, because the carrying capacity of the country is so light. Looking forward to the long tenure which the squatters have now, there is no reason why the district should not ultimately carry double the number of stock which it carries now.

1720. If a freezing depôt were established here, would a large quantity of dead meat be probably sent away? Yes. Since the runs have been stocked I think the grasses are growing thicker. There is more grass, and less herbage. There is no pine scrub in this district.

1721. How are the rabbits in this district? I am an Inspector under the Rabbit Act. In the month of April I travelled about 600 miles through the district, and I do not think I saw six rabbits; but during the last three or four months I have seen them in thousands wherever I have gone—they have been increasing alarmingly. There is no doubt that they will again become a very serious pest. Nothing has been done recently to destroy them. Nothing has been done to utilise them. When they were most numerous some of the stations preserved the skins, but they scarcely paid for the trouble. I notice that some of the lessees are providing themselves now with wire netting to trap the rabbits at the tanks.

1722. Where does the bulk of the sheep go to market from this district? I find that there came on the road from Milparinka to Wilcannia last year 119,000 sheep. They came principally from the north-western part of the district. A great portion of them went to Melbourne.

1723. Supposing a railway had been opened, then do you think that stock would have been sent by rail to Sydney? Certainly. It would cost twice as much to send them by road as by rail in such a season when every drink of water had to be paid for. 97,000 sheep went from Wilcannia to Louth, and across from there to Cobar.

1724. Are the stock in a healthy state at present? Yes.

1725. Were the stock to which you have just referred fat stock going to market? No; only a very small portion of them.

1726. What were they travelled for? For feed; and they were sold on the stations to lighten the strain on the stations.

1727. From your experience of stock, do you think it would be possible for the squatters in a season like the present one, by means of ensilage, to preserve some of the grass so as to feed their stock in time of drought? They could do so to a limited extent, so as, perhaps, to sustain their working stock, but it would not do to feed sheep, as it would cost too much to collect it.

1728. In the country over which we have travelled, there are millions of acres which would yield this year 1 ton of hay to the acre.* Would there be any more difficulty in this district in getting a large quantity of hay from the natural grass? The holdings are not so large in that part of the country.

1729. Are we to infer that the people have more country than they can manage economically? No; but the country is of such a poor nature that you must have a large quantity of it to carry any stock at all. A good season like this is exceptional. In my opinion it would not pay to keep the natural grass for feeding sheep.

1730. Would it pay to grow lucerne? Not to feed sheep upon it. It would pay in the same way as it would pay to preserve ensilage for working stock.

1731. In your opinion, will it not pay to spend money in improving the land by scrubbing and ringbarking it? I do not think it would pay to ring it. It might pay in some places to scrub certain portions, although I should not think so. I think that perhaps the scrub in this district is the most valuable growth.

1732. Then, in your opinion, we have nothing to look forward to but to allow the country to remain virtually a desert, as it is now? I believe the country will improve, but I do not believe that it will pay to go in for ringbarking. Smaller paddocks, and increasing the water supply, are about the extent of the improvements which I think will be advantageous.

1733. Are there many homestead leases in your district? There are only a few.

1734. Are the holders making a success of them generally? They have scarcely done so yet, as they have not had time. Four or five of the leases taken up have been thrown up again. I suppose the lessees considered they could not make them pay. Some of them were never stocked at all. Some carriers have taken up leases to put their stock on them, and they have fenced them in. I think only one or two have been taken up in a *bonâ fide* manner for pastoral purposes. I think that with economy a man with a family

NOTE (on revision) :—My answer to this was, "I do not believe it."

M. J. C. Tully, Esq., family who could do most of the labour within his own family, could make a comfortable living out of a homestead lease. To live out here with anything like comfort, a man would require to get a net return of £500 or £600 a year.

15 Oct., 1889.

1735. Do you think it would be possible under general circumstances for a man to take up 10,000 acres, and by stocking it and working it himself to make, say, a clear £300 a year on an average? I do not think so, because in bad seasons many of these lessees would be completely wiped out, and unless they had funds they could not make another start.

1736. If this railway were constructed to Wilcannia, do you think there would be many more leases taken up on the resumed areas? No doubt there would. In that way there would be a considerable amount of additional settlement by smaller men.

1737. *Mr. Tonkin.*] How much per ton could the natural grass be saved for? I cannot say positively.

1738. How do you know that it could not be saved? I know that bush hay was collected on Mount Murchison station a few years ago, and the manager told me that it cost him £3 per ton to collect that hay in a season similar to this. There was grass in abundance everywhere.

1739. If feed could have been supplied to the sheep for three months during the late drought, would that have saved them? Yes, it would have saved the bulk of them.

1740. How much hay would keep a sheep alive during that time? About 2 cwt. or 3 cwt. would keep each sheep.

1741. Then if you had hay that would cost £1 per ton, you could have saved six sheep for every ton of that hay? It would cost another £1 per ton to lay it out for the sheep to eat.

1742. Do you think it would not pay if it cost £2 per ton? I do not think so. I have not had anything to do with the feeding of sheep artificially.

1743. Would it surprise you to hear that in the country we have come through hay could be made out of the grass for 10s. per ton? There is very little in my district where you could make it for 10s. per ton. I dare say there is some clear open country where it could be cut down with a reaping machine.

1744. Would you be surprised to hear that it does not cost more than 10s. per ton to make hay in the Bathurst district? I would sooner make hay down there than here.

1745. Have you ever had anything to do with a farm? I was born on one of the largest farms in Scotland. It would cost more to make hay there than here, but I do not know the exact cost of making it there. Here it would take more ground to grow the hay than at home, and you could not cut right ahead here with a reaping machine. There are not 10 acres in any part of my district where you could mow straight ahead.

1746. *Mr. Hurley.*] Do you think that the pastoral holdings are very much depreciated in value through being over-run with rabbits? Yes.

1747. Has it ever come to your knowledge that squatters have been forced to pay 6d. per scalp for each rabbit destroyed, when they could easily have got them killed for 3d. and 4d., on account of an arrangement being entered into between the rabbiters and the inspectors? I know of no such arrangement, and I never heard of it. I believe that everyone did what they considered to be the very best in carrying out the Act. Time perhaps has proved that it was not the best course which was taken.

1748. Do you know that under the Act boys were receiving £5 a week, whereas they would not have received 30s. a week elsewhere? Yes.

1749. Was that fair to the State? No.

1750. *Chairman.*] Do you know the river from here to Bourke? Yes, I have travelled over it.

1751. If it is stated in an official document that the distance by river from Wilcannia to Bourke is 208 miles, is that correct? No.

1752. What is the distance by river? It is not less than 600 miles.

1753. Is the river very circuitous? It is very tortuous indeed. In some places you have to go 4 miles round a bend which you could cross in a distance of half a mile.

1754. Is it very shallow in places? At times you could find a mile of the river bed quite dry, over which you could walk.

1755. Are there many rocky bottoms? I only know of two from here to Bourke. I do not know the general character of the bed of the river.

1756. When the river is navigable how long does it take steamers and punts to go from Wilcannia to Bourke? About one week up stream. The steamers generally travel about 6 miles an hour; but there is a great difference in their speed.

1757. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] From the way in which the rabbit pest is spreading in this neighbourhood do you think it is likely to retard settlement? Yes.

1758. Do you think that small settlement would be successful in this country? I do not think it would be successful under existing circumstances.

1759. If small holdings will not be successful by keeping down the rabbit pest, and by ringbarking, and by making dams, how is that work to be done by the large pastoral proprietors who are now here? I do not think any one has been able to answer that question, and I am afraid I cannot answer it.

1760. Is it only a matter of time when the large pastoralists will be eaten out by the rabbits? Some other means may be found of getting rid of the pest. For instance, fencing has not been much tried.

1761. Do you not think that smaller holders would have a better chance of success than large holders in dealing with such a pest? The small holder would have a very much better chance of coping with the rabbits.

1762. In your opinion what should be the area of a homestead lease here? I do not think that the area of 10,000 acres should be altered. If you give a man more than that you give him a run.

Hubert F. T. Bode, Esq., surveyor, Railway Department, sworn and examined:—

H. F. T.
Bode, Esq.

1763. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Surveyor in the Railway Department. I have been a cadet in the engineering branch, but I have never been employed in construction.

15 Oct., 1889. 1764. Are you making a trial survey of the proposed railway from here to Broken Hill? Yes, of the first 77 miles from Wilcannia.

1765. What is the character of the country you have gone through? For the most part it is of a level nature, with only one range of hills to go through. 1766.

1766. What is the steepest grade throughout that distance? 1 in 100.

1767. Did you get any special instruction from the Department as to grades? Yes. We were told not to make anything steeper than 1 in 100 with 10-foot cuttings. If we wished to use anything steeper we had to apply for special authority, which was not necessary in this case.

1768. How far did you get from Wilcannia before you arrived at the ridge you have referred to? There is one about 4 miles from Wilcannia. It is only about 15 to 20 chains, and it will involve very little cutting. The next long gradient of 1 in 100 is about 40 miles from Wilcannia. There are about 50 chains of it. The ground there is of a gravelly nature. There are no other hills on the route. We skirt some hills about 65 miles from Wilcannia; that does not involve any divergence. The line is very straight; I think there are five curves altogether. They are of 100 chains radius each. It is very easy country in which to make a railway.

1769. What is the character of the soil which the line passes through? It is principally sand, and a sort of soil known as clay-pan soil—clay mixed with sand.

1770. Would it have to be ballasted? I presume so. There is plenty of ballast obtainable in the ranges, consisting of good hard stone. There is no timber at all suitable for sleepers.

1771. Will this be an easy and inexpensive line to construct? Yes.

1772. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Have you surveyed any other line in this Colony? Yes.

1773. Are not these exceptional instructions you have received, not to lay off a steeper grade than 1 in 100? That depends upon the nature of the country we have to go through. I have been told to get grades of 1 in 50 in some districts, but you might get grades of 1 in 100 in other districts without going into very much more expensive work.

1774. Have not exceptional instructions been given to you with regard to the grades on this particular line more than on any other line which you have been surveying? There has been only one other instance in which I have been told what grades to get. Within the last three or four years it was allowable to use grades of 1 in 40 in very rough country, but latterly I think the surveys have been carried through more easy country as a rule.

WILCANNIA, WEDNESDAY, 16 OCTOBER, 1889.

[*The Sectional Committee met in the Court-house, Wilcannia, at 10 a.m.*]

Present:—

The HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. Walter T. Corney, merchant, Wilcannia, sworn and examined:—

1775. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Merchant, carrying on business at Wilcannia. I have been there almost eleven years.

1776. In your business what goods did you receive in the course of twelve months? In the year 1887, with a permanent river, we had 1,100 tons of inward freight, or perhaps a little more. That was all obtained by river.

1777. What wool did you send away in the year 1887? About 6,000 bales were sent away by my firm. In 1888 there was no wool shipped from here, owing to the excessive drought.

1778. How much has been sent away for 1889 up to date? 9,500 bales, and there are about 4,000 to come in. The greasy bales weigh 3 cwt. 3 qr. each, and the scoured 2½ cwt. each. There would be about 4,000 scoured bales out of the 13,000 bales.

1779. What was the destination of that wool? Principally Port Victor, South Australia, by the river. About 4,000 bales went by Echuca to Melbourne—none of it went to Bourke or Broken Hill.

1780. In the year 1887 what was the average rate of freight to Victoria and South Australia? It ranged from £3 up to £4 for greasy and scoured.

1781. What has been the average rate so far in 1889? From 30s. to 40s. from Wilcannia to Echuca and Morgan, and from 50s. to 60s. to Goolwa, f.o.b., that is to port.

1782. Why is it considerably cheaper this year than it was in 1887? Owing to the long river we have had, and the great quantity of supplies for shearing which came up on the first of the river. There was keen competition among the boats. I do not think the freights have paid any of the boats this year.

1783. We have heard that goods can be brought up as far as Bourke for about the same rate of freight as they can be brought to Wilcannia;—is that so? I have heard of one instance of a boat carrying freight up to Bourke for the same rate as to Wilcannia this year. I think they get a better price for carrying wool down from Bourke, and that induces them to go higher up the river.

1784. What is your opinion as to the construction of a railway from Nyngan to Wilcannia? It would open up a great extent of country, and it would secure a large portion of the tonnage that comes to this town. It takes about three weeks to get goods up the river, and often a month or five weeks. If a railway were made the storekeepers would not have to keep on hand one half or one quarter of their present stock. If the freights were anything like in proportion, the railway would certainly get the preference.

1785. Would it not be a great saving in many ways if wool could be put on the train at once and sent straight to the port of shipment? Certainly it would be a great saving. It would arrive in better condition; there would be a great saving of insurance and also in storage. We have had wool stored here for nine months—that has happened more than once. During the last drought we had about 2,500 bales stored, and our clients had a lot of wool stored in the country.

1786. Do you do the largest shipping trade in wool in Wilcannia? Not always. It varies some years. The other firms which are engaged in the same kind of business as ours, in shipping wool at Wilcannia, are Doake & Co., Ottoway, Donaldson, and Permewan, Wright, & Co. There is a large quantity shipped direct from the woolwash about 2 miles down the river. I daresay they send away 2,000 bales a year. We took over our business from another firm about six years ago.

5 (a)—I

1787.

H. F. T.
Bode, Esq.
15 Oct., 1889.

Mr.
W. T. Corney.
16 Oct., 1889.

Mr.
W. T. Corney.
16 Oct., 1889.

1787. Has the business in wool decreased or increased during that period? It has been about the same on an average. We receive wool from about twenty graziers. They have all large holdings. The runs, hundreds of miles away, are not stocked so heavily as the frontage people.

1788. Which is the most distant station that sends wool to you? Tickalara station, about 250 or 260 miles away, near the border of Queensland. We have had wool from places farther away than that, but not this year. Some of the wool comes to us from the Paroo, but most of it comes from the north-west.

1789. How is that this wool from the north-west does not go to Bourke? I do not think there is such a direct road to Bourke as there is to this place. It is a better watered route here.

1790. What has been your experience as to the success or otherwise of homestead lessees? I do not think that any have made money out of the leases. Most of them are taken up just as homes by carriers and other people who are living in the district. Very few are trying to make a living out of them by stocking them. A great many of those who have taken up homestead leases have failed to carry them on for want of capital.

1791. If they had a small amount of capital do you think they could have done fairly well? In some places they could if they worked themselves and looked after things.

1792. Do you not think that from the character of the country industrious men would get on very well with small holdings? I think they would want 20,000 acres at least. Then they might make a fair living.

1793. Do you not think that around towns small holdings of from 150 to 200 acres would be availed of for gardens and agricultural purposes? Yes; with a river frontage I think they would. One or two have gone in for that line of business and they seem to make it pay very well.

1794. Are the five firms in the same line of business as yours doing as large a business in wool as your firm is? Year in and year out I think four of them do as large a business. That is, for an average of three or four years.

1795. *Mr. Copeland.*] Have you any public wharf accommodation here? We have only the bank of the river. Our firm has a private wharf. There is a wharf reserve but there is no Government wharf. About twelve months ago some money was voted for a wharf but there was a dispute with the contractor, and it was not gone on with. It would require far more than £1,500 to erect a wharf.

1796. If you had wharf accommodation would it enable you to get the goods and send them away cheaper than at present? Yes.

1797. Is the river fairly clear of snags? Yes. It has been snagged the whole way from Bourke to Wentworth. There is no snagging being done now. The river might be improved by further snagging.

1798. Have you formed any opinion as to locking the river and as to where it should be locked? Personally I should rather see it locked from here to Wentworth than from Bourke to here. I do not think it would reduce the freight, but it would make the river navigable for a longer period. I do not think it would be possible to make it navigable all the year round from here to Wentworth.

1799. Would it be worth while to spend a considerable sum to make the river navigable six months in the year? No; I am in favour of making the railway rather than locking the river. I believe that if a railway were constructed the people would use it to a great extent.

1800. Do you think that the stations in the vicinity are fully stocked? Judging from this year's wool I do not think that they are anything like stocked. Nearly every station is some hundreds of bales short; in some cases thousands of bales. The clip is considerably smaller than it was in 1887.

1801. *Mr. Hurley.*] It has been stated to us that under ordinary circumstances between 50,000 and 60,000 bales of wool go down the river every year;—do you think it is correct? It is quite within the mark.

1802. What freight have you to pay on all goods brought here by river, including all charges? From £4 10s. to £8, £9, and even £10 per ton. The average is about £6. The average for wool going down is £5 10s. per ton. If the railway were constructed and a charge were made of £5 per ton, while the boats charge £4 per ton, we would prefer to use the railway. There would be a saving on insurance and interest.

1803. What is the highest price paid for fodder by the public? £45 and £50 per ton. This year I think you can buy it for £6 and £6 10s. per ton.

1804. If the river were locked, so as to throw the water back to Bourke, do you think that sufficient feed could be grown in the district to supply the local demands? The soil is good enough. If the water were conserved for irrigation, agricultural settlement would be induced, but I do not think that the farmers could produce as cheaply as other farmers who have not to irrigate.

1805. If the river were locked and improved up to Bourke from Wilcannia, would not that serve the purposes of this district with regard to communication, without making a railway to your door? I do not think so if the rates at present charged to Bourke would be maintained. We would have to pay the extra freight from here to Bourke, which would be heavy if we had to pay lock dues.

1806. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What is the tonnage of the wool you sent away this year? Over 2,000. The average amount of wool sent down the river from Wilcannia would be about 5,000 tons. There are about 2,000 tons additional, which are shipped between here and Wentworth, which do not come to Wilcannia, but which would probably be sent by the railway if constructed. Then we may estimate that 3,000 tons of wool would be sent down from places above Wilcannia. There might be even more. The average freight paid for that wool with insurance would be £4 per ton, if not more.

1807. That gives an expenditure on freight for wool of £40,000 a year? Yes.

1808. Would the tonnage of goods brought up the river per annum be anything like the tonnage of the wool sent down? Yes; I think it would come to 7,000 or 8,000 tons.

1809. What would be the average freight paid upon that? The average freight to Wilcannia right through would be £6, or a total amount of £48,000 per annum.

1810. So that you have paid annually for freight alone on the river to and from here £88,000? Yes.

1811. Do you think that you have not made any mistake, and are you confident that there is that amount of trade inwards and outwards from this district? These are merely estimates. I think you would be quite within the mark if you said £80,000 per annum instead of £88,000.

1812. Which of the three ports, Adelaide, Melbourne, or Sydney, is the best to ship from for the whole market? I do not think there is a fraction of difference between the three.

1813. Is there any difference to the storekeepers and consumers in purchasing merchandise at any of these

these ports? In a great many lines Sydney is much lower than the other ports, but not in all. -I think taking it all round, the three cities are about equal in price—that is, buying in bond.

1814. In the event of the railway being constructed, would it be availed of in times of severe drought for the removal of starving stock? I believe it would to a great extent. During the last drought probably 500,000 sheep would have been sent away.

1815. Do you think that the new Land Bill will make things more lively in this district? I am sure of it. Things are improving already.

1816. Is that not likely to increase the amount of material which will be required, and, consequently, the traffic of the district? Yes; and it will increase the population in a great measure. I knew a station which, before the Land Bill was passed in 1884, used to employ upwards of 300 hands, but after that Land Bill was passed I do not think they had forty hands employed.

1817. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Does Wilcannia do much trade with the country between here and Broken Hill? Only for a distance of 50 miles out from Bourke.

1818. Does Wilcannia do a very large trade with Mount Browne, Tibooburra, and the country on the Queensland border? Yes; when the river is up we do a large trade there.

1819. Would it serve the interests of this district most to make a light line up to the Mount Browne country, or to continue the proposed line on to Broken Hill? I do not know that a line to Mount Browne would be of most benefit.

1820. If a railway is taken on to Broken Hill is it not likely that a great deal of trade will go on to South Australia instead of coming to Wilcannia? That would depend upon the rates. I think the Sydney railway ought to be able to compete with the other, because the private Tramway Company's rates are very high.

1821. Would it not be better for the interests of this country if you had a railway running to Mount Browne and the Queensland border, than to continue the line to Broken Hill? Yes; it would open up a great deal more country, and I believe it would pay better.

1822. Would it not be better to carry out that scheme and connect Broken Hill with Sydney by a railway, via Forbes, Condobolin, and Menindie? Yes; I think that would be the better way. However, the latter line would, to some extent, open up the same country as the line which would be carried from Nyngan to Wilcannia. I wish to correct a statement I made—that the river had been snagged between here and Bourke. I understand it has not been snagged.

Mr. Thomas F. Ottaway, auctioneer and forwarding agent, sworn, and examined:—

1823. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is your occupation? Auctioneer and forwarding agent. I have had twelve years' experience.

1824. Do you approve of the evidence given by Mr. Corney, and endorse it? Yes, in the main. I think that men holding blocks of 10 miles square would make a very handsome living here—better than they would on large areas. I know one or two in the district who have apparently got on very well on such holdings, and they have made more improvements than the larger holders.

1825. Have homestead leases been successful? No. Carriers have taken up homestead leases—they run their cattle on them, but I do not think they make a living out of the leases. They are just about holding their own. The holder of a 64,000-acre block would fence in and improve his land, and would divide it into small paddocks, and he would make a large number of water improvements.

1826. Do you think that some of the pastoral lessees have over-reached themselves by taking up areas which are too large? No, I do not think that has been the case in the past, but I think that if a railway were made, a great many 10-mile blocks would be taken up.

1827. Is your recommendation in reference to 10-mile blocks contingent upon the making of the railway? Yes.

1828. In the past, if men had taken up 10-mile blocks, would they have been likely to suffer less loss than the large holders, seeing that they would have more water and less sheep? Yes.

1829. Do you agree with Mr. Corney's statement as to the quantity and value of the business done here? Yes, and therefore I think the railway would pay.

1830. Would you recommend that the river should be locked between Wilcannia and Bourke, for the purpose of assisting irrigation? Yes, and as low down as Menindie. That is contingent on the railway being made.

1831. Supposing another line were constructed *via* Forbes and Menindie, would you recommend locking the river down there then? It would serve two purposes then—irrigation, and taking the stuff to either line.

1832. If a railway were constructed to Wilcannia, would there still be a river trade above Wilcannia in bringing wool from the intervening stations? Yes.

1833. Would you prefer a line to Mount Browne to an extension of the line from here to Broken Hill? Yes, the line to Mount Browne would be more beneficial to this district.

1834. And to New South Wales generally? Yes, if made to the Queensland border. It would develop the mineral country there, and it would bring in wool that now goes to South Australia by Orcha.

1835. When the river is not navigable, is some of the trade carried on by means of camels between Broken Hill and Mount Browne? Yes. There is trade between those two places at all times.

1836. What is the population in the Mount Browne district? I have been out there. There is a good population there. There is a new place at Coonberry, and there are stations all round.

Mr. Frank Leng, Crown Lands Agent, sworn, and examined:—

1837. *Chairman.*] What office do you hold? Crown Lands Agent.

1838. *Mr. Copeland.*] Is there a large common round Wilcannia? Yes; I do not know its area. It is a permanent and temporary common.

1839. If portions of that common were open for selection would it be readily selected and made use of for cultivation? I think so, provided we had a railway.

1840. Irrespective of a railway if it were available, in small areas, would people take up the land and cultivate it? Yes, if portions from 5 acres, or even up to 30 acres, were available so that they might cultivate wheat, lucerne, and oats. I think the land is capable of producing anything by the aid of irrigation.

Mr.
W. T. Corney.
16 Oct., 1889.

Mr.
T. F. Ottaway.
16 Oct., 1889.

Mr. F. Leng.
16 Oct., 1889.

- Mr. F. Leng. 1841. What quantity of land in this common has a frontage to the river? The common extends to the river bank on both sides.
- 16 Oct., 1889. 1842. Have you had any auction sales lately? No; the last one was held in August, 1887, at Wilcannia, being allotments in the township of Tibooburra. Land sold pretty well, but it did not bring a very high price. I have not had any town lots for sale situated in the township of Wilcannia.
1843. How many applications have you received for homestead leases? Fifty-three during the last four years. Twenty-five were non-accepted, withdrawn, and forfeited, leaving 28 homestead leases in existence. I think some of the lessees have stocked their land with sheep. I think the homestead lessees, especially in the Menindie district, are doing well.
1844. If a railway were made to Wilcannia, do you think it would lead to increased settlement by means of homestead leases? Yes, provided the river was locked and the land irrigated. I think that homestead lessees would irrigate their land.
1845. Would not that apply only to those on the river bank? Yes, or to a distance of 40 or 50 miles from the river bank.
1846. Is not most of the river frontage embraced in the leasehold areas of the pastoral holdings? No. There are large areas still available. There are resumed areas on the river frontage not yet applied for.
1847. Do you hold any other position under the Government? Yes; District Registrar of Births, Marriages, and Deaths.
1848. Is the population increasing to any extent? No; it is decreasing. In 1885 there were 90 births. In 1886 and 1887, there was a slight decrease in the number. During the present year the births are not maintaining the average. The population of Wilcannia appears to be on the decrease.
1849. Are the marriages falling off? Yes, very much so.
1850. Do you think that the new Land Bill will be beneficial to the pastoralists? I do not think it will be so beneficial to the pastoralists in the Western division as it will for those in the Central and Eastern divisions.
1851. Do you not think that the increased tenure given to the pastoralists in the Western division will induce them to expend more money on improvements? I am afraid in some cases it will not. I have not received applications for permission to ringbark since I took charge of this office, four years ago. Improvement purchases constitute the principal land business done here. They are situated at Broken Hill.
1852. Are you receiving any applications under that clause now? Yes; on the gold-fields. There have been on an average, thirty per week lately. Those at Broken Hill and the majority of them are situate at Broken Hill and its vicinity, and some at Silverton. I am the nearest Land Agent to Broken Hill. Mount Browne and Menindie are included in my district. The number of applications for improvement purchases has been increasing lately.
1853. Is that an indication that the population is increasing on the gold-fields? Yes, particularly in the Broken Hill district.
1854. What is the amount of land revenue you receive in this office? About £3,500 annually. The lessees' rent is forwarded direct to the Treasury. The revenue I have mentioned consists principally of payments by homestead lessees or for conditionally leased land, and the instalments and balances on conditional purchases.
1855. Do you hear any complaints from conditional purchasers that they are not allowed to increase their area to that maximum? Yes. Several applications have been made by persons desirous of taking up additional selections, but no special areas have been gazetted. The total number of improvement purchase applications received since I took charge is 1,336. These are situated on the various gold-fields. About 660 were refused or withdrawn, or they lapsed through non-payment of purchase money.
1856. *Chairman.*] Do you look upon the locking of the river not as an alternative work, but as one that should be carried out as well as the railway? Yes.
1857. If the river were locked, do you think it would send the water back for a distance of 40 or 50 miles in the creeks and ana-branches of the river? Yes.
1858. Do you think that that would increase settlement? Yes; it would induce people to take up homestead leases, and it would improve the value of all the land which it would command.

Mr. James M. Byrnes, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. M. Byrnes. 1859. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Butcher and dealer in stock.
- 16 Oct., 1889. 1860. *Mr. Copeland.*] How long have you been in this district? Since 1872.
1861. Has your occupation given you a practical knowledge of the growing capabilities of the country? Yes; I have only been in this line of business for three years. I was formerly in the employ of the Government in snagging rivers.
1862. Do you think that this country will carry more stock now than it used to in the early days of the district? Most decidedly it will. In the early days, away from the river, it was nearly useless. The squatters have improved it, principally by providing water.
1863. Leaving out the question of water supply, do you think that, acre for acre, the land is more capable of carrying stock now than when the squatters first commenced to depasture upon it? Yes. The pasturage is improving. The feeding of sheep over the ground improves the grass and herbs. I think that has been the experience all over New South Wales. The edible bushes have decreased of late, owing to the rabbits ringbarking them. They have destroyed useless bushes, but mostly the edible ones.
1864. Do you consider that the country is fully stocked? No, not nearly stocked. It was not stocked to its carrying capacity before 1888.
1865. If the railway were made, would it enable graziers to stock up to a fuller extent than at present, seeing that they would be able to get away their stock in case of drought? Yes; I feel confident of that. Thousands of stock would have been saved last year if there had been any getting away for them. In bad seasons the railway would carry off an immense number of stock, and in good seasons it would carry a large number of fat stock. My opinion is, that this place and Bourke will be the two principal freezing depôts in the Colony for Queensland stock.
1866. Do you think that this district is much better for sheep than for cattle? It is a matter of opinion. Those who occupy the land think that sheep are best, but I maintain that there are portions of this country where it would pay to have both sheep and cattle, even in the same paddock, because the cattle would break down a sufficient quantity of scrub to keep the sheep alive, and that would save the expense of

of scrub getters. You could not buy 200 head of fat cattle for thousands of pounds within a radius of 100 miles in this district unless they happened to be travelling. We can grow as good wool here as in most parts of the Colony in an average season.

Mr.
J. M. Byrnes.
16 Oct., 1889.

1867. Supposing a freezing depôt were established here, have you formed any idea as to the quantity of meat that would be sent away? No; we have never calculated on a railway for a certainty. It has been promised so often that we have given up the idea of ever getting it.

1868. Could the district send away as much as it could find a market for? Yes; all the Queensland cattle would come either to Bourke or to this place.

1869. Do you think that it is desirable to make an additional number of tanks on the travelling stock routes? Yes; the stock could not travel last year for want of water. If there was a tank every 9 or 10 miles it would be ample on the main stock routes.

1870. Have you had any experience of small holdings? I have had two selections—640 acres was the largest that I could take up.

1871. What use are you making of them? I use the one close to Wilcannia for running my stock.

1872. If the runs were smaller, do you think that the squatters could supervise them better than the large ones? Some of the runs are beyond the capacity of any one man to manage. Men holding single 10-mile blocks would be able to make the country carry far more stock than men holding ten 10-mile blocks. The small holders would have smaller paddocks, and more water. However, until we get railway communication, very few persons will take up 10,000 acre blocks. I feel confident that if we had a railway, more homestead leases would be applied for.

1873. If the railway were made would the people use it to a considerable extent, instead of sending their goods down the river? There is no doubt about that in my mind; the railway would be a certainty.

1874. Do you agree that the district is retrograding at present? Yes. I believe that a railway would restore the former prosperity of the district, in combination with a more suitable Land Law.

1875. Do you consider that the new Land Act is an improvement on the former one? Yes.

1876. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Are there many sheep fattened here? Yes. They are principally sent to Melbourne and Adelaide. The country is held by Victorians and South Australians, and they generally send the fat stock to their own countries.

1877. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What amount of money has been spent by the New South Wales Government in snagging and clearing the river? At least £40,000. Since 1872 I had charge of the whole of the Darling River. I was working for fourteen years on the Darling alone. We only worked when the river was low. When I left the river, three and a half years ago, a boat could not hit a snag between here and Wentworth; but I believe the floods have since put in an immense quantity of timber lower down. Continual snagging is necessary. Unless something is done to the lower river in a few years we shall be isolated. I refer to the river near Wentworth. It would cost £2,000 a year now to keep the river clear.

1878. In your opinion, would a line of railway to Broken Hill be more conducive to the welfare and prosperity of this district, than a line from here to Mount Browne? Most decidedly. The population there demand supplies. I do not think they would be more likely to be supplied from Adelaide if the railway were made, because the railway rates in South Australia are very high. Then they have to get all their coal and coke from this Colony. If a line were constructed to Broken Hill, *via* Menindie, a line would not be required to Wilcannia. A great deal of inferior country would have to be passed through from Condobolin to Menindie, and it will never be occupied by anything, except rabbits. A line to Broken Hill would be a more paying line than one to Mount Browne. So far as Wilcannia itself is concerned, a line to Mount Browne will pay us better.

1879. Is the rabbit pest increasing here? Yes. I think that wire netting the waterholes will be successful in keeping them down. I think that the squatters, now that they have security of tenure, will keep down the rabbits. I would like to say, with regard to the common around Wilcannia, that it was surveyed in small holdings; but not one of them was taken up. They are available at present.

1880. *Mr. Copeland.*] In what areas? From 20 to 50 acres.

Mr. Thomas Byrne, hotelkeeper, Wilcannia, sworn and examined:—

1881. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What is your occupation? I am a publican at Wilcannia, and I have been in the district about nineteen years. I have been a hotelkeeper here for ten and a half years. I deal in produce, chaff, oats, and bran, but principally chaff. I have had great difficulties sometimes in obtaining supplies and carriage. From October last year, until about May of the present year, the chaff which I landed here cost me £23 a ton for carriage alone from Adelaide. At present you can buy chaff landed here, at £7 10s. per ton.

Mr. T. Byrne.
16 Oct., 1889.

When I had to pay the high price for carriage I have mentioned, the selling price of the chaff here was about £30 per ton. There is very little produce grown locally. The seasons as a rule are against growing produce here. One or two crops have been grown in this neighborhood, but nothing to speak of.

1882. Could they not be grown with irrigation? Yes, on the river only. There is no well water good enough to produce crops. I know two wells, within a radius of 2 miles from the town, on the common, and they are both salt, and unfit even for stock to use.

1883. Suppose the river between here and Bourke were locked, do you think that would throw the water back into parts of the country where it would be available for agriculture? It would, were the creeks run back; but as a rule they do not run far back.

1884. Is there not sufficient soil on the banks of the river to grow all the produce required in the district? Yes; there are thousands of acres which could be easily irrigated.

1885. Would the proposed railway make a difference in the cost of produce here? I am certain you will never settle any one on the land until you give them some outlet.

1886. Where do you get your supplies from? Principally from Adelaide, at present. It is the most regular market. When the river is up there are more boats plying to Adelaide than to Echuca and other ports.

1887. Do you look upon regularity as of more importance than the actual cost of the supplies? Yes; I would pay a little more for regularity.

1888. Have you to keep a larger stock at present than you would keep if you had regular communication? Yes; with a falling river, I lay in a supply for twelve months. I believe that is the general practice here.

1889. If a railway were constructed, would it be a great boon to the district? Certainly.

1890.

- M. T. Byrne. 1890. Do you agree with the evidence given by Mr. Corney and Mr. Ottaway as to the amount of tonnage that passes to and from this place? Yes; I think their statements are correct. Until there is proper means of communication, either by the railway or by the river, we cannot expect to have any settlement here by means of homestead leases.
- 16 Oct., 1889.
1891. Which would be the most beneficial to the district—to lock the river right down to Wentworth, or to have railway communication with Sydney? From a local point of view, I think the river would be the best; but a great deal would depend upon the rates.
1892. Do you think there is patriotism enough in the district to induce the people to pay a small percentage extra in the railway rates, rather than to use the river? There is no doubt about it. I would sooner pay a great deal more, and be able to keep only a monthly supply, instead of being compelled to keep a yearly supply. I believe a majority of the people would sooner have water communication than railway communication. Water carriage would be cheaper if we had it regularly.
1893. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is the value of the stores you have to keep on hand, as a hotelkeeper, for fear that the river will not be navigable? £1,000. I daresay that is the case with every hotelkeeper here. There is a heavy loss of interest on the money invested.
1893. Which, in your opinion, would be the better line for New South Wales to construct—one *via* Wilcannia to Mount Browne, or one *via* Wilcannia to Broken Hill? I should say a line to Broken Hill. I daresay that the people of Wilcannia would benefit more by a line to Mount Browne. From a local standpoint, I endorse the opinion of other Wilcannia people.
1895. *Mr. Hurley.*] That is from a selfish point of view? Yes.
1896. *Chairman.*] Do you produce a bill of lading for certain goods from Adelaide to Broken Hill? Yes; the charge is £9 per ton.
1897. Do you also produce the waybill for the same lot of goods from Broken Hill to Wilcannia? Yes; the freight for that distance is £15 per ton. Therefore the freight for the whole distance came to about £24. That was in December, 1888.
1898. Do you produce a waybill from Morgan to Wilcannia, for June, 1889? Yes; that was on the opening of the river. The rate of freight there charged is £6 10s. per ton, including all charges paid.
1899. Do you produce a bill of lading, dated 10th October, 1889, for goods now on the way from Adelaide to Wilcannia, by the river? Yes; the rate is about £4 per ton, all charges covered. That is the through rate now.
1900. May the river now be said to be at its best? No; it is falling. From this time forward the freights will go up.
1901. There is no certainty after this as to when you may get your goods? Yes; it may cease altogether—in all probability it will.
1902. Do these figures show an average of £5 to £5 10s. per ton, including all charges, from Adelaide by the river? Yes.

M. J. C. Tully, Esq., Inspector of Stock, recalled, and further examined:—

- M. J. C. Tully, Esq. 1903. *Chairman.*] Can you give us any figures to show the amount of tonnage in wool which goes away from Wilcannia during any specified time? I have made a compilation from the number of sheep which I stated yesterday to be in the district, which is rather under than over the number. Taking it at 3,000,000 sheep, yielding $6\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of wool each, it gives 19,500,000 lb. of wool, or 8,708 tons per annum. If we take into consideration a certain quantity of lambs' wool, sheep skins, hides, and tallow, we can safely calculate it at over 500 tons; so that we have a yield of 9,208 tons per annum. Therefore I think the evidence you have already received as to the tonnage down the river being 10,000 tons per annum, is as nearly correct as need be. I made my calculations before I heard any of the evidence given before the Committee. The wool I have given includes the wool from the wool-wash.
- 16 Oct., 1889.
1904. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Have you not over-estimated the weight of the fleeces, when you say that they average $6\frac{1}{2}$ lb.? I do not think so. There is no washing, and comparatively little scouring, and the fleeces in this district are heavier than in any other district of the Colony. I have not included any portion of the country which would not make use of the railway. I have probably left out a large area on each side of the line between here and Cobar. I have only gone 40 miles over the river.
1905. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] In your evidence you said that the distance between Wilcannia and Bourke was about 600 miles by the river; are you aware that the Merchants and Underwriters' Association of Melbourne, in a pamphlet published by them, have given an estimate of the distances between all the stations on the Darling, and that they state that the distance from Wilcannia to Bourke is only 321 miles? I was not aware of that. During the whole time I have been in the district it has been calculated that the distance by river was three times the distance by land, which is 208 miles. I therefore stated the distance at 600 miles, to the best of my knowledge and belief. The distance may have been measured recently.
1906. *Chairman.*] Do you wish to give any other information to the Committee? Yes; in 1886 there were 230,000 sheep and 20,000 cattle brought through Wilcannia to the southern markets; in 1887, 179,000 sheep and 20,000 cattle; in 1888, 230,000 sheep and 10,000 cattle. The reason why there were so few cattle last year was that the season was so bad that they could not travel. During this year I expect there will be 20,000 head of cattle.

Sydney M. Cummins, Esq., Road Superintendent, sworn and examined:—

- S. M. Cummins, Esq. 1907. *Mr. Hurley.*] What office do you fill? Road Superintendent for the district of Wilcannia. I have been in the service of the Government about eleven years, and have been in this district a little over eighteen months. My district on the south extends about 105 miles towards Hay, then half way to Cobar, up the Paroo to Wanaaring, across to Milparinka and the Queensland Border, including the road down from Milparinka to Wilcannia and Menindie.
- 16 Oct., 1889.
1908. What is the character of the road to Broken Hill? Open plains and scrub mainly. The greater part of the road is scrub. There is sandy soil through the scrub and firm ground in the open country. The Netalie Hills are composed of sandstone. Right through there is stone at various points. There might be one stretch of 20 miles without metal.

1909.

S. M.
Cummins,
Esq.

16 Oct., 1889.

1909. What is the annual amount you receive from the department for expenditure on the roads in this district? About £2,000 for roads. There are special water votes; and the principal work I have here is constructing tanks. The principal road work in this district consists of clearing, and there is very little other expenditure. I have about 700 miles of road under my supervision.

1910. What is the distance from here to Broken Hill? I think it is 140 miles.

1911. How much would it cost to make a 24-foot road from hereto Broken Hill, with metal 6 inches deep? It would cost £200,000 independent of maintenance, which would come to about £2,000 per annum. There is a great deal of hilly country at the far end.

1912. Is the route suitable for a railway as far as you can judge? I am a civil engineer, and I think there would be no difficulty in getting a railway through.

1913. What grades could be obtained? One in 40 is considered not too steep. There would be no occasion to have as steep a grade as that. There would be no difficulty in getting the easiest grades required for a railway.

1914. Some time ago did you make some borings for a bridge here? Yes; I bored about 18 feet and came into sandstone rock—that was in the bed of the river.

1915. Did you strike any other water? There was water about 14 or 15 feet that rose above the summer-level of the river, but that is only soakage water that could be found on any part of the Darling.

1916. What formation did you find there? Nothing very distinct until we came to the rock. After going through the soft mud found in the bed of the river we came to fairly stiff firm clay, and then sandstone, gravel, and pebbles. After that a little sand and sandstone rock.

1917. Is there any water on the road between here and Broken Hill? There is none except station supplies. Tenders have already been invited for two or three tanks on the road to Broken Hill.

1918. If the river were locked would it not also serve as a bridge? It might be so constructed, but I do not think it would be an advantage. I think a bridge would be less expensive if built separately. Money has been voted for a bridge.

1919. Would it not be wise to hold that vote in abeyance until it is decided whether or not the railway should be constructed so that the one bridge might serve both for the railway and ordinary traffic? Yes; it would be wise to construct a bridge for both purposes.

1920. How many bores did you put down, and at what distance apart? I put down two bores at about 45 feet apart. I got a good foundation of sandstone rock at 18 feet.

1921. *Mr. Tonkin.*] If a railway could be constructed at twice the cost that it would take to make a road between here and Broken Hill, do you think it would be advisable to construct a railway? It would be advisable to construct a railway in preference to a road.

1922. Is the road to Mount Browne under your care? Yes; it is rather a heavy sandy road. There are watering-places at distances of 15 to 25 miles. There is a great deal of traffic on the road. There are about 700 miners in the vicinity of Mount Browne, Tibooburra, and the different places where they are working. I am speaking of the whole district. There are a good many stations up there, as the whole country is occupied. Wool from the stations, and station supplies, constitute the chief traffic.

1923. Where do the population of Mount Browne get their supplies from? From Wilcannia when the river is open, and a great deal from Broken Hill when the river is closed. The road to Mount Browne could not be improved except at enormous cost. It is a track cleared 1 chain wide for about 140 miles. There is only a vote of £250 a year for the whole road, or about £1 per mile.

1924. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do you mean that there are 700 adult males on the Mount Browne gold-fields? I should say that there were 700 men in the district employed in mining, storekeeping, and in different ways. The total population would not be more than 1,000, as there are very few women there.

1925. Has not some deep sinking been discovered recently in that neighbourhood which promises remarkably well? Yes; about 240 feet. They are getting very payable alluvial gravel. They are also working a reef in the district and are crushing.

1926. If a considerable supply of mining machinery were required, in which way would it have to be taken to the gold-field? If possible it would be brought here by steamer, and then conveyed to Mount Browne by road.

1927. Is there water in the deep ground? Yes; plenty of water. They have to keep the pumps working.

1928. Are there many prospecting parties in the district? Yes, scattered over the whole of the country. A great many are getting gold, and doing very well indeed.

1929. Is there any supply of timber in the Mount Browne district for mining purposes? None that is any good. If a great deal of timber were required for mining purposes it would have to be obtained somewhere on the Murray and brought here by steamer. There would not be any timber in that country fit for railway sleepers.

1930. *Chairman.*] How many have you employed on the roads in your district at present? Fifteen or twenty men scattered about. There are about nine men on the Cobar road, and the rest are on the Mount Browne road. The men on the Cobar road are clearing between the 76-mile post and the 95-mile post.

1931. Do you see many small holders about your district, and are they doing well? I know two small holders, and they are both doing very well indeed, on small blocks.

1932. What improvements have they made? Fencing, tanks, and ordinary station buildings. They have not done much clearing, as it is fairly open salt-bush country. That is at Nagrunnera; it is comparatively free from rabbits. There is a settler about 6 miles from here named Ewan, who holds a small block, and who is doing very well by means of irrigation.

1933. What is the size of the public tanks which have been constructed? From 15,000 to 20,000 yards. They all kept water throughout the drought, with the exception of one on the Booligal road, which had silted up. I think that tanks of 15,000 or 20,000 yards are large enough. There are not enough tanks in my district at present. There is room for more on the new roads, and on the Mount Browne road. 15 miles is quite close enough for tanks. Sometimes 20 miles is near enough.

1934. What is the average cost per cubic yard for tank sinking? From 1s. to 1s. 2d.

John Booth, Esq., part owner of Cultower Station, sworn and examined:—

- J. Booth, Esq.
16 Oct., 1889.
1935. *Chairman.*] Are you part owner of Cultower Station? Yes. The leasehold area consists of 204,000 acres, and the resumed area of 199,000 acres.
1936. What are you assessed at for the leasehold? Between £1,500 and £1,600 for the leasehold and resumed areas;—that is a little over 1d. per acre for the leasehold, and a little under 1d. for the resumed area.
1937. How many permanent hands do you employ on the station? About 20 on an average. When we start rabbiting work again it may be more like 100.
1938. What stock have you on the run now? Very few just now; under 40,000. We lost great numbers by the drought. The run in average seasons would carry more than that.
1939. What improvements have you made on the station? Tanks, wells, dams, fencing, buildings—no ringbarking nor rabbit-proof fencing. Nearly £30,000 has been spent on improvements within two or three years. That was expended during the first two or three years that we had possession until the Act of 1884 was passed, and we then stopped all improvements.
1940. Now that you have a better tenure, will you go on improving or expending money on the station? Yes, we will expend money as we find it will pay—that is on the leasehold. Of course we cannot touch the resumed area.
1941. How many cattle on your station? A few. We do not go in for breeding cattle to any extent. We keep about 100 horses merely for the working of the station.
1942. Have you been much troubled with rabbits? Yes, we are making preparations to destroy them. Under the Rabbit Act we were bound to kill at a certain rate, whether we liked it or not, and to pay a certain rate per scalp whether it was necessary or not. The money was thrown away. I do not know which is the best method of dealing with the rabbit scourge; we have to find that out. I have found poison the most successful; using poisoned grain and poison distributors.
1943. How many paddocks have you on your holding? Between 5 and 6 miles square paddocks. There are about 21 or 22 paddocks, or 28 or 29 including the small paddocks. The paddocks are 16,000 acres downward.
1944. Would it not be advantageous to subdivide the paddocks? It would be a great advantage to put more water on, but not to have smaller paddocks.
1945. Have you tried growing wheat, barley, and oats? I have seen it tried for several years and they got nothing. Unfortunately they were the dry seasons.
1946. Have you any planted this year? Yes, and it is doing very well, but we have plenty of grass without it. We have wheat and a little oats.
1947. Did you plough the land? No, we just threw in the seed and scarified it over, and it has come up splendidly.
1948. During the three bad years which were tried before, did you adopt the same system of planting? No, we ploughed it one year and left it. We have only a small patch under cultivation.
1949. Do you think that the natural grass could be converted into hay, and be used for feeding sheep, in dry seasons? It would feed them right enough, but it would not pay to do it. You cannot mow to any extent in this rough country; and as the sheep are worth very little it would not pay to spend much money in cutting the grass. The appearance of the grass is very deceptive at present, and where you might think you would get 1 ton of hay to the acre you would only get half a ton.
1950. Did you lose a large number of stock during the drought? Yes; the average loss was about one-half on all the stations in the district.
1951. Do you think it is better to stand by and do nothing with the country and run the risk in a bad season of losing half your stock rather than try to preserve the herbage and feed the stock during a bad season? If it costs 4s. to save 3s. it would not do to try and preserve the stock by preserving the herbage. It is just a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence. If we had a railway and could shift the stock, we might be able to save them in a drought, but if there was a drought all over the Colony, even a railway would not save them. It is the cheapest plan to let the sheep die at a time like that.
1952. If a railway were made through this district it would do some good even to the pastoralists? Yes; decidedly. It would enable us to bring feed to the district; it would be a fine thing, and a great saving.
1953. From your experience of the district for about eight years, would you like to leave the district if you had an opportunity of doing so, or would you be satisfied to go on here? I would be very glad to clear out at a very great loss.
1954. *Mr. Copeland.*] What percentage of lambs have you? I cannot say yet. Our sheep are lambing still, and we expect a very big percentage; I should think 90 per cent. at least.
1955. Would your run carry double the amount of stock you have at present? Yes; it would carry any amount of stock just now.
1956. Do you think it is sufficiently stocked at the present time for average seasons? No.
1957. Are the rabbits much reduced since the drought? Yes. They are reduced by two-thirds. There is no serious trouble from them at present, but they are increasing all over the place by hundreds of thousands. Kangaroos are in no way troublesome, but native dogs are.
1958. Do you think the country is better fitted for sheep than cattle? Cattle do well on the country, but it pays better to keep sheep.
1959. In the event of a railway being constructed would you make use of it to send your wool down? Yes, when the river was not running. We send our wool to Port Victor.
1960. Could we only expect to divert your wool to Sydney when the river was not navigable? Yes, unless the railway were cheaper.
1961. If the railway were cheaper would there be any business reason for not sending it to Sydney? Certainly not; we would send to the cheapest place.
1962. Have you any homestead lessees on your run? No.
1963. Have you any water except artificially conserved water on your run? Yes, a billabong runs out for some distance filling a lake.
1964. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] If a railway were constructed through your run to Wilcannia would it give an increased value to your holding? Yes, by giving a certain means of carriage.
1965. Then may you be taken as an advocate for the railway? Yes.

1966. Will the improvement conditions of the new Land Bill be likely to induce you to remain here and work your run? No; nothing would induce me to remain in this country if I could get out of it.
1967. Has not the new Land Bill made your run more valuable? It ought to.
1968. Will not the new railway and the new Land Act increase the value of your holding 30 per cent? It remains to be seen whether that will be the case.

J. Booth,
Esq.
16 Oct., 1889.

Mr. Edmond O'Donnell, stock and station agent, Wilcannia, sworn, and examined:—

1969. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Stock and station agent in Wilcannia. For a number of years I have been connected with station properties in the district. I have been a stock and station agent only for a few months. Before that I was a partner on a station on the Paroo for twelve years, and I was also carrying on business in Wilcannia as a butcher, dealer, and selector. The station consisted of nearly three 10-mile blocks.

Mr.
E. O'Donnell.
16 Oct., 1889.

1970. Was the station a success financially? We did not lose on it altogether. I sold out last year in rather a bad time, but taking it during the twelve years it was not unsuccessful. We made money, but I do not think we made as much as we ought to have done. We paid £18,000 for it. We had £10,000 cash. We kept it for twelve years, and sold it for about £30,000. When we bought it there were 12,000 sheep and 30 head of cattle on it. We sold out about 32,000 or 33,000 sheep, and 800 cattle, and some horses.

1971. What income did you draw from the station during the time you held it? There were five of us in it. We only drew out sufficient for our livelihood and clothes, and an occasional run to town. Sometimes one of my brothers and sometimes two of them lived on the station. We were jointly interested in the butchering business in Wilcannia.

1972. If you had sold the station in a prosperous season could you not have got a higher price for it? No. We were trying to sell it for four or five years.

1973. What do you think are the prospects of a grazier having a station in this district of the same size as your own? It depends very much on the seasons. We got on very well at times, but a bad season would then come on and throw us back two or three years. One good season out of three bad seasons is about the average. We made a great deal of improvements on our run, in the shape of fencing and tanks. Bourke was our nearest place—120 miles away—and we were 200 miles away from here.

1974. Before the railway reached Bourke how did you get your wool to market? By road to Wilcannia or else to a point on the river about 50 miles above Wilcannia, and sometimes to Bourke. As soon as the railway reached Bourke we always availed ourselves of it. The railway enhanced the value of the wool by nearly £10 per ton. The last wool we sent away by river from Bourke cost us very little short of £20 per ton. It remained at Bourke for eight or nine months, because the river was low. Since the railway has been running to Bourke the carriage to Sydney, including teams and all charges, has only cost us £10. 5s. per ton for scoured wool—greasy would be a little less. Nearly all the other graziers in the district availed themselves of the railway.

Arthur W. R. Pratt, Esq., Clerk of Petty Sessions and Mining Registrar, sworn, and examined:—

1975. *Chairman.*] What position do you hold? Clerk of Petty Sessions, Mining Registrar, and Warden's Clerk for the Wilcannia portion of the Albert gold district.

A. W. R.
Pratt, Esq.
16 Oct., 1889.

1976. How long have you been here? Since November, 1885.

1977. Do you produce a statement showing the sheep and rabbit returns from 1887 up to date? Yes, they are as follows:—1887, sheep, £550 17s. 6d.; rabbits, £1,673 2s. 2d. 1888, sheep, £657 12s.; rabbits, £1,879 8s. 9d. 1889, sheep, £548 13s. 6d.; rabbits, £1,425 2s. 10d.

1978. What do these figures represent? The subsidy paid under the Disease in Sheep Act and the Rabbit Nuisance Act—those figures are correct.

1979. Can you give us any information with regard to mining in the district? During the year 1887, the mining business transacted was very small, and the collections amounted to only £17 15s. For 1888, they were £112 5s. Up to date, for 1889, I think I have received £112.

1980. *Mr. Copeland.*] Where is the mining carried on for which that revenue has been received? Partly within 80 or 90 miles of Wilcannia, and partly extending from here right up to the Warden's district of Milparinka.

1981. What does the revenue consist of? Miners' rights, business licenses, mineral licenses, applications for gold and silver leases, and deposits for survey fees. It includes the first year's rent for gold and mineral leases.

1982. Are there any payable mines within the radius of your district? I think not.

1983. I presume the revenue is not likely to increase in future? I cannot say that it will decrease, because the district is now being more extensively prospected than before.

1984. *Mr. Hurley.*] What has been the total amount received by you from all sources for publicans' licenses and all other collections? They are as follows:—1884, £5,992 15s. 5d.; 1885, £2,646 15s. 9d.; 1886, £3,621 19s. 10d.; 1887, £3,605 8s. 8d.; 1888, £4,132 7s. 9d.

1985. How many public-houses are there in the district? About thirteen in Wilcannia.

Mr. Robert Ashworth, public school teacher, sworn, and examined:—

1986-7. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Public school teacher in Wilcannia. I have been here since the early part of August last.

1988. *Mr. Tonkin.*] How many children are there on the roll? 207 for the last quarter.

1989. Is that an increase or decrease as compared with previous years? The enrolment is about the same, but the average attendance is increasing. The population up to the present time has been rather a shifting one, the school records show that many of the names that appear on the book have only been there three months, and the children have then left the district. During the past year the names on the books have been for the most part stationary. There are no other schools in Wilcannia. I do not think there is any other school within many miles of Wilcannia.

Mr.
R. Ashworth.
16 Oct., 1889.

Mr. J. R. Holding, post and telegraph master, sworn, and further examined:—

Mr. J.R. Holding. 1990. *Chairman.*] Do you wish to make a statement with reference to certain railway surveys now being made in Victoria? Yes. I desire to state that the Victorian Government are now having a survey made of a line of railway from their nearest railway station—that is Donald, or some other town about 100 miles from the Murray—tapping the Murray at Wentworth. The country to be passed through is principally mallee country, and if that railway line is made it would take possession of the Darling trade. The surveyors were camped opposite Wentworth a few weeks ago.

16 Oct., 1889.

1991-2. Have you written out a statement as to the crops that can be produced in the Darling district? Yes.

1993. Are the statements contained in this paper reliable and correct? Yes. They proceed almost entirely from personal observation, and partly personal experience, extending over the last twenty years. The statement is as follows:—

Re Mr. Hurley's question,—that if a crop of hay be got once in three years, valued the first year at £5, and £15 three years later?—it was not clear in its object to me. I can only say, that to hold a crop for three years would be risky in many ways,—fire, deterioration, etc., and the possibility of a run of good seasons, a low forage market, and the chance of navigation being open and meeting the demand by foreign importations.

I wish to say most emphatically that no regular cultivation is possible on the Darling from the natural rainfall, but that by irrigation a sure, certain, and very often surprising result is obtained, not only in forage, but in fruits, vegetables, and many other branches of cultivation. That vines grow to perfection on the Darling, good wine made, preserved fruits, apricots, peaches, figs, nectarines, currants, and raisins (made by the sun's heat alone), jams, jellies, and preserves, etc., of an excellent quality produced, has been proved for years past; and, as well, that the citron tribe thrive and come to great perfection. The range of fruits is extensive, and allows of a large range of culture, while vines thrive everywhere along the river; and were encouragement given by legislation to irrigation, there is no doubt the Darling would become very valuable country. But the river water must be conserved to ensure an abundant supply of water, and when once cultivation is fairly set going, the famine prices and dearth of forage, potatoes, onions, fruit, vegetables, etc., will be a thing of the past. While there is no doubt that the value of the west will be immensely increased and made permanently productive of much that is requisite for the maintenance of population to a considerable extent, such would be greatly aided by a railway line to the nearest market. The Darling country is quite equal to and affords equal facilities to the much-lauded Mildura settlement, save that the Darling being smaller than the Murray, steps would be imperative to conserve the great body of highly valuable water that flows down it in flood time, leaving it in the other extreme in the summer months, when water is most needed.

Although dodder has appeared in lucerne, and rust in corn, the soil is too porous, as a rule, to cause any of the troubles arising from want of drainage. *Oidium* is prevalent in vines to some extent.

Any measure that will conserve water on our river will cause settlement, and contribute indirectly to the maintenance of a railway line worked economically. People throughout the west, especially on the rivers, are alive to the fact that water makes the country, and though, as Mr. Hurley justly says, people are very deficient in the knowledge essential to cultivation, it is pretty certain that want would soon be supplied. A school or board that could generally disseminate practical information on the methods of irrigation and cultivation would be of great value to the west, if not to the Colony generally.

As regards underground water supplies, when borings were made for the bridge foundations here, 10 feet from the bed of the river, or 20 feet from the surface of the water then in it, a stream of fresh water was struck, which rose 2 feet above the level of the water.

These remarks may be useful to gentlemen seeking information for the ultimate good of our Colony, and I tender them with all respect.

BROKEN HILL, SATURDAY, 19 OCTOBER, 1889.

[*The Sectional Committee met in the Council Chamber, Broken Hill.*]

Present:—

The HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.
HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Zebina Lane, Esq., mining manager, sworn, and examined:—

Z. Lane, Esq. 1994. *Chairman.*] You are the manager of block 14 company, and you also occupy the position of Mayor of Broken Hill? Yes.

1995. How long have you been incorporated here? Since November of last year.

1996. What is the population of Broken Hill at the present time? About 15,000, but there has been no proper census taken, so far.

1997. Has it been a very rapidly progressive population? Yes.

1998. Can you tell us the extent to which the population has grown during the last two or three years? The only record we have is that about four years ago there were within the municipality from 150 to 200 people, and it has steadily increased since that time. The town and the population as it now stands is just a matter of about four years' growth.

1999. What is the Municipal revenue? I do not know the exact amount, but in round numbers and with the Government subsidy, it will be about £9,000, or £4,500 without the subsidy.

2000. Being a new municipality, you receive £ for £? Yes.

2001. Do you look upon the mining industry here as being thoroughly established, and likely to be of a permanent character? Yes, the mining part of it is only in its infancy. The deepest works we have on the main lode are only 300 feet.

2002. Have you any data or information which would enable us to judge as to what revenue could be derived from this locality if a railway were constructed through New South Wales territory? I have thought it would be better for you to examine all the mine managers. They are all willing to give evidence

evidence as to the tonnage inwards and outwards for the different mines. I can give you my tonnage for Z. Lane, Esq. the last three months, ending the 30th September :—

Despatched by Rail from Block 14 for three months, ending 30th September, 1889.

19 Oct., 1889.

	tons.	cwt.	qrs.
Bullion despatched	1,940	13	3
Ore despatched	1,108	4	0
Bags returned	21	2	0
Total despatched.....	3,069	19	3
Received by Rail.			
Coke	2,176	4	0
Flux	589	10	3
Timber.....	238	13	3
Machinery	50	12	2
Sundries	91	15	0
Total received.....	3,146	16	0
	6,216	15	3

2003. Was that an excessive or an average amount? That is just the work for three months, with only two smelters working. Now, with another smelter at work, the return for the next twelve months will be a third more.

2004. Where did that all go to and come from? Some of it was despatched to Adelaide, and some to Port Pirie. Of course the coke, timber, machinery, and sundries are from Adelaide and Port Pirie. Most of our material comes from Port Pirie; it is, in fact, our port. In addition to that, we use about 150 tons of firewood per week.

2005. And that is collected I suppose in the locality? Yes; in the district, but it is now fast dying out.

2006. The timber is fast being exhausted? Yes; we should have to fall back on coal. If we could get coal at about 30s. to 35s. per ton, we would use it exclusively in preference to wood.

2007. What does it cost you for firewood per ton? Thirteen shillings per ton dead weight. We use about 150 tons a week. As the stock decreases, the cost will naturally increase. The consumption will also increase as the mines become opened up, and we increase our reducing plant. The timber is our greatest item. During six months we have used 348,254 feet of sawn timber.

2008. That was for the purpose of supports and planking? Yes. Our future requirements for the next twelve months will be about 100,000 feet super. per month. The timber we use is mostly 10 inch x 10 inch, 10 inch x 4 inch, and 10 inch x 2 inch.

2009. Have you any evidence showing what you have paid in the way of freight? No; most of our stuff is paid for at Port Pirie, where it is despatched from. With regard to coke, I estimate that during the ensuing twelve months we should require 200 tons per week. Most of the coke that we are getting now is English coke.

2010. Of course all this is being conveyed by your local railway? Yes. One drawback to coal is that it costs us about 54s. per ton.

2011. What does your coke cost you? About 5 guineas per ton. The railway freights are about £1 18s. 9d. per ton. The coke is a very expensive item, and the coal is much more so, on account of the heavy carriage. Our coal is brought round from Newcastle to Port Pirie, and then there is £1 18s. 9d. per ton on it again to bring it here.

2012. Then, for the coke used at this mine, there is no nearer source of supply than Newcastle? We don't use any Newcastle coke.

2013. Where does the coke come from? It is nearly all English. We have tried some of the Newcastle coke, and it did not give satisfactory results. In fact we couldn't use it; it was so high in the percentage of ash.

2014. If you had the means of bringing coal here, would it be largely availed of? It would be used exclusively if we could get it cheaper.

2015. It would be used exclusively if you could get it? Yes; if we could get it at 30s. or 35s. a ton, I would use 100 tons per week myself. Then the other companies would use in proportion.

2016. Do you call this line from Broken Hill a railway or tramway? We call it a tramway, but it is a narrow-gauge railway. It is a lightly built line, and is ballasted with gravel.

2017. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you collect some of the lime in the neighbourhood for the purpose of fluxes? Yes, all of it.

2018. How far distant do you go afield for it? In some cases as far as 9 or 10 miles.

2019. Is the stock easily exhaustible? Being a deposit, it does not go down to any great depth. It will be worked out in time.

2020. Then you will have to go further afield? Yes.

2021. Do you know the routes between here and Wilcannia? Yes.

2022. Is there lime on that track? Yes.

2023. And if good deposits could be found there, there would be plenty of business in bringing lime in? Yes; some of our best deposits would come in on that line about 12 miles beyond Mount Gipps.

2024. Do you know the line between here and Menindie? I have never been beyond 20 miles out.

2025. Is there any lime upon that line? Yes, a little.

2026. But not so much as on the other? No.

2027. Do you bring in iron for the purpose of flux? Yes.

2028. What is the maximum distance from which you bring it? We are carting some of it 12 or 13 miles on the course of the proposed line.

2029. The line to Wilcannia? Yes.

2030. Is that a large deposit? Yes, it is a very large one.

2031. Is there any iron on the line to Menindie? Yes.

2032. Either route would serve you for the purpose of lime or iron? Yes.

2033. There is no material quantity of firewood on either line? No.

2034. You must depend upon lime and iron being brought if you are to do your smelting here? Yes.

2035. And you are rapidly exhausting all that is within easy reach? Yes; as our reducing works increase the consumption is greater.

2036.

- Z. Lane, Esq. 2036. And all your squared timber at present is brought from abroad? Yes; principally from Tasmania and New Zealand.
- 19 Oct., 1889. 2037. If you could get timber from the western slopes of the Blue Mountains here at an equal price, it would suit your purposes as well? It would be better. It is a better class of timber.
2038. If we could get you ironbark, box, or red gum, it would be better? Yes; that is preferable for our work if we could get it for a price. The present drawback is the distance we have to bring it by rail. We could bring pine cheaper, because the railway carriage is less upon pine.
2039. What is the distance from here to Port Adelaide? About 300 miles.
2040. And from here to Port Pirie? I can't say.
2041. The timber comes from Port Pirie I presume? Yes.
2042. Is that 150 miles? Yes; it is more than that—about 250 miles.
2043. At any rate, your timber has to come a long distance at present? Yes.
2044. And even then it has to be brought by water first, so that you have to pay both water and land carriage? Yes; and the duty is 1s. 6d. per 100 ft. super.
2045. Then there is quite a possibility that you may be supplied from the western slopes of the Blue Mountains as effectively as you are now? Yes; the timber would be more suitable for mining purposes than the kind we are using, and it would be cheaper.
2046. It would be more durable? Yes.
2047. Is there any object in having very durable timber in the mines? Certainly, if the mines are to last.
2048. How long would you expect the timber to stand good? Ten or twelve years. The pine we are putting in will not stand more than four or five years.
2049. Will you have to replace that pine? Yes, or fill it up.
2050. It is very dry underground is it not? Yes.
2051. Will that timber rot and dry? Yes; the heat and a certain amount of dampness in the atmosphere creates a sort of dry mouldy rot in the pine.
2052. In the Oregon pine? No, in the New Zealand more than in the other.
2053. Then you have had experience that the New Zealand pine is not a very durable one? Yes.
2054. And if you could get N. S. Wales wood at any slight increase of price it would be cheaper? Yes.
2055. All the fodder for horses used here has to be brought, I presume? Yes.
2056. Where does it come from? South Australia.
2057. But what is the nearest point? From about the Burra.
2058. That is nearly 100 miles, is it not? It is more than that—230 or 240 miles.
2059. Is there any reasonable probability of fodder being grown nearer than that on the present line? Not much nearer. You might get a little from around Tarowie, but the seasons are so uncertain.
2060. Can you give an estimate of the quantity of fodder in the shape of hay, bran, and chaff, at present brought up for horse feed? No.
2061. Are the cattle fed on Indian corn here? No.
2062. On oats? Yes; on oats, chaff, and bran.
2063. They are all imported? Yes.
2064. And they all make a journey of not less than 150 miles? Yes.
2065. So that for everything you use in the mines you have to pay carriage more or less? Yes.
2066. The district must always be a large importing one? Yes.
2067. You say that you are using coke, costing five guineas a ton;—how many tons of coal would be necessary to equal one ton of coke for your purposes? Coke varies a great deal. We should not use more than about 1 ton in 5 in coking, although the different coal varies very much. There is no data to go upon at all.
2068. You have not tested the different styles of coal? No.
2069. What coal have you used in smelting? We don't use coal in smelting, but we use Stockton coal on the boiler furnaces.
2070. You have not attempted to smelt with coal? No.
2071. Could not you smelt with coal? No; it must be coke.
2072. You have tried the Newcastle coke and it failed;—have you tried the Bulli or Illawarra fields? No.
2073. Have you tried the Lithgow material? No.
2074. You have no knowledge whether the coal on the western side of the Blue Mountains would answer your purpose? No.
2075. Then, at the present time, it is cheaper to import the coke from England? Yes.
2076. Am I to understand that the cost of coke landed here is 5 guineas? Yes.
2077. Seeing that the carriage is so heavy, have you estimated whether it is better to take the ore to the coast, or to bring the coke up to the ore? Yes; we have studied that out, and the only difficulty is the dual management, which has been tried, and has been found not to work. In handling the furnaces we have a variety of ore to deal with. If we can mix it we can always regulate the furnaces, but if the furnaces are 100 miles distant we cannot do it.
2078. But could not you send a proportionate quantity of all the different kinds of ore you want for the blend to Port Pirie? Yes; that is being done by the British Company now. They do not seem to smelt any cheaper than I do, or very little cheaper. Their labour perhaps is a little less in cost.
2079. So far as present experience has gone, it is as cheap to smelt at Port Pirie as here? Yes; there is not much to be said on either side. We get better results by smelting on the mine. We have one single management, and have all the varieties of ore and other material at hand.
2080. Then there is no distinct advantage in having the smelting done on the coast? No.
2081. And it may prove to be the ultimate experience that this is the cheapest place to do it? Yes; if we get facilities for bringing in our fluxes, and we get coal cheaper than it is now, and get firewood and our timber at a reasonable price—that is, at less than we now pay for it—we should be able to smelt here as cheaply, if not cheaper, than elsewhere.
2082. If we could deliver coal here you would be independent of firewood? Yes.
2083. Supposing a railway were made by way of Wilcannia or Menindie, and you could get New South Wales coal from Bulli, Wollongong, or Lithgow here, would it be practicable to send trains of coal from the coal-mines there to Broken Hill, and give a return cargo of ore, and have smelters at each end, and to do that

that profitably? The question of smelting of course would be to have a place where flux is handy and fuel and water. If there were smelters at the other end we could always return cargo, and on the other hand if the carriage on bullion was less, or the same as is now being sent *via* Port Pirie to Sydney, we could send all the trucks back loaded with bullion. Z. Lane, Esq.
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2084. But you would not have the same bulk of bullion to send back as you would have coal coming here? Yes, we would have more tonnage of bullion than we would of coal coming in.

2085. It would be more compact? Yes.

2086. Then you could send a full load of bullion back in return for a full load of coal? Yes.

2087. If there were no difficulty in regard to water at the New South Wales end of the line, and no difficulty about firewood or coal, you would still have the same difficulty of dual management to deal with? Yes.

2088. But there would be some advantage in being in connection with the coal mine? Yes; the coke is the greatest item in smelting. If coke, limestone, and ironstone could be procured cheaply, it would be an advantage.

2089. The point is whether the western coal of New South Wales would make a coke to suit your purposes; if it would, there would be a good return for it? Yes.

2090. If it would not, the coal would be of no use to you except for the furnace? No.

2091. It would be of no use for smelting? No.

2092. Then upon that part of the problem rests the question, whether the western coal makes a good coke? Yes.

2093. Is the country between here and Port Pirie nearly all level? Yes; there are no heavy grades.

2094. What is the maximum load which could be hauled from here to Port Pirie? I could not tell you.

2095. How much coke per annum does each smelter consume? Each smelter would consume about 80 tons per week.

2096. Then every fresh smelter put up here would consume that amount? Yes.

2097. So that there would be a traffic for the railway of 80 tons for every fresh smelter put up? Yes.

2098. Looking to the future, what number of smelting furnaces do you think will be established five years from now? The number should be more than double what it is now.

2099. How many are there now? Twelve.

2100. And you think there should be twenty-four at least in five years time? Yes.

2101. And you think that would meet the probable demand? Yes, of course; some of the companies are smelting out of the Colony in South Australia.

2102. How many mines do you think are now established, and are certain to go on working in the district? There are fifteen on the main line itself.

2103. Proved mines certain to go on working? Yes.

2104. Are there any others off the main line which are proved mines? Yes, at least five others.

2105. That would be twenty certain mines altogether? Yes.

2106. Do you think they will last for twenty years? I could not say for twenty years. We can see five years ahead of us on the main line now.

2107. You would not like to guarantee beyond that period? No; what we have below us is not proved yet, although they consider they proved it yesterday and to-day with the bore.

2108. Have you had any opportunity of seeing whether the soil and climate are likely to promote the growth of fodder in the immediate neighbourhood? No; not unless the ground could be irrigated and the rainfall greatly changed. This has been an exceptional season. The soil itself is good enough.

2109. But taking the ordinary run of seasons, you don't think the district will ever provide its own fodder? No.

2110. *Mr. Copeland.*] How much land is there in your mine? 40 acres.

2111. How many shafts have you at work? Three.

2112. Are they all working? No; I am only hauling out of one. Of course we use the others. We do not take stuff through them, but we put timber down them and use them for air.

2113. How deep have you proved the lode? 300 ft. from the surface.

2114. Do you consider you have proved it all the length of the 40 acres? Yes.

2115. That is a quarter of a mile? Yes.

2116. Have you entered into any calculation as to what length of time it would take you to work the ore you know of down to that depth? What we have in sight would take about 10 years.

2117. Speaking roughly, how many men would that give employment to? I have 390 men on the sheet to-day, and I am about 100 short. We cannot get competent miners at all.

2118. In addition to that you employ a good many people indirectly? Yes.

2119. How many do you think? At least 120 more will be supplying us with flux and firewood.

2120. How many furnaces have you at work? Two, and a third one is in course of erection and will be finished in a few weeks.

2121. And will they do all the smelting you require? At the present they will.

2122. Can you say whether the ore is improving as you acquire depth? It is.

2123. Therefore you are justified in looking forward to a long future? Yes.

2124. I presume there is no indication of the lode giving out at the lowest level? No; it is getting larger.

2125. What width is the lode at the lowest level? The average of the lode on the 300-foot level is about 33 feet in width, and the average on the 200-foot level is only 12 feet.

2126. What is the greatest length you have opened out and driven on the course of the lode at any level? 1,320 feet.

2127. At which level? The 200-foot level.

2128. Is your ground a leasehold block? Yes.

2129. For which the Government are paid 5s. per acre per annum? Yes.

2130. Have you been here many years? About three and a half years.

2131. Can you say what length this formation extends along the line of the lode? The main lode itself has been proved for about 10 miles.

2132. That is proved at intervals? No; continuously; the blocks are all adjoining.

2133. Then, for 10 miles continuously, it has been proved to contain payable ore? No, not payable ore.

2134. Then, they have merely traced the lode? Yes.

- Z. Lane, Esq.** 2135. How far in a direction north of the Proprietary blocks have they proved payable ore? About five blocks. That is 100 chains, or $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles.
- 19 Oct., 1889.** 2136. And how far in a southerly direction? About three blocks south; that is 60 chains.
2137. That would be 2 miles altogether, and then there would be the length of the Proprietary claims as well? Yes.
2138. What length is their claim? 60 chains, or $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile.
2139. Therefore for $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles the lode has been proved, continuously, to be payable? Yes.
2140. *Mr. Hurley.*] You say wood costs 13s. per ton. What is a ton of wood equal to as against coal, or coal as against wood? We reckon 1 ton of coal is as good as 4 tons of this wood.
2141. What would wood give in measurement? It is all by dead weight.
2142. And it is very heavy wood? Yes. I never stacked any to measure it.
2143. Would it not pay you to pay a higher price to obtain coal permanently, instead of relying upon wood? I do not consume a great amount of wood, but the Proprietary people, who use much more, cannot get enough wood to supply them, and they are now burning coal almost exclusively.
2144. Therefore you could safely say you could pay 54s. a ton for your coal if you could obtain it? Well, we are compelled to pay it now, but we use wood in preference rather than alter the furnaces, but if we could get coal at 45s. a ton we would use it altogether.
2145. In what direction does the limestone lie from here? You can get it from almost every part of the country. The greater part of it is between here and Silverton. They are working that at present, because it is alongside the tramway.
2146. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What do you pay for the carriage of bullion from here to Port Adelaide? £2 9s.
2147. What do you pay for the timber per ton? A ton is about 420 feet, and it costs us about 25s. per 100 feet superficial.
2148. That would be about £5 a ton? Yes.
2149. What do you pay for the timber in the first instance? We pay 9s. 8d. for 100 feet delivered at Port Pirie in the ship's slings. It costs us 10s. wharfage, which has to be added, and 10s. in the trucks. Then the freight added makes it £5 a ton. That is 25s. 100 feet superficial.
2150. Would you give any more if it were hardwood timber,—ironbark, for instance? We would not give any more for it. We would prefer hardwood, however, at the same price. We take the cheapest timber we can get, and do the best we can with it.
2151. Presuming this railway were constructed, and the Government chose to deliver you coal at £2 5s. a ton, would you, as a sort of compensation, give all your back-loading, in the shape of bullion, to that railway line? When the bullion reaches Port Adelaide we are done with it; and although it is then taken by the Orient Company to Sydney, they take it at their own cost. We must take it to the nearest and cheapest port. It costs us £2 9s. now.
2152. What I want to know is this,—If this railway were constructed, and you were reaping a benefit from it by the charges you paid upon coal—say for instance you got the coal for £2 5s. instead of £2 14s., which you now pay—would you, under those circumstances, give all your back-loading, if it were taken at the same price, to that railway, instead of sending it to Adelaide? Yes, certainly, wherever we could save—if it were even a fractional part of a penny per ton—we would do so.
2153. But supposing you saved nothing in the return loading, would you then give the railway the benefit of the back-loading if it brought you coal at a lesser price than what you are paying now? Certainly, it would be to our interests to do so.
2154. We want to show, if possible, that this railway line, if constructed, will pay for its construction, and if there is a certain amount of return loading it will assist in paying the working expenses of the line. I suppose you have never used any of the Esk Bank coal, or the Lithgow coal? No.
2155. What do you use the coal for principally? Only for steaming purposes.
2156. How much do you use weekly? About 100 tons.
2157. Would that be about the average of the other mines which are working? No; the Proprietary Company would use 5, 6, or 7 times that amount.
2158. But there are other mines which would use much less? Yes.
2159. How many mines are there working which would require anything like this amount of coal? There are two or three others; but there are smaller mines which would take about 50 or 60 tons per week.
2160. You say the coke costs £5 per ton delivered here. Do you think that if the coke could be delivered at £3 or £3 10s. per ton it would be used instead of the £5 per ton coke? Certainly; the quality of the coke depends upon the percentage of ash per ton which it contains, and that is a matter which has never been looked to before, where they have been manufacturing coke in New South Wales. The colonial coke averages about 14 per cent. of ash, whereas the English coke runs to between 6 and 7 per cent. If you get a coke giving 14 per cent., as against a coke giving 7 per cent., you would want that coke 21s. per ton cheaper; or if it went 12 per cent. you would want it 15s. a ton cheaper.
2161. Do you know whether there are any other mines in this district which are likely to be benefited by the construction of a railway? Yes, all the mines.
2162. I mean independently of the silver mines,—are there any other mines here which would benefit much by the construction of this line? There are no other mines but silver lead mines in the district.
2163. Are there no copper mines here? No, not in the immediate vicinity. There is a little copper here and there, but not a large deposit.
2164. No tin-mines? Yes, there are tin-mines, but not in the immediate neighbourhood. They are about forty or fifty miles in a northerly direction.
2165. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Your $3\frac{1}{2}$ years' experience of the district has enabled you to become pretty well acquainted with its mineral resources? Yes.
2166. Do you consider there are any mines outside Broken Hill with anything like promise of permanency about them? Yes.
2167. What mines within a fair radius of the town are likely to be permanent? There are the mines in the Day Dream district. The Day Dream Mine itself is one. That is about 18 miles west from here.
2168. Are there any mines around Silverton? Yes, several.
2169. Are there any to the south or eastward? Yes, there are some on the southern end. The Pinnacle Mine itself is about 10 miles in a south-westerly direction. That is the Pinnacle group, of half a dozen or more mines, which are going slowly on.

2170. Then a railway coming from Sydney, *via* Nyngan and Wilcannia, and stopping here, would be likely to serve them and receive the trade from those mines? Yes, it would. Z. Lane, Esq.
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2171. You mentioned just now that Newcastle coke was not suitable for working in the silver-mines;—are you aware that it is used in some of the silver-mines in New South Wales? Yes; it is used where it can be used, with the difference in the percentage of ash. If the coke can be landed on the furnace floor so much per cent. cheaper for each percentage of ash above 7 per cent., then it can be used as cheaply as English coke.
2172. If you could get English coke at anything like the same price as Newcastle, would you prefer the English? Yes.
2173. Therefore we need not look for any large trade in coke by that railway? No. There is one thing in connection with coke in this country which I don't think they have ever studied, and that is in regard to properly washing it. They have never washed it properly. They could take all the impurities out of it by proper grinding and washing.
2174. From your position as Mayor can you tell us something about the trade of the town;—where does the live stock come from which you use here? Principally from Queensland. It is driven overland. The sheep come from the stations.
2175. Is it possible that the stations between here and Cobar could command that live stock trade? Yes.
2176. Having rapid access to it, perhaps they could better supply the market than those a distance away? Certainly.
2177. Would the same remark apply to the fodder trade? Yes; I think so.
2178. Most of the people resident in this town are South Australians, are they not? Yes, the majority of them.
2179. Judging from appearances, this seems to be a go-ahead centre of population? Yes.
2180. Do you consider it is likely to become very much larger in size? It is certain to increase for the next two or three years. It is impossible for it to go back. In fact, as we now stand we are 300 or 400 miners short on the field. Every mine that is working—my own, the Proprietary, and the British, and all the other mines which are trying to handle ore—are short all the time. I would take 100 miners on Monday morning and put them on to work, but I cannot get them.
2181. What rate of wages prevails here? Ten shillings a day of eight hours for miners, and 8s. 4d. for surface labourers.
2182. Where have you received most miners from? From South Australia, and from Sandhurst and Ballarat, in Victoria.
2183. Do many of the old copper-miners come? Yes.
2184. I presume a railway to Sydney would command the labour markets and mining centres when you required men? Yes; the majority of the men brought here lately have been engaged in Ballarat or Sandhurst, and we have to advance the railway fare to bring them here.
2185. Are the contracts you make in South Australia and Victoria binding here? We have to trust to the men.
2186. How many working miners do you think there are in this district—(say) on the mines of Broken Hill? Between 5,000 and 6,000.
2187. And you think there would be room for 2,000 more? There is room for another 1,000.
2188. Then, with the extension of mining, which you say will rapidly take place, there must be a greater demand for mining labour here? Yes; what is really keeping the place back at the present time is the labour.
2189. What is the value of your saleable property here? The assessed capital value is £656,636, and the annual value is £94,022.

Mr. Charles Chapple sworn, and examined:—

2190. *Mr. Copeland.*] What business are you connected with? I am a carrier and forwarding agent.
2191. Have you been long in the district? Yes; I came here in 1878 before the mines started.
2192. In which direction do you transact most of your forwarding business? South Australia.
2193. Can you say how many tons of goods have passed through your hands through any given period—(say) during last year? I can give it to you for July, August; and September last. The imports of general goods, comprising groceries, drapery, ironmongery, and machinery, &c., amounted to 1,265 tons, 18 cwt. 1 qr., timber, 782 tons 10 cwt. That is here at Broken Hill. At Silverton and Cockburn the imports have been—general merchandise, 266 tons.
2194. Those alluded to at Cockburn have stayed there, I presume, and then come on to Broken Hill? It comes over the Border into New South Wales.
2195. But you are given two lists,—the first as coming to Broken Hill, and the other as coming only to Cockburn? Yes.
2196. Have you any quantity of goods sent away from here? Yes; the ore which passed through my hands during the same period amounted to 2,157 tons 3 cwt. 1 qr; general goods, 17 tons 14 cwt.; wool, 5 tons only; and from Silverton 316 tons of wool, and 756 tons of ore. On account of the season being such a good one, and the river being up, a great deal of wool which generally comes this way has gone down the river this year.
2197. All the goods you have alluded to have been sent to or obtained from Adelaide? Yes, most of them. A little comes round from Sydney and Port Pirie; but the most of it is from South Australia.
2198. And nothing has been sent down the river except wool? No.
2199. Can you say how many other forwarding agents there are? There are three others firms besides mine. Some of the mines forward their own goods direct, and they do not pass through our hands at all.
2200. Do the other three firms do an equal amount of business with yours, or more? I think I do more, although a great deal more wool has gone through the other firms than mine.
2201. I suppose the whole of these goods have been sent away, and others brought by tramway to the Border, and then by South Australian trains? Yes.
2202. As a person well acquainted with the district, do you think that if this railway was constructed to connect

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C. Chapple.
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- Mr. C. Chapple.
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- connect Broken Hill with Sydney, many of these goods would be obtained from Sydney? I think so. I think if coal could be brought here at a reasonable price there would be a large traffic in coal alone. Then, no doubt, bullion would be sent away.
2203. I suppose you could not form any estimate of the tonnage which would be likely to be obtained from Sydney, or sent to Sydney? No; I could not.
2204. What freight do you pay for fodder from Adelaide? About £3 3s. a ton.
2205. That is for hay, oats, chaff, &c.? Yes.
2206. Do you think there would be any likelihood of business springing up in the direction of obtaining fodder from the eastward, instead of from South Australia, if this line were opened? I think so.
2207. Has there been any attempt at cultivating the ground here? Only on a very limited scale; the rainfall is not good enough.
2208. I suppose you do not know what is the actual rainfall for an average number of years? About 8 inches.
2209. And you think that is not sufficient to enable crops to be cultivated? If we got it at the right time, I daresay we could grow crops with 8 inches of rain; but probably we would get 4 or 5 inches at one fall, and then we are a long time without any.
- 2210-11. Can you say, with reference to the existing tram-line, whether any straighter or shorter line could be constructed between Broken Hill and Cockburn? Yes, *via* the Pinnacles; it is some 6 or 7 miles shorter.
2212. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How long have you resided in this district? Eleven years, within 30 or 40 miles of Broken Hill. I have been at Silverton or here ever since the field started.
2213. Can you say how many seasons are likely to be good in this neighbourhood (say) out of four? It is lucky if we get one out of four. I think I may say we get one really good season in seven, and perhaps two other seasons in seven are fairly good.
2214. I suppose during these dry seasons prices run very high in Broken Hill? Yes; they have been very high for a great many things—water especially.
2215. Can you give an idea of the cost of fodder, and also of some of the necessaries of life for mankind? Well, I paid £8 10s. a ton for fodder this last summer. I have paid £20 a ton, but that was a long time ago—before we had a railway, and when there was a difficulty in getting things.
2216. And during the dry seasons the prices of household commodities ranged very high? No, not much, perhaps a trifle higher, but not a great deal.
2217. A line running from here to the sea-board, and through highly favoured cultivated districts, would be the means of supplying you with fodder in dry seasons, and giving you command of a good market for the purchase of stores? Yes.
2218. And by that means it would be a great boon to the people of this district? Yes.
2219. You said to Mr. Copeland that you formerly took a large amount of wool down to South Australia, but that this year it went by the river;—how far out were you in the habit of getting that wool? From here to the Queensland Border, all around Mount Browne district, and close to Wilcannia.
2220. Within what radius? About 100 miles.
2221. And all that produce, when the river was low, went down to Adelaide? A great deal of it went down, and a great deal of it was stored and kept.
2222. But all the produce you and others were in the habit of sending went by river? Yes.
2223. Do you think a railway to this place would intercept that traffic? I think so.
2224. Is there much traffic now towards Mount Browne? Yes, a good deal.
2225. Do you know anything of the country in that direction? No; I have not been to Mount Browne. I know the country between this and Wilcannia, and around the district generally.
2226. How far do you think this mineral country extends (say), from Silverton northwards? I think there are minerals more or less all the way to Mount Browne.
2227. Then you say the whole of the Barrier Ranges are mineral? I think so.
2228. *Dr. Garran.*] Since this railway has been completed to Broken Hill, have you drawn the wool from a longer distance than you did before towards South Australia? Yes.
2229. It has been open whilst the river has been unnavigable? Yes.
2230. How near to the river have you gone to draw wool? Right to the banks.
2231. And have you sent return stores? Yes.
2232. Have you ever sent stores to Wilcannia from here? Yes.
2233. Or to Menindie? Yes.
2234. And the stations on the Darling River have been supplied from this railway? Yes.
2235. And you have brought back wool? Yes.
2236. And when the river is in flood, how far short do you stop? We go out then about 40 or 50 miles.
2237. What distance does that leave between there and the river? From here to Menindie, as the crow flies, is about 75 miles. All the wool in that direction goes down the river; but towards Wilcannia we go within 80 or 90 miles of the river.
2238. What is the distance between here and Wilcannia? 130 miles.
2239. You go about half way? Yes.
2240. Even when the river is in flood? Yes.
2241. Then the navigableness of the river does not reach more than about 20 miles from its banks if there is a railway on the other side to draw the wool? It depends on circumstances. Some of the wool comes down here which could go down the river, only it suits them better now to ship it from Port Pirie or Port Adelaide round to Sydney.
2242. Is the carriage inward to Broken Hill equal to the carriage outward? I think it is.
2243. Does the New South Wales railway to Bourke compete with the Mount Browne traffic you speak of? No.
2244. None of it goes to Bourke at present? No; I think not.
2245. How near to Bourke, on a north-westerly track, does the effect of this railway to Broken Hill tell? I can hardly tell you.
2246. Have you drawn any wool down from 80 miles west of Bourke? No; not so close as that. I daresay about 100 miles.
2247. If there was a railway from Sydney to Wilcannia, with a terminus at Wilcannia, it would compete with this railway which has its terminus at Broken Hill? Yes.
- 2248.

2248. And the stations midway would be balanced as to whether to send the wool to Port Adelaide or to Sydney? Yes.
2249. You take a belt of country 50 miles in breadth, inside our border, and drain it down to this direction (*pointing to the map*)? Yes; but in a northerly direction we go further out.
2250. The more northerly you go the more easterly you go? The more easterly we go the more we get to the river; but northerly we go out 200 miles.
2251. As you go northward does the effect of your railway go to the eastward also? Yes.
2252. Then you go east by north as you go up? Yes.
2253. Then to some extent you follow the trend of the Darling River? Yes.
2254. If you draw a line on the map, showing the traffic area, it will follow the line of the Darling River? Yes.
2255. A line drawn parallel with the Darling River, about 100 miles back, would be about the limit of your operations? Yes.
2256. *Mr. Tonkin.*] In the estimate you gave us of the goods traffic sent by you from here, did you include any bullion? None whatever.
2257. Then that is a much larger item in tonnage than the amount of goods you sent through? Yes; very much larger indeed. I pass the entries for it, but as I understand you are going to take evidence from the mine managers, I have not included it in my return.
2258. Then nothing you have mentioned as goods going through your hands has to do with what they receive at or send from the mines in the shape of bullion, coke, coal, or wood? No.
2259. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you any knowledge of agriculture? Very little.
2260. Can you say what the character of the soil is within 50 miles of this place? I think it is excellent.
2261. Do you think irrigation would bring about a settlement of population which would provide sufficient fodder and wheat for this place? There is no doubt about it.
2262. You are of opinion if irrigation were provided, that the soil is sufficiently productive to grow all that is required for the district? I feel sure it would.
2263. In view of the present favourable season, have any silos for ensilage been built? A gentleman told me the other day he was going to try.
2264. But it has not been practised? No; not yet.

Mr.
C. Chapple.
19 Oct., 1889.

Francis Wickham, Esq., surveyor in the Railway Department, sworn, and examined:—

2265. *Chairman.*] What is your profession? A railway surveyor, in the New South Wales Railway Department. F. Wickham,
Esq.
19 Oct., 1889.
2266. Are you also an engineer? No; we are only called surveyors in the Department.
2267. Who is the gentleman who is making the survey with you? Mr. Hixson, also a surveyor.
2268. What survey have you been engaged upon? From Wilcannia to Broken Hill and Cockburn.
2269. Where did you commence your survey? At Broken Hill.
2270. How far did you get? 40 miles towards Wilcannia.
2271. Did you meet the other surveyor there? Yes.
2272. What is the character of the country you have surveyed? Undulating country for the most part, running into flat country as you get towards Wilcannia.
2273. And the soil? It is a red soil—very mineralized kind of country.
2274. Is it stony in parts? Yes; full of stones and ridgy.
2275. What is the ruling grade you are taking on this line? 1 in 100 is the grade we were instructed to obtain, and I think we should obtain grades very nearly approaching 1 in 100. We ought to get 1 in 70 grades as the steepest on the line.
2276. Will there be much difficulty in getting 1 in 100,—will there be many cuttings or divergencies? It would be better to use the 1 in 70 grade in places, than to make a deviation for the purpose of obtaining 1 in 100.
2277. For what reason? Because you would have to have very long deviations for 1 in 100.
2278. In many places? No; in very few.
2279. Would the cuttings be very deep to get this 1 in 100 grade? No.
2280. What stations did you pass through on your survey? Mount Gipps, Kinchega, Topar, and then to Mount Gipps again.
2281. What is the longest length of plain country in this survey? About 28 miles of level surface running.
2282. Almost a dead level? Yes; almost surface running for 28 miles out of 40.
2283. What is your opinion as to the formation of this line—would it want to be ballasted? I think so.
2284. You are quite sure it would from the character of the country? Yes; I should say decidedly it would have to be ballasted.
2285. In making your survey, did you come across material suitable for ballast? Yes; a large amount.
2286. Was it sandstone? No; it is the usual rock which occurs in this country. I could not give you the name of it, but it would make very suitable ballast.
2287. From your experience as a surveyor, would you say this is an easy line to construct? Yes.
2288. What about water along the line of railway? There are two very large creeks—one very large, and one rather large. Stephen's Creek is the one I mean.
2289. At what intervals? Stephen's Creek is at 12 miles from Broken Hill, and Yancowinna Creek is at 29 miles from Broken Hill.
2290. Did you make enquiries as to whether those creeks were always with water? Yes; they have not always water in them.
2291. Are there any Government tanks along the surveyed line? Yes, one at Stephen's Creek.
2292. Did you come across any timber suitable for sleepers? None whatever.
2293. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are the ruling curves? Sixteen chains radius will be the smallest curve.
2294. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Have you surveyed the line between here and the border? I am doing it at present.
2295. Is it level country so far as you have gone? It is a little rougher than towards Wilcannia.
2296. Between here and Topar two bridges will be required—over the Yancowinna and Stephen's Creeks? Yes.

- F. Wickham, Esq. 2297. Will they be of a costly nature? The Stephen's Creek bridge will be a long one of about 11 chains; the other will be about 3 chains in length. The Stephen's Creek bridge will be an expensive one, I think.
- 19 Oct., 1889. 2298. Will there be any costly works on the other side of Broken Hill? None.
2299. *Dr. Garran.*] You say you have about 12 miles of country of ridges? Yes.
2300. Are they long ridges? No, very short.
2301. If you laid the line out pretty well on the surface-ground in the first instance, it would be easy afterwards to cut the gradient down to 1 in 75 or 1 in 100? No; it would not.
2302. *Mr. Copeland.*] What is the total length of the line between here and Wilcannia? 115 miles.
2303. You say it will be necessary to make a number of deviations to obtain a grade of 1 in 100; can you say what length those ridges are, or those cuttings would be, to obtain a grade of 1 in 100 in the length that you have surveyed? To cut the grade down very much would about double the cutting, say, make an 8 or 10 chain cutting in length.
2304. In how many cases would it be necessary to make these cuttings, and what length would the total cuttings be, so as to obtain a grade of 1 in 100? It would be necessary to cut in about two places.
2305. What would the length of each of these two places be? By making 25 or 30 chains of a cutting you could obtain a grade of 1 in 100.
2306. And the grade of 1 in 100 would be the ruling grade between Broken Hill and Wilcannia? Yes.
2307. Can you say what depth the 25 to 30 chains cuttings would have to be? I should say not more than 25 feet in the highest point, and it would gradually work out at each end to nothing.
2308. What rock formation would the deepest part of these cuttings be in,—would it be hard rock? No; it would be the rock which the whole country is formed of.
2309. Is it sandstone rock? No; it is some micaceous schist rock.
2310. And the work would be done cheaply? Yes.
2311. And then you could obtain the grade of 1 in 100 all the way to Wilcannia, and beyond Wilcannia for some distance;—do you know the country on the other side? I surveyed the line from Wilcannia and Cobar.
2312. What are the grades between Wilcannia and Cobar? There were some 1 in 40 there.
2313. But those have been taken out, have they not? I do not know.
2314. Where were those grades? Half-way between Cobar and Wilcannia.
2315. Did you make those surveys yourself? Yes.
2316. Can you say what length those cuttings were? Not from recollection.
2317. How far did you survey from Wilcannia towards Cobar? The whole distance from Cobar towards Wilcannia.
2318. Going from Wilcannia towards Cobar where did the grades commence? At about 40 miles.
2319. Then between Wilcannia and 40 miles towards Cobar you have level country? Perfectly level.
2320. So that if you reduce the grades to 1 in 100 you would then have, for 40 miles beyond Wilcannia, level country the whole way? Yes.
2321. Do you think it will be possible, all the way between Wilcannia and Cobar, to get a grade of 1 in 100? Certainly.
2322. Without trouble? There would have to be some trouble. It would have to be a longer line.
2323. You would have to make deviations? Yes.
2324. To what extent do you think it would lengthen the line so as to reduce the grade all the way from Wilcannia to Cobar to 1 in 100. Have you examined the matter critically, with the object of ascertaining it? I think you could do it with, say, an 8 miles longer line.
2325. Then by making the line 8 miles longer, and by making these cuttings you speak of near Broken Hill, you would obtain a ruling grade of 1 in 100 between Broken Hill and Cobar? Yes.
2326. Do you think it would be necessary to extend the line 8 miles to get rid of these gradients of 1 in 40 between Wilcannia and Cobar? To the best of my knowledge, it would be necessary.
2327. Would it not be possible to make slight deviations, and to have shallow cuttings? No; you would require to alter the direction of the line entirely 8 miles.
2328. By altering the direction you would be able to avoid these cuttings altogether—by making some lengthened alterations without any sharp curves? Yes; I think we would be able to avoid the ridges altogether.
2329. If you adopted that course how much longer do you think the line would be between Wilcannia and Cobar? That is the course I had in view when I said it would make 8 miles longer.
2330. Then you would obtain a level line? Fairly level,—of 1 in 100.
2331. Do you know of any objection there would be, other than lengthening the line, to making this deviation? There will be no other objection.
2332. Do you know any advantages which would arise through making this deviation? None, beyond an easier grade.
2333. Would it be likely to serve any of the station people to any greater advantage? No, not at all.
2334. Would it take you any nearer the ballast or the timber? No.
2335. Would you avoid any creeks, bridges, culverts, or anything of that kind? No.
2336. So that there would be no compensating advantages to induce making this deviation, excepting to avoid the cuttings, and get a level line? None whatever.
2337. But you could avoid the cuttings? Yes, we could.
2338. You said that the deepest cuttings near to Broken Hill would be about 20 feet? About 20 or 25 feet in the deepest part.
2339. Can you say what length those cuttings would be? From 7 to 8 chains.
2340. How many tanks would you come across for water supply for the railway between Wilcannia and Cobar? There are three within 50 miles of Cobar, and from there you would meet no more.
2341. And the distance between Cobar and Wilcannia is how much? 156 miles.
2342. Then for 106 miles you would be without water from the Government tanks? Yes.
2343. Does the line go near any private tanks? Yes, a large number.
2344. Right on the track? Yes.
2345. If you were to make this deviation, so as to get a better grade, would that take you nearer the Government tanks? No.
2346. Would there still be private tanks on that route? Yes.
- 2347.

2347. Is there any timber for sleepers between Wilcannia and Cobar? No; there is very good pine for fencing. F. Wickham, Esq.
2348. Is there any ballast between Wilcannia and Cobar? Yes; large quantities.
2349. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Have you formed any estimate of the probable cost of the railway (say) from Cobar to Wilcannia, and Wilcannia to Broken Hill? No. 19 Oct., 1889.
2350. Give us an idea of what you think would be the cost of the line? It would be rather difficult for me to do so, and it would only be an approximate cost; I think about £3,000 a mile.
2351. You are aware that the cost of the line between Nyngan and Cobar is estimated at £2,500 per mile? Yes.
2352. With grades of 1 in 40? Yes.
2353. Is not the line between Cobar and Wilcannia likely to cost less than the line from Nyngan to Cobar? No; I should not think so.
2354. And are not the gradients you refer to surface gradients, which can be altered after the line is made between Cobar and Wilcannia? No; they are not surface gradients all the way.
2355. Can you remember where the grades of 1 in 40 were; are they in Paddington Station or Kintower Station? They are on Bulla Bulla Station.

Thomas Rhodes Firth, Esq., C.E., Department of the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

2356. *Dr. Garran.*] What is your occupation? Civil Engineer in the Government service. T. R. Firth, Esq., C.E.
2357. Have you been District Engineer on any of our lines? Yes; several of them.
2358. For how many years? I have been in the Government service since March, 1863, with the exception of eighteen months. 19 Oct., 1889.
2359. You have recently been over the line from Nyngan to Cobar, inspecting the previous survey? Yes.
2360. With a view of seeing whether it would be wise to reduce the gradients? Yes.
2361. Looking at the fact that the traffic for a time, will be light, do you, as an engineer, think it would be best to accept the surface gradients for a time with the view of reducing them as the traffic increases? I think so; that is if the traffic is to be light. I do not think it is really worth while to make an expensive line until the traffic warrants the expense.
2362. These improvements between Nyngan and Cobar are all deviations? Yes.
2363. Are you of opinion that if we accepted the original survey, we should save money by leaving the lightening of the grade to a future time? Making these deviations will not cost very much more than if the original grade had been adhered to, because they have found a different line of country. Instead of keeping a straight line they have deviated, and made several curves, and therefore keep lower ground.
2364. Where you make a curve of that kind, would you alter the line as you approached the top of the grade, or would you keep a straight line and then make the curve? I would keep a straight line for a certain portion, and then run round the point of the spurs.
2365. You do not like your straight line very much to hit your spurs;—if you make the curve sharp it increases friction? Yes.
2366. And that diminishes the load to be carried? Yes.
2367. So that the curve diminishes the load as much as a grade does? Not to the same extent, but in a certain proportion—depending upon the sharpness of the curve and the length of the train.
2368. So that if, for the sake of a better grade, we make curves in the line from Nyngan to Cobar, we by that fact diminish the maximum of load to be carried? Yes.
2369. Taking the curves as you have them, and assuming the maximum load to be 200 tons, to what extent would the curve reduce the load? I could not tell you straight off. We are reducing the grades there now from 1 in 40 to 1 in 75.
2370. The introduction of the curve would not neutralise what you are doing? No, not entirely.
2371. It would only add a little more friction? Yes.
2372. A little more cost in keeping up the road? Yes; a little more wear on the rolling stock, and more extensive friction.
2373. So far as you have seen, you think it would be better to make these deviations now, rather than reduce the grade on the straight afterwards? Yes.
2374. And you have been over the line with the Committee from Cobar to Broken Hill? Yes; as near as we could get to it.
2375. And you have had practically a flying survey of the line;—do you think there are any intervening ridges or conditions which would make it undesirable to reduce the grade in the first instance? No; I think, from what I can see of the country, there would be no great difficulty in making the grades not steeper than 1 in 75.
2376. If you were left absolutely to your own judgment, and told to make the best practicable line for this Colony, would you give a ruling grade of 1 in 75? That would depend entirely on the amount of money I was likely to have voted, and the amount of traffic I could see was likely to run over the line.
2377. I ask the question with an eye to the prospective traffic? Then I think I would give a gradient of 1 in 75.
2378. You would not accept 1 in 40? No; I think I should make it 1 in 75. The extra expense would be very small, and it would not be worth while trying to save the money.
2379. If the grade were 1 in 75 it would not be worth while altering it afterwards? No; the traffic would have to be very heavy to justify its alteration.
2380. What loads do you think would it bring over a grade of 1 in 75? I should not like to say. It depends entirely on the kind of engines to be run.
2381. From what you have seen, there is no difficulty in making a line of 1 in 75 all the way from Nyngan to Broken Hill? I think not.
2382. *Mr. Copeland.*] Where you have a competitive line—as this western line must be—against the South Australian line, do you not think it is desirable to spend a reasonable amount of money in making cuttings, and so obtain an easy grade, so as to enable the New South Wales Government to carry at a low rate? Yes; I do think so, if this is to be a competitive line.
2383. Would you not take this to be a competitive line? Yes.

- T. R. Firth, Esq., C.E.
19 Oct., 1889.
2384. Would it not be competitive, as against the South Australian railway on the one hand, and the Darling River on the other? Yes; of course it would.
2385. Must we not secure a large amount of trade so as to make the railway worth constructing, or to make it payable after it is constructed? Yes; we ought to do that.
2386. You are aware that our success in using this railway will all depend upon the competitive rates we can afford to run for? Yes.
2387. Therefore it is desirable we should be able to run on as level a grade as possible, and carry as big loads as possible? Yes; but at the same time, by making this easy line at an expensive cost, you must raise your rates so as to pay interest upon that cost.
2388. But where there are only a very few ridges to cut through, and then you have a large run upon level country, do you not think it is desirable to go to the expense of cutting through these ridges and then getting the benefit of all the level country intervening? Certainly, if it is only a small amount.
2389. From what you have seen in travelling from Nyngan to Broken Hill, do you not think that is the general character of the country? Yes.
2390. Speaking in general terms, it is a dead level or nearly so; at any rate it is country where you can get exceedingly easy grades, such as 1 in 100, and it is only in a very few places indeed where you will have to go to any expense in cutting so as to secure a continuous grade of 1 in 100? Yes; the additional expense per mile would be very small.
2391. Then we should be enabled to carry much larger loads and at a cheaper rate? Yes; the surveyor says it would lengthen the line between Wilcannia and Cobar 8 miles. Of course that becomes a serious item. Even supposing the earthworks are the same, there is the permanent way and fencing, the cost of which in this instance would be at the least £1,600 per mile. Again, all traffic running through would have to pay 8 miles of extra trainage, which would reduce the possibility of competing with the rivers or with the other Colony. A deviation of that kind I should think would really not be desirable. The cost, amounting to from £12,000 to £15,000, might perhaps be spent better in earthworks and in keeping to the other line.
2392. I presume you could not say what it would cost to make those cuttings? No.
2393. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Has the Department formed any estimate of the cost of the bridge over the Darling? There has been a rough estimate of the cost made. I think it is £56,000—between £50,000 and £60,000.
2394. Do you know if the line crosses the stream called the Tallywalka, about 30 miles from the Darling? I think it does.
2395. There would be no bridge required there? Not a very big one—a low timber bridge; not a very expensive one would do.
2396. *Mr. Hurley.*] You inspected some stone in Wilcannia? Yes.
2397. Would that be suitable for the construction of a bridge of piers over the Darling? I think cylinders would be more suitable.

BROKEN HILL, MONDAY, 21 OCTOBER, 1889.

[*The Sectional Committee met in the Council Chambers, Broken Hill.*]

Present:

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT, (CHAIRMAN.)		
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	|	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
HENRY COPELAND, Esq.	|	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JOHN HURLEY, Esq.	|	

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. John Bristowe, Accountant to the Broken Hill Proprietary Co., Broken Hill, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. Bristowe.
21 Oct., 1889.
2398. *Mr. Copeland.*] What position do you hold here? I am an accountant to the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, at Broken Hill.
2399. What is the area of ground belonging to the Company? We have three 40-acre blocks under mineral leases.
2400. For which you pay 5s. per acre per annum? I could not tell you how much. I believe the leases are arranged in Melbourne.
2401. The three 40-acre blocks, I suppose, give you $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile along the lode? Yes.
2402. How many shafts have you at work on the lode? There are seven actually at work raising ore.
2403. Can you say for what length along the course of the lode you have proved the lode to exist? To the whole extent of the property; from one end to the other.
2404. Then you have proved the lode for $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile? Yes.
2405. To contain payable ore? Yes.
2406. Can you say to what depth you have proved it—what is the greatest depth? At present it is about 316 feet.
2407. From the surface? Yes.
2408. Does it show indications of continuing in depth? Yes.
2409. Can you say what is the average width of the lode, approximately? About 170 feet. Its extreme width is 234 feet.
2410. But you think it will average about 170 feet? I could not say positively, but I think about that.
2411. Can you say whether it is widening as it gets deeper? No; I could not.
2412. Can you say whether it is improving in quality as it gets deeper? No.
2413. But at your greatest depth it continues to be payable? Yes.
2414. Do you know how many years' work you have in view at the present time? I have never heard an expression of opinion from the General Manager, and I have no idea myself.
2415. I suppose you are satisfied that there are many years work assured to the Company? Undoubtedly.
2416. But you could not say how many? No.
- 2416 $\frac{1}{2}$. Can you say how much has been expended in machinery by the Company? Not from memory.

Mr.
J. Bristowe.
21 Oct., 1889.

2417. Do you know the total amount of called-up capital expended? The paid-up capital to date is £34,000, of which £16,000 has been returned to shareholders. The total amount of dividends paid up to May 30th is £808,000.

2418. Can you give any information relative to the quantity and value of goods brought to the mine, and of minerals and metals sent from the mine, say for the last twelve months? I have some figures which I have made up, but they have reference only to the quantity of bullion we despatch, and to the coke, timber, limestone, and sundries—such as ordinary stores and machinery and coal—we received.

2419. Perhaps you had better make a general statement in regard to the matter? During the months of July, August, and September last the Broken Hill Proprietary Company has despatched 7,347 tons of bullion. The Company has received 7,950 tons of coke; 3,810 tons of timber, equalling nearly 2,300,000 feet superficial; 12,053 tons of limestone; 474 tons of sundries—that is machinery and stores; and 3,011 tons of coal;—equalling 34,647 tons for the three months. The only export is bullion. The bullion produced up to May 30th was 39,708 tons, containing 9,756,977 ounces.

2420. Then the total amount of goods to and from the mines comes to 34,647 tons in that period? Yes.

2421. Can you say what you have paid for the carriage of those goods? I can give you individual rates. For bullion we pay 39s. 3d. per ton from the mine delivered at Port Pirie.

2422. Have you sent any ore? Very little. We have not sent any within the last year.

2423. What carriage do you pay for the different articles you import for the mine? For the coke and timber we pay 40s. 3d. per ton; for the limestone it averages from 3s. to 6s. per ton. It is only brought from short distances—from Silvertown and the limestone siding. The sundries average from 70s. to 130s. per ton on the South Australian railroads, and from 13s. 4d. to 22s. 7d. on the Silvertown tramway.

2424. Can you say what is the value of the bullion which was despatched during those three months? Approximately, it is about £54 a ton.

2425. The value of the bullion then would be about £396,000? Yes.

2426. That bullion is despatched to Port Pirie, and from thence to Sydney? Yes, I think so. The greater part of it goes that way.

2427. Does the Company dispose of it at Port Pirie? No, it is sent to England for sale.

2428. Then it really goes to Sydney for the convenience of the steamships? Yes, entirely.

2429. Is the coke you use imported from England? Chiefly;—the greater part of it comes from London.

2430. What other places do you get coke from? We have had quantities from Newcastle, New South Wales, and also some from New Zealand.

2431. How have you found the coke answer from New Zealand? It has not turned out very well; in fact, the colonial cokes do not compare with the British.

2432. Can you say what the British coke costs you to land at the mine? From £5 to £5 5s. a ton.

2433. Do you know what the Newcastle coke costs you, or the New Zealand? It costs about 10s. less per ton.

2434. Then the difference in quality does not make up for the lower price, I suppose? No.

2435. Is the Newcastle coke better than the New Zealand coke, or *vice versa*? I don't think there is much difference between them.

2436. Can you say how much coke is used in the year? We use 463 tons per week,—that is 24,000 tons a year.

2437. Can you say how much timber you used, say for last year? We have been using at the rate of about 400,000 feet per month.

2438. And how many feet are reckoned to a ton weight? About 500 feet superficial.

2439. That would amount, then, to about 9,600 tons a year? Yes, about that.

2440. Can you say whether the Company would use hardwood if they could get a supply of it? It would just be a matter of price, I think. Hardwood is quite suitable for our requirements.

2441. But considering the greater durability of hardwood, don't you think the Company would be prepared to pay a higher price for it, than for soft wood, for underground purposes? I don't think so.

2442. Is it not a matter of great consideration to have timber which will last 15 or 20 years, instead of 8 or 10 years? It may be, but I do not think the difference in cost would make it up. So far, the experience of our General Manager has been that Oregon timber is so much easier to handle, and to saw, and the cost of freight is so much lower, that he prefers it even at an equal price.

2443. Can you say whether there is a large quantity of lime available at the place where you now obtain it? I think there is a very large quantity indeed.

2444. What is the locality of the lime; is it near the railway line? Yes, very near one of the Silvertown Company's sidings, at a place called the Acacia Dam.

2445. How many miles from Broken Hill? About 10 miles, I think.

2446. And it is considered that that supply is sufficient for the future? From what I have heard it is practically inexhaustible.

2447. And the limestone is of a satisfactory quality? Yes.

2448. Do you not also require a large quantity of ironstone? Yes, but we have that upon our mine in large quantities.

2449. Have you sufficient to last you for many years? Yes.

2450. Then the only material you will require to bring to the mine would be coke, underground timber, and coal for your machinery? Yes.

2451. At the present time I suppose you are using firewood for steam purposes? No; we are using coal almost entirely.

2452. Where does it come from? Newcastle, New South Wales.

2453. Can you say what it costs per ton delivered at the mine? £2 7s. 1d.

2454. Do you know what is paid for the coal at the mine? We buy it at Port Pirie. It costs 21s. 5d. per ton at Port Pirie.

2455. Then the difference between the 21s. 5d and £2 7s. 1d. is the carriage? Yes.

2456. Do you know what Company's coal it is? No; I could not tell you that.

2457. But it is from Newcastle—not the western coal? No.

2458. Brought round by steamers from Newcastle to Port Pirie? Yes.

2459. What are the quantities which you are using? We are using about 700 tons a month

2460.

- Mr. J. Bristowe.
21 Oct., 1889.
2460. In addition to that, I suppose you are using some quantity of firewood? Not a very large quantity.
2461. Can you say how much? From 80 to 100 tons per week.
2462. That would be about 350 tons a month? Yes, about that.
2463. Can you say what distance this firewood has to be brought to the mine? From about 10 to 12 miles. It has to be carted to the mine.
2464. Has the wood been used in the immediate vicinity of the mine, say within 6, 10, or 12 miles? Yes, it has all been brought in, I think.
2465. I suppose the wood is rapidly being used up, and is disappearing? Yes.
2466. And you would have to go a considerably greater distance off if you had to depend on the wood? Certainly.
2467. In which direction are you having the wood brought from—anywhere near the line of the proposed railway? I could not tell you.
2468. How many furnaces has the Company at work now? Ten.
2469. Does the Company purpose erecting more furnaces? I could not tell you.
2470. You do not know whether the consumption of coal will materially increase or not as time goes on? It will not increase very much.
2471. Are you erecting any additional winding or pumping engines? Yes, a few more.
2472. Then you will require an additional supply of coal for steam purposes alone? We may probably require sufficient coal to keep two more boilers going. That is all, so far as I know, at present, and they will probably take about 40 or 50 tons a week.
2473. Where do you obtain candles, powder, and fuse used in the mine? An Adelaide contractor supplies them.
2474. Do you know where the candles are manufactured? I believe they are imported from England.
2475. And the powder and fuse—I believe they are all brought from Adelaide? Yes; the powder, fuse, and dynamite are imported.
2476. How about the picks and shovels? We have the picks manufactured—not locally—in the Colonies, the shovels are imported.
2477. You have had a very large winding engine manufactured at Hudson Bros., Sydney, have you not? Yes; and there is also a counterpart of it being made for the British Broken Hill Company, and for Block 10 Company.
2478. Was merely the engine made there, and not the boilers? Only the engine.
2479. Do you know where the boilers were intended to be obtained from? They are already on the mine, and have been obtained from Adelaide some time back.
2480. How did you have the engine brought here from Sydney? By steamer to Port Pirie, and then by rail.
2481. Where do you obtain your water supply from for the furnaces, and for other purposes? We have reservoirs built upon our water lease, which at present supply us.
2482. And you have a sufficient supply? Yes, at present.
2483. Have you any water in the mine? Yes.
2484. Much? Yes.
2485. You are not likely to suffer then from want of water? Not so far as steam purposes are concerned.
2486. Can you say the total number of miners and smelters you have employed at the present time? We have 1,044 underground men, and 1,080 surface men—that is 2,120 men altogether.
2487. These are in regular employment? Yes.
2488. What wages do you pay them? They vary from 8s. 4d. a day for labourers, and from 10s. to 12s. a day for mechanics.
2489. And the miners? The miners are paid 10s. a day, and the underground labourers 8s. 4d. a day.
2490. What is the total pay-sheet for a fortnight or a month? For this last fortnight it is about £10,200—that is for labour alone.
2491. How many hours a shift do you work? Eight.
2492. I suppose you employ a considerable number of people indirectly, in addition? Yes.
2493. Does the number you have given now include the teams you have working? No; it only includes those immediately connected with the work on the mine.
2494. Does it include the horses and drays? Yes, they belong to the mine.
2495. How many horses have you employed? I think we have 45.
2496. Can you say where you get the fodder from? It comes from the Burra, between Adelaide and here.
2497. Can you say what distance it is from here? About 200 miles.
2498. What do you feed them on? Oats, bran, and chaff.
2499. You do not give them maize? No.
2500. Do you know what price you pay for the feed? Chaff is about £6 per ton; the bran is about from 1s. 7d. to 1s. 10d. per bushel; and the oats about 4s. 6d. per bushel.
2501. How much are you paying a month locally, in addition to what you pay for labour? We are paying from £800 to £900 a week for limestone, and from £60 to £70 a week for firewood.
2502. And the iron for fluxing is included in this item of wages? Yes.
2503. You are using no New South Wales timber? No.
2504. The timber you are using is partly imported from New Zealand, and partly Oregon pine? We are not importing any from New Zealand or Tasmania at present. It is entirely Oregon we are using, and it comes from Puget Sound.
2505. Then at present you are using no colonial timber? None, excepting a small quantity we may have on hand from large stocks.
2506. Are you likely to employ a larger number of men? I think so, under ground, as the mine is opened up.
2507. Have you all the men at the present time you could employ? Yes; we have no difficulty in obtaining whatever labour we require.
2508. If you wanted more miners you could obtain them at present? Yes, without difficulty.
2509. At the current rate of wages? Yes.
2510. Where are the picks you use made? They are made in Ballarat; a man named Hillman makes them.
2511. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How long has this mine been in operation? About three and a half years.
2512. Do you consider that it is now working up to its fullest capacity? No, I do not think so.

Mr. F. H. Clark, Accountant to the British Broken Hill Proprietary Co., Broken Hill, sworn and examined:—

2513-14. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What position do you hold? Accountant to the British Broken Hill Proprietary Co., Limited.

2515. Can you make a short statement, showing the position your mine now stands in, as to how much work you have done, and your prospects? We have four shafts in work now. The mine consists of two leases, one of 40 acres and the other of 60 acres. That gives a length of about five-eighths of a mile, and we have three shafts sunk on the 40-acre lease, which is called Block 15. Two of them are down to the second level. We open levels at every 100 feet. The main shaft is down to the fourth level, there being a total depth of 435 feet from the surface. At the first level the three shafts are connected one with another with drives, almost all of them through ore. At the second level the three shafts are also connected with drives, all through ore; and the ore at the second level is of a better grade than that at the first. In addition to that, we have stoped out a considerable quantity of ground at the second level, which has yielded a payable grade of ore. It is not anything like so rich as the Proprietary Co., but it is a payable grade, and we are still stoping it out and sending it to the smelters.

2516. What is the width of your lode? It is difficult to say. At the workings from No. 1 shaft we pass through 160 feet of a lode. At the No. 3 shaft we have it opened up at present to 130 feet wide, but we have not got to the walls on either side. At No. 2 shaft—that is the third shaft on Block 15—it is not so wide, but there we seem to be above the main body of the lode. The No. 2 shaft is set where the hill breaks off, and the lode seems to dip off too; so that we have no data upon which to say anything about its width. That is on the northern edge of Block 15. The fourth shaft I spoke about is situated at the northern end of Block 16. That has been sunk about 180 feet, and drives have been put in to a length of something like 600 feet towards the Junction mine on one side, and the North mine on the other. The shaft is sunk in the corner, and our drives are put in across the corner, but we have not found much ore there. We have found patches of ore there carrying a fair quantity of silver, say about 60 to 100 oz. It does not carry much lead. It has been very silicious, so that it has not been much more payable than that we are getting from No. 3. In addition, there are two small shafts sunk on Block 16—one just north of the boundary of block 15, and one a little further on. They have only been sunk about 120 to 150 feet deep. We have ore at the bottom, of both of them, but there has been very little prospecting work done there.

2517. How many year's work have you in sight? I cannot give you any definite idea.

2518. Can you say, approximately, from your experience as a miner, how long you think the mine will last with the ore in sight? I am not a practical miner, but I have seen what length of time it has taken to make the little hole we have, and I should think there is fully two or three years' work in the ore we have in sight at present. When I say in sight, I mean above the second level. We know we have ore reaching from the second to the first level, and reaching almost from the block 14 boundary to north of the No. 1 shaft, and I should think it would take that length of time to work out the ore.

2519. Can you state the average grade of the ore obtained from your mine? I am afraid I am not at liberty to mention that.

2520. Where are you smelting? Port Pirie.

2521. Can you state how many tons of ore you have sent there? I have not the total quantity with me; but we have despatched, during the last three months, 8,187 tons.

2522. Is that a fair average for the time that you have been working? That is a fair average of what we are sending down now.

2523. Can you state the amount of bullion which came from that? No; I have not the figures here.

2524. Do you ship your bullion straight to England? I believe we do; but that is a matter I have nothing to do with.

2525. How many men have you working in the mine? About 360.

2526. I presume you have room for a great many more? Yes.

2527. Have you any difficulty in obtaining miners? It is rather difficult to obtain really first-class men. We can almost always get people who call themselves miners, but it is not very often we can get really good men.

2528. Does your company contemplate erecting smelters here? I have not heard any mention of that.

2529. But you know that an agitation is on foot in Broken Hill with that object in view? I know there is an agitation with the object of getting smelters erected here for all mines that wish to work with them; but it is not at all likely we should shift the smelters we have up, and I do not know if the matter of putting fresh smelters up has been considered by the Directors. I suppose it will be considered in the future, because I am almost certain there is a much larger body of ore below the second level than we have opened up yet, and three smelters can hardly be sufficient to enable dividends to be paid. Therefore I think more smelters must follow; but where they will be put, I do not know.

2530. Do you use English coke? Yes.

2531. And Newcastle coal? Yes.

2532. Can you state whether any of the companies are using Newcastle coke, either here or at Port Pirie? I do not know.

2533. I presume you obtain most of your stores from Adelaide? Yes.

2534. What is the tonnage of stores you receive from Adelaide? About 100 tons a month of stores, and about 200 tons of timber per month.

2535. That would make about 36,000 tons a year? Yes.

2536. What do you pay for the carriage of this? We pay the usual rates, according to classes.

2537. *Chairman.*] Are you able to state, generally, whether you think this mine is likely to be a permanency? Yes; I consider it is likely to be a permanency.

2538. *Mr. Tonkin.*] If coal or coke could be delivered here at a great deal less rate than you are now paying, would it induce you to construct the furnaces here instead of taking the ore to Port Pirie? It certainly would be an inducement, and it would be a matter, I should think, to be considered by the Directors before they decided to erect any new smelters they intended to put up.

Mr.
F. H. Clark.
10 Oct., 1889.

Mr.

Mr. Andrew Stenhouse sworn and examined:—

- Mr. A. Stenhouse. 2539. *Dr. Garran.*] What is your occupation? I represent T. K. Stubbins, timber merchant; I manage his business.
 2540. You do a large business in the importation of timber? Yes.
 2541. Both for mining and for household buildings? Yes.
 2542. What class of timber do you principally import? Oregon, Baltic timber, and stringybark from Tasmania. Of course we keep everything; but these are the principal lines.
 2543. Do you bring it up from Adelaide or Port Pirie? Principally from Port Pirie.
 2544. Does it come to Port Pirie in the original ships, or is it transhipped at Adelaide? The Baltic is all transhipped at Adelaide, and generally the Oregon; but the stringybark comes direct from Tasmania.
 2545. What extra cost does that transhipment involve? About 7s. a ton from Port Adelaide to Port Pirie. Then, of course, there are the double wharfage dues, and double handling for ourselves as well. For instance, our carts have to carry it from the store-yard to the wharf; and then there is about 7s. a ton freight. Then we pay wharfage at Port Pirie again.
 2546. But it pays you better to submit to the expense of the transhipment than to bring it by rail from Port Adelaide all the way? Yes.
 2547. What are the charges on timber carried by the railway? They have a very peculiar tariff. The South Australian charge is by weight. Wherever I have been before it has always been by measurement.
 2548. What is it per ton from Port Adelaide, and what is it per ton from Port Pirie? For timber used underground the railway gives a concession. That comes to 41s. a ton.
 2549. From where? From Port Pirie to the station here. That is including the tramway.
 2550. I want to know the price, delivered in Broken Hill? It would be about 50s. by Adelaide, and 41s. by Port Pirie.
 2551. Now for the other timber, upon which there is no concession? [*The witness handed in the following particulars:—*]

Underground timber railway rates, 16 ft. and under—

From Port Pirie to Cockburn	31s. 3d.	} 41s.
„ Cockburn to Broken Hill	9s. 9d.	

Ordinary rates—includes deals, shelving (any lengths), T. and G. Oregon, and hardwood, 16 ft. and under—

From Port Pirie to Cockburn	52s. 0d.	} 64s. 8d.
„ Cockburn to Broken Hill	12s. 8d.	

From 17 ft. to 30 ft.

From Port Pirie to Cockburn	77s. 11d.	} 96s. 5d.
„ Cockburn to Broken Hill	18s. 6d.	

From 31 ft. to 50 ft.—

From Port Pirie to Cockburn	105s. 9d.	} 130s. 1d.
„ Cockburn to Broken Hill	24s. 4d.	

Over 50 ft., by special arrangement.

Galvanized iron in cases—

From Port Pirie to Cockburn	52s. 0d.	} 64s. 8d.
„ Cockburn to Broken Hill	12s. 8d.	

2552. What is the reason of the extra charge on the 17 to 30 feet timber? I could not tell you. I suppose they have to put it into two trucks, and to have an intermediate truck.
 2553. They use three trucks for the extra length? Yes; they have to put in a check truck.
 2554. And it is to cover the extra carriage that the extra charge is made? Yes.
 2555. Do you find much demand for great lengths of timber? Yes; for poppet-heads and that sort of thing.
 2556. Perhaps, for house building, you have no demand for the extra length? Yes; it often goes over 16 feet—between 25 feet and 30 feet—especially for the houses they erect over the concentrators. For these they want heavy long beams.
 2557. Do you import much Queensland pine? None at all.
 2558. What do you line the houses with? Baltic. I tried to bring in mining timber from New South Wales eighteen months ago. I knew Messrs. Goodlet and Smith, and talked the matter over with them when I was in Sydney, and I sent a small order for 4,000 or 5,000 feet of river pine, which was very much like Kauri, but I could not touch it at all.
 2559. Do you mean that the people here did not take to it kindly? No; the price could not compete. They charged about 14s. for it at the mill, but by the time it got here it was double that price.
 2560. Had that timber been re-handled in Sydney, or had it come direct from Richmond River? I could not say. I should think it would be re-handled, but I only had it round here on trial to see if it would suit the job, and to see if the price would have any show with the other timber.
 2561. Was any fault found with the quality of the timber? No; it was very good timber, and answered the purpose.
 2562. If we could get rid of the expense of the intermediate handling, and could bring it direct from the Richmond River to Port Pirie, would the price be suitable? I think so.
 2563. You are acquainted, as a timber merchant, with the durability of different kinds of timber? Yes.
 2564. We are told by one witness that the pine used tends to decay here in about five years;—do you know that to be so? I should think some of the New Zealand timber will give way in a few years. Of course, if it is kept always wet, as in some mines, it would last as long as any other timber; but in these mines it is not kept wet.
 2565. We are told, on the other hand, that the soft Oregon pine is so much easier to handle, and it is preferred on that account to the harder and heavier New South Wales timber? That is so; but some of the mine managers prefer the hardwood on account of the durability. The manager of the big mine prefers the Oregon.
 2566.

2566. Looking at the greater strength of the Australian hardwood, would not a much smaller scantling answer the purpose? They don't seem to be able to work it. Less than 10 inches would not give sufficient shoulder for the cap to bear on. That gives you a 3-inch shoulder on each side. 8 x 8 would only give a 2-inch shoulder.

Mr. A. Stenhouse.
21 Oct., 1889.

2567. Then, however strong the timber may be, you must have a certain size of it? That is how it has been up to now.

2568. You do not think that the hardwood can cut out the soft wood for certain purposes? It does do it to a certain extent—from Tasmania. The expense is not a great deal more, because Oregon timber costs something like 11s. 6d. and 12s. to put it down, and the Tasmanian timber can be put down from 9s. 6d. to 10s. 6d.

2569. Do you think the hardwood could to any extent supersede the soft wood for house building? I do not think so.

2570. Then you think in this market the soft wood has the pull? Yes; especially for house building.

2571. And hardwood would have to be very much cheaper indeed, to cut it out? No, if it could be put down at the same price. It is dear now, but it is all on account of the method of charging the railway freights by weight. They will handle 600 feet or 700 feet of Oregon for the same price as they would handle from 350 to 400 feet of stringy-bark.

2572. The railway people find one kind is much heavier than the other? Yes, and they charge by weight.

2573. Would our rough timber, such as grows on the banks of the Darling and the Murray, do for firewood? I do not know what it is like, but I think a very ordinary kind of timber would answer the purpose.

2574. You do not deal in firewood? Yes, a little, but there is plenty of firewood brought by the bullock teams, and will be for a few years yet.

2575. Not for more than a few years? No, it is getting a long way off now.

2576. If the railway were made in three years time do you think by that time there would be a good demand for hard firewood? Yes, I think you would sell a lot of it—both for steam and household purposes.

2577. If there was a railway from here to Menindie, you think the timber growing on the beds of the rivers would find a good market? Yes.

2578. And that there would be a traffic for the railway in that kind of timber? Yes, a certain amount of traffic.

2579. What is the annual yearly consumption of timber here? I should think it will come up to 10,000,000 feet per annum.

2580. That includes both overground and underground timber? Yes, and every day it is increasing. Some of the mines have not begun to use square sets at all, and when they do they will multiply their consumption of timber by ten.

2581. Do you have anything to do with the importation of galvanized iron? Yes, we supply considerable quantities.

2582. Have you any idea what the annual import of it is? I could not say. It is not so much as it was. Most of the houses are now being built of stone and brick, and of course they don't require so much iron. When they were knocking up the small cottages there was a big consumption.

2583. Which is the most expensive—a stone or a galvanized iron house? A stone house.

2584. How much more? I should think it would be a great deal more—perhaps 15 to 20 per cent. more.

2585. And people are beginning to prefer stone houses? Yes, the field is giving a guarantee of its permanency, and the people want to build for a permanency. Of course, during the first rush, everybody was ready to clear out at a day's notice, and did not want to spend money on permanent buildings.

2586. The district lime is burnt for mortar? Yes, and good mortar too.

2587. Does the clay make good bricks? Yes, very fair bricks.

2588. So far as stonework and lime are concerned you have building material within easy reach? Yes.

2589. Is there any duty on galvanized iron here? Yes, £2 a ton.

2590. Anything dutiable in South Australia you can import in bond and bring through? Yes.

2591. And for anything that has paid a duty in Adelaide you can get a rebate? Yes.

2592. Can you get the whole of it back? It costs a few shillings to get it back.

2593. It is a little cheaper to get an unbroken parcel through than a broken one? Yes.

2594. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How long have you been here? Close on two years.

2595. What was the population when you came here? About 5,000 or 6,000.

2596. What is it now? 12,000 to 15,000.

2597. Is it likely to increase at the same rate for the next five or six years? I think it will increase to 30,000 at any rate.

2598. How long will it take to reach that? Perhaps in eighteen months or two years. I imagine so from the development of the mines.

2599. If the mining develops, and the estimate of a mining manager that twenty-four mines will be in full working order at no distant date, is correct, what do you think will be the population, say this day seven years? I should think it would double itself, even then. It all depends on how deep the mines go. They are only prospecting yet. Half of our mining timber goes to mines which are only prospecting, and they do not know whether there is anything to be had yet. As they strike the lode there will be ten men employed to one man employed now.

Mr. Thomas Coombe, timber merchant and ironmonger, sworn, and examined:—

2600. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What are you? Timber merchant and ironmonger.

2601. How long have you been here? Nearly four years.

2602. What is the quantity of timber which passes through your firm in three, six, or twelve months?

We confine ourselves entirely to the building trade. We do nothing in the mining trade. From 130 to 150 tons a month is about our quantity.

2603. That does not include ironware? Yes; it is altogether.

5 (a)—M

Mr. T. Coombe.
21 Oct., 1889.

2604.

- Mr. T. Coombe.
21 Oct., 1889.
2604. Where does it come from? From Adelaide and Port Pirie. We have had some from Sydney. We watch the markets, and where we can buy the cheapest we purchase. We keep in touch with the Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide markets.
2605. What is the comparison between the Sydney material and what you buy in Adelaide? It is very seldom we can buy in Sydney, because the freight and expenses kill it, and it is all imported timber. We never touch the colonial timber. It does not suit our trade. People will not buy it. Baltic timber is what we deal in chiefly.
2606. In importing building material you import window frame sashes? Yes, we get those from Sydney, because of the duty. We cannot get them from Adelaide, the duty is too heavy. We get them made here now almost as cheaply. We work in with our customers, and they make them for us. We prefer to pay a little more for goods made on the spot.
2607. Do you find any increase in your trade for timber for building purposes? Dating from twelve months ago, I find a large increase in trade, but it is not as large as it was two or three years ago, when the building boom was on.
2608. You account for that by the extraordinary influx of population? Yes, but when the population settled it became dull. Since then it has improved very much, and now it is very satisfactory.
2609. Is this progress steady? Yes, every month my books show an improvement in figures.
2610. And the class of buildings now being erected is of a more permanent nature? Yes, they are of a better description. I think there is as much timber used now as ever there was, but there are more to sell it. There is more competition than there was two and a half years ago. There were so few to sell it then, and that is the reason we were rushed. The quantity of timber that is used now is greater than ever it was.
2611. Have you any doubt as to the permanency of this place? I have not the slightest doubt. I think it will be a mine when we are all dead and gone, and our children after us. This discovery of ore at the Brisbane blocks at 1,700 feet deep proves that.
2612. Do you think there will be any possibility of the colonial timber competing with other timber, supposing there is a railway from Sydney here? No; not with me. I prefer Baltic timber. Nearly all our carpenters are from South Australia, and they are used to the Baltic timber. The colonial timber buckles and warps much more than the Baltic, and in the matter of price the Baltic timber can beat it. I get the Baltic timber direct to Port Pirie, and I stack it there, and get it as I require it.
2613. Is there any duty on timber in Adelaide? Yes, 2s. 6d. per load for rough timber, and 1s. 6d. per 100 feet superficial for boards.
2614. What do you call a load? 480 feet. The duty on timber in this Colony is three times as much as in South Australia. Then we get the drawback. We stack the timber, and when we import it we pass an entry, and get the duty back.
2615. That is for timber coming from Sydney? From anywhere. I don't believe in Sydney timber. We have had Baltic timber from Sydney when we could buy cheaper timber there. Two and a half years ago Sydney was glutted with Baltic and Oregon timber, and you could buy cheaper there than anywhere, but it has not been so since.
2616. Do you import your own iron? I have imported it, but I find I can buy it as I want it. I buy it in Adelaide and Port Pirie. Sometime ago I tried Sydney, and the expense of carriage from Sydney killed it.
2617. But the original cost would be less in Sydney than elsewhere? Yes, sometimes.
2618. Where were you before you came here? I am a South Australian.
2619. And of course your feelings are with that colony? Of course, all things being equal, I would rather deal with Adelaide, but there is no sentiment in business; I buy where I can buy the cheapest.
2620. Do you think the railway would be of any benefit to this place if constructed? Yes.
2621. Do you think there would be a probability of it paying interest on the capital, and also working expenses? It might not pay right off, but I should think it is a work the Government ought to undertake. There is an immense trade here, a portion of which they might have.
2622. *Dr. Garran.*] You have heard the evidence of Mr. Stenhouse? Yes.
2623. Do you corroborate that evidence? Yes, a good deal of it. With regard to the stone houses, my experience is not the same as his. My experience is that there are as many iron and wooden houses going up as ever there was, and the number of stone houses is very few? People do not seem to take to the stone houses—they say the iron houses cool down quicker, and they are put up so much more quickly. A man wants a house in three or four days here.
2624. Do you agree as to the difference in cost—the stone is only 25 per cent. dearer? There is not much difference, because stone, sand, and lime are easily obtained here. The only expensive thing is water.
2625. Is there any other point upon which you would like to modify Mr. Stenhouse's evidence? No. Of course his experience is in a different class of trade to mine.
2626. What is the cost of Baltic and Oregon timber. What is it sold at in the markets? We sell it by running feet. There is no regular system of selling it superficial. Every colony has its own system. Everything in Adelaide is sold at 9 x 3. In Sydney it is sold superficial.
2627. What is the price here upon your method of selling? We charge about 5d. a foot superficial here, when it is cut up and delivered in small sizes. We sell almost all small size timber here—3 x 2 and 2 x 1½.
2628. Is the Baltic as cheap as the Oregon? Yes. The South Australian Government carry all timber by weight, and the Baltic weighs much lighter than Oregon, and it is more generally used than Oregon.
2629. Do you find Oregon decays where exposed to the wet? No.
2630. It is as durable as the Baltic? I think so. I never heard any complaints of Oregon not being durable.
2631. This climate is not trying to it? No; not more than any other.
2632. You get a cargo once a year from the Baltic. What sized vessel do you get to Port Pirie? About 600 tons burden and 1,200 tons capacity. They come alongside the wharf.
2633. And you unload into trucks? Yes; but we stack it there, and it dries in the meantime, and we get it cheaper than if it was sent straight on.
2634. Do you pay the duty? Yes, and have it remitted to us. They will not allow it to be stacked on the wharf in bond.
2635. If you pay the duty they will give you house room for it? That is a matter we arrange with the wharf owners. We pay them rent—1d. a week per ton, or something like that. 2636.

2636-37. And it seasons there? Yes; there is a small rainfall there, and for stacked timber that is an advantage.

2638. It is a good dry climate? Yes.

2639. It would be a dryer climate up here? Yes, only we would have to pay the carriage, and we would be out of pocket. We get it up as we require it.

2640. If there were no duty on the timber in New South Wales, would that be any inducement to bring it up here at once? No; the carriage would be so heavy. We do not want to pay the carriage until we want to use the timber.

2641. *Mr. Hurley.*] What is the resisting power of the hardwood as against pine? Hardwood is much stronger.

2642. As to its durability and suitability for mining purposes, what percentage would you give hardwood as against soft? My trade does not lead me much into mining timber.

2643. Does hardwood last twenty years as against the other? I have no special knowledge in that direction. It would require special knowledge to answer a question of that kind.

2644. You have no knowledge of the durability of timber? Not in special cases, I don't know how long it would last underground. Various timbers have been tested, but I have not paid much attention. I do not think the colonial pine would last as long as any other timber. I believe the colonial pine would rot much quicker than any other timber.

2645. If you had a mine yourself, would you not prefer to put in timber which would last for twenty years, as against pine which would last for four or five years? Of course I should, but I should have to take the opinion of someone who knew. I am not competent to give an opinion. I do not know how the relative timbers last underground.

William John Hanna, Esq., Superintendent of Roads, sworn, and examined:—

2646. *Chairman.*] What are you? Superintendent of Roads for the Broken Hill district.

2647. What is the distance your district comprises in mileage, or by the names? To Wentworth on the south,—that is 240 miles; to Wilcannia on the east, that is about 120 miles by the direct line; to Cobham on the north,—that is 150 miles; and to the South Australian Border on the west.

2648. How many miles of road have you under your charge? About 550.

2649. What annual vote do you get to expend upon them? About £3,500.

2650. You know the road from here to Wilcannia? Yes.

2651. And you pretty well know the surveyed line of the proposed railway? Yes; it pretty nearly follows the surveyed road.

2652. You know the character of the country the line has to pass through? Yes, fairly well; I have only been over the recently surveyed road once.

2653. From your experience and knowledge as Road Superintendent, how much per mile would it cost to construct the road from here to Wilcannia? It would be a very expensive item. In fact, it would not be advisable to construct a metalled road in a district like this.

2654. Could you not give us any idea what it will cost to construct a metalled road per mile? About 12s. to 15s. per lineal yard. That would be about £1,300 or £1,400 a mile.

2655. What width of road would that be? Eighteen feet.

2656. You know the plain country—do you think it could be made for that cost across there? No, it would be nearly double that; but for half the road stone would be available within easy reach.

2657. But there are long lengths of plains? Yes; well it is almost impracticable to form a road, and it would not be desirable if it were.

2658. And the cost of maintenance would be enormous, even if the road were made? I think it would not be much used in wet weather, because teamsters prefer the natural surface to a macadamized road, as it is much easier for the bullock traffic.

2659. Which would it be the most desirable to construct, a road or a railway from Wilcannia to this place? I should certainly say a light line of railway in preference to a road.

2660. Do you not think it is a class of country which is well suited for the construction of a railway? It is a very easy country, all of it. There are one or two places where there would be a little cutting, but nothing of any consequence.

2661. In expending your Road Vote, how do you apply it? In clearing and cutting approaches to creeks, metalling small portions where necessary—such as across low swampy ground, the bed of a watercourse, or anything like that—but chiefly in clearing.

2662. How many men have you employed at the present time? About thirty, including contractors.

2663. Do you not find it a very difficult task to allot the work to these men in this large district, and on that long length of road? Well, a great deal of it does not require attending to; for instance, across the plain country, we can do nothing with that.

2664. That is beyond any management, or repair, or anything else? Yes; the only thing I do is to clear off salt bush on the road, in order to remove the lumps.

2665. Can you tell us whether there is sufficient stone procurable for ballast purposes for the construction of a railway between here and Wilcannia? Yes, ample.

2666. Is there any timber procurable which would be suitable for sleepers? I don't think so, excepting along the creek.

2667. What kind of timber is that? Gum. There is only a small quantity, not worth taking into consideration in the matter of constructing a railway.

2668. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do you know the road between Broken Hill and Menindie? Yes.

2669. What class of country is it? Level; very similar to the road between here and Wilcannia.

2670. Is it as level as between here and Wilcannia? It is slightly more undulating, but very little.

2671. Is there ballast upon the road between here and there, obtainable for a railway? Yes.

2672. Would a railway be as easily constructed between Menindie and Broken Hill, as between Wilcannia and Broken Hill? Yes; the country between the two places is very similar.

2673. Would there be any advantage in the way of timber for sleepers on the Menindie line? I don't think there would be much advantage; the distance from the river would not be much. There is any amount of gum on the Darling which would be available, and the haulage would be less.

2674.

Mr.
T. Coombe,
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W. J.
Hanna, Esq.,
21 Oct., 1889.

- W. J. Hanna, Esq.
21 Oct., 1889.
2674. What are the lengths between here and Menindie, and between here and Wilcannia? From here to Menindie is about 73 miles by the present route, but I think it could be shortened to about 65, and to Wilcannia by the direct line is about 120 miles. Roughly, there is about 50 miles difference.
2675. Your district does not extend to the other side of the Darling? No.
2676. Is the soil similar on the Menindie route? Yes.
2677. Are there any creeks to cross? Stephen's Creek is the only one, and the creek near the Rockwell, about 9 miles out.
2678. Then you think, mile for mile, it would be as easy to construct a railway to Menindie as to Wilcannia? Yes; the country is very similar.
2679. *Mr. Hurley.*] You employ about thirty men? Yes.
2680. What is the average rate of wage? Maintenance men get 8s. to 9s. a day.
2681. The average is about £2 10s. a week? Yes.
2682. Thirty men would give you an expenditure of about £3,000 a year? Yes; that is for road works alone. Of course there are the water supply works in addition.
2683. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What population is there between here and Menindie? I do not suppose there will be more than fifty.
2684. How many stations does the road go through? Two—the Culca and No. 2, or Carr's. These are two stations of Kinchega. Strictly speaking, it is only one station.
2685. *Dr. Garran.*] Is the quality of the country between here and Menindie as good as that between here and Wilcannia? Very much the same.
2686. And whatever can be produced on the one line of route can be produced on the other? Yes.
2687. There is a scheme for which a Bill has been passed, for bringing water from Menindie to this place? Yes.
2688. If that were carried out, would it facilitate the construction of a railway along the same route? Yes; not to a great extent, but it would be a great assistance.
2689. It would give the contractors an assurance that they would have water along the line? Yes.
2690. How far north do you go? To Cobham.
2691. Is that a direct line from here to Milparinka? Yes; it is on that road.
2692. Have you travelled that road frequently? Yes.
2693. Is that a road upon which there have been mineral indications discovered? Yes; pretty nearly all the way.
2694. It is a mineral meridian? Yes.
2695. With the probability of further discoveries being made? Yes.
2696. Have any claims been taken up between here and your limit? Not continuously; but claims have been taken up from here to Nalta, about 35 miles south from Cobham.
2697. And from there to Milparinka;—are there still other claims? Not that I am aware of, excepting the gold claims of Koorringberry.
2698. Are there mineral indications between here and Wilcannia? I do not think anything has been discovered of any importance between the Barrier and Wilcannia.
2699. Has anything been discovered between here and Menindie? Not that I am aware of, beyond Rockwell.
2700. Anything between here and Wentworth? No, not beyond Rockwell. Menindie is on the Wentworth side.
2701. Upon a supposed line between here and Menindie, would there be supplies of lime and iron for flux for the mines? Not so much in the direction of Menindie, but I could not say positively.
2702. Would there be any between here and Wilcannia? Yes; out towards Mount Gipps, there are good deposits of ironstone. That is about 12 miles from here.
2703. What road metal is there close at hand for making roads? The ordinary rock is to be met with all over the range.
2704. Are there any dykes of trap? Yes.
2705. And that would do for ballasting? Yes.

Charles E. Hogg, Esq., Engineer-in-Charge of Water Supply between Wilcannia and Menindie, sworn, and examined:—

- C. E. Hogg, Esq.
21 Oct., 1889.
2706. *Dr. Garran.*] What are you? Engineer-in-Charge of Water Supply.
2707. Which source? Nolan's, on the road between here and Menindie.
2708. How far from this place? Thirteen miles.
2709. What quantity of storage do you expect to have? Ten years supply.
2710. That is on a rainfall such as we have had during the present year? One or 2 inches of rain falling any time, will give us three years' supply. The catchment is very large.
2711. Is not the basement very shallow? No; about 35 ft. deep.
2712. Have you allowed for evaporation? Yes.
2713. And you think, when the work is once completed, the town is safe for three years? Yes.
2714. Either line of railway will cross this creek at some part, will it not? Of that I am not quite sure. The Menindie routes could cross it, but not necessarily. The Menindie line would not cross near our water supply.
2715. But it would cross the Stephen's Creek? Yes.
2716. And there is good water there? You would find it difficult to get water below our site. You would have to erect a dam for the Railway Department. The creek there is very flat and sandy.
2717. Do you not think a well in the creek would strike water? For a time there would be a fair supply, but not permanently.
2718. You might trust to a well there? Yes, for the amount you would require for the engines.
2719. Between here and Menindie are there watering places? I do not know.
2720. You do not know the road between Stephen's Creek and Wilcannia? Only 30 miles of it.
2721. Do you know the country north in this district? Yes, fairly well, within a reasonable distance.
2722. Is it a mineral meridian? Yes; it is always looked upon as being highly mineralized up to Mount Browne and beyond.

2723. From what you have seen of the mineral developments here, and from what you know of the country north, do you think it probable, at some future day, there will be a line of mines between here and Milparinka? Almost certain. C. E. Hogg,
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21 Oct., 1889.
2724. Looking to the future development of the country and the furnishing of railway facilities, do you think it is probable that we should have to make a line of railway northwards from Mount Gipps to Milparinka? Yes.
2725. You look upon that as a coming certainty? Yes.
2726. Do you know anything of the country east of the Darling? Yes; I have travelled up the Darling. I know the country from Hay and through that way.
2727. If we had a railway either from Nyngan to Wilcannia and Mount Gipps, or a railway down the valley of the Lachlan, running from Condobolin to Mount Gipps, and then a line northwards through Milparinka, should not we have by that means a good connection with Sydney? Yes.
2728. As a railway engineer, and looking at the map, and knowing what you do of railway traffic, can you suggest any better plan for bringing this mineral meridian into connection with Sydney, than by a line between Broken Hill and Milparinka, and the best connection between Broken Hill and Sydney? No; a line to Milparinka would go through the whole belt north.
2729. Do you know anything of the Lachlan valley? Yes; I surveyed the railway line from Blayney to Cowra.
2730. Would there be any difficulty in starting from Cowra and keeping the valley of the Lachlan all the way to Euabalong? None; if you keep out of the floods.
2731. The north bank is easy for a railway? Yes.
2732. Would there be any difficulty in going on the northern side of the Willandra Billabong, as far as the Ivanhoe Station? None; there would be a little trouble in ballasting, but the grade is easy.
2733. If the Lachlan were dammed below the entrance to the Billabong, would that force the water along the Billabong? Yes.
2734. For how many miles? I could not say; that was all taken by the Water Conservation Department.
2735. Is it in their report? Yes.
2736. If a small canal were made from the Billabong, could the farmers use it for irrigation? Yes.
2737. Could not fodder be grown alongside by farmers? Yes.
2738. If there was a railway from that point to Menindie, would not the fodder-growing district be much nearer to this place than it is at the present moment? Yes.
2739. We have it that the fodder at present comes 150 to 250 miles? Yes; fully that.
2740. Then I understand we could have a fodder-growing district in New South Wales much nearer? Yes; if it is irrigated.
2741. You only want facilities for transit to be able to provide fodder at a point nearer to Broken Hill than it is provided at present? Yes.
2742. We could feed our stock with New South Wales-grown fodder? Yes, and more cheaply, and with greater certainty than we can at present. In dry seasons fodder is a fearful price.
2743. Do you know the Tallywalka Creek? No; I have crossed it.
2744. Do you think it could be carried further? I would not be surprised if you could not almost join it to the Willandra.
2745. Do you know whether there is any ridge? I think it is very level; but I could not tell you from any knowledge of my own.
2746. They could be brought pretty close together? Yes.
2747. With only a little dry bit between them? Yes.
2748. Could not fodder be grown on the Tallywalka? Yes.
2749. And on the banks of the Darling, too? Yes.
2750. Then we should have a naturally irrigated tract in New South Wales, closer to this great market for fodder than anything existing on the other side? Yes.
2751. Nothing is wanted but to provide transit? No.
2752. If we only had that, we could find room for a large number of farmers? Yes.
2753. We could settle a fodder-growing population in the midst of this large country? Yes.
2754. And with a mining market? Yes.
2755. If your idea is realised, that there will be a line of mines from here to Milparinka, the market for fodder will grow immensely in the near future? Yes.
2756. If this north-western portion of the Colony is to be settled by a mining community they will want a fodder-growing population in their rear? Yes.
2757. And such a community will furnish an almost unlimited market? Yes.
2758. And we have the the irrigable land within easy reach? Yes; it is much better soil about Ivanhoe than the Darling.
2759. If the preference were given to the Lachlan route, would you then think it a good plan to accommodate the Cobar district by running a line from Condobolin through Nymagee to Cobar? Of course it has great advantages; you don't have to face the western range. I think you would find it more convenient to go down from Nyngan to Cobar.
2760. Then you would avoid Nymagee? Yes; it is a tremendous distance.
2761. A line from Condobolin to Cobar would be nearly parallel with our existing line to Nyngan? Yes.
2762. And it is much better to run parallel lines through a country like this than at acute angles? Of course you lose that portion of the line which approaches the main line. You lose 15 or 20 miles.
2763. You get no new traffic? No.
2764. If you were asked to railway this district, would you not prefer to do it by running parallel lines through, than by running branches off at acute angles? I think, in a case like this, I would unquestionably come from Nyngan to Cobar.
2765. For what reason? On account of the coal deposits in the Blue Mountains.
2766. And it is a shorter journey? If you calculate from Blayney round the way you are suggesting, it is a longer distance.
2767. Would you not have to carry all your coal from Blayney up to the height of Orange or Huntley, and then down again? Yes.
- 2768.

- C. E. Hogg, Esq.
21 Oct., 1889.
2768. Would you get the same height at Huntley as at Orange? No; from Blayney to Orange the grades are exceptionally good. The grades on the line I laid out from Blaney to Cowra have necessitated the putting in of 1 in 40 in order to get into the miserable town of Carcoar.
2769. If you had not to go into that town, would you have done it in 1 in 50? No; 1 in 60 is my grade.
2770. The whole line had to be spoilt to accomodate that little town? Yes.
2771. Mr. Whitton opposed that with all his might? Yes; he supported my report. I reported very strongly and continuously against it.
2772. And you are right in saying you could get from Blayney to Cowra with 1 in 60? Yes; I did it.
2773. Could you get back to that 1 in 50? Yes, certainly; we should leave this little place out and run down the Bellabula River.
2774. Has any other part of the line been spoilt? No.
2775. You could cut the ruling grade down within the fence? Yes.
2776. You did not alter your route? Yes, we did; 4 miles of it was spoilt. It was a stiffer grade than we need have made.
2777. You could cut the stiff grades down? Easily.
2778. Then it is within possibility we could make a line of 1 in 60 from Blayney to Cowra now? Yes.
2779. Leaving the deviation out and resuming the original line, it is possible, as a national policy, to restore the 1 in 60? Yes.
2780. Supposing the Lachlan Valley to be the route selected to come here, the gradients on the other part of the western line become a serious consideration? Yes.
2781. We must go up to Bathurst and a little further to Blayney, and that will be the highest point? Yes.
2782. And from Blayney you must descend by 1 in 60 to Cowra, and from there to Broken Hill you could get 1 in 75 and 1 in 100? Yes.
2783. Where is the nearest coal place upon that line? Lithgow.
2784. There are some stiff gradients betwcn Lithgow and Blayney? Not very. There are some coming down to Keilor, but that is all down-hill. There is a stiff grade from George's Plain to New-bridge.
2785. Could the line between Lithgow and Blayney be improved? I doubt it.
2786. Looking forward to a future coal trade, we have to make our line with easy gradients between Lithgow and Blayney? Yes.
2787. From that point we may go to the west without trouble? Yes; even with this 1 in 40 I speak about, the traffic will be down-hill.
2788. It would require some detailed examination to see what would be the best route—by Dubbo and Nyngan, or by Cowra and Nyngan? Yes; I could not speak straight off.
2789. You are certain that from Blayney to Cowra you could do it in 1 in 60, and from Cowra to Broken Hill in 1 in 75? Yes.
2790. And upon 1 in 75, with a fair sized engine, what load of coal could you haul? I do not know what class of engine they are using now.
2791. Have you considered the question of the rival routes to Broken Hill, and have you any preference, as an engineer, for the Nyngan or Lachlan route? No; the Lachlan route must have the drawback of having to keep a considerable distance from the river. I have seen the water 25 miles on each side of the river.
2792. How far back would you have to go? 30 miles.
2793. Is it easy to do that? It is; but you expect to get a great deal of traffic from the banks by farming.
2794. But you would not take the railway into a bog for the sake of traffic? No; you will have to get the railway and lose your traffic.
2795. Would a man growing produce on the Lachlan cart his traffic to the market rather than bring it to the railway? He could not cart, sometimes, a large waggon to the railway. It is a fearful bog-hole.
2796. But the local municipalities will make roads, I suppose, in time? Yes.
2797. You don't look upon that as condemning the Lachlan route? No.
2798. Its gradients would be easy? Yes.
2799. And it is fertile soil? Yes.
2800. And it is a district which must be railroaded sooner or later? Yes; if it is to be opened up.
2801. There is no question that we must make a railway to Condobolin? Yes.
- 2801½. And from Condobolin to Broken Hill would be as short as from Nyngan to Broken Hill? I think it would.
2802. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Have you formed any opinion as to the permanency of the mines? Yes.
2803. What is your opinion? I believe fifty years hence we should be finding new permanent mines, especially after the discovery which occurred here last Saturday. We find new and rich mines every day of the month.
2804. Have you any knowledge of the Darling trade? No.
2805. *Mr. Hurley.*] You have knowledge concerning the supply of iron at various mines? Yes; I am largely interested in the flux question.
2806. What is the quality of the material sold to the various mines? The iron we supply from our iron mountain is hematite iron.
2807. Is there any kidney ore in this district? I don't know of any.
2808. Any silicious? Yes; a great deal of it is silicious.
2809. You have an abundance of it? Yes; we have an abundance 2 miles from the proposed railway route.
2810. What is the largest output you could reckon upon for a series of years—say, for ten years? About 1,000 tons a week, I think.
2811. And then the mine would not be exhausted? No.
2812. So that the silver-mines can look upon a plentiful supply of flux, in the shape of iron ore, from that district for a considerable time to come? Yes.
2813. What is your output now? It is hardly anything, for the reason that the mine is in a state of transition, and having no railway it hardly pays to send it by carts. We are proposing to make a tramway of our own if the railway does not come.

2814. What is the price per ton? Delivered here, it is 22s. per ton. It costs 10s. a ton to deliver.
2815. *Chairman.*] With regard to these two lines of railway from Cowra to Broken Hill, and from Nyngan to Broken Hill—which is the longer line to be constructed? From Cowra to Broken Hill.
2816. Is it not much longer? Yes; a great deal longer.
2817. Have you examined the country between Nyngan, Cobar, Wilcannia, and Broken Hill, so as to be able to speak as to its agricultural nature? No.
2818. You are not aware that crops of every kind are grown there in great abundance? No; but I am sure it is a fact.
2819. With regard to this route through the Lachlan, have you examined right through to Broken Hill? No; as far as Ivanhoe.
2820. How far is that from Cowra? 300 miles. From Blayney to Cowra is 45 miles. It is 420 miles from Blayney to Broken Hill, *via* Cowra. One distance would be 550 miles from Blayney, *via* Nyngan, to Broken Hill, of which 200 miles are made; and the other line is 415 miles, of which 45 miles are made; so that you would have to construct, in one case, 370 miles, and in the other case about 350 miles.
2821. You referred to the country 25 miles from the Lachlan River as being of a swampy character? It is not swampy in the sense that reeds grow, but it gets fearfully wet from the floods.
2822. When you get beyond that 25 miles distance, what is the character of the country? The country then loses its richness to a certain extent, and becomes a little ridgy.
2823. Does it not become of a barren character? Yes, certainly; the other is alluvial.
2824. It is not of such a general good character between here and Cobar? No; I should say it is not.
2825. If this line were constructed we should lose sight entirely of the Wilcannia trade? Yes.
2826. If the Wilcannia trade is to be secured by railway it will be necessary that the line to Wilcannia should be made, even if the Lachlan line is made? Yes.

C. E. Hogg,
Esq.
21 Oct., 1889.

Mr. Joseph Nolan, prospector and contractor, Broken Hill, sworn, and examined:—

2827. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What are you? A prospector and contractor, Broken Hill.
2828. How long have you been in this district? Fifteen years.
2829. You have a good knowledge of the country all around? Yes; within a radius of 200 miles.
2830. What is the character of the country between here and Menindie? Good agricultural ground.
2831. Is there any agriculture carried on? No; only a small patch close to Menindie Lake.
2832. Is that carried on by irrigation? No; by natural rainfalls.
2833. Have you seen any crops there this year? I have grown crops, without irrigation, of about 3 tons per acre, about 10 miles from Ivanhoe.
2834. What have you grown? Wheat for fodder.
2835. How many years have you grown these crops? Two years in succession. I got 3 tons per acre about 11 years ago. This was at Clare, near Ivanhoe.
2836. Was there any other agriculture carried on there? Yes; by Mr. Crombie, at Tilton.
2837. What area did he have under cultivation? 20 acres.
2838. Was his crop equally as good as yours? Yes, better; he grew on a sand-hill.
2839. Has he continued to grow a crop there? He has not done so these ten years, but before that he did very successfully.
2840. How many crops have you known grown there by other parties in the district? Three or four, at Tilton.
2841. Each year following the other? Yes.
2842. And there has been no blank through want of rain? This was upon sand. The sand is of a damp nature on the Orlando Creek.
2843. If you chose a place for irrigation you would choose sand? The sandier the better.
2844. You have no doubt crops could be grown there without irrigation? No; I would like to see irrigation.
2845. But you have grown them without irrigation? Yes.
2846. What is the average number of crops you would have, say in five continuous years? Well, I have seen three years without a drop of rain at all at the Barrier.
2847. And then you would have no crops at all? No.
2848. Can you give an idea of the average number of crops you would have? I should think two years in five.
2849. Would there be any great difficulty in irrigating the land you speak of? No.
2850. How could it be irrigated? By a natural race—you could start from Euabalong to the Willandra Creek.
2851. Did you hear the questions asked by Dr. Garran about damming this Willandra Creek, and forcing the water back? No.
2852. Could that be done easily? It is not a good place to dam.
2853. Can you force the water back? It has been tried often for fifteen years.
2854. And has it been a failure, or a success? The station-holders did not expend sufficient money.
2855. Do you know the country between here and Wilcannia? I have been from Wilcannia to Mount Browne.
2856. Is that a similar country to that you have spoken of? No; quite different. From Wilcannia to Mount Browne is a mineral country.
2857. Do you know whether there is much mining in the district between here and Mount Browne? Scarcely any between here and Mount Browne, but there is plenty at Mount Browne.
2858. What is the population of Mount Browne? About 700.
2859. Is it a mining population? No. There are small stations all around for about 10 miles out. It has been a large station, which was cut up ten years ago.
2860. If a railway were constructed to Broken Hill, *via* Menindie, would that be of any benefit to the Mount Browne district? Yes; but not much.
2861. Not so much as *via* Wilcannia? From Bourke to Mount Browne is the most direct route. It is about 240 miles.
2862. How far is it from Wilcannia to Mount Browne? 180 miles.

Mr. J. Nolan.
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- Mr. J. Nolan. 2863. Would that be the nearest point to Mount Browne, supposing the railway were constructed from Cobar to Wilcannia, and from Wilcannia to Broken Hill? Yes; Wilcannia would be the nearest point.
- 21 Oct., 1889. 2864. Is there any agricultural land between here and Wilcannia? Yes; for 40 miles,—all down the banks of the Darling.
2865. There would be no difficulty in growing crops there, providing it was irrigated? No; crops would grow anywhere in the Barrier if you irrigate.
2866. Do you know anything about the country beyond Ivanhoe? Yes; towards Booligal and New Orlando. I have travelled along the creek to Mossgeil.
2867. What class of country is that? All good agricultural country.
2868. A railway along that route would be of great benefit? Yes; better than the other.
2869. Do you know that the line could not run parallel to the river owing to the floods? Yes; but there are only patches of floods. It is not all flooded for miles back.
2870. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You were the discoverer of the water scheme at Stephen's Creek? I am the promoter at Stephen's Creek and the Darling. My idea was to bring the water first from Stephen's Creek, and then to go on to the Darling, and bring it in an open viaduct.
2871. If these schemes are carried out, will there be a constant supply of water? Yes, I am positive there is a supply for domestic purposes from Stephen's Creek for years.
2872. And the mining is not likely to be impaired during a dry season for want of water? No.
2873. You say you prospected within 200 miles of Broken Hill? Yes.
2874. Therefore you can form an opinion as to the mineral character of this region? Yes.
2875. What is that opinion? I think we have the best of it in Broken Hill.
2876. Do you think any of the country between here and Mount Browne has mineral wealth? Yes, for about 30 miles from the South Australian border, right up to Mount Browne.
2877. Is that a silver or a gold country? It is both. There is a piece of country on this side of Mount Browne which we have never been able to get into to prospect. It is marked on the map as a rainless track of country.
2878. Do you find indications of silver and gold the whole way? Yes.
2879. Has the country between here and Mount Browne—say for 20 miles outside Broken Hill, and Mount Browne—being anything like tested? Yes, very lightly; there are patches on the surface.
2880. Do you consider that a line to Mount Browne would lead to a large development of the mineral country? Not from here.
2881. Where from? From Bourke.
2882. But you are aware that at the present time the whole of the trade of Mount Browne goes to Wilcannia? Yes.
2883. Why does it go to Wilcannia instead of Bourke? Because the track is better watered.
2884. Is Bourke or Wilcannia the natural market for Mount Browne? Wilcannia.
2885. Do not all the stock from Queensland come down by Wilcannia? Yes.
2886. And all the goods required by the Mount Browne people, when the river is up, are sent by Wilcannia? Yes.
2887. If a line were constructed from here to Mount Browne, would not it be more likely to feed the Adelaide trade than the Sydney trade? Yes.
2888. A line taken from Wilcannia to Mount Browne would achieve the same object of developing the resources of the country, whilst it would keep the trade in New South Wales? Yes.
2889. Which of these routes would you prefer? The Menindie to Haw.
2890. Why do you say that, outside of the reasons you gave to Mr. Tonkin—outside of the agricultural reason. I understand you to favour this line, because it would run through good agricultural country? Yes.
2891. Have you any other reason for it? No, but there is a great quantity of timber past Menindie. Thousands and thousands of tons.
2892. What kind of country is it between Clare and Menindie? All level country; good agricultural ground.
2893. Anything like the Darling flats? About the same. In some places there are small patches of limestone.
2894. Which line do you think would serve the most stock,—the one *via* Nyngan, or Cowra and Menindie? I could not answer. The stock are beyond Paroo.
2895. *Dr. Garran.*] I understand you to say that from Condobolin to Menindie is good agricultural country? Yes, from Booligal to Menindie.
2896. Is it much inferior between Menindie and here? No, it is about the same until about 12 miles from Broken Hill. Then you come to the hills.
2897. But beyond that circuit—out of the mineral district—it is good agricultural country? Yes.
2898. I understand there is a large circle of mineral country around here with Broken Hill as a centre, and another with Mount Browne as a centre? Yes.
2899. But between these two centres is the country mineral? Yes, all the way from here to Mount Browne. There is a small patch about 20 miles, about which we know nothing.
2900. And that may be mineral too? Yes.
2901. You are certain that from here to Mount Browne there is a belt of country, 20 miles wide, more or less mineralised? Yes.
2902. And within that 20 miles there will be payable mines discovered? Yes; I believe I could find one or two 40 miles from here.
2903. There is every indication that there will be payable mines discovered? Yes.
2904. Between that belt and the Darling is there if much mineral country? Yes; it is somewhat similar, but I have only ridden through it. There are copper mines between Wilcannia and here, one was opened twenty years ago.
2905. Are there any copper mines between Wilcannia and Mount Browne? That is the district I am referring to.
2906. It is not exactly on the road to either place? No, in angle between the two.
2907. Do you know the road from here to Menindie? Yes.
2908. Is it easy country for a railway? It could not be better.

2909. Would there be any local traffic likely to spring up upon it? Limestone and ironstone would come this way. Mr. J. Noan.
2910. If we got 20 miles beyond here, could the people on the plains grow fodder between that 20 miles and Menindie? Yes, with irrigation. 21 Oct., 1889.
2911. Where would they get the water? From the Darling.
2912. Do you think water enough could be spared from the Darling to irrigate that distance? Yes; two or three times a year.
2913. You think water could be spared from the Darling for 50 miles back? Yes; in an open viaduct.
2914. And farms could be supplied from it? Yes.
2915. You are of opinion that from Menindie to within 20 miles of this place, we could locate farmers who could grow fodder to supply this place? Yes.
2916. You are sure there is a large mineral future before this north-west corner of New South Wales? Yes; for twenty or thirty years.
2917. You were speaking of the flooded land on the Lachlan; when it is not flooded it is rich land? Yes; it grows well in the summer.
2918. Do they grow tobacco there? I never heard of it, but I have been away ten years.
2919. Would the flood prevent that land from being farmed? No; because there are some little necks of land which could be drained off.
2920. If the railway were made 20 or 30 miles back from the river, would the bulk of the land between the railway and the river be occupied agricultural land? Yes.
2921. Have you been on the Willandra Billabong? Yes.
2922. Is the land fertile on either side? Yes.
2923. How far back from the Lachlan does the Willandra Billabong run? It goes down towards Menindie.
2924. How far back from the Lachlan does it run? One hundred and fifty miles.
2925. And if the Lachlan were dammed and the water forced along there, you could take water 150 miles towards Menindie? You could take it right to Euston.
2926. If the railway were within reasonable reach, you could have fodder-growing farmers all along the line to the Willandra Billabong? Yes.
2927. How near to Menindie would that bring you? Forty miles.
2928. Is the intervening 40 miles level? Yes; the natural fall of the country is about 3 feet to the mile.
2929. How far from the termination of the Billabong would it be to Tallywalka Creek? I cannot say; it is a succession of lakes down.
2930. What is the distance between the head of the Willandra and the head of the Tallywalka Creek? I do not know.
2931. At any rate you can bring the Willandra water within 50 miles of Menindie? No, not altogether.
2932. Do you mean to say, we could make a continuous canal between the Lachlan and the Darling? That is my idea.
2933. You have not surveyed it? No; but I have experience of these works.
2934. Have you cut races? Yes.
2935. You think that is an advisable thing, then? Yes.
2936. You could make a canal along the side of the railway? Yes.
2937. And have farms on both sides of the canal? Yes.
2938. So that we could have a canal running by the side of the railway, all the way from the Lachlan to within 30 miles of this place? Yes.

Mr. Francis Jolly, mining manager, sworn and examined:—

2939. *Chairman.*] You are the mining manager of the Junction Company? Yes. Mr. F. Jolly.
2940. *Mr. Hurley.*] What is the area of your property? Fifty-two acres. 21 Oct., 1889.
2941. What is the deepest level? Three hundred feet.
2942. What is the number of men employed? About fifty at present.
2943. What is the output of ore? About 150 tons a week.
2944. Is it treated on the mine? No; it is smelted at Dry Creek.
2945. How far is that from here? Two hundred and ninety-two miles.
2946. What quantity of coke do you use in a month? We are not using any more than is required for assaying purposes, which is a small quantity.
2947. How much limestone? We are not using any.
2948. How much coal? Perhaps 20 or 30 cwt. a month for the smith's shop.
2949. What about firewood? We are using about 60 tons a month.
2950. What about stores? About 60 tons a month also.
2951. What about the quantity of ore you send away from the mine? For the last three months, 1,500 tons. Our tonnage for the last three months, inward and outward, was 1,710 tons, including stores, firewood, and timber.
2952. Will you enumerate the articles? Timber, 90 tons; stores, &c., 60 tons; firewood, 60 tons; ore sent away, 1,500 tons; making a total of 1,710 tons. When the furnaces are completed at Port Adelaide, from 350 to 400 tons of ore will be despatched weekly.
2953. What kind of timber do you use in working the mine? Stringybark sawn timber.
2954. Do you prefer it to soft Oregon pine? I think it is better where the ground is likely to be heavy. It will stand a greater pressure, and is more durable.
2955. What about the cost of it? I think Oregon will be a little more expensive; but I do not suppose it would be much. The timber is more expensive in the first instance. There is not the same freight upon it. I do not suppose there would be a great difference in the expense of delivering Oregon or stringybark.
2956. What quantity of bullion have you sent away? We have sent none away, because our ore is smelted at Dry Creek.
2957. Can you tell us the quantity of bullion produced from the ore you send away? No; we sell the ore by assay, and I think the ore would average about 25 per cent.

- Mr. F. Jolly. 2958. But you look upon the payments made for the ore as sufficiently remunerative to term the mine a dividend-paying mine? I think so, in the future.
- 21 Oct., 1889. 2959. You look upon the mine as having a good future before it? I do.
2960. And likely to give employment to a large number of men? Yes.
2961. What is the rate of wages? £3 a week for miners.
2962. Have you any difficulty in getting men? No; not for some time past.
2963. Are you likely to put on a large number more? Yes; in two or three months from this.
2964. Looking at the different mines in the surrounding country, do you form a good opinion as to the field lasting? Certainly I do.
2965. Is it likely to give employment to a larger number than it has given employment to already? Yes; I believe in a few years hence there will be considerably more miners working than now.
2966. Have you any knowledge of the country within a radius of 50 miles? No; I have not been in the district more than fourteen months, and during that time my attention has been confined to this main line.
2967. Prior to coming here you were engaged in mining, I presume? Yes.
2968. In silver? No, not in silver. I have managed in this country both gold-mines and copper-mines.
2969. Supposing you had the mine in full work, what quantity of ore could you put out per week over two years? When the Company's furnaces are completed at Port Adelaide, from 350 to 400 tons of ore could be easily despatched per week. Then our firewood requirements would be 120 tons per month; mining timber, 80 tons per month; mining stores &c., 30 tons per month; and the ore despatched will be 1,600 tons per month; or a total inward and outward by rail of 457½ tons per week, or 1,830 tons per month.
2970. Do you consider that will go in and out over a considerable period of time? I could not say what length of time; but I know it will continue for a considerable length of time, and I think it will be increased. It is more likely to be increased than to be diminished.
2971. *Mr. Copeland.*] How many tons of ore do you say you would be likely to send away in the future, when you get the new furnaces up? Three hundred and fifty or 400 tons weekly. The ore will be treated in Adelaide when the Company's furnaces are completed, which will be this year.
2972. How many new furnaces? Two.
2973. Have you not paid dividends this year? No.
2974. How much capital have you expended? I am not in a position to answer that correctly. I know there have only been three calls made of 6d. per share.
2975. You have winding machinery? Yes.
2976. Are you working more than one shaft? We are working up the south shaft; but we are not doing a great deal there. The principal work is being confined to the main shaft.
2977. You have stated that you were using stringybark for driving timber;—where does it come from? To the best of my knowledge, from Tasmania. I buy it from the timber merchant here, but I know it comes through Port Pirie.
2978. You have not had enough experience of the field to know whether pine will stand as well as stringybark? I am satisfied it will not stand the same pressure, and there is not the same durability in it, even presuming you do not require the pressure.
2979. Would you consider, in vertical timbering, according to the principle adopted here, that Oregon pine would be much easier split than stringybark and hardwood? Of course soft timber is easier to work.
2980. But would not the pine be more likely to split from pressure? Certainly.
2981. On a downward pressure would it not be more likely to crush the timber than split it? Yes.
2982. And split timber would be more likely to stand than sawn timber? Yes; but I question if you could get it sufficiently truly split to put the timber in in the way it is done here.
2983. Do you use any round timber for props? Square timber has taken its place.
2984. Are you using sawn timber for slabs? Yes; there is nothing else here. There are no stringybark forests about here from which we could be supplied.
2985. Do you prefer using this hardwood to the softwood at the same price? That would depend upon the pressure of ground which is likely to come upon the timber. If it could be got as cheap, I think I should prefer the hardwood.
2986. Are you stoping? We are commencing now at the 300-foot level.
2987. What is the width of the lode? Forty feet.
2988. You know the system of stoping in the Proprietary mine? Yes.
2989. Do you consider it a safe method of timbering? Yes; I fail to see how it could be timbered more securely.
2990. Do you think it will be safe after the next level is stoped out? That depends in a great measure upon the nature of the country on either side—whether the walls are rotten or whether it is hard standing ground.
2991. What is your experience as to the side pressure from the hanging walls? Wherever I have been here, it is not heavy so far.
2992. From your general knowledge of the district, you look forward to a good future for the field? I do.
2993. Do you think the people would be inclined to do business with Sydney if the railway were open? I presume they would be prepared to do business with those who would do it the cheapest for them.
2994. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What is the reason your company has decided to treat their ore at Adelaide instead of here? It was considered some time ago that ore could be treated cheaper in Adelaide than on the field, inasmuch as flux could be procured cheaper. That was the idea the Directors had when they moved in the matter.
2995. Do you think that is the case? I am hardly in a position to say. If what Mr. Sylvester Brown, one of the principal Directors, says is correct—if the flux can be got at 9s. a ton—then I think it would be cheaper to smelt it there; but I do not know whether that can be done.
2996. Do you think, if there was a material reduction in the cost of coke delivered here, it would be better to treat the ore here? Of course, if there were a great reduction in the cost of coke delivered on the field it would make all the difference in the world. I think matters are pretty evenly balanced as to the cheapness of treating the ore on the fields or on the sea-board. I do not think there is a great margin either way; but certainly if coke could be brought here cheaper, of course the smelting could be done cheaper.

2997. Has it not lately been proved that flux could be got here cheaper than was anticipated some time ago? I have read a great deal about that in the papers. It is said it can be got cheaper than it could be some time ago. I do not know what they are paying now. Mr. F. Jolly.
21 Oct., 1889.
2998. Is not the principal expense attached to everything connected with mining the cost of carriage? Yes.
2999. How much ore will a ton of coke smelt? I could not tell you.
3000. But you know there would be more than the weight in ore treated by the ton of coke? I think so.
3001. Then you would have to pay carriage upon a greater amount of ore than you would upon coke if you were smelting away? Yes.
3002. If you got the flux at nearly the same price it would be as cheap to do it here as send it away? Yes.
3003. Have you much water in your mine? Scarcely any. The new North Broken Hill are draining us. Their 300-foot level is 18 feet below ours, and consequently they are taking the water.

Mr. Francis James Odling, mining manager, sworn and examined:—

3004. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What are you? Mine manager to the Pinnacle Tribute Silver Mining Company. Mr.
F. J. Odling.
21 Oct., 1889.
3005. Will you make a short statement about the prospects of your mine? The Pinnacle Tribute is just starting concentrating machinery. This week we have started the first half of the machinery. I have returns, for the three months ending September, of the total amount of goods inwards and outwards. For July, August, and September, the total amount inwards is 85 tons, and the total amount outwards is 397 tons. I am also manager of the Pinnacle Consols Co., and the Tribute. For that period of time about 45 tons went outwards from the Pinnacle Consols.
3006. Where do you obtain your fuel? From the surrounding district.
3007. Can you give us the particulars in regard to that? The fuel for the three months ending September has been 479 cords of firewood. I hope before the close of the year to have the other half of our plant started, when, of course, these figures will rise immediately. I estimate that we shall probably require in the future 50 cords of firewood per week. I am taking a cord of wood to weigh $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons, and that would make 125 tons.
3008. Do you desire to state anything further in regard to fuel or stores? The wood is getting very scarce. The teams have to go a long distance. The water is an important question to the Pinnacles. In dry seasons it becomes an important question as to what we should do for firewood, which has to be obtained by means of bullock teams. If we could get coal it would be a great thing for the Company.
3009. If the railway were constructed to Broken Hill, and would land you coal at £2 per ton from Lithgow, that would be a great accommodation to your mine? It would be an increase upon the price we pay at the present. I estimate one ton of coal to be equal to two cords of wood. We pay 18s. per cord, or 36s. for two cords; therefore, we should want one ton of coal for 36s.
3010. If coal could be landed at £1 17s. 6d. per ton, your mine would then become a consumer of coal. It would be a very great thing for the Company, and by that means you would be able to carry on your operations more successfully? Certainly.
3011. How many men have you employed? 150 men and boys.
3012. Is that the full strength? No, we shall be increasing as the mine develops. It is developing every day.
3013. Where do you have the smelting done? Our concentrates are sent to Port Adelaide.
3014. Is there any probability of that being done in Broken Hill? There can be no question with the facilities of a railway, and when flux and fuel could be obtained cheaply, it would be a great temptation to us to instantly start to reduce the ore.
3015. Are there any other mines around you? There is the Lady Bevis, and the Kincheega, Pinnacle North, Pinnacle South, and Pinnacle Junction.
3016. Are these mines working now? Not one.
3017. Are they likely to be opened if the railway is taken near them? I should think so, but I do not know much about that.
3018. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What do you pay for the carriage of your concentrates to Adelaide? 8s. from the mine to Broken Hill by teams, and from Broken Hill to Port Adelaide 25s. 6d. per ton—that is 33s. 6d. from the mine.
3019. If you had smelting machinery on the ground, would you require to concentrate? Yes, certainly.
3020. How do you manage for water when you are concentrating? We have sufficient water in the mine.
3021. And you think that a ton of coal will only produce as much power as two tons of wood,—have you tried coal in opposition to wood? No.
3022. Would you be surprised to hear from the evidence we have taken already from people who have had experience in the two articles, that 1 ton of coal will go further in producing steam than 3 tons of wood? I do not know, but I am glad to hear it.
3023. Under those circumstances it would be of much more benefit to you? So it would; We should be very glad indeed of the coal.
3024. In the event of your not being able to get coal under this extra price, have you an unlimited supply of wood? No, we are getting further afield; consequently, it will cost more.
3025. Then it is absolutely necessary you should have some means of getting fuel? Yes, in the near future.
3026. *Mr. Copeland.*] How far are you carrying wood now? The contractor says it is 7 miles.
3027. In what direction is your mine situated? To the south of the Broken Hill lode.
3028. Is it supposed to be on the same line of lode? No.
3029. What is the distance between the Pinnacle and the Proprietary blocks? It is estimated at about 10 miles.
3030. In what direction are you bringing firewood at the present time? Further south.
3031. What does your claim consist of,—have you leases? Yes it is leasehold.
3032. How much ground have you on the Pinnacle tribute? About eight 40-acre blocks, and there is one of 20.

- Mr. F. J. Odling.
21 Oct., 1889.
3033. For what length on the line of the lode have you proved it? 250 feet in length.
3034. And to what depth? We are sinking now shafts at 250 feet.
3035. At what depth from the surface did you first strike the lode? We opened out at 100 feet, and put the cross cutting there.
3036. What width was the lode at 100 feet? It averages about 17 feet.
3037. And at the next level? At 200 feet it is about 17 feet. It bulges in places, and then widens again.
3038. You consider the lode to average 17 feet in width? Yes.
3039. And what distance longitudinally have you driven? About 250 feet.
3040. That is all you have proven—250 feet in length and 17 feet in width? Yes.
3041. What is the nature of your ore? Sulphide.
3042. Can you say what the average grading is for silver? Of course the richer portions are hand-picked and bagged. They will go 40 per cent. of lead and 69 oz. of silver. The ore goes into the concentrator at 12 per cent. and 20 ounces of silver.
3043. And you crush the poorer ore? Yes; and concentrate it.
3044. What machinery have you for concentrating? We have a fine steam stamp of modern pattern.
3045. What is the lowest grade ore you can work profitably? The machinery has only been running a short time, and I have not gone into the matter yet.
3046. You have not paid any dividends? No.
3047. What have you expended in capital in developing the mine? The nominal capital of the Company is £120,000. I cannot say what is the actual called-up capital. I am only the mining manager.
3048. I suppose you have winding and pumping engines? Yes.
3049. Do you find water troublesome at all? We should be very glad to be troubled with water. At present we have sufficient.
3050. Is that your chief source of supply—the water from the shaft? Yes; for concentrating purposes solely.
3051. Is the water drinkable from the shaft? No; it contains 3 per cent of solid residue—about twice the saltiness of the sea.
3052. I suppose the same information you have supplied the Committee in reference to the Pinnacle Tribute will apply to the Pinnacle Consols, except as to the mining developments? Yes.
3053. What have you done on the Pinnacle Consols? The shaft has been sunk 180 feet, and we have opened out one drive, and we are now cross-cutting to the lode. There has been little work done hitherto.
3054. Does the Pinnacle Consols adjoin the Pinnacle Tribute? Yes; it is nearly at right angles.
3055. Do they both contain a similar class of ore? Yes.
3056. Have you taken much ore out of the Consols? Very little at present.
3057. Have you proved the width of the lode? There are three lodes in the shaft, and we know the width of one, and that is 11 feet.
3058. Do you consider each of those lodes to be payable? Undoubtedly.
3059. And you anticipate being able to pay dividends in the future? Yes; in the very near future.
3060. So that you look forward to a prosperous career for both mines? I certainly do.
3061. What timber are you using down below? Very little. We use filling in. We use the small timber.
3062. Are you using hard wood or soft wood? We use the largest of the firewood which comes in.
3063. Have you any furnaces on the mine at all? There is one water jacket.
3064. Have you any intention of erecting furnaces for yourself on the mine? I have no doubt it will be considered at an early date.
3065. *Mr. Hurley.*] Had you any experience in silver-mining prior to taking the management of the mine here? No.
3066. You can give no information as to the probable stability of the mine in comparison with mines elsewhere? No; it is a true fissure lode, and will probably go to greater depths than we should be able to follow.
3067. Are you a geologist? No; I have a smattering of it.

Mr. Edwin Hornsby, ironmonger, Broken Hill, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. E. Hornsby.
21 Oct., 1889.
3068. *Chairman.*] What are you? Ironmonger, and manager for Walter Sully.
3069. What business do you carry on? Hardware, general, and grocery,—in a large way of business.
3070. Can you give any information as to your imports during a recent period? For the last six months—April to September—we have imported 352 tons of goods, upon which we have paid for carriage £1,049, or at the rate, in round numbers, of about £3 a ton.
3071. Have you experienced any inconvenience in dealing with Sydney at any time during your business? Yes.
3072. What has it been? The great difficulty I have experienced has been in the time it takes in sending orders here from Sydney, and the time it takes to receive the goods; nine or twelve months ago I was in Sydney, and I was very anxious at that time to cultivate a trade with Sydney people. At that time they almost ignored the Barrier trade. Mr. McNeil, of Briscoe, Drysdale & Co., and W. S. Friend, and others, said it was too far away, but since then I have ascertained, through their travellers calling more frequently, that they are anxious to pick up a trade. The difficulty has been in the time of transit. At that time, they had the steamer "Franklin" on, and they promised me they would run here once a week for alternate weeks, but that fell off altogether. Therefore, I had almost to abandon the Sydney trade.
3073. If better means of intercourse were afforded would you prefer to do business with Sydney? Well, I should like to have the other market, it would be a larger market to choose from.
3074. That would be a great advantage? It would. I have no doubt there are lines I could buy better in Sydney than anywhere, and I should like to take advantage of them if I could get them here in reasonable time.
3075. In dealing with buggies tell us what you have to pay for them, and for their transit? A fortnight ago I had some buggies from Harris and Ackman. The total amount of the invoice was £64 for four buggies,

buggies, upon which I had to pay £45 10s. 2d. expenses. That is prohibitory. I could sell any number of them if I could get them here at £5 or £6, which I think is a reasonable freight; but when you are charged £11 for a £15 buggy, it simply stops the sale of it.

3076-7. We may take your experience to be like that of people generally in business in Broken Hill? Certainly; I don't see why I should be an exception from others.

3078. If better means of communication were afforded, you would, of course all things being equal, go to the market where you have the largest choice? Certainly, where I could reap the benefit.

3079. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] By what route did these buggies come? By Port Adelaide and Port Pirie, and here by railway.

3080. You say, if you could obtain them at a reasonable figure from Sydney, you could do a large trade in them in this district? Undoubtedly.

3081. And that remark applies to many other lines? Yes; to merchandize generally.

3082. You spoke about the steamer Franklin,—where was she to run from? From Sydney to Port Pirie direct; and they could, I believe have cultivated a splendid trade; but perhaps there was pressure brought to bear somewhere, and she was taken off.

3083. Have you been here long? About two years.

3084. And you have seen a rapid increase of population? Yes.

3085. What is your opinion about the prospects of this place? My own trade is increasing very rapidly and successfully, and I infer from that that the future will be equal to the present, if not better.

3086. Do you see around you indications of permanency in the buildings or appearance of the town? Yes. I see that shanties are giving way to nice little cottages; cottages are giving way to better houses; and houses of a better class are giving way to—not mansions—but superior villa residences.

3087. Have you seen any marked alteration in the character of the hotels and stores within the last few years? Yes; they are all improving and advancing.

John Stubbs, Esq., Manager of the Bank of Australasia, at Broken Hill, sworn, and examined:—

3088. *Chairman.*] You are the manager of the Bank of Australasia, at Broken Hill? Yes.

3089. How long have you been here? I have been here permanently sixteen months, and have been connected with the Barrier two and a half years.

3090. What has been your experience as to banking business here during that time? I find it has been increasing almost continually. When I came here first, there was one bank and 4,000 or 5,000 people;—and there are now eight banks, and I do not think any one of them has any idea of closing at the present time. Some of them, of course, came late, after the boom, and their prospects were not so good as those before it; but I think there is bound to be a further increase of business.

3091. Does your bank get the bulk of the mining business? Yes; I think we have the bulk of the companies, and we do a large business in negotiating scrip drafts, and also advancing against scrip.

3092. Do you find that business of a stable character? Yes; I have every evidence of it.

3093. Are your transactions very large? Yes.

3094. Do the pay-sheets go through your bank? Yes; we have the pay-sheets of the mines. I think the Proprietary Mine pays about £8,000 a week or £16,000 a fortnight. Block 14 Company pays about £4,000 a fortnight. That is all I can remember at present. The other mines are in proportion.

3095. With regard to the advances you make, do you find the securities generally are of a good character—you do not have to foreclose? No; the advances are comparatively small as against freehold, and after they are made they are very quickly paid off.

3096. From a business point of view, and from your experience as a banker, do you consider Broken Hill is on a safe and permanent footing? Yes; I have no hesitation in saying so.

3097. And that it is likely to increase? I think so.

3098. What premises do you occupy—rented? Yes; we have a brick building leased. There are two years to run yet. It was built in the early days here.

3099. Do you contemplate building permanent offices? Yes; the difficulty at present is in getting a site. The building we have now was built for a bank and residence; but we find it too small to conduct the ordinary business in.

3100. You find, I suppose, the value of the property for building purposes goes up very much? Yes, wonderfully during the last few months.

3101. And are business accounts in a sound state? Yes; and business generally is on a sound footing.

3102. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Can you give us any idea of the unimproved value of property in Argent-street? I think the value in the main block was about £50 a foot a month ago; but it could not be bought for that now.

3103. Is there any probability that it will rise higher? Yes, every probability.

3104. *Mr. Hurley.*] What is the value of land in the cross streets? That does not bear such a high value, but it is bound to come. The town is a very long one, and I think it will increase in the width.

BROKEN HILL, TUESDAY, 22 OCTOBER, 1889.

[The Sectional Committee met in the Council Chamber, Broken Hill.]

Present:—

The HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Mr. Charles Eley, Traffic Manager of the Silverton Tramway, sworn and examined:—

3105. *Chairman.*] What position do you occupy? Traffic Manager of the Silverton Tramway.

3106. And that is the tramway running from where? From Cockburn, on the South Australian Border, to Broken Hill—a distance of 36 miles.

Mr.
E. Horsby.
21 Oct., 1889.

J. Stubbs,
Esq.
21 Oct., 1889.

Mr. C. Eley.
3107. 22 Oct., 1889.

- Mr. C. Eley. 3107. That tramway is the property of a company? Yes; called the Silverton Tramway Company.
 3108. Where is the company managed? In Melbourne, by a local Board of Directors.
 22 Oct., 1889. 3109. Can you tell us what the cost of the tramway was? I could not; I do not know it. I was not here when it was constructed.
 3110. Is the rolling-stock the property of the company, or of the South Australian Government? The South Australian Government. We have some of our own.
 3111. Carriages or trucks? We have two locomotives, twenty trucks, and two brake-vans.
 3112. Any passenger carriages? No.
 3113. So the bulk of the rolling-stock is the property of the South Australian Government? Yes.
 3114. And worked by arrangement with the company? Exactly.
 3115. How long has the tramway been constructed? About a year and ten months. We have been working the traffic about that time.
 3116. The object of examining you, is to get, as far as we can, the amount of business done by the tramway since it started up to the present time;—have you got any figures that you can give us? No, I have not. The books are kept in Melbourne. You would get that from the Chairman of the Board of Directors.
 3117. What information have you got here;—do you not keep any accounts? All the vouchers go to Melbourne, and the books are kept there.
 3118. Have you not brought any documents with you which would give us any information on that head? No.
 3119. Why not? I am not at liberty to disclose anything.
 3120. But this is a Committee which has powers equal to those of a Supreme Court, and we can compel their production if there are any in your possession? It places me in rather a peculiar position. I am not allowed to disclose private information, so what can I do. I have no doubt, if you were to ask the Chairman of Directors, or the Secretary, you would get the information you require.
 3121. Mr. O'Sullivan.] Can you show us one of the last balance-sheets? No.
 3122. Dr. Garran.] Do you send the vouchers individually and singly;—do you make up any sheets? There are statements which go over.
 3123. Chairman.] Have you no duplicates of those? I believe copies are kept.
 3124. Have you those copies? I have not. Our accountant has, I expect.
 3125. But you are the head officer here, are you not? Yes.
 3126. Do you say you brought no documents at all here? I have brought the rate-list, the time-table, the Act, and all that kind of thing.
 3127. You mean the tonnage-rates? Yes; the scheduled rates.
 3128. Is that a printed sheet? Yes.
 3129. You might hand one in? [Witness handed in list showing the goods classification, parcels and live stock rates, parcels regulations, and fare-table for the Silverton Tramway Company, on and after the 1st July, 1889.] (See Annexures).
 3129½. Dr. Garran.] Are your passenger rates the same as those of the South Australian Government? No.
 3130. Are they higher or lower? They are higher, I think.
 3131. How much higher? I could not say; I have never compared them.
 3132. Are your goods rates the same? They bear favourable comparison.
 3133. They are not higher? Very slightly.
 3134. Is your classification the same? Very nearly. The first, second, third, and fourth classification, is almost the same.
 3135. Then it is principally in passenger rates that you exceed the amount of the South Australian tariff? Yes; I think so.
 3136. You cannot say by how much? No; about three-fourths of our goods are at rates ranging from 2d. to 3d. a mile.
 3137. Your receipts are more for goods than passengers? Yes.
 3138. How many passenger trains do you dispatch each day? One, which we call a passenger train; two other goods trains carry passengers.
 3139. How many goods trains do you dispatch daily? There are four trains running daily each way; one we consider a passenger train and the other goods.
 3140. But they all carry goods? Yes.
 3141. As a rule, do they go away fairly well laden? Fairly well. Sometimes they have to take empty trucks back.
 3142. But on the whole, the trade balances itself well? No; the traffic inwards is greater than outwards.
 3143. Your inward traffic is in general goods for the supply of the township? Yes, and the mines; the bulk is with the mines.
 3144. More than for the township? Decidedly.
 3145. How much more? I should say three-fourths will be with the mines.
 3146. And one-fourth for the supply of the township's necessities? Yes.
 3147. And what goes out is mainly the produce of the mines? Yes.
 3148. Do you send any wool out? Yes, in the wool season.
 3149. Wool is the only other export besides the mineral ore? Yes; but we have small lines of sheepskins and bones, &c.
 3150. Do you dispatch much live stock? None, comparatively speaking.
 3151. Do you get any cattle and sheep here for the supply of meat for the township? We did last season, when it was dry, but this season we got hardly any.
 3152. The neighbouring stations supply the meat market? I think so; at least they must do so.
 3153. How many trucks do you send outward on each day? It depends on the class of engine that hauls the train.
 3154. How many classes of engines have you? Two.
 3155. What is the full haulage for one of each sort? A full train is twenty vehicles; I am talking of goods.

3156. In the case of goods, then, that would be twenty trucks, including the brake and the water-tank? Eighteen trucks, a brake, and water-tank. Mr. C. Eley.
22 Oct., 1889.
3157. How much will each truck carry? The carrying capacity of a truck is 6 tons.
3158. Then six times eighteen would be a full load? Yes; but they are not loaded up to their limits.
3159. A full load will be 108 tons? Yes, if the trucks are loaded to their limits.
3160. What do you think is your average load out? I do not think it would exceed 4 tons per truck.
3161. That would be about 72 tons? Yes.
3162. Is that a paying load? Yes, provided the trains were all full; of course, they have to carry empty trucks very often.
3163. Do you think, taking day by day and week by week, you average 60 tons a train? Yes; we might do that. I think we would.
3164. And the bulk of what you send away is either mineral ore or bullion? Yes.
3165. And that is paid for at the rates on the sheet you have put in? Yes.
3166. You have no information as to the growth of last year's tonnage? No.
3167. Have you sent away 60 tons a train for 300 days;—that would be 72,000 tons in the year. Do you think you sent that away last year? No; I do not think we did.
- 3167½. How much do you think you did send away in the course of the year? I could not easily guess. A very large number of trains last year were sent away with empty trucks.
3168. Still, on the whole, you think you are right in saying your average load outwards is about 60 tons? No; not out. Taking it both ways it might average that.
3169. What, only 30 tons out and in? No.
3170. You mean averaging the two? Yes; the average outward tonnage would not be 60 tons. Taking it together, it might range between 50 and 60 each way.
3171. That is, taking each way, there would be 100 tons a day in and out? Yes.
3172. That would be 400 tons a day? Yes.
3173. It is not less than that? No.
3174. Is the trade pretty regular, or does it come in gushes? The inward traffic comes in gushes at times.
3175. What causes the irregularity? A ship arriving at Port Pirie, I presume; if they get a cargo of coke, it is generally rushed up at once. That is the only thing rushed up at once. It would also apply to coal and timber.
3176. But we are told timber is left there to season a good deal? Occasionally it is rushed up.
3177. Then your rushes depend upon the supply of import at Port Pirie? Exactly; when there is a large number of ships there we are busy.
3178. When the harbour is empty you are running light? Yes.
3179. And your greatest capacity per day is, as you say, four trains a day. You cannot do more with a single line than that? Yes; we could do more, but we do not do more. We occasionally run a special—but it is a rare thing.
3180. You could do 100 tons a day if you were pushed? Yes; I could run a much larger number of trains a day than we are running.
3181. What material do you bring the largest quantity of? Coke.
3182. What next to that? Coal and mining timber.
3183. Then coal, coke, and timber are the staples of your business? Yes.
3184. And going outwards, the staple is bullion and ore? I think you might say ore and bullion. We send more ore than bullion. Some of it goes to Germany, and some to England. It is shipped to various places. Some of it is smelted at the sea-board.
3185. What do you think was the export by the railway last Saturday;—if you cannot give us the average daily can you say the gross for the week? I could not give you that. I have not reckoned up lately.
3186. You sent the four trains away each day? Yes.
3187. Were they pretty fully loaded? They were not last week, because we were short of trucks.
3188. But had you the business if you had had the trucks? If we had had the trucks we might have done a larger business.
3189. You sent away fully 60 tons by each truck? Yes.
3190. That would be 240 tons in the day? Yes.
3191. Did you do as much inwards? Yes; I should think we did.
3192. Last week, then, you carried 480 tons daily? Yes.
3193. Perhaps more? Yes.
3194. Was that a particularly heavy week? No; it was about our average week.
3195. If there had been a glut the traffic would have been heavier, but there was no special glut at Port Pirie last week? No.
3196. There were no ships unloading coke or coal? No.
3197. Had you any coal or coke business last week? We had some.
3198. But there was no unloading to press you? No.
3199. Then it was rather a light week than otherwise? Yes.
3200. And all last week's business would be carried according to this rate-sheet? Exactly.
3201. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Can you state the amount of ore or bullion sent away by each mine? I think the Proprietary Company send away something like 700 tons of bullion a week, and I think the outside limit of Block 14 is about 200 tons. These are the only two mines which are smelting.
3202. And how much more is sent away? About forty trucks.
3203. At 5 tons each? Yes; perhaps 200 trucks in one week.
3204. I mean in one week? 200 trucks.
3205. That would be 1,000 tons? Yes.
3206. In one week then you have 700 tons of bullion from the Proprietary mine? I do not know that that is their regular output.
3207. But take it as an approximate estimate—in one week you have 700 tons of bullion from the Proprietary and 200 tons from Block 14? That is about their outside limit. If any smelters were shut down it would not be so much.
3208. Then you say you have 1,000 tons of ore from the other mines in a week, and you told Dr. Garran you

- Mr. C. Eley.* you were doing business to the extent of 480 tons a day? Yes; the trains average 60 tons, and there are four trains in and out.
- 22 Oct., 1889. 3209. I suppose if we calculate the weight per day, and take six days for each week, and fifty-two weeks for each year, we can arrive at the amount of business you are doing with the tramway? Yes, pretty nearly.
3210. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you bring in fluxes—any limestone or ironstone? Yes.
3211. Can you give any idea of the amount of limestone you bring in? We are bringing in very little just now. A large quantity of it comes in by teams.
3212. Does your line run through the limestone country? Yes; a lot of it is carted a distance of about 7 miles into Silvertown railway station, and some of it comes from a siding about 7 miles down the line.
3213. You could not give us an idea of the quantity you bring in? It may be 700 tons a week.
3214. Do you bring any ironstone? Very little, comparatively speaking.
3215. Can you give an idea of the quantity? It comes in so intermittently.
3216. Would it amount to 100 tons a week? I don't think it.
3217. What is the average amount of coal you bring in monthly or weekly? I could not tell you. It would only be a guess. The Proprietary mine is the only one which uses coal extensively.
3218. Does not Block 14 use it? None, comparatively speaking. They use firewood.
3219. Do you know whether there is much coal used for private consumption? Very little, except for blacksmith's purposes.
3220. Do you carry any firewood on your trains? No; when I say no, we have carried firewood; but I don't think we average a truck a month.
3221. Is there any firewood to be had round there? No; it is very difficult to get. It is getting more difficult every day.
3222. Then they will have to have some other sort of fuel—even for private consumption? There is no doubt about it. Even for private consumption they will have to have coal, or something else, in time.
3223. Do you find any perceptible increase in the amount of coal you carry monthly? No; because the Proprietary Company and the Gas Company are the only two companies which use coal to any great extent.
3224. Do you know the price paid for coal at Port Pirie? About 21s. a ton if you buy it in large quantities. You can buy it in 25-ton lots for 25s. per ton on board the trucks.
3225. Do you find any increase in the amount of your traffic—have the last three months shown an increase in returns on the previous year? Yes; I think trade is improving.
3226. In passengers as well as goods? Yes; I think in passengers as well as goods.
3227. *Mr. Hurley.*] Your Company, being a public Company, have you published a balance-sheet of expenditure and income? I could not say.
3228. Have you ever seen a sheet? Yes; I have seen a balance-sheet, which is generally given to shareholders.
3229. Can you tell us, from memory, what percentage upon the cost of construction is returned to the shareholders upon a half-year's or a year's working? No, I could not.
3230. Have you received instructions from the directors not to disclose to this Committee the return of your workings? No; I have received no direct instructions as to this Committee.
3231. Have you not a knowledge of the percentage paid upon the expenditure on railway construction? I do not really know the cost of construction.
3232. You do not know the dividend paid? I believe it ranges from 5 to 10 per cent. on the cost of construction; but I cannot positively say.
3233. If I were to tell you that your returns were equal to 15 per cent. on the cost of construction, could you say that it was otherwise? No; I could not.
3234. It may be so? Yes. The dividends are not declared here, but in Melbourne. I am not a shareholder.
3235. But you look upon the investment as a good paying investment for the shareholders who have their money in it? Yes; I think it is.
3236. Do you not look upon it as one of the best paying investments, as a railway, in the Colony? I do not know.
3237. Do you not know that you convey a larger quantity of goods per mile over and above any branch line in the colonies? I do not know. I should say we do not. I should say your traffic at Newcastle would be much larger than ours.
3238. If you had been desirous of affording information you could have produced a copy of your last printed balance-sheet? No; I could not. I have not got one in my possession.
3239. You have received information from the directors not to disclose certain things in connection with the working of the tramway? No; not direct information; but you know it is not the usual thing.
3240. But why this desire on your part to keep from us information which may be of advantage to us in regard to the trade done? I think I have given the information fairly well.
3241. But you cannot tell us the amount of dividend paid on the cost of construction? I have mentioned, in the first place, that our books are kept in Melbourne, and our head office is there.
3242. Then you do not know whether you are working at a loss or not? I reckon we are working at an advantage.
3243. *Dr. Garran.*] Are the balance-sheets printed? Yes.
3244. Are they reported in the newspapers? Yes, I believe they are.
3245. And they are a matter of public notoriety? Yes.
3246. *Chairman.*] What class of goods are coke, timber, and coal? Bullion and coke are carried 3d. a mile; ore, coal, and flux, for 35 miles, at 2d. per mile.
3247. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Taking the figures you have given us as the daily work done by the Company—about 480 tons a day,—and multiplying that by the working days of the year, it amounts to 149,760 tons per year. Would that be about the amount of work you do? I dare say it would.

Mr. W. W. Harper, mining manager, sworn, and examined:—

Mr. W. W.
Harper.

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3248. *Mr. Hurley.*] You are underground manager to the Broken Hill Proprietary Company? Yes.
3249. Have you been long in that position? About sixteen months.
3250. Do you know the number of men under your guidance? About 1,040 in the underground workings.
3251. Have you had large experience in silver-mining? A good many years.
3252. In this country? Only about sixteen months in this country.
3253. And what other country? In America.
3254. Is your experience of a lengthened period there? Yes; almost a life time.
3255. From your knowledge of the mines in America, and from what you have seen in connection with this mine, can you give us any information as to the probable permanency of it? I should rather believe that the future of the Proprietary mine will be a very prosperous one.
3256. Are the indications such as to lead you to believe that there are many years' work in the mine? I should presume so.
3257. But it is not sufficiently explored yet to enable you to say as to the number of years? No.
3258. Are there any indications in the mine which you would take to be as against its permanency, as compared with your experience in America? Not any.
3259. You have not seen either foot or hanging-wall in the works which you have carried out? No; neither foot or hanging-wall.
3260. Have you what are called "horses" in the mine? Yes.
3261. Are those tending to a permanency or to the destruction of the lode? Not at all; they are a common occurrence all the world over.
3262. What is the grade of ore at the lowest level. Is it an improvement on the grade nearest the surface? There has not been sufficient work done to guarantee any expression of opinion on this point.
3263. There is every indication of the lode continuing at the lowest level as a permanency? Yes.
3264. What kind of timber do you generally use in America? The same as here.
3265. As to the durability of the timber, can you say anything in regard to colonial timber as against Oregon? Nothing material. I have not had sufficient experience to speak.
3266. Can you give any opinion as to one timber compared with another? I find that the stringy-bark has a tendency of drawing dampness, and causes rot in the course of time, but as a rule all timbers in mines serve any amount of time. There is no such thing as give out about them.
3267. Do you think it would be to the advantage of the mine if it could get timber which would last twenty years, as against Oregon pine which is only likely to last five years? Oregon pine only likely to last five years. I could not say as to the correctness of that.
3268. Can you say where the Oregon is used in preference to colonial hardwood? No, I could not.
3269. You are not in a position to give information as to whether it would be more to the interests of the Company to use hardwood in the future in lieu of the softer pine? No, I have never seen the hardwood used.
3270. Compared with the miners you have been accustomed to deal with in America, how do those you are engaged with here compare? Well, we have rather an inferior class of men, but we have good, bad, and indifferent.
3271. Could you put a larger number of men on if you were inclined to do so, over and above those who are working now? Not at present.
3272. But if you had lower levels, you could no doubt place 300 or 400 men more to work? If there were proper facilities for working those levels, without a doubt we could work a greater number of men.
3273. *Mr. Copeland.*] I understand that you have not been very many years in the Australian Colonies, and that you are somewhat of a recent arrival from the Californian States? I am.
3274. I am sure that the Committee will be very glad to elicit information from you as giving expression to the experience you have gained from the American States in connection with working silver ores. I am not going to ask you very many questions, but I want to elicit a few answers to questions in connection with the mine, with the view of showing the durability and the permanency of the mine. I think that is about the only direction which the Committee will require to inquire from you. We have had other evidence from the accountant, and therefore the only evidence I want to gather, so far as I am concerned, at any rate, is in the direction of the permanency of the lode. I wish to make this statement so that you will understand the drift of the inquiries I am likely to make. You are mining manager for which blocks? Blocks 11, 12, and 13.
3275. Do they comprise the whole of the Proprietary blocks? Yes.
3276. But I understand that Mr. Patton is the general manager of other blocks than those? Those are all that constitutes the Proprietary Company's mine.
3277. How long is it since you arrived in this Colony from America? On the 8th of June, a year ago.
3278. Did you occupy similar positions in American mines? Yes.
3279. That is so far as regards underground mining? Yes.
3280. One matter which I am very desirous of eliciting the truth on, and I want you to be particularly strict in regard to it, is the underlay of the lode in regard to the Proprietary? Well, I could not give anything at all.
3281. I am going to ask certain questions, and I want you to understand the drift of them. It is very desirable that the Government of this Colony, in which your mines are situated, should have some slight conception as to whether these mines are going to continue for five, ten, twenty, fifty, or a hundred years. We think it is very necessary that the Government, before committing the country to the expenditure of a railway, should have some decisive evidence as to the permanency of these lodes. There is no one who could give us any indication of the permanency of these lodes so well as yourself. Therefore the Committee has invited you here to give evidence, and we desire that you will give us evidence direct. What I want to know is this—the position of the first discovery of the lode. I take it for granted you are well acquainted with the whole line of the lode? Yes; that is in the Proprietary mine.
3282. I want you to state to the Committee the position where the lode was first discovered to be payable? So far as I can understand, it was right on the surface.
3283. About where and in what block? In several places,—in fact on the three blocks. The northern portion of block 11, and also block 12, and block 13.
3284. Will you state here in which parts of the mine did you find payable ore? In blocks 12 and 13. There was no work done in block 11 when I came here.

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3285. At what depth in blocks 12 and 13 did you find payable ore? The principal working was down on the 216 feet level,—from that upwards to the surface.
3286. Did the one shaft serve the two blocks? No; we had five shafts.
3287. At what depth did you first commence to get silver bearing ores? We had it right from the surface to the present depth.
3288. In what block did you first commence to sink a shaft? I cannot say, except from hearsay. I was not here.
3289. Where was the first shaft sunk to a depth of 100 feet? I could not tell you in which block, excepting from what I have heard since I have been here.
3290. At what depth did the Company commence to get payable ore? I could not tell you that because I was not here.
3291. Do you know what the assays from the outcrop gave? No, not at that time.
3292. You do not know that there were a number of assays taken from the outcrop which gave little or no silver? I do not know what they did before I came here.
3293. What was the depth of the deepest shaft at the time of your arrival? The deepest working point was 316 feet.
3294. In which block? 13.
3295. Block 13 is two blocks north of block 11? Yes.
3296. You took possession of block 13? Yes, and 12.
3297. When did you take possession? When I arrived here on the 8th of June, 1888.
3298. You came here with all your experience as a miner from the Californian States? Yes.
3299. I am not going to ask an offensive question, but it is very desirable that we should know from whom we are receiving evidence. I should like to know what testimonials or certificates you can produce to show your previous career in the States? The merits of my work. I have no testimonials. The only reference I can give you is that I was under the firm of J. W. Mackey & Co. for seventeen years in a similar position.
3300. *Dr. Garran.*] Did Mr. Patton send for you to come here? Yes.
3301. *Mr. Copeland.*] What is your experience in other countries as a mining manager? I was right on the Comstock lode for twenty-three years.
3302. You were managing it? Mostly for all the time. As I have already stated I was in a similar position as I am now in for seventeen years under the firm of J. W. Mackey & Co.
3303. You were the underground manager, and had charge of the underground workings? Yes.
3304. One particular aspect of the question of mining I want to elicit your evidence upon, and that is in reference to the timbering of these open workings. You know that you are taking out a very large width of ore and you are leaving a channel open to a considerable width—150 to 200 feet—and by doing so the life of a number of miners is in danger unless you timber the ground in a satisfactory manner. Is that so? Yes.
3305. I want to ask you whether, in working the Comstock lode, you were in the habit of timbering the lode in the same manner as you are timbering it now in the Proprietary mine? Yes, precisely.
3306. You know that in ordinary mining, and under ordinary circumstances, it is not the practice to timber in that particular form? Not in small lodes.
3307. The ordinary form is to timber from the foot-wall to the hanging wall, at an angle? Yes.
3308. You are timbering vertically? Yes.
3309. Do you consider that a piece of sawn timber will bear the same amount of vertical pressure which a piece of split timber will bear? The vertical or down pressure has no tendency to weaken those timbers at all.
3310. It has no tendency to split the pine? No; it is a very rare circumstance.
3311. Have you ever found the surface giving way at all? No; of course there is more or less shrinkage.
3312. You have not found any crush? No.
3313. In your experience as mine manager of this mine, you have not found that a piece of sawn timber has a greater tendency to split—knowing that the grain of the timber is diagonal—than a piece of split timber? It might possibly have, but not in the way we use it. We do not see any action of that kind taking place.
3314. So far you have not noticed any action in that direction? No.
3315. Will you say whether you have ever noticed any vertical pressure on the mine in your underground workings? No; there is really no vertical pressure.
3316. You have a large number of miners employed, whose lives are valuable, and they are entirely under your charge. If you timber this ground in an impracticable manner, or one which does not carry out the scientific views you think you possess, the consequence will be another collapse? It is not a matter of thinking, it is a matter of experience.
3317. You are speaking from your previous experience in the Comstock lode? Yes.
3318. In that lode you timbered the ground in the same form as you are timbering this lode? Precisely.
3319. And you found that the vertical pressure did not split the pine timber—did you have pine timber? Yes.
3320. You are quite sure of that? Yes.
3321. Where did it come from? Oregon.
3322. And you had sawn pine timber, and it did not split? No.
3323. Did you have any crushes at all? No, not to amount to anything beyond the general line of working.
3324. What was the width of the lode? 327 ft.
3325. What was the angle of the underlay of your lode? To the east.
3326. At what angle? I could not exactly tell you about the angle.
3327. Did it underlay, say 45 degrees? Not quite that much.
3328. Was it very vertical? No; I suppose it may have had pretty nearly an angle of about 45 degrees; but I could not say exactly.
3329. I should like to know, for the benefit of the mining communities of this Colony, because your timbering is a lecture to me, and what I want to know is this: in the timbering of the Comstock lode how many years' experience did you have? Twenty-three.

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3330. But was the Comstock lode open for twenty-three years? Yes, over thirty years.
3331. What age were you when you went in? I was only a stripling.
3332. Did you have any crushes—did the timber give way in the Comstock? No.
3333. What was the angle of underlay? I cannot tell you exactly; but somewhere in the neighbourhood of 45 degrees.
3334. Do you think the underlay of the Comstock lode is about the same as the underlay of this lode? No.
3335. Do you think it is more? Yes.
3336. It has a greater underlay than the underlay of this lode? Yes.
3337. In timbering the lode you timbered it on the vertical principle which you are timbering now? Precisely.
3338. Did you timber it with pine? Yes, with Oregon pine.
3339. You are timbering now with Oregon pine? Yes.
3340. Did you have any experience of the durability of that pine? Yes.
3341. How many years? We worked over a second working after the timbers had been in place twelve years, and we found them in a compressed state and very hard—in a state of petrification.
3342. You worked over this ground twelve years after? Yes.
3343. Was that in dry or wet ground? Dry ground.
3344. And in dry ground you found this pine to be in a satisfactory state? Yes, most decidedly so.
3345. It was not perished? No.
3346. It did not dry rot? No.
3347. It had not split from the vertical pressure? Most decidedly; it was crushed a little. It was in a compressed state. I can produce some if you are desirous of seeing it.
3348. Did you have any experience of the same timber in water? Yes.
3349. What is your experience of the same timber in water? I always found wherever it was exposed to a sufficient amount of water that the timber was in a better state even for years after than when put in place. It had a tendency to tighten the timbers.
3350. Do I understand that the part above the water maintained its solidity, and the lower part below the surface of the water also maintained its solidity? Yes.
3351. But just at the junction of the waters with the atmospheric air, it decayed;—is that so? Of course there are places where you can see any kind of timber decay which is exposed to a certain amount of water sufficient to cause dampness.
3352. What I want to know is the weak points of this particular timber—wherein does the weak point lie of timbering with pine instead of hardwood? I don't know of any.
3353. You believe, in a general way, that pine will timber the ground as satisfactorily as hardwood? Yes.
3354. And from your experience do you think this pine timber will last twenty years? I could not say that. All I expect is from what I have seen.
3355. Do you think it will last ten years? I am sure of it.
3356. But you are not sure it will last twenty years? No, I could not say how long it will last. I should say, from the way I have found things, that it will last any amount of time.
3357. What we want to know is whether hardwood would be more economical than soft wood for timbering purposes? I could not say, because we have not used it sufficiently.
3358. Taking into consideration all the expenses of fitting a set of timber before it goes down the lode, and then the fixing of it below, and the lathing and all the rest of it—do you think it is desirable to use soft timber which will decay in a few years, in preference to using hard timber, which will last double the number of years at double the price? I don't know if it will decay. I have never seen it. The experience I have had from the hardwood is very limited.
3359. But have you experience of the pine? Yes.
3360. Does the pine live under ground? Most decidedly.
3361. For how long? I cannot tell you.
3362. How long will it live before it gets the dry rot? I cannot say. I can only speak from what my experience has taught me. We have worked back upon it after the timber was in place twelve years, and we found it in a compressed state, as hard as it could be made.
3363. Was that above water or below? It was in the dry portion of the lode. By sinking the shafts we had drawn the water from the lode. It was below water or above water, just as you like to put it.
3364. But it had practically been above water the whole time? It was in a dry place.
3365. And you found it did not get the dry rot? No; to cut a long matter short, it may be to your interest to state that Virginia City is built right upon the big ore bodies, as taken out from the Virginia Californian Mines, and the largest hotel we have there is standing to the general satisfaction of everybody. That is upon the largest ore bodies which are being worked on the Comstock lode.
3366. Can you tell me the angle of underlay in that lode? Not more than I have already told you. It is somewhere about 45 degrees.
3367. Perhaps you are not aware that old towns have gone down in one night;—take for instance parts of Ballarat, which have been sunk down 7 or 8 feet. Large hospitals and breweries, and other buildings have gone down in one night? Yes. I have not had experience and could not answer any question in regard to hardwood being better than pine, because I have not had any experience with it.
3368. *Dr. Garran.*] Is the atmosphere in this mine as favourable to the preservation of timber as it was in the Comstock? I should presume so.
3369. How deep did you go in the Comstock? 3,300 feet.
3370. And you had the wood in the mullock, and stoped it out for the whole of that depth? Not the whole of it. We did not do much in stoping above the 1,100 feet level.
3371. What depth of mullock did you rest upon it? All we had to put in it. We used timber, in preference, where it was required.
3372. You did not fill in? No.
3373. Then the pressure was merely the pressure of the two walls? Yes, and we used timber wherever it was necessary in place of mullock.
3374. Then your timber did not have to resist the superincumbent pressure of the mullock, but only the side walls? Of course we had the general mullock from the mines.
3375. Generally, you are satisfied that your present system of working is safe? Decidedly.

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3376. And you do not see any necessity for going in for harder timber? I do not really see any necessity for it; I think the timbers have given entire satisfaction where they have been used, but almost any timber will shrink.
3377. If the railway were made to bring hardwood from New South Wales there would be no great demand for it? I do not know. That is entirely out of my line of business.
3378. It is not your line of business to choose the timber? Certainly, but as long as the timber has got a grain, it is strong enough, because the general pressure on these timbers is not perpendicular.
3379. But still in this mine you are filling in with mullock largely? Yes.
3380. Then your timber has to bear the weight of it? Yes.
3381. So that you will have a more perpendicular weight to bear here than at the Comstock? Yes, each section is supposed to be a strength in itself. It is the side pressure we work for.
3382. But you have a different problem to solve here in timbering to what you had in the Comstock mine? Not much.
3383. More perpendicular pressure and less lateral pressure? It does not make any difference. We are calculated to use our judgment as to the effect of the pressures.
3384. You will not require to sink deeper than you have done at the present for many years to come? No.
3385. When will the time arrive when you will have to sink another 200 or 300 feet? I could not say.
3386. The ordinary course of working will not require you to probe this lode for any greater depth than at present? No.
3387. And you will not know the continuing depth of the lode until you sink again? No.
3388. That is left an open question? Yes.
3389. But so far as you can see there is no reason to doubt the permanency of depth? No.
3390. But it can only be absolutely proved by sinking? Yes.
3391. There is nothing in your present work compelling you to do that? No.
3392. One single exploring shaft would not involve any serious expense? Yes; it would all be expense.
3393. There is no intention of doing that at present? I could not say.
3394. It is not in any part of your recommendations? I am only the manager of the mine, and I do what I am told.
3395. All I wanted to get at was whether there was anything in immediate view to determine the durability and depth of the lode? I could not say.
3396. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You stated that the width of the Comstock lode was 327 feet? Yes.
3397. What was the depth? We worked it from 1,100 feet down to 2,200 feet, that is in payable ore.
3398. That lode, after being worked for thirty years, is still being worked vigorously? Yes.
3399. Is Virginia City a growing city? Not so much so now.
3400. But it lasted well for twenty years? Yes.
3401. And became a flourishing centre? Yes.
3402. What do you estimate the proprietary lode at? I do not know; I cannot say.
3403. Do you consider the lodes in this district in any way approaching in value and in size to that of the Comstock? We have never determined those matters here yet, so that I could not speak with any certainty.
3404. Do you care to give us some idea as to how long this lode and district will last? I could not say. If I were to express myself at all I should rather do so favourably. But all I know about is simply the Proprietary Mine, and I can merely speak from what I have seen there.
3405. We are thinking of spending over a million of money in this railway and in waterworks, and in other matters, and we should like to know whether we should be justified to do so from the nature of the field. We should like to know if you think this district will last as a mining district for some time? Decidedly I do, I think very favorably of the future of the Barrier Range, but then I am only one man.
3406. After your experience of similar country in Nevada and Virginia City, do you think you have a country here which will justify the construction of this railway and other public works? I could not say anything with regard to the railway, because that is entirely out of my line of business. All I can speak of concerning the Barrier Range is from the short time I have been here. My experience of it is very limited as I have not travelled much over it.
3407. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What character of ore was the Comstock? Silver and gold.
3408. Was it of the same character of ore as this? No.
3409. Was it sulphide ore? Yes.
3410. What is the deepest point you have penetrated to here in your workings? 385 feet.
3411. Did you get water at that level? Yes.
3412. Did that then turn to sulphide ore? We were not in the lode at all at that point.
3413. Have you indications at the lower levels of sulphide ore coming in? Yes.
3414. Did you have any quartz or carbonate ores in the Comstock? We had no carbonates; we had quartz.
3415. Then this actually is a richer lode than the Comstock? Judging from present appearances it is.
3416. That is as far as it has gone? Yes.
3417. Have you struck anything like any quantity of zinc blende in these workings? Nothing to speak of. Of course we have some zinc blende.
3418. But nothing sufficient to affect the character of the ore? No.
3419. Do you smelt all your ore here or send it away? All here.
3420. Have you any grades of ore in your mine which have been put on one side hardly rich enough to pay the smelting? No; but we have it in silicious forms.
3421. Are you taking every bit of ore from the mine and putting it into the furnaces? No; we are through the concentrator.
3422. Are you concentrating any of it? Yes. In the silicious form we have to treat it differently.
3423. Can you give any idea of the number of years work you have in sight—that is the number of years it is likely to last? No, I could not. We have not done sufficient work to warrant my speaking anything in regard to it.
3424. Have you found the quality of the ore as good at the bottom of the lower level as it was at the top? The bottom workings are equally as good as any other place.
3425. Then you have no doubt from all appearances that the lode is likely to continue? None at all.

Mr. Oswald Maddocks, Customs Officer, sworn, and examined :—

3426. *Chairman.*] What are you? Customs Officer.
 3427. Stationed where? Willyama, or Broken Hill.
 3428. The goods passing through your hands go to and from Broken Hill? Everything.
 3429. Have you prepared any returns to show the value of goods inwards and outwards? The total revenue collected at Willyama for the year 1888 was £64,915 15s. 5d. No. All returns are prepared at Silverton. For the eight months ending August 31, 1888, the total receipts were £49,121 12s. 4d. For the eight months ending August 31, 1889, the total receipts were £42,340 17s. 1d. This is the actual revenue from dutiable goods, and a large amount of free goods was imported in addition.

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Mr. Simon M'Kenzie, storekeeper and merchant, Menindie, sworn, and examined :—

3430. *Dr. Garran.*] Where do you reside? Menindie.
 3431. What occupation do you follow? Storekeeper and merchant.
 3432. Have you just arrived from Menindie? I came in last night to give evidence before the Committee.
 3433. What distance is it from Menindie here? It is under 70 miles.
 3434. Have you ever considered the project of a railway from Menindie to this point? Yes; we have been agitating for it for years.
 3435. Is there a Progress Committee in Menindie which has taken it in hand? Yes.
 3436. Have you collected any evidence on the subject? Yes; general evidence; but a friend who is with me is prepared to give a good deal of evidence; perhaps, more than I could.
 3437. What arguments were you prepared to use in favour of a railway from here to Menindie? The nature of the country. Good country now locked up would be opened for agriculture, and traffic would follow.
 3438. Is it your opinion that the railway from here to Menindie would be a desirable work in itself,—irrespective of its continuation towards Sydney? I think so.
 3439. Is any part of the country between here and Menindie fit for growing fodder? Yes; almost every acre, if it were irrigated.
 3440. Where could you get water for irrigation? From the Darling River.
 3441. Do you think the Darling River could spare enough to irrigate farming land? Yes. It could irrigate nearly the whole of the western district if the waters were saved.
 3442. And where could you save the waters? There is a system of lakes on both sides of the river in which an immense quantity of water can be stored.
 3443. Without deepening the lakes? Even now they would hold a great deal.
 3444. Could they be deepened advantageously? Yes, very easily.
 3445. Have you formed any definite conclusion as to the quantity they would store? No.
 3446. Have you formed any conclusion as to the quantity of water each acre would require for irrigation? No.
 3447. Then you only speak from a general impression? Yes.
 3448. And the water would have to be conveyed along the line of route if the farms were irrigated? Yes; the water runs out for about 17 miles. It gravitates from the river for 17 miles, to Speculation Lake.
 3449. And then the ground begins to rise? Not until 50 miles are passed.
 3450. How far would water run freely from the Darling towards here without raising it? That I cannot say. It runs out about 17 miles.
 3451. And upon that 17 miles is the soil good and fit for fodder growing? Yes.
 3452. Will it grow hay? Yes.
 3453. And you think if there was a railway from Menindie here you could settle a number of farmers at the back of Menindie, and supply this country with fodder? I am sure of it.
 3454. Is the route pretty level? Yes; for almost 50 miles from the quartz reef it is almost a perfect level.
 3455. Are there any mineral indications for the first 20 miles from here? Yes; and within 30 miles from Menindie.
 3456. Is there any timber on the route? Yes; ordinary timber.
 3457. Is there any limestone? Yes.
 3458. Iron? I think there are indications of ironstone and quartz reef in the gorge.
 3459. How far is that? About 55 miles.
 3460. After you pass Stephen's Creek, is there any water between there and the lakes? No; except the soakage of the creek itself.
 3461. And from Stephen's Creek to the lake itself—what is the distance? 35 or 36 miles.
 3462. That is superficially a dry country? Yes.
 3463. Have any wells been sunk on that line of route? Yes; by private enterprise.
 3464. What depth have they found water at? I cannot say; but somewhere about 200 feet, I think.
 3465. I understand you to say that for 12 miles from Menindie there is no difficulty in supplying water to agricultural farms? Not the slightest. There will be no great difficulty. Of course it will be an expense.
 3466. From there to this point the soil is good, but water will have to be raised? Yes.
 3467. Do you know anything of the country between Menindie and Ivanhoe? I do between Menindie and Hay.
 3468. Is that as good as on this side of the Darling? Quite, in some places; and water could be easily conserved there too. The water runs out from the Darling in that direction 70 or 80 miles.
 3469. There would be no difficulty in making a line of railway from Menindie to Hay? There is no engineering difficulty at all, as far as I know.
 3470. Is there any difficulty between Menindie and Ivanhoe. I do not think so. It is all level country.
 3471. Have you ever considered the question of a direct railway from Menindie to Sydney? Yes.
 3472. By which route do the Menindie people prefer it? They were at one time agitating an extension of the Hay line.
 3473. And are they still in favour of that? We will be quite content if the line went that way. The route would be shorter.

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3474. Shorter than what? Shorter than any other route proposed via Forbes and Condobolin, although good country exists there.
3475. You think that line would be shorter? Yes, I should think it could be made in about 260 or 280 miles.
3476. When you say shorter, you mean less mileage of railway? Yes.
3477. But not a shorter distance to Sydney? I think it would be a shorter distance to Sydney.
3478. But you have not calculated that out? No.
3479. Do you know the country for 20 miles back from the Darling on the east side of Menindie? Yes.
3480. Do you know the Tallywalka Creek? Yes.
3481. How far does it carry water back from the Darling? I think about 40 miles.
3482. A canal cut from the Darling would carry water 40 miles back? Yes.
3483. And you could have farms on each side? Yes, farms could be distributed very largely, the lakes will hold an immense quantity of water.
3484. Would there be any difficulty in supplying water from the Darling for farmers, for a distance of 40 miles back towards Ivanhoe? I don't think so. This Tallywalka Creek carries water for 80 or 90 miles.
3485. But not in a direct line eastward? No, but from where it enters from the river until where it flows out again is something like between 80 and 100 miles.
3486. How far direct back from the Darling could you carry water backwards for the use of farmers, and the open country? There would be no limit to the distance, I think.
3487. The country rises as you get away from the Darling? I don't think so.
3488. But you cannot speak on this subject with certainty? No.
3489. But the soil on this side of the Darling is good? Yes.
3490. But on both sides of the Darling for many miles back you could carry water, and irrigate lands which would grow fodder? Yes.
3491. And that fodder might find a good market here? Yes, it would find any amount of markets.
3492. And with a carriage of not more than 70 miles? Yes.
3493. We have it in evidence that the bulk of the fodder comes from the Burra, 200 miles? Yes.
3494. Do you think on the Darling, a shorter distance would give a supply of fodder to this market? I do.
3495. Apart from this market, would there be a market for fodder amongst the pastoral stations of the north? Yes.
3496. You think if we established a line of farmers to grow hay they would not want a market for their produce? I do not think they would.
3497. The squatters alone would buy a great deal? Yes.
3498. Irrespective of the mining market? Yes, they have to get all the supplies by the river. They grow very little.
3499. What were they charging for carrying hay up the river? It depends on the distances.
3500. How much a mile? On the whole course of the Darling, it is being carried to Bourke for 30s. a ton.
3501. And when the river navigable it would go for 30s. a ton? Yes.
3502. What would pay the farmers to grow it? That would depend on the return they got.
3503. The quantity you mean? Yes.
3504. You cannot form any idea? No.
3505. What would the total cost of hay be delivered at the squatters' homesteads on the river? I think hay could be grow there for £2 or £3 a ton.
3506. But would pay the squatters to give that price? They have to give whatever it is worth at the time it is required. I have know them to give £35 a ton.
3507. But if the supply was good? That would regulate the price. If there was a large supply it would be cheaper.
3508. *Chairman.*] What is the character of the country between Condobolin and Menindie? I have never been out as far as Condobolin, only to Hay.
3509. Away from the river what is the character of the country? It is very good soil, where a plough could be put at once with very little trouble.
3510. Is it as good as between here and Cobar and the Darling? It is better than most of that soil, but I have never travelled the country.
3511. Is not the country there likely to be flooded from the Lachlan? Yes, from the Lachlan and Murrumbidgee.
3512. For what distance from the river? That I cannot say; I never saw any of them in flood.
3513. Would many bridges be required if a railway were constructed along that route? Yes; three or four, I think. A bridge on the Murrumbidgee, one on the Lachlan, and there would be a creek or two, and a bridge on the Darling.
3514. Otherwise you think it a suitable country for constructing a railway? Yes; and it would open up a block of beautiful country. The flats on the Murrumbidgee are as good soil as any to be found in the country.
3515. Of course, if that line were constructed, the Wilcannia trade would be left in the cold altogether? There would be a chance of a connection, perhaps, if the trade of Wilcannia required it.
3516. *Mr. Hurley.*] Can you tell us whether you have practised any fruit-growing in the district where you are located? Yes; I know where fruit is grown.
3517. With success? With very great success, indeed.
3518. What character of fruit? Oranges, lemons, apricots, nectarines, pears, and peaches. Grapes grow beautifully in Menindie. I have seen some of the finest grapes there I ever saw in my life.
3519. Are people earning their living from fruit-growing? Yes; two or three Chinamen there have gardens and make money by it. They pay the Government a high price for their land. There is such a thing as £200 being made out of an acre of land.
3520. That is with irrigation? Yes.
3521. And there is an abundance of land of similar character? Yes; thousands and thousands of acres.

3522. Likely to give work to a large population in the event of a railway being constructed? Yes; if the railway were constructed there would be room for any amount of population.
3523. Have you grown any wheat there? I have not seen it grown, but I believe it would grow well.
3524. Has there been any ensilage practised there? Ensilage has been commenced. The manager of one station had a very luxuriant crop of herbage growing about the station. He had it all cut down and put into a silo, and it is going to be a success. Besides that, I know of another gentleman who grew 60 tons of beautiful natural grass, and made it into hay.
3525. This is merely an experiment? Yes.
3526. It may induce others to follow it if it is successful? Yes; but it gives every proof of what the country can do.
3527. What is the population of your district within 20 miles circumference? Between 400 and 500 people.
3528. Is the land dear immediately in the town? Allotments are pretty valuable.
3529. What should a half-acre allotment in a most prominent part of the town bring? I have known £100 refused for a half-acre allotment not long ago.
3530. Was that an ordinary block? Yes; it was a block with a blacksmith's shop on it.
3531. What about the unimproved value of land in the town? It would not be that value. Some allotments in the town are quite as valuable as that. The property I have got is on the river bank, and with buildings and all, I gave £1,500.
3532. Is the cost of living in Menindie much more expensive than here and Adelaide? No, I do not think so, except in a dry season. When the river is up the cost of living is much reduced.
3533. You rely upon the floods in order to drive the water into the Menindie lakes to convey it a certain distance towards this point? Yes.
3534. In the event of a very dry season what is the depth of water in that lake? I think the greatest depression would be 15 to 20 feet of water.
3535. At the driest season? I never saw it thoroughly full. The evaporation is very great, but I have seen that much in it.
3536. Would it not be necessary to lock the river at that point in order to ensure a constant supply? Yes.
3537. That would be necessary to force the water this way a certain distance? When the river rises to the level of the lakes the lakes fill themselves. It would be necessary to lock that water up.
3538. By locking the Darling? No, locks on the lake would save the water.
3539. By backing the water? Yes.

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S. M'Kenzie.
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Mr. Robert Scobie, saddler, Menindie, sworn and examined:—

3540. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You reside at Menindie? Yes.
3541. What is your position? A saddler.
3542. Have you any information to lay before the Committee as to the claims of Menindie to a railway? I believe I have.
3543. Will you place it before the Committee? I have made the Colony my home, and I desire to see her annex her own wealth and trade of the district. I have the Government plans of the lakes districts of Menindie to bear out the statements which I may make.
3544. Have you any figures regarding the progress of Menindie? In the last seven years the place has doubled itself in regard to private people putting up houses. The trade has fallen away, being annexed to South Australia.
3545. What is the character of the country around Menindie? It is good arable land. Before it gets rid of the effects of flood water another overtakes it. It is a grand soil for irrigation.
3546. Every time the river is up I presume the trade of the district goes to South Australia? Yes, at all times.
3547. Whether the river is up or not? Yes.
3548. How does it go when the river is not up? *Via* Broken Hill, since the railway came up here.
3549. What is your distance from Wilcannia? Ninety miles.
3550. What regular teams are there between here and Menindie in dry seasons? That depends when the dry seasons set in, or periods when the Darling is unnavigable. This last dry season all the wool from the district of Menindie was carried to Broken Hill.
3551. How many teams found occupation? We could not get sufficient teams. Some had to wait.
3552. Can you give an idea of the amount of tonnage taken up in that way by the teams? Not at present. I have known each of those stations, with ordinary fair seasons, to produce 2,000 bales of wool.
3553. And I suppose that wool would go to Broken Hill? Yes.
3554. And did the teams return pretty well loaded? These teams did not pass through Menindie, but took the nearest road to their own particular homestead.
3555. But they may be cited as belonging to the Menindie district? Yes.
3556. And they took back supplies to the stations? Yes.
3557. Did you hear the evidence given by Mr. McKenzie in regard to the population? Yes.
3558. Do you endorse it? I do.
3559. Do you endorse the statement about the water running back for 12 miles? On which side of the river.
3560. On the western side or Broken Hill side? Twelve miles! It is 80 miles.
3561. You are certain it runs back 80 miles? Yes.
3562. Can you name any particular point at which it starts? Bullabulky.
3563. What is the distance from Broken Hill to Menindie? Under 70 miles.
3564. If it ran back 70 or 80 miles, would it not inundate Broken Hill? I am talking about the Bullabulky lake.
3565. I want information in regard to the Broken Hill side. What distance does the water run back from the Darling on the Broken Hill side? At present about 17 miles, and it can be made to run further into Horse Lake, which is still further on the road, by a channel similar to that which joins the Speculation lake.

Mr. R. Scobie.
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- Mr. R. Scobie. 3566. How much further would Horse lake be? Several miles further.
3567. How far does the water run back on the eastern side? Eighty miles.
- 22 Oct., 1889. 3568. Can you name a point at which it stops? Bullabulky lake.
3569. Do you mean it is 80 miles back from the river? It runs right back to the extreme end of the county. It covers the whole county.
3570. How often does that occur? Whenever there is a flood of sufficient height to send the water down the Tallywalka and Terryamyinnia Creeks.
3571. When the water is at its furthest point in time of flood, how far is that point from the end of the Willandra Billabong? I have never travelled the distance, and cannot supply the information.
3572. Therefore the banks of the Darling are pretty well irrigated at times? When the water rises 2 or 3 inches over its eastern bank, it will go back 8 miles of its own natural gravitation.
3573. And if the river were locked you could get irrigation more freely? Yes.
3574. What out-post do you trade with? I prefer to trade with Sydney.
3575. What outlying places do you trade with? Unfortunately, in my line of business, we deal with Adelaide and Melbourne.
3576. Where do the mails run to? To Wilcannia and to Broken Hill. Formerly we had one running between Menindie and Hay. Then we have one running to Wentworth.
3577. Can you give any idea of the tonnage of goods arriving at Menindie from Adelaide? No.
3578. How many steamers do you think call there a year? This last rise a good few have called.
3579. Is the river trade declining? It is.
3580. Do you think the Bourke railway has intercepted it? No.
3581. Has it intercepted a portion of the River Darling trade in the higher portions? Yes; it has taken it all.
3582. Do you think a railway to Menindie would intercept a large portion of it? Yes.
3583. In the event of a railway running there from Sydney by any route, do you think it is likely the trade of the intermediate district would go to Sydney? Yes; it would lead to the settlement of the land by people who would be, generally, colonists.
3584. Do you think the railway could compete with the water carriage when the river is up? That would depend upon what conditions the steamer came up the river. If the river was locked, so as to make it navigable all the year round, it would be a regular trade, and it would be a question of expense of sending the steamers up the river as against the railway. As the river is now, it is only navigable in good flood times.
3585. Would you recommend that the locking should be carried out if you want the railway? Gradually.
3586. Which would be most conducive to the interests of the River Darling district to lock the river or to run a railway from Menindie to Wilcannia? £5,000 has been expended in making earthworks, in filling the creeks leading to the Menindie lake, and the Government has already spent a third of £80,000 in snagging the river, and these works will require to be continued. Others moneys will have to be expended, and if this money was now spent at once in throwing one dam across the Darling at a point below Menindie and above the outlet of the Tallywalka Creek, the whole object could be secured, and the trade of that district would be annexed and settled.
3587. If the railway went from Wilcannia, would it not in a measure serve the whole of the Menindie district? It does not pass through the same kind of country. It is not so near or close, and would not answer so many beneficial ends.
3588. If we constructed a railway to Broken Hill, *via* Wilcannia, there would only be 100 miles to Menindie? Yes.
3589. Would not that be practically serving Menindie, and bringing it within a fair reach of the metropolis? Yes; but by starting out from Menindie, the railway would annex the whole food supply of Broken Hill. Butter, milk, eggs, poultry, and bacon—all these articles can be produced on the Darling.
3590. But are these articles existing now on the Darling. Do you stipulate on their coming into existence? No; every person carries on his industry in his own small way.
3591. Judging by the success of these experiments, you consider that a large dairying business might grow up around Menindie? I consider there would be a great scope for a dairy factory under the new style.
- 3591½. And that in addition to the agricultural qualities of the district, you might get a valuable aid to Broken Hill? Certainly.
3592. And a place from which the supplies for Broken Hill might be obtained? Yes.
3593. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What pastoral holding is Menindie on or adjacent to? Kinchega.
3594. Is that the only one? No; about 100,000 acres are taken up on the northern side of Menindie in selections and homesteads.
3595. How many homestead lessees have you? I can only recollect eight.
3596. Do you know whether the land around Menindie is in the resumed area, or leasehold area? The land on the northern side of Menindie is the resumed portion.
3597. And is that land the good land you are speaking of? Yes.
3598. Do you think with greater facilities of transit there would be more homestead leases there? Yes.
3599. And that resumed land is fit for homestead leases? Yes.
3600. What is the amount of tonnage going away from Menindie, or arriving there during the twelve months? As regards actual tonnage before this railway was completed, I do not know. I know there were thousands of tons of coke landed there at 10s. a ton on the river from Morgan. Goods, on the present flood, have been taken back and put along the ship's side at 42s. 6d. a ton.
3601. Would not 10s. a ton for the carriage of coke be much cheaper than the way they can get it here now by rail? There was a talk about coke coming up the Darling on the present rise, but freights were lowered on the South Australian railways £1, I am told.
3602. I understand from your answers that Menindie is going backwards in regard to commerce? Yes; after the development of the silver district, all the money earned in the district gravitated to Broken Hill.
3603. Could not Menindie find a market here for any produce grown there? The transit will not allow it.
3604. I am speaking of the produce of the district of Menindie? They have no roads nor market.
3605. Could not you find a ready market here for anything you could produce at Menindie? Yes, if we had a road.
3606. Is there any agriculture carried on at Menindie? Yes, privately, in a small way.

3607. What is that small way. An acre or two? Yes, about that; but there have been larger quantities.
3608. Have you any experience with regard to these crops? I have seen them.
3609. Have you noticed any particular crop in one paddock continuously year after year? No.
3610. Then it is only now and then they get a crop? The people using the country mostly depend upon nature, and they are quite content with the country in its natural condition. One good season in three would suit their purposes.
3611. Have you seen any fodder grown, year after year, in one particular part of Menindie? No.
3612. Has anybody tried it? I know of one man who recently died, who tried it, but I never saw the selection.
3613. Have you much butter and eggs and dairy produce there? Every person makes for themselves. If their country is large enough they keep their own cows.
3614. *Chairman.*] Do I understand the object of your coming here is to advocate the railway from Menindie to Broken Hill, or a route by way of the Lachlan and through the Lachlan valley? Yes; through the Lachlan valley to Sydney.
3615. Have you been along that country yourself? No; but I have made inquiries. There are agricultural areas at Hillston and Booligal, and selections have been taken up at Condobolin.
3616. I suppose all the country the railway would go through is taken up by selectors and squatters? Yes, by squatters mostly.
3617. And a branch from here to Menindie would be of little use to you? It would be useful; but it would be better to be a national railway at once. There is a large demand here for firewood, and we could supply unlimited quantities. With the locking of the Darling there would be an immense supply of fish which is now sold at 100 per cent. upon its original cost at the river.

Mr. R. Scobie.
22 Oct., 1889.

Mr. W. M. Weatherall, Postmaster, Broken Hill, sworn and examined:—

3618. *Chairman.*] What are you? Postmaster at Broken Hill.
3619. How long have you been here? Since February, 1888.
3620. Have you any figures to show the business done at the post-office during the last three years? The postal revenue for 1888 was £5,121. The revenue for the nine months ending September 30th this year was £3,672.
3621. It will be more this year? No, it will be slightly less.
3622. Is the Money Order office business large? Yes; in fact, I think we do the largest money order and savings bank business of any post-office in the Colony.
3623. Have you any figures for 1887? Yes.

Mr. W. M.
Weatherall.
22 Oct., 1889.

(The witness put in the following return):—

The following statement shows the amount of business transacted at the Broken Hill Post-office from the 1st January, 1887, to 30th September, 1889:—

Year.	Number of Orders issued.	Number of Savings Bank Deposits.	Commission.	Money Orders issued.	Savings Bank Deposits.	Money Orders Paid.	Savings Bank Withdrawals.	Number of Money Orders paid.	Number of Savings Bank Withdrawals.
1887.	2,298	423	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.		
1888.	8,568	2,491	122	8,397	554	2,005	2,914	522	125
Increase on 1887.	6,270	2,063	466	31,046	20,247	11,132	11,101	2,491	637
To 30th Sept., 1889.	6,884	3,841	344	22,649	19,693	9,127	8,187	1,969	512
			371	22,224	23,842	16,189	15,614	2,640	869

Stamps sold during 1887.....	£1,427	Broken Hill Revenue for 1888	£5,121
" " 1888.....	£5,121	Bathurst " " 	4,141
" " to 30th September, 1889	£3,672	Goulburn " " 	4,811
Letters posted during 1887.....	121,718	Newcastle " " 	8,461
" " 1888.....	503,019	Wagga Wagga " " 	1,655
" " to 30th September, 1889	343,359	West Maitland " " 	1,535

Mails despatched weekly 125 | Mails received weekly 125 | Total 250.

3624. The postal revenue from Broken Hill during 1886 was £230, during 1887 £1,427, and during 1888 £5,121, independent of money order and savings bank business.
3625. *Mr. Hurley.*] I suppose the withdrawals would be attributable to the fact of a large number of banks having been brought into the town? I do not think so. I think it is attributable to speculation in a small way amongst the miners. Most of the working classes deposit with us. Their amounts are small, being from £2 to £10.

Mr. Francis Whysall, telegraph master, Broken Hill, sworn and examined:—

3626. *Chairman.*] What are you? Telegraph master at Broken Hill.
3627. Have you brought any figures to show the business done in your Department? Yes.
3628. For what years? From the time the office was opened here on the 2nd of August, 1886, to the present time, October 21st, 1889.

Mr.
F. Whysall.
22 Oct., 1889.

Mr.
F. Whysall.

22 Oct., 1889.

(Witness put in the following statement) :—

THE following statement shows the amount of business transacted at the Broken Hill Telegraph Office, from the 2nd August, when first established, to 21st October, 1889.

Year.	Messages transmitted.	Messages issued.	Revenue.
From 2nd August, 1886			£717 1 0
1887	33,291	35,346	£3,144 7 1
1888	104,846	117,233	£8,456 0 0
To 21st October, 1889	75,441	80,741	£6,192 14 9

The revenue collections at a few of the principal offices in New South Wales, during the year 1888, were as follows :—

Broken Hill.....	£8,456	Bathurst	£1,148
Newcastle	4,390	Armidale	1,111
Goulburn.....	1,817	Maitland	1,398

3629. Do you know what the rainfall has been? In May of last year we were provided with a rain gauge here, and from May to December the total rainfall was 1·77 inches, and from January 1, 1889, to October 21, the total rainfall was 15·95 inches.

3630. You have not the record for any previous years? No, there was no official record kept before 1887.

Richard M. Gibson, Esq., Mining Registrar and Warden's Clerk, sworn and examined :—

R. M. Gibson,
Esq.

22 Oct., 1889.

3631. *Chairman.*] What are you? Mining Registrar and Warden's Clerk.

3632. Have you any information to show the business done in mining leases and mining rights? Yes; I can give you the total from September, 1887, when the office was opened, until September last. The total revenue from all sources collected from September of 1887 to September, 1889, is £9,362 2s. 6d., made up as follows :—£5,338 for 1888, and £2,446 for 1889; and the balance for 1887. During that period there were 7,492 business licenses issued, 1,974 miners' rights, and 556 mineral licenses. The applications for mineral leases have only been received since June, 1888, and are 125 for 50,000 acres. This is only part of the district, which has only been divided for twelve months, so that all the principal revenue for the leases has been taken in Silverton before and since twelve months ago.

3633. The gross amount of business done then was during the first quarter of 1888? Yes; when there was a rush; and of course when the town was thrown open, the town was reserved for occupation under business and miners' rights, until September, 1887.

3634. Have you any data as to population? The sergeant of police could give you the population in January of this year. The population then was about 12,000 people. At that season of the year a large number of miners were away for their Christmas holidays, but population since then has increased considerably.

3635. To about what number? To about 15,000 or 16,000 people; certainly not less—more if anything. I know that nearly all the Crown lands—the Government surveyed lands—are taken up, and that comprises an area of nearly 2½ square miles round the town. The population is all the way round.

3636. Do you keep a record of births, deaths, and marriages? Yes. For the last quarter ending September 30, 1889, there were 111 births, 29 deaths, and 38 marriages. The total number of births, deaths, and marriages since the office was opened in the early part of 1887 is 686 deaths, 689 births, and 270 marriages.

3637. Then the death rate has been very high? Yes; last year it was very high, but this year it has been very low.

3638. That is owing, I suppose, to improved sanitary arrangements? Yes.

3639. And the better hospital accommodation? Yes; and of course always in the summer time, when fever is prevalent, the death rate increases. The last three months have been about the three best months of the year.

3640. What is the value of land? There have been sales of land in the main street, recently, at the rate of £18,000 an acre.

3641. Can you give us an idea of the amount of money the Government has received from land which has been alienated and sold by the Crown? The amount the Government has received from the alienated land sold in the town is £27,425.

Mr. Frank Ernest Randell, produce merchant, Broken Hill, sworn and examined :—

Mr.
F. E. Randell.

22 Oct., 1889.

3642. *Chairman.*] What are you? Produce Merchant at Broken Hill and Silverton.

3643. How long have you been in Broken Hill? Two years.

3644. What is the chief part of your business? Flour, bran, and chaff.

3645. Importing it for the use of the district generally? Yes.

3646. How much do you generally receive during a month? I have imported 4,500 tons of chaff in 2 years, 750 tons of bran, 820 tons of flour, and 150 tons of oats.

3647. And that has been imported for the use of the Broken Hill district generally? Yes.

3648. Do you retail it? Yes.

3649. How far do you send it from Broken Hill? Wilcannia is the greatest distance.

3650. You only send it there in very dry seasons? Yes.

3651. What would be the rate of freight from here to Wilcannia by team? From £15 down to £9 per ton.

3652. What would the produce be sold at per ton there? I have sold chaff at £25 a ton and flour at £30, delivered in Wilcannia.

3653. Is there not any produce for consumption and sale grown in the district? None whatever.

3654. Why is that? Well, this year, I feel sure if the crops have been put in, they would not have been able to grow, but nothing has been put in at all this year.

3655.

3655. Do you think with ordinary rainfall there would be any difficulty in growing anything? None whatever. We should have had good crops if any had been planted. During this past year we have had an instance of it on the Silverton tramway, where wheat has fallen out of the trucks, and crops have grown along the line, as good as any in South Australia. Mr.
F. E. Randell.
22 Oct., 1889.
3656. Without being planted at all? Yes; it has just fallen on the ground.
3657. You are able to form an idea of the character of the soil from here to Wilcannia? Yes.
3658. Don't you think with ordinary rainfall it would grow anything? I feel satisfied it would grow anything at all.
3659. Do you think if there was better means of communication between here and Wilcannia that would open the settlement? I do.
3660. If crops were grown towards Wilcannia, and there were means of conveyance here, it would suit you better to get your produce from there than Adelaide? Yes, it would be far cheaper.
3661. Are you acquainted with Silverton? I have an agency there.
3662. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] From what distance do you obtain produce? From Jamestown, Crystal Brook, Petersburg, and Port Pirie.
3663. All these are in South Australia? Yes.
3664. Is there any other business of the same kind as yours? Yes.
3665. And do they all obtain produce in South Australia? Yes, it is all grown there.
3666. *Mr. Tonkin.*] How many other produce merchants are there in this district; say, in Broken Hill and Silverton together? Fully 20.
3667. Do you think they do as much business as you do—each of them? I do not think so.
3668. I see your total is 5,222 tons for the two years—that is 2,600 a year—what do you think would be a fair estimate of the business of the other 19 or 20 merchants? Drew & Co. do a larger business than I do, and the Milling Co. comes next, and I think I am about the third.
3669. Do you think if we estimated the whole of them at 2,000 tons each it would be too much? Yes.
3670. Would 1,500 tons be an average right through? I think so.
3671. Then twenty-one of you would import an average of 1,500 tons a year? Yes, fully that.
3672. What is about the average price you pay for chaff in South Australia, first cost? About £2 10s. to £3 per ton on the trucks. That is for straw and hay mixed.
3673. You don't import any maize? No; the only maize I get during the winter months is from Sydney, *via* Port Pirie.
3674. What price do you pay for your oats? About 3s. 6d. on trucks at Port Adelaide.
3675. Do they prefer oats to maize here? Yes.
3676. It is on account of the price, but they prefer it as feed? Yes; very little maize is used. They say it is too heating in the summer months here.
3677. Do you import any lucerne or hay? No.

BROKEN HILL, WEDNESDAY, 23 OCTOBER, 1889.

[*The Sectional Committee met in the Council Chamber, Broken Hill.*]

Present:—

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN,
HENRY COPELAND, Esq.,

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.,
EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.,

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

[The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.]

Mr. James Logan, mining manager, sworn and examined:—

3678. *Chairman.*] What are you? Mining manager, Brisbane Blocks. Mr. J. Logan.
23 Oct., 1889.
3679. What are your present operations? Chiefly confined to putting down a bore.
3680. In what place? Close on the boundary of the property of the Company.
3681. How is that property situated with regard to the Broken Hill Proprietary mine? It is composed of three blocks—two 20-acre blocks and one 40-acre block—immediately to the west of the Proprietary, bounding Block 14, and extending to the Proprietary.
3682. What depth is the bore down at the present time? Last night we were down 1,697 feet.
3683. How long were you getting to that depth? I am not positive as to the time we started operations, but it is somewhere about two years.
3684. And the work has not been continuous? Yes; it has been continuous, barring mishaps.
3685. Working day by day? Yes; and very often two shifts, working sixteen hour a day.
3686. Have you been in charge all the time? No; about nine months.
3687. What depth were they when you took charge? About 1,497 feet.
3688. Then you have gone about 200 feet? Yes.
3689. Up to the time of your taking charge, what were the results of the bore? The results have been nothing until lately—until the bore got down to a depth of 1,653 feet.
3690. At 1,653 feet you developed something? We developed silver.
3691. What character of ore? There was no core came up at all with the drill for 5 feet, where the first development took place.
3692. What came up? Grindings, or silt, pumped up by the water.
3693. Does that come up in a core shape? No; it was too soft to come up in a core.
3694. After you passed 1,653 feet, did the bore still bring up the same stuff? It continued on for about 5 feet, when no core came up at all on drawing the rods. I then had the material which came up the bore assayed by one assayer belonging to the Proprietary mine, and another belonging to the Junction mine, and the results from those assays were 176 ounces of silver per ton, and no lead at all.
3695. Between that depth and your present depth, what has been the development? I have been assaying the core which came up each time the rods were drawn until last night, and the results have been from 1 ounce to 4.
3696. Then there are signs of it right through? Yes.
3697. Are you still going deeper? Yes; we will continue for 2,000 feet, perhaps deeper. 3698.

- Mr. J. Logan. 3698. What depth can you bore with the present plant? I am not quite certain; but Mr. Slec, of the Government Department has undertaken to go 2,000 feet with this plant.
- 23 Oct., 1889. 3699. Before the 1,653-foot level was reached, what was the character of the rock penetrated—was it bearing? It varied from gneiss, schists, and quartzite right through. There would be little veins of quartzite, perhaps 6 inches and a foot in depth, then it would go into schists, and then we should get gneiss.
3700. Is there a sectional plan of the bore all through? Yes.
3701. What length do the cores come up? Sometime in 8 or 9 feet pieces. I may mention that the core bar alone is 10 feet long, and it will come up the full length of that, provided it does not break, but very often it breaks into small pieces, such as a foot, 6 inches, and even less.
3702. But where you found this silver-bearing soft stuff—that would not come up in the shape of a core? No.
3703. How does that stuff resemble the silver-bearing stuff in the Broken Hill Proprietary? It does not resemble it at all. It would appear to me to be more of an oxidized material than anything else.
3704. What would you describe this as—a silver-bearing ore? I should say it was an oxidised material; but I am not sufficiently expert.
3705. What oxide would it be? Oxide of iron, I should say.
3706. You struck this oxidised material at 1,653 feet? Yes.
3707. And you have gone 44 feet since? Yes.
3708. Right through that 44 feet are there signs of silver? Yes, as far as we have gone yet. The schist core is averaging from 1 ounce to 4 ounces.
3709. Is there any sign of lead in that? None. A new development took place in the last assay from 97 feet There was a trace of gold also.
3710. *Dr. Garran.*] To whom does the plant belong? The drill plant belongs to the New South Wales Government.
3711. Is there anyone there representing the Government? Yes.
3712. Who? The engineer is in charge.
3713. He is responsible to the Government for the safety of the plant? Yes.
3714. You are obliged to employ him? Not at all; he is employed by the New South Wales Department.
3715. But does he work it, or merely look on? He works it.
3716. Then you are obliged to employ him as a worker? No, the Government are doing it themselves. The Company pays so much per foot.
3717. Then you are merely the Company's agent, looking on whilst the Government does the work? Yes.
3718. What does the Government charge you a foot? 30s.
3719. Can you do it at that rate with plant of your own? Yes.
3720. The Government is not making a large profit out of it? No.
3721. Are they making any profit? The engineer in charge says they are making some profit, but not much.
3722. Then you are not responsible for the safety of the plant in any way? Decidedly not.
3723. *Mr. Hurley.*] What inferences do you draw from what you have cut through recently? We anticipate that we may strike the main Broken Hill lode any day. These were our anticipations when we first started to bore.
3724. The inference to be drawn from what you have cut through is that you are in close proximity to that lode? Yes, everything tends to prove it by the core coming up at this great depth, and being silver-bearing.
3725. What gave rise to the wonderful price in the shares the other day? I cannot say.
3726. Was anything ever traced in regard to what was circulated about the mine being previously salted? Yes.
3727. From what source did it emanate? I can't say that it was properly traced, and who it emanated from; but it was so closely traced that one employé of the Government Department, working with the drill, was the cause of it.
3728. It was an action which grossly misled the public? Yes.
3729. But what has been recently obtained from the core can be relied upon by the public? Decidedly so. The core is there in charge of the engineer, and it can be tested by anyone at any time; and also the grindings, which were saved by the engineer, are in my possession at the present time.
3730. There is a Miners' Association in this town? Yes.
3731. Would it not be to the wellbeing of the mine, and be the means of gaining the confidence of the general public, if in cutting anything with your drill you were to call them together, in order to witness the operations and the lode you were passing through? I do not see that it would be of any benefit whatever.
3732. Would it not establish a confidence which does not now exist? It would be useless labour, because it would only excite public opinion. There would be no necessity to call the attention of the public to it until the Company was satisfied with it.
3733. I am speaking in the interests of the general public who are investors. Would it not establish a confidence with the public, if this Society were invited to inspect at the time of passing through it, any measure which you think likely to be indicative of being close to the main lode? The material is there for anyone who is sceptical, and there are also samples of all the core taken up, and which are sent down to the Department of Mines, in Sydney.
3734. But the ore obtained the other day which gave a rise to the price of shares. Is that open for inspection to the public at the present time? Decidedly so, if I get instructions from my directors what to do with it.
3735. Where are the directors? In Brisbane.
3736. Would it not be better to have their sanction to give all information possible, and publicity to what you are passing through, for the information of the public? It would be quite impossible for me or the engineer in charge to call the attention of the public to anything which we did not know about, until we had proved it by assays.
3737. But I mean immediately after the assays? Well, immediately after the assays it was published, and the press was notified of the fact.
3738. But the Miners' Association was not informed? I do not belong to that Association myself. It is public now, and the core is still there for examination by anyone who wishes to examine it.
3739. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What distance is the bore you put down from the line of lode in the Proprietary mine? I could not say for a certainty.
- 3740.

3740. Cannot you give the approximate distance? The bore is about 10 or 12 feet from the boundary between the Proprietary Company and our Company. Mr. J. Logan.
3741. How far do you think the outcrop is from the boundary of the Proprietary mine? I should say it would be 600 feet. 23 Oct., 1889.
3742. Then in point of fact your bore is distant 600 feet from the line of lode in the Proprietary mine? I should think so, but I have not measured.
3743. *Mr. Hurley.*] And you have no knowledge of the underlay of the lode? The underlay of the lode is in places decided, and in others it is not.
3744. *Chairman.*] You don't regard this ore, struck at 1,653 feet, as the lode? No.
3745. What would you call it? It is hard to say. It may possibly have been a cavity at one time or another, and through filtration from the main body of ore it got filled up.

SILVERTON, WEDNESDAY, 23 OCTOBER, 1889.

[The Sectional Committee met in the Council Chamber, Silvertton.]

Present:—

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN,
HENRY COPELAND, Esq.,

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.,
EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

[The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Nyngan to Cobar.]

Henry Browne, Esq., Mayor of Silvertton, sworn and examined:—

3746. *Dr. Garran.*] What is your position in this township? Merchant and Mayor of the municipality. H. Browne,
Esq.
3747. Have you been long resident here? Five years. 23 Oct., 1889.
3748. Is this one of the earliest townships in the Barrier district? Yes, the earliest mining township.
3749. It owes its existence to mines? Altogether.
3750. And is now mainly dependent on mines? Yes.
3751. How many mines contribute to the support of Silvertton? It would be rather a difficult matter at the present time to state that, because it is hard to define the boundaries between the Broken Hill district and Silvertton, but I should imagine not less than 30 to 40 mines.
3752. I mean what mining localities do you supply, and from what mining localities do you receive contributions of ore or produce? We supply Thackaringa, the Pinnacles, the Day-dream, Purnamoota, and Euriowrie.
3753. These mines lie in different directions, do they not? Yes, they lie east, north, and south of this place.
3754. They are all on different lodes? Yes.
3755. So that from several points of the compass you have a trade concentrating in Silvertton? Precisely.
3756. Is that increasing or decreasing? It is increasing at the present time.
3757. To what is that due? To late developments.
3758. The development of these mines is proceeding? Exactly.
3759. And it is to be presumed therefore that the indications are promising? Very much so.
3760. Do you consider that there is a fair indication of a permanent mining industry in this locality? Most decidedly.
3761. What is the present population of the municipality of Silvertton? The population of the municipality proper is about 1,620; but with those districts upon which you are questioning me as to the output from mines, the population will be from 3,000 to 4,000.
3762. None of the mines are within the municipal boundary? Oh, yes.
3763. Which one? The Umberumberka, which is the oldest and deepest on the Barrier District.
3764. You only have one working mine within the municipal boundary at present? We have more; we have several mines within the municipal boundary, but not of very much moment at present, although their prospects are good.
3765. What is the rateable value of the property you assess? The assessed annual value of the property within the municipality itself is £12,847. The area is 49 square miles.
3766. The railway by which you are served belongs to a private Company? Yes; much to our regret.
3767. You are absolutely dependent upon them as to their charges? Yes; otherwise we should have to employ teams from the South Australian border.
3768. As a merchant, you trade therefore with the nearest capital? Yes.
3769. Principally with Adelaide? Yes; I likewise trade with Sydney.
3770. Does your trade with Sydney come round by Port Pirie? Partly by that, and partly by Port Adelaide.
3771. What description of trade do you carry on with Sydney in preference to Adelaide? Soft goods, groceries, wines, and spirits.
3772. What reason is there for giving a preference to Sydney in these articles? With regard to prices there is scarcely any difference, but as a citizen of New South Wales I prefer to keep my money within the Colony to which I belong.
3773. Then it is rather that reason than any particular strict business consideration? Yes.
3774. There is little difference in trading with one city and another in a mercantile sense? It is scarcely noticeable.
3775. What is the rate of taxation you impose here? The annual rates are £642 7s.
3776. Is that a one shilling rate? Yes, 1s. in the £; there is no special rate.
3777. Is the population increasing or decreasing? It is about stationary.
3778. How long has it been about 1,620 people? This was taken last year, the end of the municipal year.
3779. How many mines contribute to this township at the present moment in working, prospecting, or raising ore, and spending money? Within my own knowledge over twenty.
3780. Do you know the number of men employed upon those twenty mines? Not exactly; approximately,

- H. Browne,**
Esq.
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- I should imagine the Umberumberka employs 140 or 150 men, and the others average from four to twelve.
3781. Is there any smelting in the district? Not at present; but we are taking steps to erect a public smelter to meet the requirements of the small mines within the district.
3782. Is there any concentration of the ore carried on? Only at Thackaringa and the Umberumberka. The latter treat their own ore.
3783. Where is the crushed ore shipped to? Port Pirie and Port Adelaide.
3784. To be smelted there? Either to be smelted or sent to Europe.
3785. How are you situated with respect to limestone flux? We have almost inexhaustible quantities of flux in the form of ironstone and limestone.
3786. At what distance from Silverton? Limestone about 6 or 7 miles; there are large deposits of ironstone about 10 miles from here.
3787. Is that on the railway line? It is in proximity to the line.
3788. So that it has not to be brought all the way by dray? It is all delivered at the Silverton Station for transmission to Broken Hill.
3789. Supposing you had smelters here you are well off for flux? Yes; we could smelt cheaper here than any other part of the Barrier, owing to the large quantities of flux and the good supply of water.
3790. Is the limestone and the iron in pockets or in stratification? Simply in quarries. I may add that in the event of this portion of the country being connected with the western line by railway, the delivery of coke and coal at a lesser rate than we can now procure it would materially affect the interests of this district.
3791. Are you better off for smelting here than at Cockburn;—have you any advantage over Cockburn? We have the advantage of the flux and the advantage of being nearer the mines.
3792. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Supposing the railway were constructed from Nyngan to the Barrier, and the Government ran a train in the morning and another in the evening for the accommodation of Silverton, do you think it is likely that this town would become a sanatorium or dwelling-place for the well-to-do people of Broken Hill? Undoubtedly.
3793. And by that means it would create a large traffic? In my opinion it would.
3794. Have you a flux company here? Yes.
3795. Are they supplying the flux to Broken Hill? Yes; large quantities. Several hundred tons per week.
3796. *Mr. Hurley.*] I noticed a lot of kerbing and building stone in the town;—where do you procure that? It is procured locally.
3797. Adjacent to the township? Yes.
3798. How far? Within a range of 3 miles; there is any quantity of building stone here.
3799. You spoke about the permanency of the mine;—have you had any experience in past years in regard to silver or gold mining? Not much with silver, but a great deal with gold—about thirty years.
3800. But you have had no experience in silver mines? Only that which I have acquired here.
3801. Therefore you only speak theoretically in regard to the permanency of the mines in the district? Yes. Of course I have gained a certain amount of practice here. I question whether there are many men on the Barrier who knew much about silver before coming here.
3802. Do you know the depth of the best mines in this district? The Umberumberka, with a vertical depth of 560 feet.
3803. What is the width of the lode? It varies in width, but I believe the formation is from 20 to 40 feet—not of ore, of course.
3804. Does the ore vary much in percentage from the bottom compared with the top? I cannot say; but from information I have received the ore is very much better at the bottom.
3805. Are you a shareholder in any of the mines? Not in any of them in this district.
3806. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is the reason you think the well-to-do people of Broken Hill would make this a sanatorium or temporary dwelling-place? Because this place has been singularly free from typhoid fever. We have a good supply of water, and being close to a large plain we invariably get the south-westerly winds from South Australia, and there is nothing to contaminate the atmosphere.
3807. In point of fact, Silverton is likely to become a fashionable suburb for Broken Hill? It is very likely that we should have all those who are residing there, and who can afford it, to come here to live. I know that when the question of the erection of the gaol came under the notice of the head of that Department, it was recommended very strongly that it should be erected here for the reason that it is much healthier.
3808. Is your water more permanent here than at Broken Hill? Yes; we are on the bank of a creek and we have a large Government tank 27 feet in depth.
3809. And on the whole you regard it as a much healthier place to live in than Broken Hill? It is generally admitted to be.
3810. *Chairman.*] I suppose it is generally admitted that the Silverton of to-day is not what it was a little time ago? No, we are very much more civilised than we were.
3811. I mean in regard to its prosperity? We cannot help admitting that Broken Hill has robbed us to a great extent. It is the extraordinary richness of the Broken Hill lode which has attracted a large number of the people from here. It is owing to that that the development has not gone on here as rapidly as it would have done.
3812. But there is a large number of mineral holdings about this district which are not being worked at the present time? Some, and some are only being partially worked.
3813. Why is there such stagnation if the district is so rich? It is because the laws of the present time do not reach those people who hold lands, and have them locked up and do not work them.
3814. I understand then that they are held by speculative holders who are hanging on with the object of making a good thing when the proper time occurs? A large number of them live outside the Supreme Court jurisdiction of this Colony. They live in other colonies. If those lands were open there are any number of people who would take up the leases and work them at once. That is within my own knowledge.
3815. Then you think it is the fault of the law and not of the district that many of these holdings are at present stagnant? Either the fault of the law, or the practice of the Department—possibly both.
3816. What are your views in regard to the agricultural capacities of this district? I do not think this will ever become an agricultural district, unless there is a proper system of water conservation. I could give

- give you proof of that by bringing some fine wheat which was grown where there happened to be water. The wheat is 4 feet 6 inches high. H. Browne,
Esq.
3817. Is the growth of cereals carried on to any extent? No.
3818. Is the wheat you refer to grown near Silverton? Close to—in fact, there is a little crop of wheat in the town, down the street. That was owing to the recent good season. 23 Oct., 1889.
3819. Then this district resembles most of the country between here and Nyngan—with water you can grow these things? Yes, very much so; with water, cereals can be grown.
3820. If the railway line were to be constructed, there would be no difficulty in procuring ballast for it? No; we have plenty within our own borders. The whole of the ballast for this line could be obtained in a creek about 3 miles from Umberumberka, and 7 miles from Silverton. It has an inexhaustible supply.
3821. What about timber for railway purposes? There is none whatever. We shall have to depend very shortly upon coal. I understand the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales to say we could get coal cheaper from the western collieries of New South Wales, than at the South Australian sea-board, and that would assist us materially. Wood is a very expensive item here just now.
3822. Is there a large amount of tonnage sent from here towards Broken Hill or Adelaide? Yes, very large.
3823. What does the tonnage landed here or sent away principally consist of? Inwards it is generally merchandise, coke, coal, mining timber, and agricultural produce; outwards it is ore, bullion, wool, skin and hides. No articles of manufacture.
3824. Where does the hay and corn consumed at Silverton come from? From South Australia. There is none grown in the district excepting purely for personal consumption. A large quantity of natural grasses and herbage are being saved this year owing to the good season we have had. It is very abundant.
3825. Is that the first year it has been tried here? Yes.
3826. How are they doing it? In silos.
3827. But there has not been time to see whether it is a success? No, we have to wait the result.
3828. What kind of grasses are they storing in these silos? The wild grass, the spear grass, the wild geranium, the wild carrot, wild oats, and wild barley.
3829. Has the growth of artificial grass been tried in the district? I don't know, but I know flowers are grown here, likewise vegetables.
3830. What is your water supply for the town? From the Government tank and the creek.
3831. Has it to be carted, or is there a pipe service? At the present time it has to be carted, but the inhabitants have taken good care to have a large supply of rain water, and have gone to the expense of providing themselves with tanks, and of supplying themselves from the houses.
3832. Is the lay of the country surrounding this locality suitable for water conservation? In my opinion it is. There are many extensive flats in the ranges in which water could be conserved with embankments.
3833. Could it be conserved near the railway line? Yes; the water could be used for irrigating the lower lands.
3834. Has there been any boring for water? One bore has been put down, and the Government proposes to put another down.
3835. With what success? I cannot speak as to the success of the first bore. It was not put down very deep, but they are just letting a contract to put an artesian bore down on the edge of the plain, about 8 or 9 miles from here.
3836. Are there many wells in the district? Yes, several wells.
3837. What is the character of the water? Mostly salty. There are one or two fresh water wells,—one at Purnamoota, 25 miles from here, and another at a station, about 10 miles away.
3838. I suppose all the country round is taken up by mining leases and homestead leases? Yes.
3839. Are there many homestead leases taken up round the Silverton district? There are several.
3840. Are the holders prospering? Evidently so.
3841. Are they cultivating? Not within my knowledge.
3842. What have they done towards improving their holdings? Speaking of those adjoining the southern boundary of the municipality, they have fenced the land in, and made tanks. The land is used for dairying purposes.
3843. And those which are taken up are taken up evidently with the idea of permanent settlement? Yes, because they are not only supplying this town and the surroundings with milk, but they are likewise making butter. For the last few weeks the people have been supplied almost altogether with butter locally made—a thing unheard of prior to this season.
3844. Do you think these holders will be able to get a living upon these leases without any extraneous aid. We have been told in many instances that butchers and mail contractors use these things as auxiliaries to their business. Do you think these people are going to live entirely on their own homestead leases? Yes, those I speak of are doing so.
3845. Are they getting their own source of livelihood from them? Possibly they may be engaged in mining as well, but there can be no doubt, under favourable conditions, that there is not a better spot in Australia for settling down. Of course in extremely dry seasons these people suffer very much.
3846. Is the country round here good holding ground for tanks? Yes, in places on the flats. The Government tank upon this flat holds the water well.
3847. *Mr. Hurley.*] You made reference to the complaint prevalent in the district in regard to the large area of land locked up by leases, and you were speaking about the defectiveness of the Mining Act. Is it not chiefly attributable to the fact that the labour conditions of the Act are not enforced? That is what I refer to.
3848. Is it not the duty of people of the district to report to the Department that the operation of the Act is being over-ridden? Undoubtedly, if they feel aggrieved. I believe they have reported in a number of instances.
3849. At all events, if that were remedied and the labour conditions enforced, a larger area of country would be available for mining? Yes, and the people of this country would get the benefit instead of foreigners—meaning people of other colonies, who mainly hold the leasss.

Mr. Uriah Dudley, mining engineer, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. U. Dudley.
23 Oct., 1889.
3850. *Chairman.*] What are you? Mining engineer and manager of the Umberumberka Silver-lead Mining Co.
3851. *Mr Copeland.*] Have you been long in this district? About two years. I have only been about nine months at this mine.
3852. What area of ground have you in this mine? 140 acres,—two 40 acres blocks; and three 20 acres.
3853. Giving you about how long on the course of the lode? About 6,000 feet. It runs diagonally through the block. It is over a mile of lode.
3854. In how many places have you proved the existence of the lode? For 2,000 feet in one place, and 400 feet in a second place, at the other end of the ground.
3855. And for that 2,000 feet is the lode continuous? Yes, without a fault.
3856. What is the ore worth on the surface? It is worth as we despatch it about £20, £26, and £27 per ton for lead and silver.
3857. What percentage of lead does it contain? The last six months average runs to 31 per cent. of lead, and 113 ounces of silver.
3858. It is a sulphide ore? Yes, chiefly.
3859. How deep have you proved the lode? 530 feet.
3860. At that depth have you a level? I have just started one.
3861. And have you cut through the lode? We are still in the lode at that point, but we are not through it.
3862. How wide have you proved it? About 12 feet wide at that depth.
3863. Have you tested the quality of it for that distance? No, not in bulk.
3864. Have you formed any opinion as to the value of it? Yes.
3865. What do you estimate the ore to be worth? The ore at Umberumberka has to be picked considerably as it is very bunchy, and it shows the same characteristics at this level.
3866. What do you estimate the ore would average taking it right across the lode? I have not tried it out at that level, but an estimation would lead me to suppose it would give about 12 ounces of silver to the ton, and about 12 per cent. of lead.
3867. Do you think the whole 12 feet of lode would average that? It would where we have cut it. We are not quite through it yet.
3868. How much deeper is that than the level you were working at previously? 160 feet.
3869. Do you know by your underground operations whether the lode is continuous? Yes for 2,000 feet.
3870. But I mean in depth? Yes, the whole of that depth, 530 feet, as stated.
3871. I suppose the shaft is a vertical one so that you have not sunk on the lode? Yes.
3872. And you have every reason to believe the lode is continuous from the surface to the present depth? There is no doubt of it.
3873. And you anticipate many years work in the future? Yes.
3874. Do you consider the ore is payable? Yes, it is payable at the present depth reached.
3875. Do you anticipate being able to pay dividends out of it? I do, or I should not be there.
3876. What is your process of working. Do you concentrate the ore? The ore is first of all hand-picked, and what is left from the handpicking is put through a concentrating plant, and the concentrates together with the hand-picks are sent to South Australia for smelting.
3877. How many men do you give employment to at the present time? About 130.
3878. Is that a fair average of the number of men you employ? The last six months average was 120.
3879. What is the average pay sheet for a month? About £1,400 a month, that is including my accounts for labour and material.
3880. You use a considerable quantity of mining timber? Yes.
3881. What timber do you use? The mining timber is chiefly round timber.
3882. Cut in the district? No, the principal portion is cut in the district, but some comes from South Australia.
3883. What kind of timber is cut in the district? Mulga. Anything from 4 to 7 inches in diameter, and from 6 to 7 feet long.
3884. Are you of opinion that the round props are stronger than similar pieces of sawn timber would be? For the same area of wood they are decidedly much stronger.
3885. And do you think the Mulga wood have greater resisting power than the pine used at Broken Hill? Yes, three times.
3886. So that if the railway were constructed here, you would be desirous of using as much of the colonial timber as you could get at a reasonable price, in preference to using imported pine? I would not use the pine at all if I could get the hardwood.
3887. And you would not use sawn timber if you could get split or round? No, only in shaft work.
3888. Do you anticipate opening up more shafts and employing more labour? Yes, I have already started further developments.
3889. And you think in the course of a few months, or a year or two, you will be employing more men than at present? Yes.
3890. Is the prosperity of the mine sufficiently assured to warrant you in believing it will continue a payable mine for some years to come? Yes.
3891. What is the average rate of wages paid to the miners? They are all paid £3 a week for eight hour shifts.
3892. Where is the ore sent to? All to South Australia.
3893. And you have no crushing or concentrating machinery? Yes, we have crushing and concentrating machinery, but the dressed ore is sent to Adelaide to be smelted.
3894. Then you crush and concentrate the ore on the mine and send the concentrates to Adelaide? Yes.
3895. And the number of men you employ includes those engaged at the crushing works? It includes those engaged at the crushing works.
3896. Do you consider your mine an exceptionally good one; is it the best one, or are there other mines likely to be as large undertakings as this one? There are some likely to be much better, and to give employment to quite as much labour.
3897. Where do you get the mining stores from—candles and picks, steel for drills, and shovels? South Australia.

Mr.
W. Dudley.
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3898. Are the candles manufactured in Adelaide? Some of them are, but I do not prefer them.
3899. You do not deal with Sydney in any way? No, not at present.
3900. I suppose the only connection you have with Sydney is in paying a rent of 5s. per acre per annum for the ground you occupy? That is all.
3901. I suppose the whole ground is held under a mineral lease? All but two blocks, which are freehold. Sometimes we pay the Government a little for water which we get from the tanks.
3902. The Government is constructing the water supply? Yes.
3903. You have a knowledge of the fact that it is proposed to build a railway here; can you say if the railway were constructed to Silverton whether it would be of any advantage to you in connection with the mine? Yes; it would be a decided advantage. We should be able to put up a smelter at the mine at once and smelt our own ore, in consequence of being able to get coal and coke and mining timber cheaper.
3904. Do you think you would get the coal and coke from the western district of New South Wales? Yes, if that coal will coke well; but I have no knowledge of that, but I presume it could be made to suit smelting.
3905. What distance have you to carry firewood at present? I get it from local supplies about 7 or 10 miles away, and also from South Australia. I have got some from as far down the line as Nacnara, over 100 miles. That is better firewood than the local supply.
3906. Do you anticipate that the local supply will disappear very rapidly? If all the mines round about were to go to work we should not have any timber here after about six months. We should consume every stick about the place within 10 or 12 miles.
3907. What do you pay for the wood? Eleven to twelve shillings per ton.
3908. Are you of opinion that coal would be cheaper for you to use than firewood? Yes; its extra heating quality will always commend it.
3909. You think it would be cheaper to use coal than wood, and you would have a safe supply which you are not likely to have of wood? That is true; I have experienced want of stock within the last six months. In the dry season here, teams are scarce, and we cannot get firewood when we want it.
3910. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You say you prefer hard and split timber to sawn and pine timber; what are your reasons for that? The round timber which is not cut across the grain is certainly stronger than if it were cut.
3911. Then you think it would be safer to work in mines with split and hard timber than to work the Oregon pine, which is sawn, and used in the Broken Hill Proprietary Mine? Yes, in all cases.
3912. If the mines generally adopted this split and hard timber it is probable a large trade in hardwoods might arise between here and New South Wales? Yes; there would be a large trade for the whole of this district.
3913. What is your opinion of the mining prospects of this district? I think the prospects are very good, seeing that silver-mining is practically a new industry in the colonies. It suffers from pioneering, the same as other industries; and many of the lodes which are only partially understood, and which have had very little work done upon them, have remained idle, owing to speculators outside wishing every day to get hold of another Broken Hill, which is the show mine of the world. I think the district warrants spending a great deal of money for prospecting, as the minerals go over such a large area, and lodes are known to exist for considerable distances.
3914. Do you think the mines which have stopped, or which have partially stopped working, are likely to resume operations if anyone else strikes a good lode? Yes, they are sure to.
3915. I suppose they are holding back for some encouragement? Yes.
3916. And should they work, this town is likely to become an important mining centre? Yes.
3917. *Mr. Hurley.*] Can you give us any information regarding the outward and inward tonnage of your mine? The outward tonnage during the last six months has been 675 tons; the inward tonnage, 2,558 tons.
3918. What does the inward tonnage comprise? Generally stores—mining stores, tools, coal, coke, horse fodder, and powder.
3919. What is the average rate per ton? The outward charge will be about 30s. a ton.
3920. And the outward and inward tonnage is likely to increase considerably in years to come? Yes; I am increasing it monthly.
3921. *Chairman.*] What are your views as to the adjoining mines in the district? At Thackaringa there is a large number working. They get their supplies principally from this place, and their out-puts of ore are published in the *Silver Age* weekly. I have seen the mines themselves once or twice. My opinion is that what the mine I am at present managing is turning out is only small compared with what the mines at Thackaringa are turning out. I am sure they are turning out more than what I have mentioned for Umberumberka.
3922. You think the character of the mining there is as good as yours and possibly better? I think the district compares favourably with this, and it may be better. I have not examined it at length so as to be able to give a definite opinion.
3923. Where does the ore from your mine go to? Port Adelaide, and it is all smelted there.
3924. Is it sent on to Sydney? The bullion is generally sent on to Sydney by the Port smelting works, to be taken home by the Orient steamers.
3925. That is a very round-about way of sending it? Yes.
3926. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you had a large and varied experience in silver-mining? I had none before I came here, except in Queensland. Six or seven years ago I was managing two mines there.
3927. Does the character of the mines here lead you to believe they are of a permanent character? Yes.
3928. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You had in this district a mine called the Day-dream? Yes.
3929. Can you tell how much it has paid in dividends? I have no idea.
3930. Do you think it is likely to resume working on as large a scale as it was before? I have never seen the mine, and do not know the people connected with it.
3931. Can you say anything with regard to the Terrible Dick mine? I have seen it, but I have not seen the bottom of it.
3932. Can you give any idea of the probable prospects of that mine? I could not say anything definitely, but I think it is worth spending a lot more money upon. There was some good ore got there.
3933. Do you think this district has been thoroughly prospected? No, not up to the present time.
3934. Then there is a probability of other good finds being made? Yes.

Mr. Charles Ring, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. C. Ring. 3935. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? An agent, secretary for the Silverton Flux Company, and contractor to one or two Companies.
- 23 Oct., 1889. 3936. What does the Flux Company represent? They supply limestone for Broken Hill Companies.
3937. Is it close to the railway line? We have claims all over the district—some at Thackeringa, some within 2 or 3 miles of Silverton, and some 8, and some 6 miles.
3938. Are they of a permanent character? Yes.
3939. How is the lime obtained? It is in alluvial beds.
3940. You cannot say as to the permanency of the area of land you have? Except where you can see the extent of the beds.
3941. But they may be exhausted in a few years? Yes; of course some of them will exhaust and others will go on.
3942. What is your output now—quarterly or monthly? Since last January we have sent to Broken Hill approximately about 10,000 tons.
3943. Could they take a greater supply from you if you were prepared to supply them? No; we are prepared to supply them with more than they can take. We are prepared to supply them with 1,000 tons a week.
3944. An increased development of the mines in the district would give increased demand for your material? Yes.
3945. Do you know much of agriculture? Yes, a little.
3946. Is the soil suitable for the growth of cereals in the district? Yes; with irrigation or rainfall.
3947. Have you practised it yourself? No.
3948. You believe the climate is suitable for agricultural if there were water. Give us an idea as to the price of land in the town. Has it risen or fallen in the last six months? It has been about the same during the last six months.
3949. What is the unimproved land in the town worth? It is very hard to state; the fact is if you want to buy land you have to pay a price for it, but if you have to sell it you have to sacrifice it to a great extent.
3950. The place does not seem to be progressing at the present time? It is about stationary.
3951. What is that attributable to? To the attraction of Broken Hill. Broken Hill has not only attracted the population, but kept capital away from the district.
3952. It has taken the life out of the speculation in this portion of the district? Not only of this portion of the district, but of the whole of the colonies. Of course they go for the greater thing and they pass by us.
3953. What you send away is sent by rail? Yes.
3954. What are the charges between here and Broken Hill? 4s. 6d. a ton from Silverton and 6s. from Thackeringa siding.
3955. What rate is that per mile per ton? I believe it is 14½ miles from the goods shed—about 4d. a mile.
3956. Have you to do your own loading and unloading? Yes.
3957. Do you look upon that freight charge as excessive? Yes.
3958. Have you any idea as to what dividend the Company pays upon the expenditure in connection with the construction of the railway? I could not say what it is, but I know it is something enormous. I believe they pay 20 per cent. on the nominal capital of the Company.
3959. Have you at any time endeavoured to have the freight reduced? Yes, and we succeeded to a certain extent. We were paying 5s. 6d. a ton. We asked for a reduction and they reduced it to 4s. 6d. That was about 2 months ago.
3960. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] I presume your flux resources in this district are great enough to stand the strain if the discoveries around Broken Hill should increase? Yes.
3961. If mining is prosperous there, you are likely to have a still greater trade from Silverton? Yes.
3962. Does the Tramway Company treat you in a fair and generous way? As well as you could expect monopolists to do. We often get stuck up.
3963. Do you consider the fares fixed by the schedule of their Act as being too high? Certainly.
3964. Do they run the trains to accommodate your business? No; they do not accommodate us anything out of the ordinary way.
3965. How many trains run per day, say from here to Broken Hill? There are two passenger trains—one at 7 a.m., and the other in the afternoon, and the same number back.
3966. Do you think those are enough for the business of this district? No; there would be larger traffic if they ran trains more conveniently.
3967. *Chairman.*] What is the extent of your limestone beds? We have one about three-quarters of a mile long by one quarter of a mile broad. We are just taking the bed up. We don't take up the ground surrounding it, but we go to another bed; we get it as easily as we can. The beds are not necessarily adjoining one another. We have about 300 or 400 acres of ground. The lowest depth we have gone is 25 feet.
3968. Was there apparently more limestone? No; we estimate that as the bottom.
3969. What tenure have you of this property you get the limestone from? Twenty years lease from the Government.
3970. Do you pay as a lease, or royalty? We take it up in the same way as a mineral lease. We are prepared at the present time to enter into a contract for five years to supply 1,000 tons a week.
3971. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Has any attempt been made in the district to cultivate orchards or vineyards? Only in a small way. We have a few gardens down the creek here, and some fruit trees look very nice there at times.
3972. Do you think from the character of this country it would be a suitable place for the culture of the vine? Yes, especially in spots.

Mr. Francis Spence, station-master at Silverton, sworn, and examined :—

3973. *Chairman.*] What position do you occupy? Station master at Silverton.
 3974. You are in the employ of the Silverton Tramway Company? Yes.
 3975. How many trains are there a day inward and outward? Four each way.
 3976. What times do they run? The train South leaves Broken Hill at 1:30, then at 6 o'clock in the morning, then at 11.20 a.m., and then there is a passenger train at 9 o'clock at night.
 3977. Is the passenger train a goods train as well? It is a mixed train.
 3978. Which is the largest business in the way of freight—inwards or outwards? Outwards from here.
 3979. What does that chiefly consist of? Flux going to Broken Hill.
 3980. With regard to the trade from Broken Hill, which is the larger freight, inward or outwards? I could not say.
 3981. I thought you kept the records of the business here? No, I have nothing to do with Broken Hill.
 3982. With regard to the outward freight, how many tons a day go on the tramway? About 70.
 3983. That is a fair average from here to Broken Hill? Yes, that is about an approximate average.
 3984. What is the inward tonnage per day? That would not go over 10 tons a day.
 3985. I suppose that consists generally of supplies for the town and district? Yes, of general goods.
 3986. And a considerable amount of fodder I expect? Not at present, but in dry seasons we have it. There is a lot of chaff.
 3987. What is the freight per ton from here to Broken Hill? For flux, 4s. 6d.
 3988. Is not there a considerable amount of fuel brought here for the use of the mine inwards? None whatever.
 3989. Does any firewood come here by train? No, it is all carted from the locality.
 3990. Have you any difficulty in keeping pace with the business, or could you supply more trains? No, we have no difficulty at present.
 3991. Are the goods kept waiting here any length of time? No, there are trains on the time-table which do not run.
 3992. Why not? Because they are not required.
 3993. Can you tell us what amount of revenue you collect here in the shape of passenger fares and tonnage? About £250 a week, and that includes South Australian railway charges.
 3994. You take at this office about £250 a week? Yes.
 3995. For passenger fares and freight? Yes, say about £200.
 3996. Is that a fair average of all the year round? Yes, at this station at present.
 3997. You stated just now that there were more trains on the time-table than actually run. Can you reconcile that with the statement made by the last witness that you do not consult the convenience of the goods owners at all? No.
 3998. Mr. Ring stated it would be much more convenient if more trains ran from here to Broken Hill? With the present trains we can compete with the traffic. There may be a delay of a few hours now and then with flux.
 3999. That is the very trade he speaks of. Have you been asked by him to run trains more frequently? No, I have not.
 4000. Do you know whether application has been made? No.
 4001. Do you know what it cost to construct this line? No.
 4002. I suppose you know they are losing money every day by running it? I could not tell you.
 4003. *Mr. Hurley.*] The last dividend was 25 per cent., was it not? I could not say.
 4004. Have you a balance-sheet? No.
 4005. Have you ever seen one? No.
 4006. Are you a shareholder? No.
 4007. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Has your Company ever tried running an early train from Silverton to Broken Hill, and an evening one? There have been different times for trains.
 4008. Do you think if the Company ran a train (say) at 7.30 a.m., in time to land business people at Broken Hill, and another in the evening about 5.30 or 6, to bring them back, it would lead to a number of residents of Broken Hill living here? From what I have been informed I should believe it would.
 4009. If the Company put on a morning and evening train it would possibly induce a large passenger traffic? I think it would slightly; although I think it has gone too far for that now.
 4010. What do you mean by gone too far? If there had been a passenger train at the start no doubt there would have been a large number of people travelling.
 4011. Do you mean to say that Silverton has gone too far, or is it too late to think of doing this? I could not say about that; Silverton has not the same trade as it had.
 4012. Do not you think it would lead to an improvement in the prospects of Silverton, if this became the suburban home for well-to-do people in Broken Hill? I believe it would.
 4013. Do you consider it is too late to attempt to create this traffic? I could not give an opinion.
 4014. Do you keep any record of the number of passengers between here and Broken Hill? Yes; an average of about 130 a week.
 4015. How many from Broken Hill to Silverton? About half of that number.
 4016. Can you give an idea of the numbers a year ago? It would be more then.
 4017. What is the reason for the decline? I think the people have gone from Silverton to the Hill and have settled there.
 4018. Has business increased in volume since you took office? No; it is less now than it was in goods, and I should think it is about the same in passenger traffic.
 4019. You referred just now to a trade in chaff; where does that come from? South Australian stations—from Jamestown, Saddleworth, and Riverton.

Mr. John James Collier, iron-mine proprietor, sworn, and examined :—

4020. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? Proprietor of an iron mine.
 4021. Have you been long in the district? Nearly five years.
 4022. What you engaged in? At present I am sending iron flux to Block 14.
 4023. What area of land do you hold? 80 acres, under a mineral lease.

Mr. F. Spence.
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Mr.
 J. J. Collier.
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4024.

- Mr. J. J. Collier. 4024. What is your output? We have sent as much as 80 tons a week, but latterly the mine has been idle, and we are only starting again.
- 23 Oct., 1889. 4025. You could send more if the demand was greater? Yes. In the course of eighteen months or two years we will be sending 400 or 500 tons a month.
4026. What is the character of your ore? Iron flux.
4027. Is it kidney ore or hematite? I do not know any special name, but it is first-class flux.
4028. How do you find it—in beds? It is in the lode.
4029. So that there may be any quantity of it? You can trace it through an 80-acre block from one end to the other; and where we have opened it, it has opened from 1 foot to 10 feet.
4030. How many men have you employed? Eight; and we think of putting on a lot more.
4031. Have you had any experience in mining? Not a great deal in silver-mining.
4032. Have you been employed in agriculture at all? Yes, a little.
4033. Is the district suitable for agriculture? It would be in fair seasons.
4034. How do you send the ore to the market? From Silvertown, by the tram line.
4035. What do you pay? 4s. 6d. a ton.
4036. Do you look upon that as an excessive rate? I think it ought to be done cheaper.
4037. Have you paid any dividends in the mine? Yes; a few. We pay about £1 a week in general—there are only six of us in the mine, and we are only working on a small scale.
4038. But you look upon it as a dividend-paying concern, provided you had a sufficient market to take your flux to? Yes.
4039. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Are the supplies of ironstone large in this district? Yes; I have a big contract just now.
4040. I presume there is room for extension? Yes.
4041. You carry on business on a fairly large scale if the mines require it? Yes.
4042. Can you state whether the ore is rich? I never had any tried; but Mr. Lane told me it is the best flux there.
4043. Do you supply any other mine but Block 14? No.
4044. Where do the others get it from? They get it from their own mines.
4045. Which mine does the Mount Vulcan Ironstone Quarry supply? They were supplying Block 14 with some; but I believe they have knocked off.
4046. What other mines do they supply? I do not think they are supplying any other.
4047. Have you any knowledge of the surrounding hills? Yes.
4048. Is there any place where water can be stored on a large scale? Not on the hill, I think.
4049. Or on the general catchment? On the flats it is good open country.
4050. I suppose this district is not likely to run short of water if proper provision is made? No.
4051. *Chairman.*] Are there other iron deposits that you are aware of besides your own holding? I do not know of any.
4052. How much do you send to Block 14? We are only just starting now, and have not sent in much for the last four weeks on account of their stopping the smelters.

Mr. Archibald Henry Gibson, general forwarding agent, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. A. H. Gibson. 4053. *Chairman.*] What are you? Agent for Charles Chapple, of Broken Hill and Silvertown.
- 23 Oct., 1889. 4054. What business do you carry on? General forwarding and agency business.
4055. Can you give any particulars as to the amount of business done here? I have made up all my returns, and I believe Mr. Chapple gave them to you in Broken Hill.
4056. No; he did not give us them separately? I have taken down the amount for Silvertown and Cockburn together, where we have a branch. I have made up the return for three months, ending 30th September. The ore which actually went through our hands was 756 tons, sent from Silvertown and Cockburn, and the wool was 316 tons. The imports we received were,—general merchandise 266 tons, and beside that there is a lot of local traffic which I have no note of, such as goods going to Broken Hill and Umberumberka, and from Thackaringa to Broken Hill, and so on.
4057. Would that be taken by train or teams? Brought to the train by teams.
4058. Have you any idea what that traffic would amount to? No.
4059. Where is that picked up then? A lot of ironstone is sent from Thackaringa for the Broken Hill smelters.
4060. Is there a station on the line? Yes; the Thackaringa siding. We sent a lot to Umberumberka by rail during the three months mentioned—about 60 or 70 tons.
4061. Can you tell us what you have paid the Tramway Company for carriage during that period? I have no note of it now.
4062. How are you served by this tramway—does it run conveniently or otherwise? I think it is convenient.
4063. It answers all the purposes you require of it with regard to time? Yes.
4064. What do you chiefly bring up from the South? Mostly stores, chaff, and flour. Of course this 266 tons is only what passed through our hands.
4065. Is there any other business of a like character to yours in Silvertown? One other.
4066. Do they do as large a trade as you? Perhaps their tonnage is as large. We do the largest business up country.
4067. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Where does the wool come from which you forward? From Mount Browne district, and the Queensland border.
4068. Anywhere else? From Balaclava Station.
4069. Where is that? About 50 or 60 miles from Cockburn. It is between here and the River Darling.
4070. Are there any other stations round there? No; we don't send from any other.
4071. How often do you get wool from the Mount Browne district? There is sometimes a difficulty in getting teams. Sometimes two years' wool will come in one year.
4072. Do you get wool from the Mount Browne district, and outlying stations, when the river is up? We have got it this year.
4073. Do your teams go straight from Silvertown, or do they belong to Broken Hill? A lot of teams are carrying between here and Mount Browne. It saves freight between Broken Hill and Silvertown.

4074. Do the teams start from Cockburn? No; they go up loaded from here and bring back wool.
 4075. Do these teams make Broken Hill or Silverton their point of departure and return? Silverton.
 4076. Then they look upon Silverton as their head-quarters? Yes.
 4077. And they start from here with supplies to the stations and bring back the wool? Yes.
 4078. Why do they come on to Silverton instead of stopping at Broken Hill? To save freight between Broken Hill.
 4079. Could not they save more freight by going to Cockburn? Yes.
 4080. Do they often go there? No; there is no up-country merchandise sent to Cockburn, because in dry seasons there is a scarcity of feed and water there.
 4081. Did you get the wool towards the river this year? Yes.
 4082. How many tons came? I have not the weight.
 4083. I presume you had wool brought down before this mineral country was opened up? Yes; we have always had wool for the last three or four years.
 4084. Where were Mr. Chapple's head-quarters before Silverton and Broken Hill were opened? Always at Silverton; but we have had branches as the line has been completed.
 4085. Mr. Chapple has been long established in this district? Yes.
 4086. He was here long before Silverton and Broken Hill were opened? Yes.
 4087. Where did he operate from then? Mundy Mundy Station, I believe.
 4088. Where did he operate from when he started as a forwarding agent? I think it was from Terowie.
 4089. Can you state if Mr. Chapple first began to work as a forwarding agent in Silverton? His head office was here, I think.
 4090. Before Silverton was established, where were his headquarters as a forwarding agent? He had no quarters then.
 4091. Then all the trade he now does with Mount Browne and outlying stations in the carriage of wool and stores has arisen since Silverton has started? Yes; within the last four or five years.
 4092. *Chairman.*] Before this tramway was started had you anything to do with the forwarding of goods from here to Cockburn? Yes; we had our forwarding office at Cockburn.
 4093. How do the rates of freight compare now by tramway with what it cost before the tramway was started, when you were sending by teams? The teams used to cost us between 25s. and 30s. a ton to Silverton.
 4094. And now? And now it is about 8s. or 10s.
 4095. How long did it take to get the goods there by team? There was often delay in wet weather.

Mr.
 A. H. Gibson.
 23 Oct., 1889.

Richard Mooney, Esq., Sub-collector of Customs, sworn, and examined:—

4096. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What position do you occupy in Silverton? Sub-collector of Customs.
 4097. Do you keep a record of all the goods which go through here to Broken Hill? I keep a record of the whole of the imports and exports arriving by train whether for here or Broken Hill.
 4098. Can you lay before the Committee any statement with regard to the inward traffic? I can give you my statistical returns for the last year and this.
 4099. Give us the total inward tonnage for 1888? The statistics are not made up in tons for all goods. Some of the information is given in packages, and the spirits are given in gallons, not in weight.
 4100. Give us the general total;—the tonnage first and the total of the other? I can tell you the weights of the principal items.
 4101. State the totals so far as you can give them? I can give you the total value for last year. The total value of the imports was £1,072,636 for 1888, for Silverton and Broken Hill.
 4102. What was the value for 1889? Up to the 14th of October the value was £706,639.
 4103. Does that show an increase upon last year? I think it will show a decrease upon the corresponding period.
 4104. Can you give us the total tonnage? I think the total tonnage will be for this year about 2,500 tons inwards and outwards per week. That refers to all descriptions of goods, including coal, coke, and timber. That is about the average weight carried by the Tramway Company. Last year the goods inwards would be larger than this, but they will be greater outwards this year than last.
 4105. Why should the quantity of goods be larger last year than this, seeing that there is now a larger population? The people have now all their houses built, which they had not last year. These are to a great extent articles of timber for building.
 4106. Have you a record of the amount of outward tonnage? Yes; to the 14th of this month there were 26,094 tons of silver lead sent away, of the value of £1,208,944. Besides the bullion there were 29,386 tons of silver ore of the value of £202,544. There were 9 tons of tin ore, valued at £86; 106 tons of copper ore, valued at £1,081; 34 cwt. of gold quartz, valued at £17; 1,105 hides, valued at £722; and about 7 tons of tallow, valued at £92. In consequence of the river being navigable during the present wool season, a large quantity of wool, which would have come here, went down the river. Up to date there have been 10,740 bales of greasy wool gone down the line. In all there have been 14,233 bales of New South Wales wool sent away this year to date, besides 1,262 bales of Queensland wool. The value of the New South Wales wool was £139,383. Live stock does not travel by rail.
 4107. The figures you have just given us of the outward trade are for nine months of the year 1889 only? They are up to the 14th of October, nine and a half months.
 4108. Will you state how this trade compares with the outward trade done last year? It is considerably in excess of the full total of last year.
 4109. In what respects? The increase has been in wool, silver lead, bullion, and silver ore.
 4110. Have you noticed a cessation in the building material taken to Broken Hill? Yes; it has fallen off in quantity.
 4111. Do you take that as an indication that the building requirements of Broken Hill are more than sufficient for the population? I think so, and are likely to remain so for some time.
 4112. Are the live stock driven overland from Queensland? The cattle come principally from Queensland, and the sheep principally from New South Wales—generally from any part of the country west of the Darling.

R. Mooney,
 Esq.
 23 Oct., 1889.

- R. Mooney, Esq.
23 Oct., 1889.
4113. How high do you think they come from—as far as Paroo? The greater number of them from west of the Paroo.
4114. Do they come from further north than Louth? Yes; from the Queensland border.
4115. Have you noticed any live stock coming up from the South Australian side to Silvertown, and Broken Hill? Yes; a considerable number of cattle come up from South Australia to Broken Hill.
4116. Fat stock for slaughter? Yes.
4117. Then as a matter of fact the South Australian people are supplying these markets with stock for slaughter? They supply a great portion.
4118. Where does the other stock come from? Queensland, principally.
4119. Do any of the surrounding stations supply a portion of the market? Yes, with sheep; but there are scarcely any cattle upon the country about here now.
4120. Do you think a line constructed from Cobar to Broken Hill would be likely to intercept that fat stock trade, and allow the graziers along that line of railway to supply the market? The market is a very limited one.
4121. But there are over 16,000 people there, are there not? They seem to think so, but I am rather doubtful of the number.
4122. At all events there is a considerable population? Yes.
4123. And it is likely to be further increased? It is the opinion of a good many that it will increase, but I think it will remain stationary for a long time.
4124. At any rate it is understood that there are over 16,000 persons there, and if that is so it affords a good local market for the consumption of fat stock? Yes.
4125. If the graziers living on the line of railway between Broken Hill and Cobar could reach the market in ten or twelve hours would they be likely to supply it? Yes; but I am of opinion that the cattle we got from Cobar would come originally from Queensland, and it would be just as short to drive them direct from Queensland to Broken Hill. They would have better country to go through.
4126. You are alluding to cattle only? Yes.
4127. Would not our graziers along the line be likely to get the sheep portion of the trade if they had a railway running to Broken Hill? No; I do not think so.
4128. Do you think if a man were to drive his stock 50 or 100 miles he could compete with a man living alongside the railway, who could run his sheep in fat, and without being deteriorated in value by being compelled to travel? No; but Broken Hill is in the midst of a large sheep run. There are enough sheep bred on the surrounding stations to keep Broken Hill going for the next hundred years.
4129. There are not many sheep fattened there? Oh, yes.
4130. If that is the case how comes it that Queensland is supplying a considerable number of stock? It is only supplying it with cattle.
4131. And are the South Australian graziers only sending cattle? Yes; any sheep coming here from South Australia are sheep returned after being removed for want of food, or stud sheep.
4132. What are the principal articles of import to Silvertown and Broken Hill, which come through your hands? Coal, coke, timber, drapery, wearing apparel, wines and spirits, beer, &c.
4133. Which is the largest item of import? Coke, as regards weight. There have been 25,000 tons of coke imported up to now, this year, and about 6,000 tons of coal.
4134. And what length of timber? 9,360,000 feet super., that is of every description of timber, rough and dressed.
4135. And all that passes over this railway line? Yes, we do not keep separate returns for Silvertown and Broken Hill. They are coupled together. We only keep separate returns so far as the revenue is concerned.
4136. Have you got the revenue received as regards Silvertown for this year or last year? The revenue at Silvertown last year was £18,506 upon all goods.
4137. What is your opinion in regard to the trade of this place. Has it increased lately or decreased? It has decreased as far as revenue is concerned, and also at Broken Hill. At Broken Hill the revenue decreased £5,268 on the nine months ending September 30th, 1889, as compared with the corresponding period of 1888, and the decrease here was still greater, being £7,000.
4138. Is the item of timber import an exceptionally large one or about the average? It is an exceptionally large one, I was quite astonished at it myself.
4139. Have you got the timber import for the year before? Yes, the total timber last year was almost as large, if not larger—9,693,942 feet. This year, of course, is only up to date.
4140. Can you give us the total revenue received for 1888 by you? The total for last year at Broken Hill was £64,915, and to the end of September this year, £47,442.

James Francis Williams, Esq., Warden's Clerk and Mining Registrar, Silvertown, sworn, and examined:—

- J. F. Williams, Esq.
23 Oct., 1889.
4141. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What position do you hold? I am Warden's Clerk and Mining Registrar at Silvertown.
4142. Can you give us any figures in regard to the revenue received in your Department up to the end of 1888? Yes; I can give you the amount of revenue received from March, 1883, to September 30th, 1888, as £60,079 8s.
4143. What is that at the rate of per year? About £12,000 a year.
4144. In what manner was that money received? It was received by way of deposits for rent of mineral leases, survey fees, miners' rights, stamp duties, &c.
4145. Could you give us the revenue from September, 1888, to September, 1889? Yes, the total was £2,595 15s.
4146. Can you account for that tremendous falling off? Yes; there is not the same amount of speculation. There is not the same quantity of land taken up for mining purposes.
4147. Which is the principal part which has fallen off so materially—the applications for leases or miners' rights? In all respects—miners' rights, business licenses, and the mineral licenses—the applications are not so great as in former years.
4148. Have many of these leases have been allowed to lapse and taken up again? Yes; any lands which are supposed to be well situated are retaken up.

4149. Is that the principal portion of the application money you have received these twelve months—for forfeited leases re-applied for? Not altogether—in some cases for cancelled leases, and some for new land. J. F.
Williams, Esq.
23 Oct., 1889.
4150. In what particular year were the principal receipts, and the amount? In March, 1888, the amount taken was £7,001 10s.
4151. Was that for one month? Yes; in the February preceding, the amount was £4,372 5s., and in April £4,109 7s. 6d.
4152. That was nearly £16,000 in three months? Yes.
4153. That was, of course, during the great boom you had? Yes.
4154. Then you must have had, previous to the boom, some years which have been materially less than the receipts for this year? No; in October there was £1,950 taken. That was 50 per cent. under what was taken for the whole year. The receipts for this last year were £2,595. In October of 1887, they were £1,950; in November, £1,622; and in December, £1,059. This last year is by far the worst of any.
4155. Do you notice whether this year there has been a gradual decrease—that each month has been getting worse, or has it been a sudden collapse? No, the collapse has not been sudden. Each month has not been getting less. The average, perhaps, is between £250 and £300 a month.
4156. How many leases are there in this district in active work? I have taken the number of leases in actual force from the last *Gazette*, and there are 1,171 in the Silvertown district. That includes Broken Hill.
4157. Is Broken Hill included in the Silvertown district as the Warden's district? Until the last twelve months it was.
4158. But do you take in all Broken Hill? No; there are two districts.
4159. Can you give us the number of leases in active operation in this district, independent of Broken Hill? No, I have not got them separately. I have the lot together—1,171.
4160. I suppose a very large majority of these leases are at Broken Hill, and not here? No; the Silvertown district is a larger one than Broken Hill, and I think you may divide them equally.
4161. Can you give any idea of the number of claims in this district which you know to be in active work? No.
4162. Is there any possible way of getting that return? It could be got with a good deal of labour.
4163. Do you think there is a large number of lease applications lying dormant now which ought to be cancelled, or labour conditions insisted upon? Yes, I am sure there is.
4164. Do you not think there are more leases held in that manner—without the labour conditions being complied with—than there are leases in active work? Yes, I think the great majority are idle. I believe it is the rule of the Mines Department not to wish to cancel leases where they find there has been a great expenditure. They are lenient to the holders of these leases.
4165. But that must be detrimental to this district? Yes, it would be far better if the lessees were compelled to work.
4166. Can you say whether there are many of these leases—which are known to be payable leases—which are lying idle for the want of the fulfilment of the labour conditions? I hardly know what is payable and what is not.
4167. Do you have many complaints in regard to these labour conditions not being complied with? I have inquiries, perhaps, several times a day, as to whether such and such blocks are cancelled or void. People find there is no work being carried out upon them, and they come to the office to know whether the ground is held under lease or not, or whether it is cancelled.
4168. Has the Warden lately received many communications from the Minister to inspect those leases and see whether the labour conditions are being complied with? He receives some of them every week.
4169. And of course attends to that business? No doubt he gives it attention. He sends some one, if he does not go himself.
4170. In your opinion, is the mining industry in the Silvertown district in a flourishing state or not? No; I should say it was in a depressed state. It is of no use a single party of miners taking up land here. Unless they have a large capital they cannot work. Mining requires a large amount of capital to be invested before there can be any returns.
4171. That is the particular class of mining in this district? Yes; silver mining.
4172. And that accounts in a great measure for many of the labour conditions not being complied with. The ground is taken up by speculators, and if they cannot get the capital invested in the mines they stand idle? Yes.
4173. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You said a number of leases had been allowed to lapse and afterwards taken up? Yes.
4174. Were they taken up by the same persons or by fresh ones? Usually by fresh applicants.
4175. Does that suggest the idea that these lands have been merely used for speculative purposes? I cannot tell for what purposes they are taken up, I never inquired. If they make the application that is sufficient for me.
4176. If any applications are made, how long is it before the leases are issued? I have noticed the Mines Department recently has been very energetic. I have lately seen leases come up which have been applied for only five or six months ago. I have noticed other times when it has taken eighteen months, and two and three years.
4177. Has it been the practice for some persons to be able to have their application pending for eighteen months or two years, and during that period to pay no rent at all? When an application is made, and the first year's rent is paid, there is no rent due until after the lease is issued. If it is pending eighteen months or two years, there is no rent accruing.
4178. Then for that time they monopolise these lands, and hold them for speculative purposes without paying money to the Crown, and they avoid the labour conditions? They are not bound to go to work until they get the lease.
4179. But has that practice prevailed in this district? It does to a large extent.
4180. Then we cannot gauge the mining prospects of this district by the number of applications for mineral leases? I expect not.

John Saunders, Esq., Clerk of Petty Sessions, Silverton, sworn, and examined :—

- J. Saunders, Esq.
23 Oct., 1889.
4190. *Chairman.*] You are Clerk of Petty Sessions at Silverton? Yes.
4191. How long have you been here? Since August, 1884.
4192. What is the record of fees received in your department? I can give them from 1883 to the 30th of last month.
4193. Can you give us the return from all sources from 1883 to the present? The total is £6,019 9s. 10d.; from all sources. The last twelve months was £1,016. The average receipts are about that sum.
4194. What do the fees consist of? Fines, hawkers' licenses, and publicans' transfers.
4195. How many hotels are there in this place? In the Silverton district there must be about twenty.
4196. How many are there in the town of Silverton? About eight.
4197. What is your opinion as to the state of the district at the present time—as to its advancement or otherwise? At the present time it looks very healthy. I think the mines in and around Silverton at the present time look better than ever they did.
4198. You base that statement on the fact that they are being worked systematically? Yes, some of the mines are. Why Silverton is so quiet and dull is on account of Broken Hill having all the attraction.

Mr. Henry Browne sworn, and further examined :—

- Mr. H. Browne.
23 Oct., 1889.
4199. *Chairman.*] You are a merchant in a large way of business at Silverton? Yes.
4200. And during the four years, ending March, 1889, you have paid away for goods passing through your hands between £60,000 and £70,000? Yes.*
4201. And there are other firms in Silverton doing business? Yes, equally as well.
4202. How many? Four others, and their output will probably be as large as mine.
4203. And that money has all gone out of the country? Yes, into another colony, to my regret.

* NOTE (*on revision*) :—What I meant in reply to this question was that to March, 1890, with like average, the amount stated would go through, otherwise one-fourth must be deducted, and it would be £45,000 for the three years ending March, 1889.

APPENDIX.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

APPENDIX.

A.

COBAR, NYMAGEE, AND NYNGAN TRAFFIC.

Sir,

Railway Station, Nyngan, 15 October, 1889.

I have the honor to forward you copies of returns of Cobar, Nymagee, and Nyngan traffic, for the information of your Honorable Committee, as requested by the Sectional Committee, who visited Nyngan on Saturday the 5th October.

These are exact copies of returns made out for the information of the Railway Department at various times.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee,
Public Works Office, Sydney.

I have, &c.,

ALBERT S. ROWLING.

RETURN of Tonnage of Goods inwards and outwards, and Revenue thereon, 1 January, 1887, to 19 March, 1888.

Tonnage—Inwards.	Revenue.	Tonnage Outwards.	Revenue.*
1887. 6,459	£ s. d. 19,052 0 0	7,491	£ s. d. 948 4 2
To 19 March, 1888. 1,525	4,782 4 6	951	13 18 0

* Outwards Revenue is only what is paid at Nyngan station before despatch.

A COMPARATIVE RETURN showing number of passengers, tons of wool, total tonnage, and total revenue derived from Nyngan each month for the years 1887, 1888, and 1889.

Months.	1887.				1888.				1889.			
	No. of Pas-sengers.	Total Tonnage.	Total Revenue of Station.	Tons of Wool.	No. of Pas-sengers.	Total Tonnage.	Total Revenue of Station.	Tons of Wool.	No. of Pas-sengers.	Total Tonnage.	Total Revenue of Station.	Tons of Wool.
January	331	1,258	£ 2,175	482	449	905	£ 2,338	219	437	1,865	£ 3,137	260
February	345	724	2,217	147	371	904	2,591	121	368	1,739	2,793	47
March	354	864	2,135	191	377	976	2,207	43	465	1,663	2,781	44
April	347	806	2,299	43	392	1,093	2,537	12	318	900	2,063	42
May	386	1,125	2,074	12	315	1,108	2,455	...	354	770	1,915	16
June	287	1,133	2,101	...	319	1,135	2,473	...	347	735	1,540	23
July	248	921	2,420	13	348	1,326	3,043	12	322	1,185	2,243	21
August	276	975	2,006	90	423	1,965	3,166	486	265	1,697	2,022	400
September ...	255	1,147	1,787	373	481	2,528	2,991	869	310	1,189	1,868	617
October	540	2,130	2,826	788	578	3,362	3,801	1,513	...	.....	.....	...
November ...	545	2,153	2,780	1,002	547	3,038	3,805	825	...	.....	.....	...
December ...	570	1,804	2,371	596	628	2,176	3,235	367	...	.....	.....	...
	4,484	15,040	27,191	3,737	5,228	20,516	34,582	4,467	3,216	11,743	20,362	1,470

RETURN of Traffic from Nyngan to Cobar—1st July, 1886, to 31st March, 1887.

A Rate.	B Rate.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	4th Class.	Total.
Tons. 621	Tons. 71	Tons. 55	Tons. 180	Tons. 311	Tons. 7	Tons. 1,245

RETURN of Traffic from Nyngan to Nymagee—1st July, 1886, to 31st March, 1887.

A Rate.	B Rate.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	4th Class.	Total.
Tons. 475	Tons. 105	Tons. 43	Tons. 200	Tons. 335	Tons. 4	Tons. 1,162

RETURN of Traffic from Cobar to Nyngan—1st July, 1886, to 31st March, 1887.

A Rate.	B Rate.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	4th Class.	Total.
Tons. 54	Tons. 47	Tons. 9	Tons. 4	Tons. 13	Tons. 3	Tons. 130

RETURN of Traffic from Nymagee to Nyngan—1st July, 1886, to 31st March, 1887.

A Rate.	B Rate.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	4th Class.	Total.
Tons. 10	Tons. 14	Tons. 9	Tons. 2	Tons. 3	Tons. 1	Tons. 39

RETURN of Traffic from Nyngan to Nymagee from 1st June, 1888, to 31st May, 1889.

Months.	A Rate.	B Rate.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	4th Class.
	Tons cwt.	Tons cwt.	Tons cwt.	Tons cwt.	Tons cwt.	Tons cwt.
1888.						
June	14 19	12 17	69 14	10 13	33 18	1 17
July	27 8	45 15	33 4	52 14	45 12	2 5
August	11 18	32 0	3 16	17 5	41 3	2 8
September	32 7	18 3	157 6	25 5	31 14	17 0
October	29 12	9 0	25 9	33 7	35 13	1 12
November	43 8	15 13	47 15	45 13	60 12	4 2
December	42 16	4 6	9 6	28 1	38 18	1 14
1889.						
January	42 17	16 1	9 15	28 3	31 9	0 12
February	73 14	8 15	30 1	22 4	30 11	2 6
March	51 10	2 4	2 8	23 12	33 15	1 8
April	39 10	5 10	2 13	11 9	28 7	16 0
May	17 16	.....	2 9	5 17	29 11	0 5
	427 15	173 4	393 16	304 3	441 3	51 9

RETURN of Traffic from Nyngan to Cobar from 1st June, 1888, to 31st May, 1889.

Months.	A Rate.	B Rate.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	4th Class.
	Tons cwt.	Tons cwt.	Tons cwt.	Tons cwt.	Tons cwt.	Tons cwt.
1888.						
June	29 6	20 11	22 0	17 2	38 11	3 6
July	18 4	31 6	65 4	32 0	24 10	1 8
August	88 6	29 19	5 12	18 17	49 19	3 17
September	29 10	15 9	28 15	21 16	39 16	1 2
October	56 13	5 14	57 9	18 19	51 1	3 4
November	42 14	10 4	97 3	27 1	62 5	4 1
December	69 17	6 16	10 17	16 9	35 17	0 16
1889.						
January	94 12	13 13	20 12	27 15	49 3	1 8
February	33 3	15 3	24 13	23 12	44 13	1 8
March	141 13	16 19	23 19	19 3	29 1	3 2
April	62 3	7 19	8 6	10 1	24 17	1 5
May	50 4	1 2	4 12	20 2	24 6	1 6
	716 5	174 15	369 2	252 17	473 19	26 3

RETURN of Copper and Wool from Cobar to Nyngan—1st July, 1886, to 31st March, 1887.

No. ingots Copper.	Weight.	No. bales Wool.	Weight.
80,886	Tons cwt. 766 3	5,477	Tons cwt. 1,003 13

RETURN of Copper and Wool from Nymagee to Nyngan—1st July, 1886, to 31st March, 1887.

No. ingots Copper.	Weight.	No. bales Wool.	Weight.
85,538	Tons cwt. 745 18	5,098	Tons cwt. 1,021 17

APPROXIMATE Return of Tonnage from Nyngan to Cobar, from April, 1887, to 31st March, 1888.

General goods 1,251 tons 14 cwt.

APPROXIMATE Return of Tonnage from Nyngan to Nymagee, from April, 1887, to 31st March, 1888.

General goods 1,122 tons 2 cwt.

APPROXIMATE Return of Tonnage from Cobar District to Nyngan, from April, 1887, to 31st March, 1888.

No. bales Wool.	Weight.	No. ingots Copper.	Weight.	General Goods.	Total.
6,396	Tons cwt. 1,115 6	237,195	Tons cwt. 2,165 7	Tons cwt. 78 0	Tons cwt. 3,358 13

B.

[To Evidence of Mr. Cameron.]

RAINFALL AT MARFIELD STATION.

Year 1880	6·03
" 1881	12·90
" 1882	8·72
" 1883	6·60
" 1884	5·58
" 1885	13·03
" 1886	12·34
" 1887	17·44
" 1888	5·99
	<hr/>
	88·63

Average per year for nine years, 9 inches 84 $\frac{2}{3}$ points.

C.

THE SHIPPING TRADE ON THE DARLING.

THE following facts bearing upon the above subject were obtained during the Sectional Committee's stay in Wilcannia:—

After the steamers leave Wentworth for a trip up the Darling many snags and rocks are met with. The navigation grows more difficult and dangerous after Wilcannia is passed, and the river takes a most tortuous course, its route in many places resembling the figure 8. Very dangerous rocks are situated at Kennedy, near Murtee, and at Mara Island. At low water the rocks are extremely dangerous nearly all the way between Wilcannia and Bourke. It takes 8 feet of water at Bourke to give 4 feet over the rocks at Curranyalpa, near Tilpa. The rocks are 4 miles long, and they are often spoken of as "Acre's Rocks." At Tooralee station there is another series of dangerous rocks. It is utterly impossible to pass the rocks at Curranyalpa or Tooralee when the river is low. It is at points like these that the steamers are detained when the river suddenly falls.

The following are the distances of the various points at which steamers touch on the Darling River. They were obtained from a reliable source, and may be depended upon as approximately correct. No official measurements of the Darling River appear to have been made:—

	Wentworth to	Walgett to		Wentworth to	Walgett to
Wentworth	—	1,129	Mount Murchison	514	615
Tapio	29	1,100	Murtee	327	602
Avoca	32	1,097	Cutowa	604	525
Para	68	1,061	Nelyambo	631	498
Burtundy	80	1,059	Walloo	634	495
Middleyards	86	1,053	Marra	651	478
Malara	137	1,002	Tankarooka	657	472
Tarcoola	140	999	Buckambil	672	457
Pooncarie	146	993	Tilpaukallara	688	441
Polia	175	964	Curranyalpa	700	429
Morara	188	951	Numay's	715	414
Cuthero	226	913	Campadore	719	410
Tolarno	263	876	Winbar	753	376
Netley	267	872	Dunlop	761	368
Kinchega	305	834	Louth Township	774	355
Menindie	320	819	Tooralee	813	316
Pamamaroo	343	786	Gundabooka	824	305
Albemarle	355	774	Yanda	853	276
Henley	373	756	Jandra	880	249
Henley Woolshed	379	750	Fort Bourke	886	243
Old Tintinallogy	387	742	Bourke	896	233
Weinteriga	400	729	Wanawecna	907	222
Tintinallogy	412	717	Beemery	954	176
Billilla	455	674	Bunnawannah	956	173
Caulpaulin	469	660	Brewarrina	1,005	124
Wilcannia	505	624	Walgett	1,129	—

RATE OF PROGRESS OF FLOOD-WATERS IN THE RIVER DARLING.

A pamphlet issued by the Merchant Shipping and Underwriters' Association (Limited) of Melbourne, says:—"The rate at which the flood waters come down the river is not generally known, and we therefore give the following to serve as an approximate guide for those who are desirous of obtaining information on this point:—A big rise took place in the head waters and sources of supply in the river Darling in June and July, 1886. The river first commenced to rise at Bourke on 6th June, and at Wilcannia on 17th of that month, the fresh reaching Wentworth during the night of 3rd July, twenty-eight days later on than its appearance at Bourke. The distance from Bourke to Wilcannia (by river) is 391 miles; from Wilcannia to Wentworth, 505 miles; or a total of 896 miles. During the first of these stages the water travelled at the rate of 35·54 miles per day, but for the latter portion it moves along at 31·56 miles per day only. The whole distance from Bourke to Wentworth (the junction with the Murray) was covered in twenty-eight days, at the rate of 32 miles a day, or 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour. In summer time it would be necessary to add some five or six days to this, to allow for the greater absorption of the river bank, evaporation, &c."

DISTANCE TO POINTS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The distance from Wentworth to Goolwa, where wool is transhipped for Port Victor, is 617 miles. From Wentworth to Morgan (N. W. Bend), where wool is sometimes placed on the railway to Adelaide, is 388 miles. Goolwa is 229 miles from Morgan.

[Seven Plans.]

1890.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

NYNGAN TO COBAR RAILWAY BILL.

(MESSAGE No. 11.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 2 July, 1890.

By Deputation from the Governor,
ALFRED STEPHEN,
Lieutenant-Governor.

Message No. 11.

In accordance with the provisions contained in the 54th section of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends, for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly, the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses in connection with a Bill to sanction the construction of a line of Railway from Nyngan to Cobar.

Government House,
Sydney, 25th June, 1890.

1890.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDICES, AND PLANS,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

KIAMA TO NOWRA.

Presented to Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act,
51 Vic. No. 37, section 8.

SYDNEY: CHARLES POTTER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

1890.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable JOHN LACKEY, Vice-Chairman.
 The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN.
 The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
 The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
 The Honorable GEORGE HENRY COX.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esquire, Chairman.
 JACOB GARRARD, Esquire.
 HENRY COPELAND, Esquire.
 JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esquire.
 WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esquire.
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esquire.
 JOHN HURLEY, Esquire.
 CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esquire.

MEMBERS OF THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY, Chairman.
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esquire.
 JOHN HURLEY, Esquire.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM KIAMA TO NOWRA.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, and the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Kiama to Nowra," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the railway should be constructed; and, in accordance with the provision of sub-section IV, of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

1. The proposed railway is intended as an extension of the Illawarra railway, from its present terminus at Kiama, to Nowra, a distance of 22 miles and 46 chains, and it is put forward also as a portion of a line which ultimately may be carried on to Jervis Bay. The towns of Kiama, Gerringong, Berry, and Nowra will be directly served by the extension, and several outlying places will be within convenient reach of the railway. It is not proposed to take the line into the town of Nowra. The proposal is that it shall stop on the north bank of the Shoalhaven River, the reasons for this being the intention to ultimately carry the railway on to Jervis Bay, and the necessity in that event for crossing the river at the most convenient spot, and a desire to avoid any premature expenditure in constructing a bridge across the river. For half the distance the railway will run close to the coast, a circumstance unavoidable in consequence of very high land preventing the line from being taken further inland, and the steepest gradient will be 1 in 50. From the official description of the proposed railway, published as an appendix to the evidence, it will be observed that the line will be taken from its present terminus across Wright's Creek, and thence into Kiama by a tunnel 506 yards in length. Passing on from Kiama it will run along the western side of the South Coast Road, and then skirt the coast for $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile, going in this distance through four tunnels, 429, 242, 407, and 440 yards in length, respectively. A number of small water-courses will be crossed on to Miller's Flat, and the line will then pass over the Main South Coast Road, and by the village of Gerringong at a distance of about 40 chains from the centre of the village, thence crossing the Nowra road, and passing in a south-westerly direction along the flats at the head of Crooked River. A spur of the Main Coast Range is crossed at a point about 3 miles from Gerringong, and the line will then proceed across a saddle of the Cooloongatta Range to the valleys of the Broughton and Broughton Mill Creeks, which creeks will be crossed by a series of timber openings, and thence across the Berry and Cooloongatta Road about 10 chains to the east of the township of Berry, and along the eastern side of the Main South Coast Road to Bomaderry Village, crossing the Bomaderry Creek, and passing on to the Shoalhaven River, the north bank of which is reached at a distance of 92 miles 45 chains from Sydney. A temporary deviation for station purposes is to be made from the main line close to the Shoalhaven River, and terminating at the Main Nowra Road, about 1 mile from the township of Nowra.

2. The estimated total cost of the railway is £381,390, or about £17,000 a mile. This estimate is less by £60,273 than the estimate of total cost laid before the Legislative Assembly when the railway was referred to the Committee, the difference being brought about by the carrying out of some deviations, and by a revision of the estimate of prices based upon the detailed information at hand since the

Description of
the proposed
railway.

Estimated
cost of the
proposed
railway.

the line has been permanently staked, cross sections taken, and everything settled. The most expensive portion of the railway is the first five miles, particularly the portion that will take the line from its present terminus north of Kiama into that town. This first five miles will cost, according to the evidence of the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, half the total estimate, so that while for the whole distance—the 22 miles 46 chains—the cost per mile is about £17,000, or, as stated by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief, £16,895, the cost for the distance beyond the expensive five miles would be about £11,000 a mile. £121,000 is included in the estimated total cost for the construction of tunnels.

Views of the Railway Commissioners on the proposed line.

3. In accordance with the requirements of section 13 of the Public Works Act the Railway Commissioners have reported on the proposed railway, and they recommend that it should be constructed, their recommendation being based chiefly on the richness of the district and the great evidence seen by them in it of progress. Their calculations of annual cost and estimate of revenue are based on an estimate of the cost of construction amounting to £538,663. This is £97,000 more than the amount of the estimate put before the Assembly and referred to the Committee, the difference being represented by the omission from the Assembly estimate of the cost of a bridge over the Shoalhaven River, and the additional cost of a deviation for station purposes. Calculated upon the reduced estimate of total cost, the amounts set down as annual interest, and permanent-way maintenance, would be less than those shown in the report; but in either estimate the calculations represent, in a comparison between the charges and the estimated revenue, a considerable loss. This, the Commissioners appear to anticipate, will in time be met by the progress of the districts through which the railway will go.

Form of the Committee's inquiry.

4. The Committee took evidence in Sydney from the Under Secretary for Public Works, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, the District Engineer specially engaged in connection with the route of the proposed railway, and the Goods Superintendent of the Railway Department, who had personally gone into the calculations of probable traffic from the line; and they then appointed a Sectional Committee to go through the districts concerned in the proposed railway, inspect the route, and take evidence from local witnesses. The result of the work of the Sectional Committee will be found in a report, with minutes of evidence and appendices, published with this Report of the Committee.

Principal points of the inquiry.

5. Many matters directly associated with, or incidental to, the inquiry have been kept in view by the Committee; but the principal points upon which they have considered it necessary to obtain information are the following:—

- (1.) The reasons urged in favour of the construction of the railway.
- (2.) Whether the route chosen is the best that could be obtained.
- (3.) Whether the estimates of cost have been carefully prepared.
- (4.) What are the prospects of revenue from the railway.

Reasons urged in favour of the railway.

6. Two prominent reasons are urged in support of the proposal to construct the railway. The first is, that the richness and importance of the district through which the line would pass justify its construction; the other is, that keeping the railway out of the town of Kiama is unjust to the population of that part of Illawarra, and injurious to the traffic of the railway. An examination of the report of the Sectional Committee will show that "the country through which the line will pass is highly fertile, and more densely and continuously settled than any other dairying and agricultural district" of similar extent in the colony; that a number of thriving localities will be accommodated by the railway; that there is ample room for the settlement of a large number of people on the areas of Crown land, which, in the Shoalhaven district, are still unalienated, and which may be made very profitable; that the existing farming and dairying industries are carried on extensively, and may be considerably enlarged; that the mining resources of the districts are such as to promise a considerable traffic on the railway; and that an existing fishing industry and a timber trade only require facilities for speedy conveyance to market to make them important and profitable. The Sectional Committee point out also the facts that the south coast district is a very favourite resort of tourists, and that the proposed railway will give access to picturesque and attractive scenery in the districts of Gerringong, Berry, and Shoalhaven; and they call attention to the importance of Jervis Bay as one of the most capacious and valuable harbours in Australia. Rich as the Illawarra district generally is, the richest portion of it lies along the route of the

the proposed railway. So far as the farmers or proprietors of the land have been able to do, they have availed themselves of the facilities offered them by the railway to the neighbourhood of Kiama; but south of Kiama, beyond a certain point, the residents find the railway too far away to be of service, and they are obliged either to secure a market for their produce in their midst, which is not as profitable as markets further afield, or to make for the nearest harbour on the coast and ship their produce to Sydney by steamer. The district immediately around Kiama is not likely to increase to any considerable extent in population, but, with sufficient inducement, it may advance materially in production, and further south, where there is a wider area available, both population and production will, with the facilities offered by the railway, probably increase very greatly. A striking fact in favour of the proposed railway is that the present railway has succeeded, not only in attracting a large traffic which appears to be steadily increasing, but it has decreased, if not altogether destroyed, both the passenger traffic and the traffic in produce which, previous to the construction of the railway, was carried on between Kiama and Sydney by steamer. The stoppage of the railway, at present outside, and to the north of Kiama, interferes with the railway traffic in produce as well as inconveniences residents in and around Kiama. Passengers have to travel a mile and a half between the present railway terminus and the town of Kiama, and while this distance is a serious inconvenience to railway travellers, it is also a great obstacle to farmers further south who may desire to send their produce to market by railway. Much of this produce—milk for instance—is of a perishable nature, and can be safely taken in vehicles by road only a certain distance. Beyond that distance its condition becomes affected, and it does not pay in that case to convey it. The extension of the line would obviate this, and also improve the facilities for passenger traffic.

7. The route of the proposed railway appears from the evidence and from the personal examination made by the Sectional Committee to be the best that could be chosen, except that the Sectional Committee are of opinion that the line should be taken into the town of Nowra. Special efforts seem to have been made, not only to secure a desirable route, but to make as many improvements as possible. As far back as 1883 the proposed railway was before Parliament, an amount being voted in that year for the line, and the project has therefore been under consideration for a period of six or seven years. In 1888 an engineer in the Department of the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways was sent into the district to improve the grades and reduce the earthworks, and some considerable alterations were made. All that is possible to be done in the way of improvement this engineer states he has done; neither time nor trouble has been spared, and he considers the line, as now proposed, to be by far the cheapest and the best that could be adopted. The line runs close to the coast, partly from necessity, and partly because that route is cheaper than one further inland, while it is just as convenient as any other to the general body of the population. It would be possible to avoid the expensive mile and a half into Kiama from the present terminus by going round, but it would have to be done by crossing an extensive and deep swamp, where a large amount of earthworks would be required, and by traversing other difficult country, the expense of doing which would be so great that the line would cost £81,000 more than that recommended. It would be possible also to take the line round by Jamberoo, which lies a few miles to the west of Kiama, but it would have to be done at great additional expense and with questionable advantage. Jamberoo, it is urged, will be best served by a branch line. The stoppage of the proposed railway outside Nowra is a circumstance not regarded with favour by the people of Nowra, and they have from time to time made strong representations on the subject. The explanation of the railway construction officers regarding the intention to terminate the line for the present on the north bank of the Shoalhaven River, and about a mile from Nowra, is that the contemplated terminus of the railway is Jervis Bay, and that it is not necessary in order to get to Jervis Bay for the line to go into Nowra. The Sectional Committee who visited the district consider the line should be taken to the town in order to secure the maximum amount of traffic, and that it is inadvisable to have any deviation from Bomaderry to Broughton Creek Road, in view of the great necessity to construct the bridge at as early a date as possible.

8. The estimates of cost in relation to the railway have been subjected to revision, and there does not appear to be any reason to doubt that as they now stand they have been carefully prepared. The engineer who specially examined the line for the purpose of making improvements, and who seems to have done his work skilfully

skilfully and well, does not think it possible to reduce the cost beyond the point already reached, and the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways considers that after the first five miles, which will be unavoidably expensive, the line will be a comparatively cheap one. The estimates of cost are for a single line; the wisdom or otherwise of providing for a double line depends, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief points out, on what the traffic is likely to be in the future, and it is not expected that the traffic, though sufficiently satisfactory for a single line, will develop with the rapidity that would justify making immediate preparations for a double line.

Prospects of
revenue from
the railway.

9. One of the most important matters in connection with a proposed railway is that which relates to the question of revenue, and the Committee have endeavoured to ascertain, with as much completeness as possible, what the actual revenue from the proposed railway will probably be. It was made known to them at the commencement of their inquiry that the Railway Commissioners regarded the prospects of traffic on the line as sufficiently good to justify their approval of the proposal to construct the railway, and the Committee then proceeded to examine one of the principal traffic officers of the Department in order to ascertain the grounds upon which the Commissioners had arrived at their decision. That officer informed the Committee he had personally examined the calculations of traffic in regard to the line, and had gone over much of the route, and though any such calculations must, to a certain extent, be matters of assumption, there were sufficient grounds for believing the traffic would be good. The proposed line would improve the present trade by railway with Kiama and the district in its immediate vicinity, and the extension on to Nowra would, at any rate, pay working expenses. The traffic from Nowra itself was not likely to be remunerative, but "the districts surrounding it, and beyond it, would give a good traffic when won." The traffic on the present line to the neighbourhood of Kiama, he states, has steadily increased, and has stimulated the productiveness of the country which it serves; and the district through which the proposed extension will go "is a rich one, and should develop in the same way as other districts have done." This evidence was followed by the visit of the Sectional Committee to the districts concerned in the railway, and from their report and the evidence of witnesses examined by them it will be seen that the prospects of a profitable traffic are satisfactory. In the Sectional Committee's report attention is drawn to the remarkable circumstance that for the first year during which the railway to Kiama was in operation, the increase of revenue from the traffic on the line was at the rate of about £800 a month. The coaching traffic between the Shoalhaven district and Kiama at the present rates amounts to £400 a month, or nearly £5,000 a year. This traffic would assuredly pass to the railway if it were constructed, and the general tenor of the evidence taken by the Sectional Committee, confirmed by their report, is that while the passenger traffic on the railway would probably be large, the carriage of produce would be satisfactory, because the facilities for its rapid and cheap conveyance to market would not only attract the trade already available, but would stimulate production, and bring about a very large increase. Water carriage, doubtless, to more or less extent, will be always in competition with the railway; but so far as the results of constructing the railway to Kiama show, the railway line is largely preferred by both passengers and producers, and there is everything to indicate that it will be the same as the line is taken further southwards.

Resolution
arrived at by
the Com-
mittee.

10. The resolution passed by the Committee in relation to this proposed railway was arrived at on Tuesday, 18 March, 1890.

Mr. Humphery, moved—

"That in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed railway from Kiama to Nowra, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out."

The motion was seconded by Mr. O'Sullivan, and after discussion, passed on the following division:—

Ayes, 7.

Dr. Garran,
Mr. Humphery,
Mr. Trickett,
Mr. Garrard,
Mr. Dowel,
Mr. O'Sullivan,
Mr. Hurley.

Noes, 3.

Mr. Cox,
Mr. Copeland,
Mr. Tonkin.

J. P. ABBOTT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 22 April, 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM KIAMA TO NOWRA.

WEDNESDAY, 4 DECEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

The HONORABLE ANDREW GARRAN (TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN).	
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the proposed railway from Kiama to Nowra.

Joseph Barling, Esq., Under Secretary for Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Temporary Chairman.*] Have you brought any preliminary statement? Yes, I have, sir.
2. Perhaps you will read it? The proposal before the Committee is for the extension of the railway from Kiama to Nowra, a distance according to the description of the line laid upon the Table of the House in August last, when Mr. Bruce Smith submitted the proposal, of 22 miles 67 chains. Since then, however, some minor deviations ordered by Mr. Whitton have been carried out, and the length has now been reduced to 22 miles 46 chains. A revised estimate has also been prepared amounting to £381,390, the estimate as given to the House, being £441,663. Mr. Deane, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief, will give full particulars regarding these matters. I now hand in a description of the line, together with the report of the Commissioners for Railways. It will be seen that the Commissioners' estimate of the cost is £538,663, the difference between that sum and the estimate of the line given to the House in August, viz., £441,663, being due to the omission of the cost of the bridge over the Shoalhaven River which was estimated by Mr. Palmer in 1886 at £100,000, and the addition of £3,000 for a deviation for station purposes, which make a total net deduction from the cost, as estimated by the Commissioners, of £97,000. I also hand in a pretty full *précis* of the case, which will probably supply all the details which may be required, and a plan, which the Committee will see is signed by the Chief Draftsman of the Lands Department, and which shows respectively the alienated, unalienated, and reserved lands in the district affected by the line, the figures being—alienated, 195,700 acres; unalienated, 115,100 acres; reserved, 73,100 acres. With regard to objections which have been raised, and the fears which have been expressed in connection with the proposal to stop for the present at the north bank of the river, I may, perhaps, be permitted to read extracts from the report of a deputation which waited upon Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith on the 29th August last. "There was," the Minister said, "a great mistake made by the people of the district on this subject (*i.e.*, the determination of the Government to terminate the line at the river). Like the inhabitants of many other towns, because a railway came their way they supposed its sole object was to reach them, and they grumbled, therefore, if it did not run right into the centre of the place. This idea had already cost the country many thousands of pounds. It was intended eventually to take this line on to Jervis Bay, and (as he showed them from a map of the route) the line would then cross the river at a point about three-quarters of a mile away from the now suggested temporary terminus, and it was only to afford them greater convenience that it was proposed to construct this three-quarters of a mile of temporary line away from the line proper, in order to bring it as near as possible to the town, without going to the immediate heavy expense of a bridge over the river. When the line was continued further this temporary line would be taken up, so they could see that the fears of another township springing up were quite groundless.
3. You mention here that there are 115,000 acres unalienated; is it understood that a large portion of that will be saleable if the line is made? I did not get information upon that. I thought you would rather get it direct from the Lands Department. The gentleman whose signature is there (Mr. Saunders) will be able to give you that information.
4. You would rather we should ask Mr. Deane questions on all the engineering points? Yes.
5. How long has this project been under the consideration of the Department? I think you will find it is stated in the *précis*.
6. It appears that in 1883 Parliament voted £804,000, and so, practically, this project has been six years under consideration? Something of that sort.
7. You see the money was, according to this, actually voted in 1883? Yes.
8. There has never been any second vote on the subject I suppose? No; I think not. That is the only vote of which I am aware.
9. Do you know whether the money was actually borrowed? I cannot say that. I merely say it was included in the loan estimate.

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- J. Barling,
Esq.
4 Dec., 1889.
10. This saving of £100,000 is only an apparent saving? Of course it is only an apparent saving.
 11. This temporary line that you make—is there any real necessity for that; could not the line on the road to the bridge serve as a place for a terminus? The reasons for taking that particular part will be given better by Mr. Deane, as there are engineering considerations in connection with that.
 12. And Mr. Deane could tell us all about the trial survey more inland? He will tell you all about the trial survey.
 13. The project, as now put before us, varies from these figures in the Commissioners' paper? Yes; in the particulars which I have described.
 14. But principally in the postponement of the bridge? That is the principal thing.
 15. In all other respects it remains the same substantially? Substantially the same.
 16. And is the Committee to understand that the department recommends this project? They recommend the project.
 17. Can you tell us with regard to the existing line from Sydney to Kiama—taking it in sections—how the parts of that line pay relatively; take it, for instance, between Sydney and George's River? That will come under the Commissioners for Railways. They have the traffic arrangements.
 18. You are not in a position to tell us that? It will come direct from them.
 19. Mr. Kirkcaldie will be prepared to give us that information? I suppose the secretary to the Commissioners, Mr. McLachlan, would, but I cannot answer positively on that point. It may be interesting to the Committee for me to state that from the annual report of the Commissioners, which has just been published, I see that the total cost of the railway from Sydney to Kiama, a length of 70 miles, was £1,725,451, or £24,649 per mile.
 20. It does not say the net profit? I have only just had this report, and therefore I am not in a position to be examined as to that. That comes under the Railway Commissioners.
 21. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Allowing for the reduction of £97,000 through not erecting the bridge, and the construction of this short line to the present Nowra bridge, I find the total working expenses would be £15,458 per annum, and the probable receipts £6,157? You are quoting I think from the Commissioners' report.
 22. That leaves a deficiency of £9,301 per annum? Yes.
 23. I understand the Department recommends the line even though that deficiency is known to exist? Undoubtedly.
 24. Can you give the Committee any reason why that line hugs the coast for a considerable distance and then branches off in a wide detour to Nowra? That is an engineering question that Mr. Deane will be able to answer.
 25. This is a portion of the ultimate line to Jervis Bay? Yes.
 26. *Mr. Tonkin.*] There is a difference still I cannot get at exactly;—a difference of £54,000? That is explained. The estimate has been reduced since the 30th August, when it was about £440,000, and Mr. Deane will give you all the particulars with regard to that.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

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27. *Temporary Chairman.*] Would you tell us in the first place how this railway stands with respect to gradients from Kiama to Nowra? The steepest gradient is 1 in 50.
 28. I observe that for half its length it is what we might call a coast line? Yes.
 29. I suppose you are fenced in by the spurs coming close down to the coast? Yes; there is very high ground close to the coast. There is no help for it—you could not get further inland.
 30. Making a line like that close to the coast we can draw traffic only from the one side? Yes.
 31. And we are in close competition with the steamer traffic? Yes; that is between distant ports.
 32. In both the inter-coastal traffic and the traffic to Sydney we are in competition with steamers? Yes.
 33. So in both these respects we are making the line under the greatest possible disadvantages? Yes, in that respect.
 34. What I mean is that a line is more likely to pay if you can draw traffic from both sides? Certainly.
 35. In this case we draw it only from the one side? Yes.
 36. And we are in competition with cheap water carriage? Yes.
 37. But we have to look upon it, I suppose, not merely as a local line, but also as a through line to Jervis Bay? Yes.
 38. I suppose that is one of the considerations that guided the Department? Yes. The object was to reach Jervis Bay. This is a portion of that extension.
 39. We may say that Jervis Bay is for the present our objective? Yes.
 40. And we must take this route to get there? Yes.
 41. With regard to crossing the river, do you go to the head of navigation to go to Nowra? Yes—what is practically the head of navigation for coasting vessels.
 42. If you had to cross the river lower down would you have to have a swing-bridge? Yes; because steamers go right up to Nowra.
 43. Of course if Huskisson or Jervis Bay is the point you are looking at, a straighter line would be to cross the river nearer Numba—nearer the mouth of the river? There is a great bend in the line to get right to Nowra.
 44. Was the object of that to avoid crossing the river at a navigable point? Partly on that account and partly to serve Nowra.
 45. You could have gone across nearer the mouth of the river? That I cannot say, as I do not know what the foundations would be. As it is we have had some difficulty in finding a suitable place for crossing the river.
 46. Did you have the same difficulty there as you have had with the rivers nearer Sydney—very deep foundations? Yes. The line as it was first laid out, and as shown on the Parliamentary plan, was to cross the river a little below the road bridge, but when borings were taken to try the depth at which foundations could be reached, we had in one bore to go down 160 feet before getting to anything sound, consequently that crossing was abandoned, and other borings were not taken. A new line was sought about a quarter of a mile lower down the river, where there is a reef of rocks. We have got a fairly good crossing there.

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47. What depth have you to go to for your foundations? The greatest depth there is 85 feet.
48. What depth had the road bridge to go to get a foundation? I do not remember exactly; but there were very great difficulties. There was a settlement in some of the piers after the bridge was built.
49. You get a good crossing now? Yes, a very good crossing.
50. What I mean is, the department has not attempted to make a straighter line between Gerringong and Huskisson than it is now? No.
51. You think the difficulties of the bridge would be very considerable? Yes.
52. And the stoppage of navigation? Yes.
53. You think it is a wise thing to make this detour inland towards Nowra? Yes.
54. Have you any knowledge of the distance between Nowra and Huskisson, and of the country? No, I have not.
55. I see a rough line marked on this plan;—is that any guide? That is the line that has been surveyed and staked out.
56. How does that stand for difficulties? There is no difficulty.
57. If we reach Nowra we can go on to Huskisson without any difficulty? Oh, yes.
58. Do you think it is equally important that we should get to Jervis Bay as it is that we should get to Nowra? Jervis Bay is one of the finest harbours on the coast. The railway would tap a fine district, I believe, ingoing down there.
59. If we were to go to Nowra we would go for an established population, and an existing agricultural traffic? Yes.
60. If we go to Huskisson it would rather be for national purposes I presume? I think so.
61. There is no considerable traffic there at present, is there? The line would also have the effect of serving the country further down. The produce now comes by sea. The line would also have the effect of facilitating settlement.
62. Do you know anything of the country between Nowra and Huskisson? I have not been beyond Nowra.
63. Have you personally been over the route from Kiama to Nowra? Yes. That is to say not over every mile of it, but I have examined the country. I have been over the route generally.
64. What are your ruling gradients between Kiama and Sydney? Between Sydney and Clifton—that is Coalcliff—1 in 40, beyond that 1 in 50.
65. Could you try to get it down to 1 in 50? We got it down to that on the further length.
66. You could not avoid the 1 in 40 between Sydney and Wollongong without going to great expense? No.
67. You have to bring your coal up 1 in 40 from Wollongong? Yes.
68. Has there been any alternate line surveyed more inland than this coast line, from Kiama or Jamberoo? Not from Kiama, but from a point farther back—Albion Park.
69. Do you know anything of that line? I have not been over it, but I know you have to rise very considerably, and it is an expensive line too.
70. You go up and down, I suppose? Yes. There are grades of 1 in 40. Possibly they might be eliminated, but I do not think so. The summit level is 1,450 feet above the sea.
71. You have to rise after leaving the Illawarra Lake and then descend to Nowra? Yes, to Berry.
72. And then rise again? You rise after leaving Albion Park. Near Albion Park the line branches off and you rise ultimately to an altitude of 1,450 feet, and then you drop down again. You join the present route about Berry—Broughton Creek it used to be called.
73. Would that more inland route serve the coal mines where the coal crops up in the side of the mountain at the back of Kiama? I am not exactly aware where the coal crops out, but I have no doubt it would. It would be nearer than the present line, but a portion of the present line would have to be abandoned or worked as a branch. But I think the chief objection to that line would be its expensive character, its heavy grades and long tunnels, and the height you would have to rise, 1,450 feet—unnecessarily I might say.
74. You think all those engineering objections are conclusive against it? That is my opinion.
75. Then if these collieries, which at present are only prospective collieries, had to be developed, they would have to make separate branch lines down to the coast? Yes.
76. You do not see any other alternative? No.
77. That matter has been carefully considered by the Department, I presume—that alternative line? Yes, it has.
78. Carefully worked out? Yes.
79. Have you looked into it personally at all or taken the judgment of your subordinates? I cannot say I have looked into it very closely, because when I began to have anything to do with the surveys of any of the lines this line had already been adopted.
80. Can you tell us whether Mr. Whitton gave the preference to this coast line over the inland line? Yes.
81. He did consider that inland line? Yes.
82. And decided in favour of the coast line? Yes.
83. You know that? I am certain of that.
84. With regard to this short temporary line to Nowra, what is the engineering difficulty in the way of making the terminus on the main route? There is no engineering difficulty, but it would leave the station so far away from the town.
85. Then it is purely to accommodate the Nowra people? Yes.
86. Till you make the bridge? Yes.
87. Then you would take that line up? Yes. A good deal of the material will be utilized for the extension of the permanent line.
88. Will your terminus be close to the road bridge? Yes; I have a sketch plan here. The red line shows the present adopted line, the black line shows the line as originally laid out and where it had an impracticable crossing of the river. A branch is also shown by a red line going alongside Bomadery Creek and terminating at the main road.
89. What do you estimate will be the cost, first of making this additional branch line, and then of taking it up afterwards? The cost of making the branch line I have estimated at £3,500, and the materials

that

- H. Deane, Esq.
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- that could be utilized would be worth about £1,500, so that the cost of the line itself, after making all deductions, would be £2,000.
90. Have you any land to buy? That does not include land, but from what I have heard I am inclined to believe that the land would be given, either for nothing or for a very nominal sum.
91. No arrangement has been made for the temporary use of that land? No arrangement has been made.
92. What is the length of that branch? 52 chains.
93. Considering that will all ultimately be a waste of money, do you think it is worth while to postpone the bridge, seeing that one object of making the line to Nowra is to go on to Jervis Bay? If it were certain that the line would be constructed in the near future I would recommend the bridge; but if it is to be deferred for a number of years I consider that the branch should be made.
94. But I understood you just now that one great inducement to put up with the loss which this line must for a time involve is that it is a national line to Jervis Bay? Yes.
95. The mere traffic to Nowra would of itself scarcely justify the outlay? I have not expressed any opinion about that. I believe that there will be a great deal of produce carried along this line, and that the section from Kiama to Nowra is in itself a very important section of the line.
96. Still a large part of its justification lies in the fact that it is two-thirds of the distance to Jervis Bay? Yes; it was the Government's intention to carry the line on to Jervis Bay, and of course this is only a portion of it.
97. That being the case is it worth while to spend any considerable sum of money on a merely temporary station? Not a considerable sum of money, but I would say that there would be a saving in making this temporary branch if the construction of the line to Jervis Bay is deferred for a few years. I have made a careful re-estimate of this line, and I find that the bridge over the Shoalhaven might be built at the present crossing for about £60,000.
98. Without reducing the substantial character of the bridge in any way? Without reducing the substantial character of the bridge; and the interest on that at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. would be £2,100 per annum, so that if the line were delayed for two years the interest on that sum would more than cover the cost of the branch even without deducting the value of the materials.
99. You do not think that you are under-estimating the outlay by saying this branch will only cost £2,000 to make and unmake? £3,500 less the value of the materials.
100. The total waste, so to speak, would not be more than £2,000? It need not be. We could do it for that.
101. If you made this station on the line of your railway on the northern side of the river, how much extra journey would you give the Nowra people? They would have to go another three-quarters of a mile.
102. Not more than that? No.
103. It is to save that three-quarters of a mile that you incur this extra expense? Yes.
104. The line is now staked out—do you think that on the whole that is the best line you could make between the two points? Yes.
105. And the gradients are as good as you could expect to have on so undulating a country? Yes.
106. And as good as you could expect to get on any further extension down the coast? Yes, I think they will be quite as good as that.
107. I mean that from what little you know of the coast you think it would be reasonable to take a grade of 1 in 50 for a south coast line? Yes. We might get flatter grades beyond Nowra, but I am not certain at present. I have been intending to have that line inspected, but there has been no time for it.
108. There have been no flying surveys between Huskisson and Ulladulla? I do not think so.
109. In any case whether the line were continued or not you must make for Jervis Bay? Yes.
110. And in laying out this line between Nowra and Jervis Bay have you tried to keep in view a possible extension? Yes. The line would naturally take the route that is at present laid out if it is extended beyond that.
111. Will the spurs there come down and push it as near the coast as it is? The object is to rather hug Jervis Bay.
112. Because, you see, south of Huskisson you have got St. George's basement almost ahead, and you have to go back again to the west? Yes.
113. Are there any serious engineering works on the line between Kiama and Nowra? There are five tunnels.
114. And a bridge over Broughton Creek? Yes. But the bridge over Broughton Creek is not a very expensive one.
115. You cannot avoid these tunnels I suppose? No, we cannot avoid them.
116. It is they that make the line so expensive on the whole? Yes.
117. What is the total cost of those five tunnels? £121,440. I mentioned just now that I had re-estimated the cost of this line. In the description that was made and submitted to Parliament and which was handed on to this Committee the estimated cost was put down at £441,663. When that was put down some minor deviations were in progress which Mr. Whitton had ordered, and they have now been completed. That estimate was also made in 1886, when prices were higher than they are at present. We had not the detailed information which we have now, now that the line has been permanently staked and cross-sections taken and everything settled. The new estimate of the cost of this line, including the branch, is £381,390 as compared with £441,663. That is to say that about £60,000 of the estimated cost can be knocked off.
118. Then including the bridge you could now go from Kiama to Nowra for £450,000 in round numbers? Yes.
119. Where are those five tunnels, are they near Kiama? They are near Kiama. The first is before you get into the town of Kiama, and is 506 yards in length. I have a printed description of this line showing the alteration of the estimate, and mentioning the course taken by the deviations, and I now hand it in.
120. Supposing the line went up towards Jamberoo, would that avoid these tunnels? No; you would have to go down and meet the line again.
121. What is the longest tunnel? The longest tunnel is the first—506 yards.
122. There is only one bridge, you say, to be constructed between Kiama and Nowra? There is the bridge over Broughton Creek. That is the most important structure.

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Esq.
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123. What would the bridges cost? £22,128.
124. Is it difficult country to construct a railway through independent of the bridges and the tunnels? For the first few miles it is decidedly rough.
125. Heavy cuttings? Yes.
126. Rock cuttings? Yes.
127. After it strikes away from the coast what class of country does it pass through between there and Nowra—good agricultural country? Yes, very good land.
128. Is it all sold, alienated land? Yes.
129. I see that the Commissioners recommend that the owners of land through which the railway is to pass should be asked to give their land free of cost; do you know whether if that has been done? No steps have been taken at present. Beyond Gerringong the country is nearly all in the hands of the trustees of the late Mr. Berry.
130. *Mr. Humphery.*] Where does the present Illawarra railway stop? It stops about a mile and a half from the town of Kiama.
131. You have included in the estimate for extending the line to Nowra, on the northern side of the river, the cost of taking it to Kiama? Yes.
132. Can you state what the cost of constructing a mile and a half in order to reach Kiama will be approximately? More than a mile and a half would be necessary. The town could be reached in a mile and a half, but you would have to go close on two and a half miles to include a length suitable for a station.
133. What would be the cost approximately of constructing that two miles? I have not made any estimate recently, but the old estimate that was made at the same time as the other estimate in 1886 was £94,185. I have not the slightest doubt that could be reduced.
134. So, as a matter of fact, the cost of giving the people of Kiama the accommodation they have been so long agitating for would be £100,000, and the cost of the extension beyond Kiama would be the difference between that sum and your estimate? Yes.
135. Can you state whether, notwithstanding the cost, the Illawarra line has been a success as a railway; has it been a successful line so far as the earnings are concerned? I cannot tell you anything about that.
136. Do you know anything about the existing bridge over the Shoalhaven River? I know a little about it. I have been over it.
137. By whom was it designed—do you remember? It was built by the Edgemoor Iron Company—an American firm.
138. Do you know whether that bridge was designed for the purpose of carrying a railway? I do not remember whether they had any intention of doing so. I am quite certain it would never carry a railway.
139. Was it not stated at the time that with additional piers it would carry a railway; was not that one reason for constructing the bridge? The bridge is not suitable for a railway. It is a link and pin bridge, the same as the Hawkesbury. You could not put any additional supports underneath the spans.
140. Not strengthen it sufficiently to carry a railway temporarily; would it not be safe to take a train travelling at a slow pace across it to Nowra? I would be very sorry to attempt to do it. I have stood on that bridge when a buggy was driven over at a rapid pace and I felt the vibration. I do not know what it would be if a train were driven over the bridge.
141. You do not remember the opening of the bridge? No.
142. I understand that then a severe test was applied which the bridge stood satisfactorily? Yes, for vehicle traffic, perhaps.
143. You are satisfied it would not carry a train? It is most unsuitable, and I would doubt very much whether the foundations of the piers would be sufficient.
144. It would be necessary to build a new bridge in order to take the railway to Nowra and Jervis Bay? Certainly.
145. Do you know the country between Bomadery and Kiama? Yes, I have been through the country.
146. Will the railway, if constructed as designed by you, serve the settled population of the district? Yes.
147. For the purpose, of course, of travelling and conveyance of produce? Yes, undoubtedly.
148. What will be the length of the tunnels after Kiama, going south? The second tunnel would be 429 yards.
149. Where does that commence? That commences just a little way out of the town of Kiama. All the four tunnels are just a little beyond the town.
150. There is only one tunnel between the present terminus and the town? Yes.
151. The other four are just beyond? Yes, within 3 miles of Kiama.
152. Then after that the country is comparatively easy is it? Yes, it becomes easy.
153. So the great expense of constructing the line would be in the immediate vicinity of Kiama? Yes. I should say that the easy country commences after leaving Gerringong, at $76\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Beyond there the line is of an easy character.
154. Do you not think that you will be repeating the error—if you regard it as an error—that has occurred at Kiama, if you stop short at Nowra; do you not think that from the moment a railway is constructed there will be agitation for the purpose of getting the railway into Nowra, just in the same way that there has been constant agitation and difficulty with the Kiama people owing to the railway terminating $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Kiama? I do not think there will be the same objection. The difference in distance would not be so great. Supposing we crossed the Shoalhaven and made a station on the Nowra side, it is still some little distance from the town. You could not get right into the centre of the town. The present proposed temporary terminus is only a mile from the centre of the town—not a mile from the town, but from its centre. The station would be between a quarter and half a mile from the centre of the town; so the difference in the distance which the people would have to travel would be a little over half a mile. In the case of Kiama it is a question of travelling fully a mile and a half.
155. Then on the south side of the bridge is there not a considerable district to be served by the railway? They would be served by this, except that they would have to go a little farther. In this case they would not have to go any farther to the railway than they do at present to get their produce down to the boats.

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156. However you are of opinion that the saving that would be effected by leaving the terminus on the north side of the bridge would justify your not building that bridge at the present time? Yes; the cost of the deviation is only one year's interest on the cost of the bridge.
157. And you propose that the terminus should be at the present road bridge? Yes.
158. On the northern side of the river? Yes.
159. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is the reason the line hugs the coast after leaving Kiama—it goes down to Bear Bluff instead of going straight to Gerringong? Because the country rises as you leave the coast.
160. I notice there is a road running between Kiama and Gerringong; would it be possible to have taken the line along that road; or along the line of the road? No, it would not be possible. The road rises to a considerable height, and it would not be a suitable position for it.
161. Then there was no alternative but to take it down to the coast, and afterwards on to Gerringong? No, there was no alternative. Having to start from the present terminus the line which has been laid out is the only line that would be a good one.
162. What is the reason for abandoning that line on which a trial survey was made from Albion Park to Nowra via Saddleback and Foxgrove? The steep grades, the costly works, and the summit level.
163. That would have been a far more costly work than the line now proposed? There would have been about 2 miles of tunnel. The gradients as they were laid out were 1 in 40. Possibly by winding—but I am not certain about that—they might have been reduced, but that would have added to the length of the line, and to the earthworks.
164. But have you not a considerable length of tunnels on the line proposed? Yes.
165. What is about the total length? 2,024 yards they amount up to altogether. That is a little over a mile—not a mile and a quarter.
166. To have taken it from Albion Park to Nowra would have necessitated a longer length of tunnels and more expensive work? Yes.
167. With a gradient of 1 in 40? Yes; and you would have to rise over 1,450 feet at the Saddleback. You would have to go up that height, and down again in either direction.
168. You said in your evidence to Dr. Garran that the line would only cross one creek, or at least that it would only require one bridge, and that would be over Broughton Creek? That is the most important.
- 168½. But do you not cross the Bomadery Creek near Nowra before reaching the river? No. We do not cross the Bomadery Creek. We keep on this side of it.
169. If the line stops where proposed at present you would not require to cross Bomadery Creek? No.
170. But if the line were taken on to Nowra and Jervis Bay you would have to cross Bomadery Creek and the Shoalhaven as well? Yes; but the bridge over the Bomadery Creek would not be of much account.
171. Do you think it is worth while to construct this short line, considering that the short line from the position where the bridge will be, to the temporary terminus, is only to be a temporary work? Yes, I do. I think it is desirable.
172. What is the distance? Fifty-two chains.
173. About three quarters of a mile? Yes.
174. Considering that they will have to take their goods from the station across the bridge into the town, is it worth the while of the State to construct a temporary line just to save three quarters of a mile haulage? I should point out, that if you had a station at Bomadery on the main line, you would have to spend a good deal of money in making roads, for the present road to Bomadery is a mere track, so the whole cost of the deviation would not be saved.
175. Then you think it wiser to take the line on to the proposed terminus for the accommodation of the people, and to save the expenditure on these roads which would be necessitated? Yes.
176. Where is Huskisson;—beyond Jervis Bay is it not, or a portion of Jervis Bay? It is shown on the map.
177. Huskisson is a township on Jervis Bay? I cannot tell you anything at all about it. I have not been there.
178. Is that the proposed terminus of the Jervis Bay line? I believe so.
179. You understand that is the proposed terminus of the Jervis Bay line? Yes.
180. You do not care to express an opinion as to the probable traffic on the line? No; I have not gone into that.
181. Do you know the distance between Nowra and Jervis Bay? I could get it for you. I have not a note of it here.*
182. There appears to be no good crossing place between Nowra and the coast for a railway, judging by the plan submitted to the Committee? Yes.
183. I think from the plan submitted to the Committee that the department have chosen the best crossing-place for the railway on to Shoalhaven? Yes.
184. As near to the coast as possible, have they not? Yes.
185. So that detour between Gerringong and Nowra was absolutely essential? Yes. It not only serves Nowra, but it crosses the river at just about the head of navigation, and it is probably the most economical way of carrying the line too, on account of the cost of the bridge. The cost of a bridge lower down would be very much greater even if we were permitted to block the navigation.
186. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you know the country pretty well between Kiama and Nowra? Yes; along the route that the line takes.
187. Is there much population there? There is some settlement. There is Gerringong and Broughton Creek, or Berry as it is called now. There is considerable population at those two places.
188. Do you know whether the whole of it is private property—alienated country? I believe that it is very nearly all alienated.
189. How did you reduce the cost by £60,000, for there is a difference of about £60,000 between your estimate and what is before us at the present time—that is between £381,000 and £441,000; how was that alteration made—by any deviations made lately? It is partly due to deviations, and partly to more exact information, and partly to reduction in prices.
190. At what do you estimate the cost per mile? The cost per mile is £16,895.
191. Is that not a very high price for railway construction now? It is, but we cannot help it, for the first few miles of the line are very costly. If you could cut out the heavy works at the commencement—

say

* NOTE (on revision) :—The distance is about 16 miles.

- say 70 to 75 miles—if you could cut out the first 5 miles you would cut out a very large proportion of the expense indeed. Beyond there, it will be a comparatively cheap line.
192. That £16,800 odd per mile does not include this bridge, does it? No; that does not include the bridge, but it includes £121,000 for tunnels.
193. Have you any idea of what the first 5 miles cost per mile? No; but I believe an analysis would show that the first 5 miles cost as much as all the rest—cost half this estimate.
194. That would reduce the cost of the ordinary line beyond this very difficult engineering part to something like £8,000 a mile, would it not? About £11,000 a mile.
195. For the line with the exception of the first 5 miles? Yes.
196. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have the plans been so prepared that the tunnels and bridges will be constructed for a double line? No, for a single line.
197. Only for a single line? Yes, only for a single line.
198. Looking at the mistakes of the past, do you not think it would be advisable to make provision for tunnels, as you have done on the Newcastle line—to have sufficient width in your tunnels for a double line? It is a question that would depend on what the traffic is likely to be in the future.
199. Is it not generally admitted that there has been a mistake made on the western lines in the construction of tunnels for single lines? Yes.
200. Well, in order to avoid any mistake in the future, would it not be wise to make provision in the construction of tunnels upon either the southern or northern lines for a double line? I do not think I should recommend it in this case, because there would be very little difficulty in putting an extra tunnel alongside.
201. Have you had anything to do with the preparation of the plans for the construction of tunnels between Newcastle and Gosford? Yes.
202. It has been anticipated that the trade will be sufficient to warrant the construction of a double line? Yes.
203. Would not the same warrant arise in regard to the probability of trade on the southern coast line? It could not be expected to develop so rapidly.
204. Say within the next twenty-five years? Yes; I have no doubt that within the next twenty-five years double-line tunnels would be a necessity.
205. Looking at that fact—that double line tunnels would actually be a necessity twenty-five years hence for the accommodation of the public—would it not be wise now, when constructing the line, to enter at once upon the construction of double-line tunnels? I think not. I will explain why. The cost of the single-line tunnel is £120,000. The cost of the double-line tunnels would be £180,000. That would be £60,000 additional expense you would have to go to at the present amount. $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on that would be £2,100 a year extra interest that you would have to pay.
206. Have you had any experience in duplicating a tunnel after it has been once constructed? No; but I would not duplicate the tunnel, but make a fresh one alongside of it, or near it.
207. Well, looking at the probability of a fresh tunnel being an actual necessity within a period of twenty-five years, would it not be to the advantage of the general public and of the Treasury to have that tunnel constructed at once? Not if you have to wait for twenty-five years.
208. Looking at Kiama, and where the present line terminates, will not that $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile of line from the present terminus into Kiama be one of the most costly structures in this country? Yes, it is costly.
209. Will not that be one of the most expensive structures that has been taken in hand in this country? It will be costly.
210. Has the proposal to construct that line from the present terminus into Kiama been brought about by public agitation? I cannot tell you that.
211. Cannot this be avoided by the construction of a line 4, 7, or 10 miles further north, and avoiding Kiama altogether, keeping north of Kiama. Would you not avoid the whole of this expense, by going across for instance so (pointing to the map)? No, you would not.
212. Have there been any trial surveys? You could not get across except across here (pointing to the map), and there, as I have pointed out, you would have to go round in this way more or less near Jamberoo, and across the Saddleback, and you would have 2 miles of tunnels, very heavy cuttings, and very heavy grades.
213. Supposing this line to Kiama were not in existence at all, and you were asked to construct a railway from a given point—say 10 or 15 miles north of Kiama—to Nowra, which way would you go? I should naturally look at this one first.
214. There have been no trial surveys? Yes; there has been a trial survey made across there.
215. Is it accessible country to get through? We have surveyed a line across there.
216. Would it shorten the distance? Yes.
217. Can you give us any idea of the number of miles you would save? I do not think I can. It would not be so much as appears on the map from the direction it takes, as there are many curves on it.
218. Has there been any estimate made of the cost of construction of that surveyed line, as against this? No; I cannot find any.
219. You cannot get us any estimate of the saving of cost in reaching Kiama by that route as against this route? No, I cannot.
220. *Mr. Dowel.*] Of what material do you propose to construct the bridges? On the present line they would be timber. The bridge over the Shoalhaven would have iron cylinders and wrought-iron or steel superstructure.
221. Upon what principle do you propose this iron bridge should be constructed? I have one or two sketches made for it, but I have not decided anything definitely at present.
222. Could this bridge be designed in such a manner that tenders could be called, the material could be prepared, and it could be constructed in this Colony? Yes.
223. It could be designed specially in the way I have indicated? Yes; I see no reason why the work should not be made in this Colony, if desired.
224. In this specification and design there will be no special sizes of iron that could not be procured here? Oh, no. Of course the plates, the angle-iron unions, and the T iron, and so on, would probably have to be imported.

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225. You are aware that in the construction of many railway bridges special sizes of iron have been specified which have not been able to be procured in the ordinary way, and that only certain persons have been able to get the specified iron—is that so or not? That I cannot say; but if I had the designing of this bridge I certainly would not adopt any but the ordinary sections of iron, unless I saw some special reason for the introduction of special sections.

226. You are in favour of simplifying this specification so that there shall be no difficulty attending the construction of the bridge in the Colony? Decidedly.

227. In setting out this railway, you are aware that it goes through a large quantity of private purchases? Yes.

228. Was there any possible way of avoiding its going through the Public School and grounds, the Court-house and yards, and the Bank belonging to the E. S. and A. C. Co. in Kiama? I had the alignment of the centre line there under consideration, and I tried to improve on that line.

229. Would it not be very undesirable to go through the Court-house, the Public Schools, and this Bank? I do not think it does; it goes through some of their premises.

230. The book of reference shows it takes them? It does not take the building. For instance, we go through the back premises of the Joint Stock Bank, but not through their building.

231. But this is the E. S. and A. C. Bank—not the Joint Stock Bank? I beg your pardon. Well, it is almost impossible to choose a different line. I tried to get it up here, but it is not desirable to run along the centre, otherwise you cut into both blocks facing both streets. I scarcely think we could alter it. If we can alter it, it will certainly be done.

232. Is it not unusual that a railway should be taken through the very heart of the town—through the main street? It is not a thing to be desired, but you cannot get it anywhere else. This is all rising ground here, and down here you get it too low. It has been proposed to take the line through here, and across there, and round there, but I think it most objectionable. There is a great wash of the sea coming up here, and you would have to build a breakwater or very strong sea-wall to resist the action of the waves.

233. In exploring this line in the first instance, every possible care was taken to go through as little town property as possible? Yes. In this case it appeared to me we had no choice. When I took my present office I was careful to look at these plans and examine them, and I sent a surveyor down to Kiama to see whether he could not get a better line than what was shown here, so as to avoid the property, and the conclusion I came to was that that line had better be retained in its present position.

234. Can you name any other town in the Colony where the railway goes through the town in the way it is laid out here? No. I think Kiama, as far as I can remember, is the only one where the conditions necessitate our going through that part of the town. I agree that it is very unusual; but in this case I do not see how it can be avoided.

235. *Temporary Chairman.*] I understand that the getting into and out of the town of Kiama will cost very nearly, if not quite, £100,000? That was in the estimate of 1886.

236. Even now pretty near that? I think that might be reduced to £80,000.

237. From where we are to the town of Gerringong is the most expensive part of the whole line? Yes.

238. Have you considered every conceivable plan to go round to the rear of Kiama so as to avoid this expense? Personally I have not done it at all. I took up this line as it had already been adopted.

239. You see there is the enormous expense of this portion of the line? Yes.

240. Utterly in disproportion to any traffic we are likely to get on it? Yes.

241. And therefore the immense importance of considering any alternative project? Yes.

242. Has there been any estimate of the expense of that inland line, so that we could compare it with the expense of this route? I think no estimate has been made.

243. Would it be very difficult to make a rough estimate? I will endeavour to get an estimate of it.

244. Of course we must have some tunnels on that line? Yes.

245. And some heavy earthworks, because we have to cut through ridges? Yes.

246. And could you give us an estimate of that inland line to compare with the cost of this line? Yes.

247. We should come out, I suppose, at some point near Broughton Creek? Yes, at Broughton Creek.

248. But beyond the present line? Yes.

249. It would be very desirable that we should have some estimate of the total cost of an inland line that would avoid the immense expense of this coast line, if you could give us that? I can furnish you with that next week.

250. We might have to start some point a mile or so back from Kiama? A good many miles. To make anything like a direct line, you would have to start from about Albion Park.

251. How far from Sydney is Albion Park? About 61 miles.

252. That would be about 8 miles before you get to Kiama? It is about a mile, I think, after passing the Macquarie rivulet, which is 60 miles from Sydney.

253. You think you would have to go off from there? To make a direct line.

254. It would be very important if you could give us, if only a rough estimate, of what it would cost to follow that route? I will look into it and give you an estimate early next week.

255. With regard to the bridge at the river, even when you have completed your line across the river, you will always want a platform on the north side of the river, will you not? Yes, just a platform. I should think a platform would be sufficient. It might be necessary to have a goods siding.

256. Would the work you must put up now be very much in excess of what would be permanently wanted for a station there? You mean apart from the permanent way?

257. I am looking at the possibility of getting rid of this temporary branch—suppose you stop at the north side for the present, and have as economical an arrangement as you can, you will always want some platform or station there? Yes. There has been as little as possible put down for station works.

258. You are not going to build everything very good on this little temporary branch line? No.

259. Are you going to build nothing more substantial than you would permanently want as a platform on the north side of the river? No, I think not.

260. Because if you make there at present what you will permanently want—that is a platform, sheds, and a siding—that will be all to the good; you would not want to shift it? No; but, as I pointed out, there would be some expense in making up the approach, which has not been estimated. If Bomadery were left as a terminus for a few years, it would be necessary to make a good road to it from the end of the bridge.

261. Would it be $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile? About $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile.
262. Is it a bad soil for a road? Yes; it is all alluvial soil till you get right up to Bomadery.
263. What would be the expense of that road? It would cost about £600 I should think.
264. We are going to waste £2,000 over this work; would it not be better to spend £600 in making a good road at once, which would be wanted again afterwards? I am quite satisfied if the Nowra people are satisfied. This deviation was, of course, intended to suit the Nowra people.
265. Yes; but if we are to make a railway, and an expensive bridge to suit the Nowra people presently, it is not reasonable that they should want a very large expense for a merely temporary service, is it? No.
266. If we made a good road at £600 a mile, and one that would serve them always afterwards, do you not think that we would do what is fairly sufficient for the exigency? Now they have to be satisfied by going along a road, 25 miles in length, to the station. They ought to be satisfied if they had only a mile and a half to go.
267. Considering their present position, if we bring the railway within $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile of the township, and make a good road for that $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile, do not you think they would be pretty well served? They would be very much better served than now, and I am sure they would look upon it as a vast improvement. But then, if the line were carried out to the road close to the bridge, people would be able to walk out and in conveniently to the station; whereas, perhaps, if it were $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile further—
268. But we are spending nearly half a million of money to take the railway to this township, and do not you think we ought to save if we can? Yes; but it is not a very large extra expense, proportionately to the whole outlay.
269. But even if you have a platform there, after the bridge is made you will still want the road from that platform to the bridge, will you not? I do not know. I would not spend very much money on it then.
270. There is sure to be a demand for that road? Not from the town, I think.
271. Well, from the bridge leading to the platform? People going up as far as the bridge along the main road would go right into the town of Nowra. They would not come out at the Bomadery station. Bomadery station would serve the people more on the east of the line.

H. Deane,
Esq.
4 Dec., 1889.

THURSDAY, 5 DECEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

The HONORABLE JOHN LACKEY. (VICE-CHAIRMAN.)

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Kiama to Nowra.

John Wright, Esq., District Engineer, Department of Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

272. *Dr. Garran.*] You are in the Railway Department? Yes, I am District Engineer in the Railway Department. J. Wright, Esq.
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273. What part of this work have you been engaged on? I was sent down in July, 1888, by Mr. Whitton, to improve the grades and to reduce the earthworks.
274. The line had been surveyed prior to you going down? It had.
275. You went to see if you could make improvements? Yes.
276. Have you made any substantial alterations? Yes, some considerable alterations.
277. You are of course aware that from the present terminus of the railway to Gerringong is to be part of the line? Yes.
278. And it will be very expensive? Yes.
279. You have given your best attention to reducing the cost of that part of the line? Yes, I devoted most of my attention to that. Of course that was the most difficult and costly part. Mr. Whitton was evidently dissatisfied with the survey and sent me down eighteen months ago to improve it if I possibly could.
280. Have you now done all that it is possible to do? Yes, I have done all that is possible to be done. The whole of the country has been cross-sectioned. In 3 miles I reduced the distance 30 chains, and the earthworks by about 20,000 yards. I straightened the line and cut out nearly the whole of a 12 chains curve. I have only left one 12 chains, and one 16 chains curve, whereas there were two curves of 16 chains, and I think seven curves of 12 chains. It was considered such a marked improvement that I had to go over several of the other lines. For instance I went over the line from Marrickville to Liverpool.
281. In so doing have you injured the grades at all? No. I have improved the grades. I have reduced them from 1 in 40 to 1 in 50.
282. And to the best of your judgment this is the best line between those two points? This is the best line, and by far the cheapest line. I have been over the whole of the other lines surveyed.
283. Have you been over the trial line from Albion Park? Yes.
284. Will you describe the engineering difficulties of that line? After leaving the Macquarie Rivulet the country is very hilly until you reach the Mount Terry Range. That is 7 miles north of the Minumurra.
285. What height had you to ascend to cross that range? About 400 feet, but I cannot be quite certain, as I made a flying survey.
286. Would that involve the cutting of a ridge? It would involve a tunnel with a grade of 1 in 40. With grades of 1 in 40 a 21 chains tunnel would be required, and with a grade of 1 in 50 a tunnel of 38 to 39 chains. Then you descend to another valley between the Mount Terry spur and the Jamberoo spur of the main coast range.
287. Then have you another tunnel? There is a long grade there about 1 mile in length of 1 in 40. It would be useless to attempt to get anything less than 1 in 40 to cross the Jamberoo Range into the valley of Jamberoo. There would be 144 chains of 1 in 40 with a tunnel about 43 chains in length.

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288. Would you have a difficult bridge over the Minumurra? No, it would be of easy construction. Between the Minumurra River and the Saddleback Range you get down into the flat of Jamberoo which is only 36 feet above high-water mark, and in order to ascend you have to keep winding round 3 or 4 miles through very bad country abounding in natural slips in the spurs of the mountains.
289. Then this range is 1,429 feet at the crossing at its lowest point in the Saddleback? Of course the lowest point is crossed nearest to the coast on the present survey.
290. Does the Saddleback run nearly to the coast? It runs to where the road is sketched on the map and then gradually descends to the coast.
291. If you went further to the east you would still have nearly as great a height to cross? A greater height. But we go to the point indicated on the map in consequence of the facilities afforded us by going up the creek. We creep up in a continuous grade of 1 in 40.
292. And you take the ridge at the saddle? Yes, at its narrowest point.
293. Descending from the Saddleback? To get through the Saddleback would necessitate a tunnel nearly 2 miles in length. Descending again from the Saddleback Range down to the valley of the Broughton Creek you have to go through a difficult and exceedingly rough country until you reach the Nowra Road. Then the country gets a little better.
294. From an engineering point of view it is undoubtedly a difficult line? Yes, and a very costly one.
295. And the gradients would have to be 1 in 40? Yes, unless you tunnel. In one point it will necessitate something like 3 miles of 1 in 40 ascending and descending on the Saddleback Range.
296. In your judgment there would be nothing to be gained by taking that line? The advocates of that line only claim for its construction that it is a little shorter.
297. Would you not come nearer the coal-fields in the mountain? Yes. But I would like to point out that this line which I have recently surveyed from Shoal Harbour to Jamberoo would serve the same purpose at a cost of about £30,000.
298. Have you examined a route to go about 2 or 3 miles at the back of Kiama, to come round and avoid this expensive line through the township;—is that a practicable country? It is a practicable country if you choose to go the expense, but it is a dearer line than the other by £126,000. Assuming all things being equal up to the crossing of the Minumurra River to Kiama, the line would cost £81,000 more than the line now constructed.
299. What is the cause of the difficulty? The first difficulty is the crossing of the Terragong swamp, in which there is 60 feet of mud, and we make an allowance there of 10 feet for subsidence. Therefore we require a great amount of earthworks. Then we have to skirt round the Terragong swamp, and there are heavy works only a few feet above high-water. Then we have to cross exceedingly difficult country right through to Kiama.
300. Are you obliged to come into Kiama. Cannot you keep to the west? It is too heavy.
301. Across a series of spurs? Yes. The Saddleback Range widens out into a series of undulating hills.
302. You must come round by the points of those spurs? That is much the cheapest way.
303. Although you admit the tremendous expense of the short distance from Kiama to Gerringong, you do not see your way to avoid it? Any other route would be more expensive. Every precaution has been taken, surveys have been made, and it has been cross-sectioned right down to the coast line.
304. If the railway were at present only as far as Albion Park you could not see any better route to get to Nowra than the one proposed? No. No better route could be found—it is impossible.
305. If we are to go from point to point we must take the coast line? Yes, for economy. It is a little longer, but still the extra cost which would be incurred in the other would render its construction prohibitory, taking its initial cost, and the cost of maintenance, it would be 100 per cent. dearer than this.
306. *Mr. Trickett.*] Would it not be better for the line to go to the west;—would it not serve the agricultural population better up there? Yes: it would if the cost of affording facilities would not be too great. But, as you are aware, it is very difficult to alter the direction of trade. People will go where they have been in the habit of going, and it is not considered an inconvenience. But to take the line through that way, even to get to Kiama, would cost £120,000, and to get to Broughton Creek by the most direct route would cost nearly half a million more. I can better describe it by saying that on the extreme western line there will be nearly 3 miles of tunnelling. There will be nearly 9 miles of ascending and descending grades of 1 in 40. On the line to Kiama from Albion Park there is one small grade of 1 in 50—that is the worst right through. There is a tunnel of 2 chains in length, and upon this line (pointing to the map) we have a series of tunnels five in number, amounting to 1 mile and 1 or 2 chains, which will be more cheaply constructed, as you are aware, than a continued series of tunnelling.
307. The people will be no better served for getting produce to market when the railway is constructed, than they are served now by steamer carriage;—they will have to bring it quite as far? They will have to bring it quite as far, but were any intermediate line constructed I do not think it would afford equitable facilities.
308. How do they get produce to market from the high country? Under any circumstances they have to come down to the level ground—that is from 30 to 40 feet above high-water mark—with pack horses. Presuming the railway went right through Jamberoo they would still have to come down there. The great bulk of the people live between the line and the coast. Put it in another way. Assuming that you adopt any one of those lines, a branch line would be necessary to Kiama, which is the largest centre of population, and Jamberoo could be served by an easily constructed line.
309. The branch line could be constructed to Jamberoo? Yes.
310. Would that be a difficult line to construct? No; very easy.
311. From your knowledge of the country you say that this line along the coast is the cheapest and most practicable, and would serve the most people? Undoubtedly. Any one who sees the country will arrive at the same conclusion.
312. *Mr. Hurley.*] Leaving the question of the construction of a railway to Nowra out of consideration, and looking at the proposal to run to Kiama;—do you think in the interests of trade and the Railway Department, it is necessary to construct a railway right into Kiama? I do not follow you.
313. The proposal is to take the line from a point to the north of Kiama? Yes.
314. Leaving Nowra out of the question, do you think it is necessary to construct this mile and a half of railway in the interests of trade and of the department? I do not think it will enhance the returns £10 in a year.
315. Therefore if that were the only extension required you would not advise the construction of the mile and a half from the present terminus to Kiama to be carried out? No. 316.

316. Have you any knowledge of the country between Nowra and the country west on to the Great Southern Line? Yes, I have been through there on several occasions. J. Wright,
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317. Have you any idea of the distance? The distance from there to the nearest point on the Great Southern Line is about 40 miles, or 33 miles direct. 5 Dec., 1889.
318. The distance from the present terminus of the Southern line to Nowra is 22 miles? Yes.
319. And from Nowra to the nearest point on the Great Southern line will be 40 miles? About that.
320. And the country has not been explored? I was told to go over it, but it is so rough that I did not see my way to get up.
321. You do not think it is a favourable country for railway construction? No. Various mountains have to be mounted in such a short distance.
322. What kind of country is it up to Nowra;—is there abundance of timber? All the land as far as the range is splendid grazing and good agricultural land. Wherever crops are grown they appear to yield well. Of course there are small patches which are not of much value, but the whole of it is splendid country;—as good, I suppose, as any in Australia.
323. Is there abundance of timber for sleepers? Yes.
324. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you think it is desirable to take the railway through the town if it is avoidable? It may not be desirable, but when we cannot obtain what is desirable we must take the attainable.
325. It is unavoidable? Yes; I don't see how you could avoid it.
326. Can you point to any town in New South Wales where the railway is taken through as it is done here? I do not know of one.
327. It is impossible to divert that line so as to take it away from the principal portion of the town already settled? I have tried for two or three months to get lines on one side or the other, and have failed to do so. We saw the difficulty, and it was proposed to take a line elsewhere; but that would necessitate an enormous cost, and we should still go through the main portion of the town.
328. You have done all that is possible to get the best line? It has been cross-sectioned in such a manner that we have secured the best possible line. We have spared neither time nor trouble in obtaining it.
329. You are sure no other route could be discovered? I do not know of any. The ranges rise very abruptly, and attain a height of 300 and 400 feet in 5 or 6 chains. They run up almost like the sides of cuttings.
330. This line goes through public schools, court-houses, and banks? That is the only possible route we could get.
331. And that after careful survey? Yes. It would be advantageous if you went down there to have it pointed out to you how impossible it is. It is one of those insulated cases in which no improvement can be made.
332. *Mr. Humphery.*] Have you examined the country between Shoalhaven River and Jervis Bay? Only slightly. We had a great deal of trouble with the railway crossing, and I started to go over the line to reduce the grades from 1 in 40, as low as I could get them, and I had to give it up in order to complete the survey of this line.
333. You cannot speak as to the physical features between the two points? I have not been as far as Jervis Bay, but as far as the Currenbeen River, a few miles from Jervis Bay.
334. Are there any difficulties between Currenbeen and Nowra? No; it is an easy line, but it is a barren country.
335. There would be no difficulties to encounter in the shape of elevations or depressions? No; there are no heavy works.
336. You do not think it possible to reduce the cost beyond the point you have already reached in the direction of this extension from the cemetery at Kiama to Shoalhaven? No. I do not see how it is possible. We have reduced the grades and the earthworks. In one portion I cut out 100,000 yards of earthworks, I do not see how it is possible to reduce it any further. The heaviest portion of the work is the first 3 miles, and after that it is simply side-cutting.
337. You said the extension of the line to Kiama would not, in your opinion, increase the returns more than £10? Not from the present terminus to Kiama only.
338. As far as Kiama is concerned, is not the railway being simply used at present for passenger traffic? No; a great deal of milk and butter is sent up from Kiama now.
339. Would not the conveyance of produce be largely increased if the line were extended? Not into Kiama; because it is only a mile from Kiama now.
340. But as far as Gerringong? Yes; if it were extended it must increase.
341. Do you know the country between Kiama and Shoalhaven River? Yes.
342. What is its character? Most of it is alluvial flats—from soil washed down from the sandstone and the basalt formation. It is very prolific.
343. Would it support a large population? It does so now. There is a large population upon it.
344. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Supposing you were going to survey a line direct to Nowra, without taking Kiama into consideration at all, would you go round by Kiama? Undoubtedly.
345. Then the fact of that town being where it is has not drawn you to it? No.
346. Is there any table-land through which the railway could run rather than go in through the spurs? No; the geological formation is against any table-land coming in between the coast range and the coast itself.
347. Of course there is no table-land between the coast range and the coast—but speaking of the coast range itself is there any table-land upon that? Yes.
348. Could not a railway be constructed there much better than by going through Kiama to Nowra? You would then go through the barrenest country possible, and would afford no facilities to the bulk of the population living lower down.
349. But are not the population living lower down near Kiama already served by the railway which is now within a mile of Kiama? Yes, up to Kiama they are served by railway.
350. As they are already served could not a line be constructed cheaper by going to the top of the coast range? No.
351. On the table-land? Yes, but it would lead from nowhere to nowhere.
352. Would not it lead you to Nowra? No. When you get on the top of the main range it would be impossible to get down. It is from 1,600 to 1,700 feet high, and it is only 4 miles to Nowra.

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353. What is the distance from the foot of the coast range to where this line would be constructed along by Kiama? The distance varies. The trial survey,—Albion Park to Nowra, *via* Saddle Back,—is immediately under the coast range. The coast range skirts round by Broughton Village; it then falls suddenly back to the west until you pass Nowra.
354. You think that line which is now at the foot of the coast range directly will not be as easily a constructed line as the one we have now under consideration? No. From Mount Pleasant, 74 miles, to Nowra is quite easy.
355. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Who made the original survey from Kiama to Nowra? I think it was Mr. Wells.
356. Who made the trial survey from Albion Park to Nowra, *via* Saddle Back? Messrs. Hardie and Jamieson.
357. Do they recommend that line? No.
358. How long is it since you were ordered to improve the grades and cut down the earthworks and curves? I commenced that class of work in July of 1888.
359. *Vice-Chairman.*] You have been a long time in the railway service? A little over five years.
360. Not longer? Not in this Colony.
361. Having been instructed to examine the lines with the view of lessening the cost, you have given considerable attention to both routes? I may state that when I joined the Department Mr. Whitton instructed me to try and improve the grades of the line to Bolivia—that was on the Great Northern line, and there were grades of 1 in 40 crossing the Dividing Ranges, between the Severn and the Deepwater, and crossing the Bolivia Range. I spent six months trying to improve the grade. He also requested me to go over the Inverell line as soon as I had time. After I had completed working the north he sent me to the line to Nowra, and afterwards to the line Marrickville to Liverpool.
362. With regard to the line to Nowra you considered you found the easiest grades you could? Yes.
363. Do you pass the township of Nowra in the proposed line? Yes.
364. Do you cross the Shoalhaven River? No, it is not contemplated to do so just now. The terminus is to be on the north side of the river within a mile or less of the township.
365. Has it been considered by the Department whether the present bridge can be utilized for the purpose of railway communication at any time? Mr. Deane and I examined the present bridge, but arrived at the conclusion that it was not strong enough to carry a railway.
366. It is a large bridge? Yes.
367. Of iron cylinders? Yes. But it is of light construction, and the cylinders have not been sunk to the rock.
368. The bridge could not be strengthened in view of future railway communication? I do not think it could be strengthened. It is of the class of link and pin, and it would be very difficult to strengthen.
369. You are aware that the estimate of the Commissioners of the cost and probable receipts of the proposed line has been submitted to the Government and this Committee? I only know of our own estimates.
370. The Commissioners have made an estimate of the probable cost of the line and the probable receipts. The estimate does not include the cost of the land. The probable cost of the line according to their estimate is over £538,600. That would be something like between £22,000 and £23,000 a mile? Yes.
371. As an observant man, and as one who has given attention to things in general, do you think the country would be justified in going to an expenditure of £23,000 a mile for the purpose of constructing a railway from Kiama to Nowra? To do it straight off as a new venture might not be judicious, but as an extension of the present line I think the amended estimate might be incurred.
372. Supposing it were incurred, would you regard that as an extension to Kiama alone, or as a portion of a general extension to the southern limits of the Colony in that direction? As an extension to the southern limits of the Colony.
373. From that point of view do you think it a proper line to undertake? Undoubtedly.
374. Do you think the country would be justified in incurring the cost, considering it would have to pay extra for the land which would have to be resumed? Yes.
375. What is the value of land there? I do not think it would average more than £25 an acre.
376. About how much per mile would it add to the cost of the line? £700 or £800 a mile.
377. You have spoken about the land upon the ridge being barren—you mean immediately on the ridge in places I suppose? When you get on the top of the sandstone formation along the coast, right from Bulli to the south of Kangaroo Valley, there is a large drop in one place, extending to the Bundanoon, which is very poor country.
378. Otherwise, when you get a mile back, you get to rich basalt country? Yes; it is much better towards Moss Vale, Yarrawong, and Robertson.
379. That land is very rich? Yes. The Kangaroo Valley is the garden of New South Wales as far as agriculture is concerned. It is a prolific district.
380. You think, in view of an extension to the southern limits along the coast, this is a desirable line to construct? Yes.
381. And outside your professional opinion, you think the country would be justified in incurring the expenditure? Yes, I do indeed. It would be a benefit to the whole of the Colony.

WEDNESDAY, 18 DECEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARBAR, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Kiama to Nowra.

John Harper, Esq., Railway Goods Superintendent, sworn, and examined:—

382. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you personally gone into the calculations of traffic in regard to the line under the consideration of the Committee? Yes, as far as the information I have before me permitted me to do so.

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383. You have already had some experience of the traffic of this district since the line has been opened to Kiama? Yes. 18 Dec., 1889.

384. Has that traffic equalled the expectations of the Department? Yes.

385. Has it exceeded those expectations? I could not say what the expectations were. It certainly exceeded my expectations.

386. Is there a large quantity of the agricultural produce of the district carried by railway? Yes; of dairy produce.

387. Milk; Yes; milk, butter, live stock, eggs, and poultry.

388. Do you think the traffic of the district has increased since the railway was opened? I think the traffic of the district, generally, has increased, whether carried by sea or rail, owing to the establishment of more factories; and I think the railway has contributed towards the success of those factories.

389. Do you think those factories would have come into existence without a railway? I think so.

390. Then the greater part of your traffic has been taken from the steam-boats? A lot of circumstances have conducted to bringing about an increased traffic. These include the better price for butter, the ready means of storing and disposing of it, and a lot of other causes outside the transit question altogether. I think that the railway has played a very prominent part in promoting the success of the district.

391. You think the actual productiveness of the district has been increased? Yes, I am sure of it.

362. Have you to under-cut the steam-boat rates much in order to obtain traffic? We have never attempted to do so yet.

393. Are your rates higher or lower than those of the steam-boats? They are higher.

394. You have under-cut on the Newcastle line, have you not? No. We have not attempted to under-cut at all in the matter of goods traffic. Our rates are simply the ordinary goods mileage rates, excepting in regard to wool, in connection with which our rates are simply arbitrary. We charge more than our ordinary mileage rates between Newcastle and Sydney.

395. But you have under-cut in connection with the passenger traffic? I am not prepared to speak about that.

396. Have you under-cut on the passenger rates to Kiama? No. The fares are the ordinary southern line fares. Excursion tickets have been issued at times,—at holiday times, for instance.

397. And at the rates charged you have obtained a fair amount of passenger traffic? Yes.

398. Is it a paying amount? Yes.

399. Dividing the line to Kiama into sections, could you say, off hand, whether from Sydney to George's River the line is a paying one? I should say that from Sydney to Hurstville, which would include George's River, the line is a paying one. Of course we have no sectional returns for last year, and I am not prepared to say definitely whether it is a paying section or not.

400. But as a traffic manager you would be able to form a good opinion? Yes; I should imagine it is a paying section.

401. Does the section between George's River and the first coal-mine you come to pay? I could not say.

402. You have as yet very little settlement along the line? Comparatively none.

403. Have you brought any coal to Sydney by this line? Yes.

404. Where do you land it? At different places on the suburban lines, and at Sydney. We have had the contents of a number of trucks from the Metropolitan Coal Company's works delivered at the brick-works, and at Darling Harbour.

405. In Sydney you delivered at Darling Harbour? Yes.

406. Do you put the coal on board the ships there? No.

407. You deliver it for local consumption? Yes.

408. You have not as yet shipped any coal? No.

409. Is there any traffic between the Coal Company's mine and Coal Cliff? Yes, a very good traffic. Along there we have a comparatively large population, and we carry a large proportion of their supplies.

410. Was not that the most expensive portion of of the line? I cannot speak as to the cost.

411. Do you think that the traffic upon that section makes it pay? Taken as a section I should imagine that it does pay; but it is rather a difficult question to answer in the absence of sectional returns. I should imagine that, on the mileage, the traffic does pay.

412. You speak from what you see of the booking returns? Yes.

413. Is the line paying between Coal Cliff and Wollongong? Yes; between those places we are carrying a good paying traffic.

414. And with regard to Wollongong and Kiama? The traffic there is an increasing one. The grade is easy. Of course the traffic must be taken with the whole; but I should imagine that that section pays.

415. I ask these questions because I wish to get at the fact as to whether an extension to Shoalhaven would, in itself, be payable, if the cost of the line were moderate? I think we had something like

£13,000

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- £13,000 worth of traffic from the section between Wollongong and Kiama, a distance of 22 miles, during the year ending June last. We had only a through road from Sydney for eight months of the year.
416. The traffic from a district of this kind is pretty well distributed throughout the year? Yes.
417. It is not like the wool traffic? No.
418. It goes on from January to December? Yes.
419. And that is the most profitable and convenient traffic? Yes.
420. Is the traffic inward to Sydney equal in value to the traffic outward from Sydney;—which is the better in value? From Sydney.
421. You carry stores? Yes, over the whole of the road. Coal, of course, is carried at a lower freight than most of the articles carried from Sydney. Butter is an article carried at about a medium rate of freight, whereas most of the goods carried on the various sections pay a comparatively high rate,—7d. a mile.
422. You are aware that the first 6 or 7 miles of this line were very expensive in construction? I should imagine so, but I do not know anything about the engineering features of the line.
423. Have you looked into the cost of the work of construction? No, I have not dealt with the matter.
424. I asked you just now whether the traffic would pay upon a moderate capital cost; but the capital cost of these few miles is great. Do you think the traffic from Shoalhaven would be sufficient to cover the cost of a particularly expensive piece of line? That is a question of paying interest on capital. I should imagine that the line would pay working expenses. Of course I am not prepared to say anything about the payment of interest on capital.
425. At Nowra you would obtain a fairly concentrated traffic? I think so.
426. And the traffic of Nowra would in itself be a remunerative one? Not alone.
427. But of the district of which it is the centre? The districts surrounding it, and beyond it, would give a good traffic when won.
428. Do you expect any additional coal traffic from the extension of the line through Kiama? I have never expected any. No doubt it may come.
429. You are looking solely to the agricultural passenger traffic? Yes.
430. And so far as your experience of the line as far as Kiama goes, you think it would be justifiable to extend it to Shoalhaven, under the impression that satisfactory results will follow? I think it would improve our trade with Kiama and the district beyond it. We suffer at the present time from being far away from Kiama.
431. Assuming that the line to Kiama is a fairly good line for the Department, do you think the extension to Nowra will be a log upon you, or a help to you? I should think it would help us. Of course it is a matter of assumption. We have good grounds for believing that the traffic will be a good one. The district is a rich one, and should develop in the same way as other districts have done.
432. You admit that your conclusion is speculative to a certain extent? Yes.
433. Do you know anything of the country between Nowra and Jervis Bay? No.
434. You have not carried your consideration of the country beyond Nowra? No.
435. On the whole you are prepared to say that the railway to Kiama has justified itself? I think so.
436. Looking at it from a departmental point of view? I think so, without any accurate knowledge as to the results.
437. The line from Sydney to Kiama has not been a mistake so far as the returns are concerned? I have no returns in my possession to show that; but when I find a line gradually increasing the value and volume of its traffic every year, I naturally conclude that it is a line which should have been constructed.
438. This line is steadily increasing in traffic? Yes; it is, and we think it has assisted the agricultural interests of the neighbourhood.
439. It has stimulated the productiveness of the country? Yes; I think so.
440. *Mr. Humphery.*] Was there formerly any milk business carried on between Sydney and the Kiama district? None that I know of.
441. Has there not been a large business since the line was opened? Yes; a very large business indeed.
442. Do you not know whether any saw-mills have recently been established along the line? I have not heard of any. There is a saw-mill on the other side of the Metropolitan Coal Company's premises at Lilyvale, but up to the present time we have had no traffic from it.
443. I think you said there were not many residents between the Metropolitan Coal Company's works and George's River? Yes.
444. Are there not a great number of miners employed at the Coal Company's works? I am speaking outside the mining population.
445. But is not the mining population permanently settled? Decidedly.
446. What is the extent of the mining population? I could not tell you. I was told when I was down there by Mr. Robertson, but I have forgotten the number. There is a large number of men employed in sinking the second shaft.
447. Is there an increasing population in the vicinity of the Coal Company's works? I should imagine so.
448. Is the line being duplicated between Waterfall and George's River? Yes.
449. When will the duplication be completed? I am sure I could not tell you.
450. How long is it since it was commenced? I could not tell you that definitely.
451. Has the increase in traffic justified the expenditure for duplication? I could not express an opinion upon that point, but I presume the Commissioners would not have commenced it otherwise.
452. I presume the Commissioners would not have recommended the duplication unless they thought it was necessary? No.
453. *Mr. Garrard.*] Have you ever been over the country between Kiama and Nowra? Yes.
454. Is there a larger area of country between Kiama and Nowra for agricultural products, than between Wollongong and Kiama? I have not been over all the country, but I should think so.
455. The mountains are further back from the coast and give a larger area? Yes.
456. In your opinion the country is as capable of as large a production as the country between Wollongong and Kiama? Yes.
457. Do you know whether much settlement has taken place at Gerringong or Coolangatta? There is a settlement at Gerringong and at Broughton's Creek. 458.

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458. Is produce shipped from Gerringong now? Yes, by steamer.
459. Do you think the producers would probably use the railway? Yes, we hope to be able to give them inducements to send their produce by rail.
460. Have you been as far as Cambewarra? Only past it.
461. You went along the coast? No; along the road from Kiama to Nowra.
462. Did you come back the same way? Yes.
463. You know nothing then about the Cambewarra or the Kangaloon? No, excepting from a report which I furnished some time ago about the extension to Robertson.
464. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you taken note of the quantity of goods conveyed by steamer to Kiama and Wollongong? Yes; although it has been a somewhat difficult thing to do. The steam-boat companies have been very conservative in regard to giving information, but we have had observations made.
465. You have obtained the rates of freight by boat? Yes.
466. Can you give us any idea as to the difference of rates of freight by boats, and the rates of freight by rail? The freights on the boats—which are now struggling for existence—are about half our rates in many articles, and slightly above ours in others.
467. Could you offer better inducements to those who import to use the rail instead of the boat? Yes, by giving quicker transit, and better carriage.
468. What do you mean by better carriage? By carrying goods quicker, and in vehicles better suited for the conveyance of produce.
469. The vehicles on the southern line at the present time are not suitable for the traffic? Yes, they are, but we may have better.
470. You could improve upon them? Yes.
471. Then in order to get the trade it is necessary you should have improved accommodation? Even with our present accommodation, I think, as far as the factories are concerned, we shall gather the traffic. The farmers, who continue to make their own butter, cling to the old method of conveyance. As a rule most of the factories on the south coast are forwarding their butter by rail, finding it, I presume, more suitable, although our rates are higher.
472. Are not the steamers competing with the railway for the traffic which goes to the two ports I have named? Yes.
473. Would it not be to the advantage of the Railway Department to give greater facilities to secure that trade? We are giving them an excellent service as far as Kiama. We give them a service equal to 25 miles an hour for the conveyance of their butter and milk. We give them conveyances which, so far as experiments have gone up to the present time, are equal in temperature to the refrigeratory cars of the milk company. That is as far as we are prepared to go at present.
474. Have complaints ever been made to you, by merchants of Kiama and Wollongong, to the effect that they are prevented from using the railways on account of the excessive rates charged? Yes.
475. Would it not be to the interest of the Department to run loaded trains down there even at a reduced rate, instead of running half-loaded trains? That introduces the question of differential rates, which I am not prepared to discuss.
476. Have you anticipated what trade is likely to accrue from the working of the Metropolitan Coal Company? We are anticipating it by arranging for the construction of 400 waggons to meet that and the other coal trade of the southern collieries.
477. Those waggons are being constructed principally for the purposes of the trade of the Metropolitan Coal Company? No; to meet the demand for the shipment of coal at Darling Harbour.
478. Coal from all parts? Yes; either from Lithgow or from the south coast.
479. Where are the trucks being constructed? I cannot tell.
480. Do you know whether they are being imported or not? I have not the slightest idea.
481. Can you give any information as to who recommended the construction of the duplicate line from the Metropolitan Company's works towards Sydney? No.
482. Had you anything to do with it? Nothing whatever.
483. *Mr. Copeland.*] I should like to know whether the Department has any scheme worked out as to where the terminus of this line is to be. What is to be the ultimate terminus of the line? If any terminus has been fixed upon the name has not been communicated to me.
484. You have nothing to do with construction? No.
485. Do you not know then whether Nowra is likely to be considered the terminus, or whether the intention is to take the line on to Eden? No.
486. Do you know what freight is paid, by train, for butter, cheese, bacon, and eggs,—say from Kiama? £1 5s. 8d. per ton, if forwarded in large quantities; and £1 11s. 7d. per ton if forwarded in small quantities. That is equal to about 1s. 3d. per cwt.
487. That will be less than half a farthing per lb.? Yes.
488. Can you say whether any difficulty is found in paying that freight? None, whatever, as far as I am aware of.
489. Does the same freight exist in regard to cheese, bacon, and ham? Yes; in regard to dairy produce generally.
490. One penny a lb. would make a considerable difference to the producers? Yes.
491. It would be no good attempting to charge them 1d. a lb. for the carriage of any dairy produce? No; I should think not.
492. If you attempted to charge that price you would lose all the traffic? Yes.
493. Do you think the Department has considered the question from a Departmental point of view? I do not think the Department has considered the question.
494. Then they have constructed a railway on the supposition that the producers will still be able to patronize them, and send their goods up at this low rate, but your opinion is that if 1d. per lb. is charged they would be unable to send the goods up by train? They would send them by boat.
495. Then, in that case, the railway would not pay? I should think not.
496. You gave evidence to the effect that dairy produce was increasing in quantity? Yes.
497. I presume you anticipate, when the line to Nowra is constructed, doing an increased trade? Yes.
498. And being able to compete with the steamers? Yes.
499. Do you know whether the Department has considered this aspect of the question:—That if they bring, as

J. Harper, Esq.
18 Dec., 1889. I suppose they ultimately will, the line to Eden, there will then be steam-boat competition, and instead of charging £1 per ton by all the Illawarra boats, as is done now, the goods will be brought down from Eden to Sydney at 7s. 6d. per ton. I presume you are aware that the charge from Melbourne to Sydney is 10s. a ton? Yes.

500. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Is the freight on milk the same as on butter and cheese? No, it is a little less.

501. Do the freights pay the working expenses and interest on the construction of the line? It will if we get enough of it.

502. But does it pay with what you get now? Yes, aided by other sources of revenue.

503. Then this is not a differential rate for this particular kind of produce? No. It is a rate which has been in existence to my knowledge for the last ten years.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Kiama to Nowra.

APPENDIX.

A.

Précis of proceedings relating to the Railway, Kiama to Jervis Bay—Extension to Nowra.

IN 1883 Parliament voted £804,000 for this line.

20/4/86.—Mr. Secretary Lyne laid on the Table of the House plan, section, and book of reference of Part No. 1 of line, Kiama to Nowra.

27/7/86.—The same were approved by the Legislative Assembly.

11/8/86.—Dr. Mackellar laid the plan, section, and book of reference on the Table of the Legislative Council. The matter was referred by the Council to a Select Committee, and there is on the file an imperfect copy of the minutes of evidence taken by such Committee, but there is no appearance of any report having been made to the Council, and it is assumed that no report was sent in.

Prior to this the Illawarra line (of which the Kiama-Nowra line is an extension) was in course of construction, if not completed, up to a point about a mile this side of Kiama. There it stopped short, in consequence of a difficulty about a route for the line through the town of Kiama.

A route was at length decided upon, and this route it was—a length of 2 miles 37 chains, which was referred to the Select Committee. It was strongly objected to in the Council because it crossed some dozen streets either by bridges or by level crossings with gate-keepers, and because the necessary land resumptions would be very costly.

The action of the Legislative Council necessarily brought matters to a standstill, and much dissatisfaction was expressed by the persons interested at the delay.

1/4/87.—A deputation waited upon Mr. Secretary Sutherland (from Kiama and Nowra) to advocate the extension of the line into Kiama, and the further extension of it towards Nowra. They pointed out that until the line was brought into the town the Kiama goods would continue to be sent by sea, and that the extension towards the fertile Shoalhaven district was equally important; and they urged that immediate steps should be taken to secure the approval of the plans in order that the work might be carried out. The Minister informed the deputation they were in a difficulty. The plans for the extension to Kiama had been submitted to the Council and had been by them referred to a Select Committee which had not made a report when Parliament was dissolved. He was not certain what steps would have to be taken, but probably the Select Committee would have to be re-appointed. The matter was, therefore, at a deadlock. As regarded the further extension south, the plans had been submitted to the Assembly but had not been considered when the House dissolved, and the Government had already decided to make no railway proposals that session. Nothing, therefore, could be done at present, especially as the second proposal was dependent on the first. The newspaper report states that the Minister said in reference to the termination of the line outside Kiama that “the matter had been brought into a hole where it should not have been allowed to go,” and that “the line ought never to have been carried to the beach at all.”

5/7/87.—A public meeting was held at Kiama to protest against the erection of the station buildings at so great a distance from the town, and to advocate the immediate extension of the line into the town. A telegram was read from the Minister intimating that action had been suspended to allow of an expression of opinion on the subject. One of the speakers stated that plans were in the contractors' hands for the erection of a station to cost £4,000. It was further stated that if the station were located as proposed it would never be used, as produce would continue to be sent by sea. They were of opinion that the line was not made to benefit the district, but in the interests of the coal owners between Coalcliff and Sydney, and that Kiama had been used as a “cat's-paw.” They were sure the line would never pay until carried to Jervis Bay.

12/7/87.—Presumably as the outcome of this meeting a petition was presented to Mr. Secretary Sutherland, praying for the extension of the line into Kiama (1) because the place where it was proposed to place the station was—as it had been very appropriately termed—“a hole;” (2) because such “hole” was a mile outside the town, and a few yards above high-water mark on the beach, with the cemetery on one side and a lagoon on the other; and (3) was inaccessible to the people of Kiama, Jamberoo, and Gerringong.

15/7/87.—Mr. Whitton reported that all work in connection with the temporary station had, under the Minister's instructions, been stopped, but this would prevent the line being opened to Kiama.

14/9/87.—Mr. Fraser Martin addressed Mr. Secretary Sutherland, stating that he was constantly requested by leading residents of Shoalhaven to urge the Government not to overlook the extension from Kiama to Nowra. It was generally considered that tenders might be called simultaneously for the extension into Kiama, and for the longer section beyond. In any case the clashing of interests in regard to Kiama should be no bar to the construction of the longer and more important extension towards Nowra.

11/11/87.—A deputation waited upon Mr. Sutherland to urge the same points. They pointed out that, pending a settlement of the Kiama difficulty, there was no reason why the extension should not be commenced from the Nowra end. The Minister replied that he could add little to what he had previously said. This would be one of the first proposals the Government would deal with. The South Coast Railway could not be considered complete until it was carried to the Shoalhaven River, and until that was done the line would not pay; but they knew the difficulty, and there would be trouble yet in settling it. The Shoalhaven district was second to none in the colony, and it had not had fair play in the matter of public expenditure.

15/6/88.—A deputation from Shoalhaven waited upon the Colonial Secretary in reference to the extension, and handed in a number of statistics, but the only record of the transaction is a brief newspaper paragraph, and the statistics are not on the file. It would appear from a minute by the Engineer-in-Chief that the line Kiama to Nowra, at an estimated cost of £538,663, was included in the railway policy of this year (1888), and that the plan, section, and book of reference were approved by the Legislature, but not by the Council. There is no other record of the circumstance on the file.

* Some statements make it 2 miles.

5/4/89.—A deputation waited upon the Colonial Secretary and the Minister for Works to again press that the railway might be brought into Kiama, as part of the intended line to Shoalhaven. Sir Henry Parkes expressed surprise that the terminus had been left so long outside Kiama, and thought the request to bring it into the town was only reasonable. The Minister for Works concurred. The Colonial Secretary further observed that the line had been sanctioned under the old system, and it might therefore be carried out without reference to the Works Committee. The Government would lose no time in considering the matter.

13/4/89.—A deputation to advocate the extension of the line to Nowra was received by the Minister for Works. The deputation argued that the extension would open up a very rich country, every yard of which was productive, and that it passed through level country which was thickly populated. The Minister informed the deputation that they had not advanced any fresh arguments, that he knew the country well and could not admit that it was thickly peopled. No doubt the country was fertile and deserved encouragement, but a large sum of money was involved, and he could not be bound by the action of his predecessors. He thought it a pity they had not come prepared with statistics, and an estimate of the probable traffic of the line, but the matter should nevertheless be carefully looked into. A note is appended to this report to the effect that it was stated that twelve coaches run weekly from Kiama to Nowra carrying an average of twelve passengers each.

9/5/89.—A telegram from the district appeared in the *Herald*, stating that great dissatisfaction was felt at the determination of the Government to treat the proposal as a new undertaking.

13/6/89.—A deputation waited upon Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith and submitted statistics of the population, cultivation, trade, &c., of the district through which the line would pass. The Minister informed the deputation that he was convinced of the fertility of the district, and it was at his request that it was one of the first visited by the Railway Commissioners to whom all the information in the office had been furnished, and to whom the new facts supplied by the deputation should also be sent. He was himself in favour of the line, and if he were backed up by the report of the Commissioners he would submit it to the Cabinet with a recommendation to refer it to the Works Committee. The deputation might go away assured of a favourable report from the Commissioners who took the most liberal view of any proposed line, looking to the return in the future rather than to present prospects, and they were, he knew, in favour of a port at Jervis Bay. The statistical paper presented by the deputation states the estimated population of Shoalhaven district at 11,250 souls; the population of Kiama not being given. Average rainfall 52 inches.

Shoalhaven possesses stock as under—	
Cattle.....	33,127
Horses.....	4,789
and turns out annually—	
Butter.....	1,891,267 lb.
Cheese.....	53,708 „
Hams and bacon.....	128,319 „
Area of land—	
Enclosed.....	223,753 acres
Unenclosed.....	35,227 „
Cultivated.....	66,446 „
Maize produced.....	144,297 bushels

There are still in the Electorate 400,000 acres of Crown Land unsold.

Kiama possesses stock as under—	
Cattle.....	17,225
Horses.....	2,435
and turns out annually—	
Butter.....	1,220,733 lb.
Cheese.....	.....
Bacon and hams.....	.....
Area of land—	
Enclosed.....	60,135 acres
Unenclosed.....	727 „
Cultivated.....	26,956 „
Freeholders in Shoalhaven.....	1,232
Do „ Kiama.....	542

There are on the file further statistical statements, but they either have no official authority or are of too old a date to be of any value, and as the returns of the Government Statistician are now available, it is considered expedient to ignore the former, and give the figures of the latter. The following table is accordingly compiled from the Statistical Register for the year 1888 :—

	Shoalhaven.	Kiama.
Population.....	5,814	6,172
Total area of land.....	1,022,080 acres.	134,400 acres.
Area cultivated.....	63,941 „	62,343 „
Number of holdings.....	1,063	608
Hands employed.....	1,921	1,559
Cultivated for grain.....	5,868 acres.	374 acres.
„ „ fodder.....	3,512 „	2,446 „
„ „ potatoes.....	308 „	85 „
Artificial grasses.....	53,890 „	59,411 „
Produce—		
Grain, various kinds.....	149,124 bushels.	12,421 bushels.
Potatoes.....	996 tons.	258 tons.
Hay and fodder—Quantity not stated, but undoubtedly very large.		

It is by no means easy to arrive, from the Statistician's tables, at the population of the districts which will be affected by the proposed railway, but he gives the number of electors for Shoalhaven as 2,500, and for Kiama as 1,649, and these figures, according to the usual modes of computation, would make the populations—Shoalhaven 12,500 to 15,000, and Kiama 8,245 to 9,894.

Some statistics of traffic to and from Kiama, northward, may be given here, and must be taken for what they are worth :—October, 1888, to May, 1889.—Goods forwarded, 1,147 tons, freight £1,379; goods received, 661 tons, freight, £339; live stock, 68 trucks, freight £172; passengers booked, 8,064, £3,058 (about half of these arrived by coach from places south of Kiama); southern proportion of butter dispatched from Kiama in same period, 1,029 kegs, freight, £59.

June, 1889.—The Railway Commissioners reported that a single line (Kiama to Nowra) was estimated to cost £538,663, that the annual charges would be :—

Interest on cost at 3½ per cent.....	£18,853
Maintenance—Permanent Way.....	3,250
Loco. Expenses.....	1,400
Traffic do.....	1,200
	<hr/>
Estimated Revenue.....	£24,703
	6,157

Annual loss
£18,540.

But the bridge (estimated to cost £100,000) across the Shoalhaven River, at Nowra, they considered should be postponed until it was decided to extend the line further south, the terminus for the present to be on the north side of the river, where the necessary station and approaches would cost £3,000, diminishing the capital expenditure by £97,000. If this plan

APPENDIX.

plan were adopted the annual interest would be reduced to £15,458, and maintenance also would be less by £350; total saving, £3,745. The district was very rich, and exhibited symptoms of great progress. They would recommend that the extension be carried out, but the residents should combine to convey to the Government free of cost all land required. Annual loss reduced to £14,801.

1/8/89.—The House, on the motion of Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith, approved of the reference of the line for the consideration and report of the Public Works Committee.

7/8/89.—The honorary secretary of the Shoalhaven Railway Committee pointed out in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* that under the recommendations of the Railway Commissioners the terminus would be 2 miles away from the town and on private land (the Berry Estate, of 90,000 acres), that Nowra had been laid out by Government, and now contained much valuable property distributed over 28 miles of streets. If (he asked) the terminus were to remain for many years on the Berry Estate, and speculators and syndicates made use of their opportunities, what would be the effect on Nowra, the Government town, with a river $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile wide between it and the terminus? Is there not (he demanded) *any morality* in the transactions of the Crown? The people of Nowra had spent thousands on the faith of its being laid out and sold by the Government, and now the Commissioners were going in effect to run a private town against them. Was this repudiation—or worse?

7/8/89.—The same gentleman, writing to the *Herald* on the same date, and referring to the same matter, placed it in different phraseology in the same point of view. Was it (he asked) sound policy for the Lands Department to build up and the Railway Commissioners—another branch of the same Government—to pull down? The Crown had laid out and sold land for the purposes of a town, virtually proclaiming and establishing Nowra as the Government town of the district of Shoalhaven, and hundreds had spent their all upon their buildings and businesses. Did it not savour of repudiation to stop the railway 2 miles short of that town on private land? It was argued that the terminus was on Berry's land only temporarily, and, if so, the impolicy of spending £3,000 was obvious. But they all knew what land syndicates and ninety-nine years' leases could do where party politics were concerned. It seemed to him and to others that the honor of the Crown was concerned where such spoliation was contemplated. Would the saving of £3,000 or £4,000 for a few years justify such an immoral policy? This was an aggravated repetition of the policy of retaining the terminus at Redfern, or of stopping the railway 2 miles short of St. Leonards.

20/8/89.—Mr. P. H. Morton wrote to the Minister asking him to receive a deputation of persons interested in the matter who desired to represent that the extension as proposed and sent on to the Works Committee was not from Kiama to Nowra, but from Kiama to Bomaderry, a small settlement on the north side of the river, and on land owned by one person. The residents of Nowra who had built upon land bought from the Crown in the faith that no other town would be encouraged considered that a great and unjustifiable injury would be done to them if the terminus were placed on the opposite side of the river, and they hoped that the Minister, after hearing the arguments of the deputation, would see his way to refer the extension across the river for the consideration of the Works Committee.

29/8/89.—The Minister received the proposed deputation, who expressed a fear that the erection of the terminus at the place proposed would cause a private township to spring up there and do serious injury to Nowra. The Minister replied that the sole object of the railway was not to reach them, and that they had no right to grumble if the line did not run right into the centre of their town; views of this kind in the past had cost the country thousands of pounds. It was intended eventually to extend the line to Jervis Bay, and it would cross the river about $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile from the intended terminus. It was only for their convenience that it was proposed to make this $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile of temporary line, in order to bring the terminus as near to them as possible without incurring the immediate expense of a bridge. When the line was carried on this temporary line would be taken up, and their fears of another township springing up were therefore groundless.

Mr. P. H. Morton handed to the Minister a number of cuttings from newspapers (both local and metropolitan). In the mass of matter contained in these cuttings the key-note is the inexpediency of stopping short, even temporarily, on the north side of the Shoalhaven River, and the injury likely to result to Nowra if that measure be carried out.

5/9/87.—Mr. John Maclean, in a letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, stated that if the question of the location of the terminus had been remitted to the Public Works Committee—the law-appointed jury in such cases—there would not have been one word of complaint, but he feared that question was placed outside the scope of their inquiry. As regarded the heavy cost of the proposed bridge they already had a bridge which the Edgemoore Iron Company was prepared to guarantee would carry the heaviest trains, and which was wide enough for a double line of rails, and this had cost only £40,000, while the Minister's estimate was £100,000 for a bridge, just 120 per cent. in excess of this. 150 per cent.

17/9/89.—Mr. Morton, M.P., forwarded to the Minister a letter from the Dowling Progress Association, urging the extension of the line to Jervis Bay. C.A.B., 26/11/89.

B.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 17 June, 1889.

Proposed Branch line of Railway, Kiama to Nowra, 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

IN accordance with section 13 of the "Public Works Act, 1888," we beg to report as follows:—

Cost of Construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief estimates the cost of construction of a single line of railway, exclusive of land and compensation, at £538,663

Annual Cost—

Interest on cost of construction, at 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.	18,853
Estimated cost of maintaining permanent-way, per annum	3,250
Locomotive expenses, per annum	1,400
Traffic expenses, per annum	1,200
	5,850

Total annual cost £24,703

Traffic estimate of revenue £6,157

Included in the estimate is a sum of £100,000 for a bridge over the Shoalhaven River at Nowra. We consider that this large expenditure should be postponed until it is decided to extend the line further south, the terminus for the present to be on the north side of the river. It is estimated that the necessary station and approaches can be constructed for about £3,000. If our recommendation in this respect is carried out it will reduce the annual interest to £15,458, and the permanent-way maintenance will also be reduced by £350. The cost of working the line would be £5,500 instead of £5,850—saving per annum, £3,745.

The district is a very rich one, and we see in it great evidence of progress. We would beg to recommend that the extension proposed be constructed.

We consider that the residents in this district should combine together to have the land necessary for the construction of the line conveyed to the Department free of cost.

The Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was affixed hereto on the seventeenth day of June, in the presence of,—	{	E. M. G. EDDY, (L.S.)
		Chief Commissioner.
		W. M. FEHON, (L.S.)
		Commissioner.
		CHARLES OLIVER, (L.S.)
		Commissioner.
		W. V. READ.

C.

OFFICIAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY
Line from Kiama to North side of Shoalhaven River, near Nowra
Length 22 miles 46 chains

Estimated cost from Permanent Survey (exclusive of land and compensation), £381,390, or, £16,895 per mile

THIS proposed extension of the South Coast Railway commences at the end of contract No 4 of the Illawarra Railway, at 69 miles 79 chains, near the Cemetery north of Kiama, thence across Wright's Creek, and, by a tunnel 506 yards in length, into Kiama, to the junction of Minumura and Collins Streets, thence in a south easterly direction to a point 150 links distant from Kiama Bay, crossing Shoalhaven and Tealong Streets, and passing between the Scotch Church and Municipal Chambers; thence passing between, and parallel to, Manning and Shoalhaven Streets, crossing Noorina and Barney Streets; thence along the western side of the South Coast Road, which it crosses at 71 miles 58 chains, thence in a southerly direction, skirting the coast for 1½ miles, in which distance there are four tunnels—the first commencing at 72 miles 32 chains, 429 yards in length, the second commencing at 72 miles 73 chains, 242 yards in length, the third commencing at 73 miles 59½ chains, 407 yards in length, and the fourth commencing 74 miles 14 chains, 440 yards in length—and crossing a number of small watercourses on to Miller's Flat, crossing the main South Coast Road at 75 miles 32 chains, passing by the village of Gerringong, at 76 miles 46 chains, and distant about 40 chains from the centre of the village, crossing the Nowra Road at 76 miles 62 chains, thence in a south westerly direction along the flats at the head of Crooked River, crossing a sput of the Main Coast Range at 79 miles 26 chains, thence across a saddle of the Cooloongatta Range, to the valleys of the Broughton and Broughton Mill Creeks, which creeks will be crossed by a series of timber openings from 83 miles 36 chains to 84 miles, thence crossing the Berry and Cooloongatta Road about 10 chains to the east of the township of Berry, thence on the eastern side of the Main South Coast Road, distant therefrom 10 to 30 chains, to the Bomaderry Village, crossing the Bomaderry Creek at 92 miles 25 chains, and on to the Shoalhaven River, the north bank of which is reached at 92 miles 45 chains

The temporary deviation for station purposes, 52 chains in length, leaves the main line at 92 miles 16 chains, and terminates at the Main Nowra Road, about 1 mile from the township of Nowra

The sum of £804,000 was voted for the construction of the line from Kiama to Jarvis Bay
28 November, 1889.

D.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION BRANCH

Proposed Railway from Macquarie Rivulet to Broughton Creek, via Kiama

COMPARATIVE ESTIMATES OF COST OF WORKS FOR RAILWAY

ESTIMATED cost of constructing a line of railway (exclusive of cost of land and compensation)

Length of main line, 24 miles

GRADES

Descending from a spur of the Coast Range into Kiama there is a short length of 1 in 50 Ascending from Kiama to Marsden Park there are 29 chains of 1 in 50 Descending again into the valley of East's Creek there are 20 chains of 1 in 50

Class of Work	Estimated Cost of Works of each Class			Total Cost		
	£	s	d	£	s	d
Actual cost of constructing line from Macquarie River to present terminus (Kiama), 10½ miles				112,600	0	0
Excavations	65,800	0	0			
Culverts—						
No — 3 ft						
No. — 4 ft						
No — 5 ft						
No — 6 ft 6 in				14,070	3	0
No — 8 ft						
No — 10 ft						
No — Box drains				200	0	0
Bridges—						
No — Single spans of 6 ft						
No — Double „ „						
No. — Treble „ „						
No — Bridges of more than three spans of 6 ft, aggregating spans						
No. — Single spans of 10 ft 6 in						
No — Double „ „				17,000	0	0
No — Treble „ „						
No — Bridges of more than three spans of 10 ft 6 in, aggregating spans						
No — Single spans of 24 ft						
No — Double „ „						
No — Treble „ „						
No — Bridges of more than three spans of 24 ft, aggregating spans						
Overbridges—						
No — Roadway feet wide				2,000	0	0
No. — Level crossings				3,000	0	0
Diversions of roads				800	0	0
No — Tunnels, length 2,024 yards				121,440	0	0
Permanent way and ballasting				32,844	0	0
No — Stations				10,000	0	0
No — Water supplies				2,000	0	0
Fencing				4,500	0	0
Turntables				500	0	0
Signals				750	0	0
Cost of works	274,904	0	0	274,904	0	0
Engineering and Contingencies				27,490	0	0
Total				414,994	0	0
Average cost per mile	17,291	0	0			

Engineer in Chief's Office,
12th December, 1889

H DEANE,
Acting Engineer in Chief

DEPARTMENT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS.
RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION BRANCH.

Proposed Railway from Macquarie River to Broughton Creek, via Saddleback and Jamberoo.

ESTIMATED cost of constructing a single line of Railway (exclusive of cost of land and compensation).

Length of main line, 13 miles 40 chains.

GRADES.

Ascending from Macquarie River to the summit of the Jamberoo Range the grade is 1 in 40 for ...	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles.
Descending to the village of Jamberoo the grade is 1 in 40 for	2 $\frac{1}{4}$,,
Ascending to Saddleback summit ,, ,,	1 $\frac{3}{4}$,,
Descending to Broughton Creek ,, ,,	1 $\frac{1}{4}$,,
Total length of 1 in 40.....	
7 miles.	

Ascending Saddleback there is also a grade of 1 in 50 through a tunnel 2 miles in length, continuous.

Class of Work.	Estimated Cost of Works of each Class.		Total Cost.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Excavations	96,330	0 0		
Culverts—				
No. —10 ft.....	38,140	0 0		
No. —Box drains	150	0 0		
Bridges—				
No. —Bridges of more than three spans of 24 ft., aggregating spans	23,600	0 0		
Overbridges—				
No. 3—Roadway ft. wide	3,000	0 0		
No. —Level Crossings	2,500	0 0		
Diversions of Roads	1,000	0 0		
No. —Tunnels, length 4,554 yards	273,240	0 0		
Permanent Way and Ballasting	44,650	0 0		
No. 2—Stations	5,000	0 0		
No. —Water Supplies	2,000	0 0		
Fencing	6,000	0 0		
Turntables	1,000	0 0		
Signals	2,500	0 0		
Cost of Works	499,110	0 0		
Engineering and Contingencies ..	49,910	0 0		
Total			549,020	0 0
Average cost per mile	29,675	0 0		

Engineer-in-Chief's Office,
12th December, 1889.

H. DEANE,
Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

E.

SOUTH COAST COACH AND OTHER TRAFFIC.

Sir,

20 November, 1889.

The question of the extension of the railway from Kiama to Nowra will probably come before the Public Works Committee next week, and I am anxious, in view of this, to get some information as to the south coast coach and other traffic. We have information already in the office from interested sources showing this, but the Committee naturally like official authentication in matters of this kind, and I should therefore be obliged if you could kindly obtain from your officers in the district particulars of the number of coaches bringing passengers daily to the Kiama railway station, and the steamers. If some idea could also be given of the goods and other traffic it would be very valuable.

I do not know whether I am asking you too much, but the information, if obtained, will be appreciated by the Committee, because it would come from a disinterested and reliable source.

E. Fosbery, Esq., Inspector-General of Police.

I have, &c.,
J. BURLING.

Will Mr. Ryeland obtain for me a careful report.—E.F., 21 11/89.

Police Station, Kiama, 28th November, 1889.

SERGEANT BRAYNE respectfully reports having made careful inquiry *re* attached memo. He finds there are three coaches running each way daily between Shoalhaven and Kiama Railway Station. The average number of passengers conveyed between them daily each way is 18; the number of persons travelling otherwise is about 5. Total, 23.

The number of coaches plying between Kiama and Kiama railway station are 7. The average number of passengers conveyed by them daily each way are about 32; persons travelling otherwise, about 6. Total, 38.

About 25 of this last-mentioned number would be visitors to the district; the remainder would be district people.

The average number of persons travelling by four steamers each week between Kiama and Sydney are about 3 each way.

The

The goods traffic, &c, between Kiama and Sydney at this time of the year are as follows (this is from Kiama only; there are no goods, &c, coming from Shoalhaven District to the railway) —

GOODS SENT EACH WEEK

Produce	By rail	By steamer
Butter	292 kegs	320 kegs
Bacon	3 cwt	3 tons
Cases of eggs	5	30
Cans of milk	84 10 gal	Nil
Miscellaneous produce, such as hides, tallow, bones	5 tons	10 tons
<i>Live Stock—</i>		
Horses	7 in six months	4 weekly
Milch cows	Nil	4 "
Calves	Nil	30 "
Pigs	Nil	35 "
Coops of poultry	Nil	6 "

155 head of cattle and 413 sheep have been sent by railway, in truck loads during the last six months
The farmers here appear to prefer the steamer, as in sending small lots of produce, &c, it is far cheaper than the train

Most of the butter factories send their produce by railway, as they have larger quantities to send at one time
Farmers with one keg of butter, a horse, a cow, fat calf, sheep or pig, will not send by rail while the freights are as they are

Produce	Freight by Rail	Freight by Steamer
	£ s d	£ s d
Butter, single keg	0 2 0	0 1 0
Butter, half ton	0 1 1 per keg	
Single case of eggs	0 2 0	0 1 0
Single horse	1 15 0	0 5 0
Truck of 7 horses, by rail	2 7 4	
Single milch cow	0 17 9	0 5 0
Truck of 9 cattle, by rail	2 7 4	
Single calf	0 5 11	0 2 6
Single pig	0 3 0	0 1 0

This will show why they prefer the steamer

There are about ten times the amount of goods coming from Sydney to Kiama by steamer than there is by rail
During the past year the steamer freights have been reduced about 30 per cent, they appear to carefully watch the Railway Department's scale of charges Sugar is brought by steamer from Sydney for 10s per ton, while by rail it costs 29s 11d; salt, 5s per ton, by rail, 12s 4d This will show why the steamers do all the trade, it is chiefly flour, fruit, and light bulky packages that come by train

The produce from the southern end of the Kiama district is shipped at Gerringong for Sydney. There are 80 kegs of butter, 25 cases of eggs, 1 ton of bacon, and about 1 ton of tallow, hides, bones, and miscellaneous produce, 48 calves, 6 pigs, and 3 coops of poultry each week

There are about 7 tons of goods brought to Gerringong from Sydney by steamer each week, but no passengers either way.

There are several vessels trading in blue metal, and there is some sent up by rail; but the sergeant has not touched this trade, as he did not know whether it was necessary

C W MAYNE, Sergeant

James Ryeland, Esq,
Superintendent of Police, Eastern District

Forwarded for the information of the Inspector General of Police —JAS RYELAND, Superintendent, 29/11/89
Shoalhaven report not yet to hand Report now supplied, and forwarded —JAS RYELAND, Superintendent, 9/12/89

Police Station, Nowra 6 December, 1889

SERGEANT SYKES begs to report that the I S N Co's steamer the "Illawarra" runs bi weekly between Sydney, Kiama, and Shoalhaven conveying goods and passengers Mr Hays (of the Berry Estate) steamers, the "Meendery" and "Coomonderry," also run bi weekly between Shoalhaven, Kiama, and Sydney, the two latter steamers ship goods, produce, &c, at Nowra bridge wharf and Berry wharf The "Illawarra" being unable on account of her size to come up the river to Nowra, ships at Greenwell Point, but her consort the "Terara" a river steamer, collects all produce for a distance of 25 miles from the mouth of the Shoalhaven River upwards and tranships to the "Illawarra" A river steamer, the "Sunbaw," acts as a feeder to the "Coomonderry" and "Meendery" No goods whatever arrive in Shoalhaven via Kiama by rail, excepting of course small parcels conveyed by Thorburn's coaches All goods, produce, &c, excepting about 50 tons sent weekly from Kangaroo Valley via Moss Vale, arrives and is sent out by the steamers already mentioned Since the opening of the railway line to Kiama the passenger traffic by the steamers has almost diminished the I S N Co, having offered as an inducement to run passengers free by coach from Greenwell Point to Nowra (10 miles), had shortly afterwards to discontinue the practice The whole, or nearly so of the passenger traffic from Shoalhaven, goes via Kiama by Thorburn's coaches, that is of course since the railway opened to that place The passenger traffic by coach from Nowra to Kiama (fare 6s) is very considerable, Mr Thorburn employing no less than 28 coaches in the district for that purpose with carrying capacities from 22 to 8 passengers for each coach Speaking approximately, 20,000 passengers have been conveyed in this manner during the past twelve months Then people travelling by horseback and private conveyances for the past twelve months would be about 200, these figures, of course, would be doubled by the return journey During the past twelve months about 2,600 to 2,800 passengers have travelled (including both ways) to and from Kiama and Sydney by the steamers (fare, 15s single—Nowra to Sydney) The passenger traffic via Kiama is increasing steadily and there are a great number of people who do not travel in consequence of the discomforts attached to both coach and steamer who would readily avail themselves of the opportunity to travel by rail With regard to the cargo exported and imported into the Shoalhaven District by the steamers, the principal exports, of which great quantities are produced, are maize, bacon, butter, cheese, poultry, eggs, potatoes, oysters, and fish Owing to the reticence of the steamers' agents, &c, the sergeant has experienced great difficulty in obtaining as accurate information as he could have desired, but the weight of exports and imports conveyed by the steamers for the past twelve months would be about from 10,800 to 11,000 tons; the various freight charges the sergeant has been unable to obtain, as also the number of live stock, but the sergeant knows that large numbers of pigs and calves principally, as also numbers of horses and cattle, are conveyed by the steamers to and from Sydney and Kiama Shoalhaven abounds in splendid timber; eight saw mills are actively employed, and the greater part of the timber finds a market in Sydney, one small steamer and three small sailing vessels being engaged in the trade, but owing to the absence of owners, and other causes, the sergeant has been unable to ascertain the quantities conveyed Should the line be opened to Nowra the whole of the traffic from Kangaroo Valley which goes via Moss Vale would be diverted to Nowra

The

APPENDIX

The passenger traffic between Nowra and Kiama by coach is regulated by the state of the road, which in wet weather is cut up badly consequently at that time passengers decrease in a great degree, and the figures quoted, therefore, represent the traffic in passengers at a time when the roads are in good order through a continuance of fine weather. In conclusion, the sergeant would state, with regard to the Shoalhaven district that the statistical returns of such being collected by the sergeant and the police under his charge, and furnished through the Inspector General of Police to the Government Statistician, are quite reliable, and if anything are underated than otherwise. The sergeant would also like to state from his knowledge of the district that in the event of the railway being opened to Nowra, the land, or a great portion of it, to the south side of that place would be opened up for the purposes of establishing a fruit industry, the soil being specially adapted for fruit and vines.

Jas Ryeland, Esq.,
Superintendent of Police, Eastern District.

A A SYKES, Sergeant.

F.

Book of Reference to Parliamentary Plan

No of Plan	Description of property	State of Cultivation	Names of			Remarks
			Owners	Lessees	Occupiers	
PART No 1						
1	Reserve ..		Crown			
2	Beach		"			
3	Lagoon		"			
4	Beach		"			
5	Grass Paddock		Holden Bros			
6	Pig Yard		"			
7	Grass Paddock		"			
8	Gipps street		Crown			
9	Allotment		James Colley			
10	"		"			
11	"		"			
12	"		"			
13	"		"			
14	Street		Crown			
15	Allotment		Nesbit Hindmarsh			
16	"		"			
17	"		"			
18	"		"			
19	"		"			
20	"		"			
21	Grass Paddock		"			
22	House & allotment		William Dwyer			
23	Collins street		Crown			
24	House and yard		Nesbit Hindmarsh			
25	Minumuna street		Crown			
26	House and Yard		Nesbit Hindmarsh			Thomas Barrett.
27	"		"			John Morgan
28	Grass Paddock		William Geoghegan			William Geoghegan
29	"		"			
30	House and Yard		John A Leatham			John A Leatham
31	"		"			James Moffit
32	"		"			Wilham Carmichael
33	Allotment		"			
34	Public School and ground		Crown			
35	Allotment		William Geoghegan			
36	House and yard		Arthur Yeates			Arthur Yeates
37	Reserve		Crown			
38	House and yard		Arthur Yeates			Owen Malone
39	"		William Geoghegan			Mary Brown
40	Reserve		Crown			
41	Shoalhaven street		"			
42	Reserve		"			
43	Paddock		Scotch Church			
44	"		"			
45	Reserve		Crown			
46	Terralong street		"			
47	Court house & yard		"			
48	House and yard		The Trustees of the late A King			George Bullen
49	Shop		The Trustees of the late Alexander King			George Knight.
50	Allotment		The Trustees of the late Alexander King			
51	House and yard		Stephen Major			Stephen Major
52	Reserve		Crown			
53	"		"			
54	Private lane		George L Fuller			
55	House and yard		"			William Jones
56	Market lane		Crown			
57	House and yard		Thomas Fuller			William Cocks
58	Bank and yard		E S & C Bank			
59	House & allotment		George Fuller			James M'Dermot
60	Lane		Disputed property			
61	Allotment		Thomas Fuller			
62	House and yard		John Hawken			James Harnett
63	"		George Dinning			James Hart
64	"		"			Ellen Curien
65	"		Edward Campbell			Edward Campbell

No of Plan	Description of Property	State of Cultivation	Names of			Remarks
			Owners	Lessees	Occupiers	
66	House and yard		Ebenezer Cook		Ebenezer Cook	
67	Bong Bong street		Crown			
68	House and yard		David Smith		Charles M'Glinchy	
69	"		John Hawken		Mary Emery	
70	"		Sarah E Caird		James Murphy	
71	Allotment		Scotch Church			
72	"		David Smith			
73	"		"			
74	"		John Healy			
75	"		David Smith			
76	"		Thomas Reynolds			
77	"		David Smith			
78	"		"			
79	"		"			
80	Allotment & house		"		Bridget Lanklater	
81	Allotment		"			
82	Noorian street		Crown			
83	Grass paddock		David Smith	David Smith		
84	Market garden		George Fuller	Ah Hung	Ah Hung	
85	Grass paddock		William Woods	James Morgan	James Morgan	
86	"		James Walker			
87	House and yard		Nesbit Hindmarsh		Caroline Black	
88	Grass paddock		Percy Owen	Philip Dty		
89	"		Nesbit Hindmarsh			
90	"		Alexander Douglas	Robert Walker		
91	Barney street		Crown			
92	House and paddock		H J Tarrant	James Cowan	James Cowan	
93	Paddock		"	"	"	
94	"		"	"	"	
95	Grass paddock		"	George Sefton		
96	"		"	"		
97	"		James Hudson		James Hudson	
98	"		George Hunt		George Hunt	
99	"		"			
100	"		Percy Owen	George Waldron		
101	Market garden		George Hunt		George Hunt	
102	Farmer street		Crown			
103	House and yard		Thomas Windsor		Thomas Windsor	
104	Cultivation pad dock		"			
105	Grass paddock		"			
106	Paddock		Sarah E Caird			
107	House and paddock		Charles Price		Charles Price	
108	Grass paddock		"			
109	"		Nesbit Hindmarsh			
110	"		"			
111	"		Cornelius Leggett			
112	"		Mrs John Black	William Cochrane		
113	"		"	Hugh Keon	Hugh Keon	
114	Road		Crown			
115	Grass paddock		Mrs T S Kendell	William Grey		
116	"		Thomas Fuller	Dixon and King		
117	Drafting yard		"	"		
118a	Slaughter yard		"	"		
118	Grass paddock		"	"		
119	Cultivation pad dock		"	Duncan Rankin		
120	Pig yard		"	Dixon and King		
121	Grass paddock		"	"		
122	"		Mrs T S Kendell	William Grey		
123	"		"	"		
124	"		William Gray			
125	Main South Coast Road		Crown			

PART No 2

124	Grass paddock		William Gray ..			
125	Main South Coast Road		Crown			
126	Grass Paddock		Richard East	Mary East	Mary East	
127	"		"	"	"	
128	House and garden		"	"	"	
129	Yard		"	"	"	
130	Paddock		"	"	"	
131	Barn		"	"	"	
132	Yard		"	"	"	
133	Paddock	Grass	"	"	"	
134	"	"	"	"	"	
135	"	"	William Weir	William Cochrane	William Cochrane	
136	"	"	"	"	"	
137	"	"	"	"	"	
138	"	"	"	"	"	
139	"	"	"	"	"	
140	"	"	John Lore		John Lore	
141	"	"	William Weir	William Cochrane	William Cochrane	
142	River		Crown	"	"	
143	Paddock	Grass	John Lore		John Lore	
144	"	Wheat	"		"	

No of Plan	Description of Property	State of Cultivation	Names of			Remarks
			Owners	Lessees	Occupiers	
145	Paddock	Corn	John Lore		John Lore	
146	Beach		Crown			
147	Paddock	Grass	Daniel M'Rath	Patrick Strong	Patrick Strong	
148	"	"	"	"	"	
149	"	Corn	"	"	"	
150	"	Grass	"	"	"	
151	"	"	Regan Biotheis	"	Regan Brothers	
Parish of Geringong						
152	Freehold	Pasturage	S W Gray		Wm Buchanan	Rented
153	"	"	"		"	"
154	"	"	"		"	"
155	"	"	"		"	"
156	"	"	"		Joseph Dunster	"
157	"	"	"		"	"
158	"	"	Wm Miller		Wm Miller	"
159	"	"	"		"	"
160	"	"	"		"	"
161	"	Road	Crown		Crown	"
161a	"	Pasturage	James Miller		James Miller	"
162	"	"	Robert Miller		Robert Miller	"
163	Freehold	Pasturage	Robert Miller		Robert Miller	"
164	"	"	"		"	"
165	"	"	"		"	"
166	"	"	"		"	"
167	"	Occupation Road	Crown		Crown	"
167a	"	Pasturage	Robert Miller		Robert Miller	Forest land
168	"	Road	Crown		Crown	"
169	"	Pasturage	Thomas Noble		Thomas Noble	"
170	"	"	"		"	"
171	"	"	"		"	"
172	"	"	Archibald Campbell		Alexander Campbell	Rented.
173	"	Yards (were used as slaughter yards)	"		"	"
174	"	"	"		"	"
175	"	Pasturage	"		"	"
176	"	"	William Hindmarsh		Mrs J Dundas	Five years lease, three years unexpired.
177	"	Road to Broughton Creek	Crown		Crown	"
178	"	Pasturage	William Hindmarsh		Mrs J Dundas	"
179	"	"	"		George Lee	Five years lease
180	"	"	"		"	"
181	"	Pasturage	George Hindmarsh		Geo Hindmarsh	"
182	"	Creek	Crown		Crown	I am not sure whether this belongs to Crown.
183	"	Pasturage	George Hindmarsh		George Hindmarsh	"
184	"	"	David Berry		John Moffatt	Six months tenure.
185	"	"	"		George Lee	"
186	"	"	"		"	"
187	"	"	"		"	"
188	"	"	"		"	"
189	"	"	"		William Bailey	"
190	"	"	"		James Sharpe	"
191	"	"	"		"	"
192	"	"	"		"	"
193	"	"	"		"	"
194	"	"	"		"	"
195	"	"	"		Benjamin Allen Thomas Browning	Pensioner on sufferance.
196	"	Slab hut and cellar	"		"	"
197	"	Forest land	"		David Berry	"
198	"	"	"		Benjamin Allen	Six months tenure
Parish of Broughton Creek						
199	"	Swampy forest	David Berry		David Berry	"
200	"	Pasturage	"		Ashley Harding	Six months tenure.
201	"	"	"		"	"
202	"	"	"		"	"
203	"	Planted with sorghum	"		"	"
204	"	Pasturage	"		"	"
205	"	Occupation road	"		"	"
206	"	Pasturage	"		David Berry	"
207	"	"	"		Patrick Dooley	"
208	"	"	"		"	"
209	"	"	"		"	"
210	"	"	"		James and Patrick Daly	"
211	"	Swampy forest	"		Phoenix Wells	"
212	"	Cleared enclosure	"		"	"
213	"	Pasturage	"		Alexander Campbell	"
214	"	"	"		"	"
215	"	Forest land	"		David Berry	"
216	"	Track	"		"	"
217	"	Forest land	"		"	"
218	"	Pasturage	"		"	"
219	"	"	"		Wm O'Donnell Ellis Mathers	"

No of Plot	Description of Property	State of Cultivation	Names of			Remarks
			Owner	Lessee	Occupiers	
Parish of Broughton Creek— <i>continued</i>						
220	Dwelling, kitchen, and offices		David Berry		Ella Mathers	Slab huts with bark roof; approximate value, £50 Six months tenure.
221	Pasturage		"		"	"
222	"		"		Thomas Gall	"
223	Yards		"		Ella Mathers	"
224	Pasturage, grubbed		"		Patrick Mathers	"
225	"		"		Thomas Gall	"
226	"		"		Joseph Mathers	"
226a	Ploughed This fence erected since my survey		"		"	Approximate position of fence only
227	Pasturage		"		James Wilson	Six months tenure.
228	"		"		Crown	"
229	Broughton Creek		Crown		Let directly to James Wilson and sublet	"
230	Garden and house		David Berry		by him to Richd Chamberlain	"
231	Pasturage, cleared paddock		"		James Wilson	"
232	Road to Cooloongatta		"		David Berry	"
233	Yard, and stable, and shed complete		"		James Wilson	"
234	Yard		"		David Berry	"
235	Occupation road, 30 links wide		"		"	"
236	Arable		"		This land is being subdivided, with view to letting it on six months tenure	"
237	Pasturage		"		William Vidler	Six months' tenure
238	"		"		Mathew Putman	"
238a	Dwelling (weather board)		"		"	"
239	Pasturage		"		John Gray	"
240	Orangery		"		Matthew Putman	"
241	Broughton Mill Creek		Crown		Crown	"
242	Arable		David Berry		Charles Robertson	"
243	Pasturage		"		"	"
244	"		"		"	"
245	Piggery and boiling down shed		"		"	"
246	Pasturage		"		John Maclean	"
247	"		"		Charles Robertson	"
248	"		"		John Maclean	"
248a	Weatherboard cottage		"		"	"
249	Road to wharf		"		David Berry	"
250	House (weatherboard)		"		John Swift	"
251	Yard closet, fowl house		"		"	"
252	Pasturage		"		John Swift	"
253	"		"		"	"
254	"		"		William Kenealy	"
255	"		"		"	"
256	"		"		David Berry	"
257	"		"		John Swift	"
258	"		"		John Robertson	"
259	Yard, dwelling, house, and outhouses		"		"	"
260	Pasturage		"		"	"
261	"		"		"	"
262	"		"		"	"
263	"		"		Thomas Hetherington	"
264	"		"		"	"
265	Bush partly cleared		"	Michael Kelly	Michael Kelly	"
266	Paddock		"	"	"	"
267	Bush partly cleared		"	"	"	"
268	Paddock	Corn	"	John Chisholm	John Chisholm	"
269	Bush partly cleared		"	"	"	"
270	Paddock		"	"	"	"
271	Bush partly cleared		"	"	"	"
272	Paddock		"	"	"	"
273	Bush partly cleared		"	R B Boyd	R B Boyd	"
274	Bush		"	William Elliott	William Elliott	"
275	Bush partly cleared		"	James Ringelty	James Ringelty	"
276	"		"	James Quilty	James Quilty	"
277	Road		Crown	"	"	"
278	Cultivation paddock		David Berry	Simon M'Donald	Simon M'Donald	"
279	Paddock		"	Thomas Hoolghan	Thomas Hoolghan	"
280	House and garden		"	"	"	"
281	Cattle yard		"	"	"	"
282	Road		Crown	"	"	"
283	Bush land partly cleared		David Berry	John Gray	John Gray	"
284	Bush land		"	"	"	"
285	Bush partly cleared		"	James Gallagher	James Gallagher	"

No. of Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of			Remarks.
			Owners	Lessees.	Occupiers.	
Parish of Broughton Creek— <i>continued.</i>						
286	Bush paddock ...	Grass	David Berry.....	William Vickers...	William Vickers.	
287	Paddock	"	"	"	"	
288	"	"	"	"	"	
289	"	Corn	"	James Gallagher...	James Gallagher.	
290	Bush	"	"	"	"	
291	Track	"	"	"	"	
292	Bush	"	"	"	"	
293	"	"	"	"	"	
294	"	"	"	George Hunt	George Hunt.	
295	Bush land.....	"	"	Thomas Irving.....	Thomas Irving.	
296	Paddock	Corn	"	Loughlan M'Lean..	Loughlan M'Lean.	
297	Bush land.....	"	"	"	"	
298	"	"	"	"	"	
299	Bush partly cleared	"	"	John Pistle	John Pistle.	
300	Swamp	"	"	"	"	
301	Bush	"	"	"	"	
302	Old Main South Coast Road.	"	Crown	"	"	
303	Bush	"	David Berry.....	"	"	
304	Bomedery Road ...	"	Crown	"	"	
305	Paddock	"	David Berry.....	"	"	

24th Sept., 1886.

JOHN WHITTON,
Engineer.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

RAILWAY FROM KIAMA TO NOWRA.

REPORT.

YOUR Committee have to report that they have inspected the route of the proposed Railway from Kiama to the Shoalhaven River, visiting the towns of Kiama, Gerringong, Berry, and Nowra, which will be served by the line, and taking the evidence of upwards of fifty of the residents in those localities.

The country through which the line will pass is highly fertile, and more densely and continuously settled than any other dairying or agricultural district in the Colony of similar extent. The farms, which are very numerous, are not of large size, the prolific nature of the soil enabling the settlers to live comfortably on very limited areas. A few miles from Kiama, on the route of the proposed line, is the thriving township of Gerringong, and 11 miles distant is the larger town of Berry, which is rapidly growing in importance as a commercial centre, where the numerous farmers of the district transact their business, and find a market for their products. Amongst the thriving localities which will be accommodated by the railway are Kangaroo Valley, Cambewarra, Foxground, Broughton Vale, and Wood Hill, all of which places, with the exception of the Kangaroo Valley, are within a few miles of the route. On the south side of the Shoalhaven River, opposite to the terminus of the line, is the important town of Nowra, having substantial buildings, well-made streets, and a population of about 1,500. There are also in this part of the district the townships of Terara, Numba, Tomerong, Burrier, and Yalwal, the traffic in connection with which will be sufficient to largely augment the revenue from the proposed railway.

The arable land between Kiama and Nowra, owing to its exuberantly productive character, is eagerly sought after by persons desiring to settle, and the price ranges between £20 and £60 an acre. The soil consists of rich deposits on a basaltic formation, and between the steep hills, which are covered with a thick vegetation, are extensive alluvial valleys, affording ample pasture for the numerous herds of the dairy farmers. The hilly part of the district is the country between Kiama and Berry, the land between Berry and Nowra, which is of an undulating, but less rugged, character, being intersected by the Broughton Creek and the Shoalhaven River.

The farmers in the district may be divided into two classes, the freeholders and the leaseholders, the latter being chiefly on the extensive property in the Shoalhaven district known as the Berry Estate. This estate comprises 62,500 acres, of which about 50,000 acres are suitable for cultivation, 25,000 acres having been already leased for dairying and agricultural purposes. There are on the estate about 400 farmers, 100 other householders, and 150 cottages for servants and labourers, the total population on the property being estimated at not less than 5,500; and it is intended shortly to throw open another 25,000 acres, which it is expected will lead to a further settlement of some 400 more farmers, and a proportionate increase of inhabitants; so that there will probably soon be a population of over 8,000 on the Berry Estate alone.

In addition to the leaseholders on the Berry Estate, however, there is a numerous settlement on conditional purchases along the route of the proposed line, and the total population to be served by it cannot be less than 15,000, including Kiama, Gerringong, Berry, and Nowra. In the Shoalhaven District there is ample room for the settlement of a large number of people, considerable areas of Crown lands being unalienated, which, though not of the best quality, are nevertheless suitable for growing various kinds of fruit, including the orange, the vine, and the

olive, as well as for grazing purposes. It would be advisable to have them proclaimed special areas, as the committee are of opinion that a large revenue will accrue from their sale in the event of the railway being constructed. It may be mentioned, that while the value of the superior land is from £20 to £60 an acre, the rents in the Kiama District vary from 20s. to 40s. an acre per annum.

The staple products of the district between Kiama and Nowra are butter, milk, bacon, and maize. The milk industry has assumed enormous proportions since the railway was extended to Kiama, and your Committee are convinced that the continuation of the line to the Shoalhaven River would result in a still larger development of the industry all along the route beyond its present terminus. There are fifty butter-making factories and private separators in operation in the district, turning out very large quantities of butter; and the bacon-making industry is also extensively carried on, the proprietor of one factory—that at Berry—which is not the largest, as the Committee were informed—slaughtering about 3,000 pigs annually.

The cultivation of maize in the Shoalhaven District is considerable, the area under this crop last year being 5,547 acres. The area growing green food for cattle was 2,568 acres; hay, 1,054 acres; under permanent artificial grasses, 53,890 acres; making the total area under cultivation in the Shoalhaven District 63,941 acres. The number of horses in the Shoalhaven District is 4,789; sheep, 2,486; pigs, 9,736; ordinary cattle, 17,856; dairy cows, 15,271. The evidence shows that throughout the whole of the districts to be accommodated by the proposed railway there are more than 30,000 head of dairy cattle, besides the ordinary cattle, and a very large number of horses, pigs, and poultry.

To give some idea of the way in which traffic may be developed in the South Coast District, the Committee would draw attention to the great rapidity with which the railway returns at Kiama increased immediately on the completion of the connection between Waterfall and Clifton. During the six months preceding the completion of the railway connecting Kiama with the metropolis the total revenue of the Kiama Station amounted to £705 12s. The revenue at Kiama Station during the first six months after the completion of the line amounted to £4,347 8s. 10d., and for the following six months to £5,239 11s. 1d. Thus the opening of the Kiama Railway, which only taps the district to the south of Kiama, resulted in an increase of the revenue to nearly £10,000, or about £800 a month for the first year that the line was in operation.

The mining resources of the district are such as to promise a considerable augmentation of the traffic on the line in the future. At Yalwal, 20 miles from Nowra, through which town all the traffic from that place must pass, a gold-field is being developed, which seems likely to be of a permanent character. Large sums of money have already been spent in providing machinery for the Yalwal mines, which, it is believed, will soon be in a productive and flourishing state. Large amounts have been invested in the mines by speculators outside the Colony, and one of the Yalwal properties has recently been sold to Victorian capitalists for the sum of £20,000. The heavy traffic to and from this gold-field is carried by steamer, the passengers travelling by rail to Kiama, whence they have to proceed to the end of their journey by coach.

It may be here stated that the coaching traffic of Mr. Thorburn, of Nowra (whose evidence will be found on page 33), returns him £400 a month, or nearly £5,000 a year.

The fishing industry is being developed at St. George's Basin, Swan Lake, and Jervis Bay, the fish being conveyed to Sydney by steamer from Greenwell Point. The want of a railway for the transmission of this perishable product to the Sydney market is severely felt, and speedy transit would be an advantage to consumers in Sydney, as well as a great benefit to the men engaged in obtaining this valuable article of food from the prolific waters mentioned.

The timber trade is carried on to a limited extent only in the district, although there are still several large timber reserves. Along the whole route of the proposed railway there will be no difficulty in obtaining ample supplies of timber and ballast for the line, free of cost.

Evidence was given by several local residents in regard to the large coal deposits which are known to exist in the mountains, within a few miles of the route of the line, as well as near Jervis Bay. The coal is said to be of a superior quality, and it is anticipated that a considerable development of the coal mining industry will take place as soon as railway accommodation is provided.

Your

Your Committee desire to call attention to Jervis Bay, one of the most capacious and valuable harbours in Australia. Its importance as an admirable site for a seaport cannot be overestimated; it is undoubtedly destined in the future to become a port of call for coasting and ocean steamers, and the mails will probably be landed there for transmission overland to the metropolis. In the near future Jervis Bay is certain to become conspicuous in connection with the maritime commerce of the country, and must occupy an important position with regard to any general system of defence of the Colony. Any unalienated land in the Government township and in the surrounding district should be reserved until after the completion of the railway, in the event of its being determined to carry it to the Bay.

The South Coast district has already become a favorite place of resort with tourists. Without a railway to Nowra access to the magnificent scenery lying beyond the terminus of the existing line, in the districts of Gerringong, Berry, and Shoalhaven, is both difficult and expensive. But by providing railway accommodation we should bring these picturesque and attractive localities within such easy distance of Sydney as to render them a common pleasure resort to the citizens of the metropolis, thus increasing the railway revenue, and conferring a boon on those whose occupations only occasionally permit a visit to the country.

The evidence taken at the several centres of population indicates a degree of prosperity and comfort among the occupants of the land, which is not exceeded, if equalled, in any other district of the Colony. The Committee would draw special attention to the evidence of the various bank managers, in reference to the flourishing condition of the inhabitants of the district. Bad debts are almost unknown, whilst the fixed deposits have increased to a surprising extent. The leading banks are represented in several parts of the district; all are doing a large and increasing business, and most of them have erected or are erecting costly banking premises to meet the requirements of their operations.

Local Government obtains throughout the district between Kiama and Nowra, the municipalities of Kiama, Gerringong, Berry, Terara, Nowra, Numba, Broughton Vale, and Wood Hill, having been long in existence.

The Sectional Committee, after having carefully considered the evidence, inspected the country through which the line is to pass, and observed the fertility of the soil as well as the settlement in the district, recommend the construction of the proposed line of railway without delay, and its early extension to Jervis Bay.

Your Committee also urge the necessity for taking the line into the town of Nowra, in order to secure the maximum amount of traffic.

The speedy erection of a railway bridge would render unnecessary the proposed branch line from Bomadery to the existing bridge over the Shoalhaven River.

F. T. HUMPHERY,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 30th January 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

[TAKEN BEFORE THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.]

RAILWAY FROM KIAMA TO NOWRA.

KIAMA, SATURDAY, 25 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

The HONORABLE FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY (CHAIRMAN).
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq. | JOHN HURLEY, Esq.
 The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN was also present.

The Sectional Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Kiama to Nowra.

Charles William Craig, Esq., Mayor of Kiama, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] You are Mayor of the Borough of Kiama? Yes.
2. How long have you held that position? About twelve months.
3. Were you an alderman before? Yes, nearly six years.
4. How long have you been in the district? I was born here.
5. Have you looked at the plan of the proposed extension? I am conversant with the line; I have seen the surveys.
6. As far as you are aware, is there any objection to the route of the proposed extension? No particular objection, unless that, instead of going through the centre of the town, it might go nearer to the Church Point. The opinion is it should go by Church Point, so as to prevent cutting the town in two.
7. What is your own opinion,—would you rather see the Church Point route taken in preference to the one through the town, or is the objection to the town route simply a local one? Simply a local one.
8. Have you any objection to the proposed extension from the present terminus of the line to the Shoalhaven River? None whatever.
9. Would you like to make any remarks generally on the subject? I am pleased to see the matter in this stage of progress, and I trust that the evidence given will be favourably entertained, and that the report will result in the extension further south. At the present time the Kiama station is in a very inconvenient position, and it would be an advantage to have the line extended into town; but we have been given to understand that cannot be done now without going further south. We have no objection to going further south.
10. Do you believe it will benefit the railway returns if the extension further south is made? Yes, for at the present time only a small portion of the fertile district is tapped, and the further the railway goes south it will improve. Owing to the terminus being where it is at present a considerable amount of produce is lost to the railway, as it is forwarded by steamer. The district is a splendid one around Gerringong, Berry, and Nowra, and right down; and I believe the extension of the railway would also have the effect of tapping the coal-seams further south.
11. What is your opinion of the proposed site for the station at Kiama? I would like to see a more suitable site for the station. I have my own opinion as to where it should be, but I am not going to cavil about that. There is, of course, a difference of opinion on the subject, but we should like you to consider a more favourable site.
12. Is the Committee to understand that you are favourable to the proposed extension, and that you have no objection to the route? Yes, I have no objection whatever.
13. Can you give the Committee any information as to the progress of the district during the last five years? No, I cannot. That had better be left to Mr. Dymock and Mr. Campbell.
14. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is the population of Kiama? I do not know, but Mr. James Somerville, Council Clerk, can give it.
15. This is a very old established town, is it not? Yes.
16. What are the industries of the town? There is the stone trade.
17. Have you any particular industries outside the town? Dairying, chiefly.
18. What outlying districts trade with Kiama? At the present time, Shellharbour, Jamberoo, and Gerringong. This line will go through Gerringong.
19. How much of the back country do you think this railway would tap? It would tap the whole, and for some 10 or perhaps 12 miles to the western mountain range.
20. Can you state the value of ratable property in the town? If I referred to the Council's books I could give it.
21. Can you furnish the Committee with information as to what amount of that property the railway would run through? Yes; the Council Clerk, James Somerville, is here, and can do so.
22. And any other information about the borough? Yes; Mr. Somerville is in a position to do so.

C. W. Craig,
 Esq.,
 25 Jan., 1890.

- C. W. Craig, Esq.
25 Jan., 1890.
23. *Mr. Hawley.*] You are aware that the residents of the district have been agitating for a long time past for the extension of the line into the town of Kiama? Yes.
24. Can you say whether they have sufficient claims for the line to come further south and be extended into the town? I certainly think the people are entitled to it, even if the line did not go further south than Kiama.
25. Will it give increased railway returns? Yes; there is a considerable amount of produce sent by steamer now which would go by rail.
26. What is the difference in the charges by railway and steamer? I do not know.
27. Do you know by what route the goods consumed in this district are chiefly brought into it—are they brought by rail or steamer? There is a considerable amount brought by steamer, and by rail too.
28. Suppose you had the station on the Church Point, would not goods come by steamer all the same? I think not.
29. Do you not know that water carriage is cheaper than carriage by rail? I have heard that it is, but I think the Government would be able to compete with the steamers.
30. You are mayor of this town? Yes.
31. Do you know whether persons now prefer to send their stone to Sydney by steamer rather than by rail? That depends a good deal upon circumstances. Some of the companies working here have their own boats, and it is an advantage to them to send the stone by those boats at a reasonable cost.
32. At all events, the steamers are in competition with the railway? Certainly.
33. And, if the railway were brought into town, it would not prevent steamers from coming here? No. Whether it would then pay them or not to come here I do not know.
34. Have you any idea of the amount of income to the Railway Department from this source? No.
35. Can you give us any information as to any other sources of income from the district to the Railway Department—whether anything further would be derived if the line were extended? Yes; a large quantity of milk would be sent by rail which is not sent at the present time because the distance is too great to convey it from the dairies to the railway-station.
36. Have you any idea of the cost of the extension into the town of Kiama from the present terminus to Church Point? I think so, but I cannot say whether my idea is correct.
37. Do you think the people of the town are in such a position that they could pay a tax which would warrant the country incurring the cost of that extension? I do think so.
38. Are you aware of the amount of rates received from the ratepayers of the town? There is about £1,600 worth in the municipality.
39. At all events, you believe the people are in a position to give sufficient loading to the railway to warrant the construction of the line into the town, and to pay interest on the cost of construction? I do.
40. The cost of the construction to Church Point would be about £16,000, and the interest upon that about £640—do you think the people of the town would be able to contribute sufficient revenue to pay the interest on the cost? That I could hardly say, but going further south will be a considerable item; to construct it into town would be nothing without the further extension. No doubt the railway will have to go further south, and, after the difficulty of bringing it into the town has been got over, it will not be very difficult or costly to take it on to Nowra.
41. The source of income, I suppose, would be within a radius of about 20 miles? Yes.
42. And the revenue would be derivable from people sending their milk and other general produce, and also from cube metal? Yes; and I believe, taking the whole district, the line would pay handsomely if only milk and butter were sent; but, at no distant date, I believe we shall have a branch line constructed from Kiama to Jamberoo, where the coal-measures would be opened up.
43. Can you tell us what has been done towards developing the coal at Jamberoo? I know that a survey has been made, and the seams have been tapped, and found to be of excellent quality.
44. Are you interested in that? I am not.
45. Would the railway, if brought into the town of Kiama, increase the value of property? Yes, to a considerable extent.
46. What is the increase in the value of property since the railway terminus has been where it is? I cannot say.
47. Do you think that values would rise through compensation required if the line went through the town? It is hard to say what people would ask; but they cannot always get what they want.
48. Do you know the capabilities of the district between Kiama and Nowra? It is a splendid agricultural district for cultivation or for dairying.
49. And the district around Nowra is also good? Yes.
50. You believe a profitable trade would spring up if the proposed railway extension were carried out, and that the construction of the line to Nowra would be a good national investment? I believe it would be.
51. *Dr. Garran, through the Chairman.*] You have been here since you were a boy—you know every foot of land about Kiama? Yes.
52. Do you know of any possible route that could be taken for the proposed extension different from the present route? I cannot give an opinion, not being an engineer, but I should like the route not to go through the town.
53. If brought round to Church Point would there be less compensation required? It might take an odd house—a portion of it would simply go through Government land.
54. Do you think the district generally would benefit by what is known as the Saddleback route, in preference to the route by the coast? I think it would be an enormous cost, and it would simply go away from Kiama, and injure it.
55. Do you think it would be of any benefit to the people inland? I think the preferable route is within Kiama.
56. You said that if the line was extended a deal of the traffic which now went by steamer would go by rail;—do you really think so? Yes.
57. Are you anxious to see the steamers run off? I have no desire to see it.
58. Do you think it would be to the interests of the town of Kiama for them to be run off? I do not think so.
59. Are they making a living now? I believe they are. I have never heard anything to the contrary.

60. What proportion of the old trade do the steamers keep? I cannot say.
61. At any rate, the railway gets a good deal of the traffic? It does.
62. Has the railway stimulated the traffic of the district? Yes, it has.
63. Is there more produce in the district? I cannot say that the railway has caused the district to produce more.
64. *Chairman.*] Has it not created a milk trade between Kiama and Sydney? Yes, a considerable quantity now goes by train, much larger than by steamer.
65. Do you think the extension of the line would be the means of expanding the milk traffic between Sydney and Kiama? Yes, to a very large extent.
66. How many coaches leave Kiama with passengers daily for the south? I am not aware of the exact number, but it is considerable.
67. And passengers are carried right on to Nowra and further south by that means? Yes.
68. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Who is the agent for the steamers that trade here? Mr. Keon.
69. Have you a customs office here? I think so; there is a person in charge.

C. W. Craig,
Esq.
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Mr. James Somerville, Council Clerk, Kiama, sworn, and examined:—

70. *Chairman*] What is your occupation? I am Council Clerk for the borough of Kiama.
71. Have you resided long in this district? Twenty-two years.
72. How long have you been connected with the Municipal Council? During the whole of that time. I have been Council Clerk during the whole of that period.
73. Have you seen the plan of the proposed extension of the railway from the cemetery at Kiama to the Shoalhaven River? I have not, but I know the route. I have seen the ground marked out.
74. You have seen the staked line? Yes.
75. Are you favourable or unfavourable, from your knowledge, to the construction of the line as proposed? I am quite in favour of it.
76. Do you deem any deviation desirable? No.
77. Can you give the Committee any information as to the progress of the district during the past fifteen years? It has progressed very much during the last fifteen years. At present the population is between 7,000 and 8,000; fifteen years ago it was not half that number.
78. What has been the progress in the electorate of Kiama during the last fifteen years? It has increased about 100 per cent.
79. How long is it since the agitation for the railway first started? About fifteen years; since the construction to Illawarra was agitated for.
80. But since the present extension was agitated for? About five years.
81. What has been the progress of the district since then? About 30 per cent.
82. Has there been an increase in the price of ratable property in the borough? Yes.
83. Do you think that increase was due to the construction of the railway? Partly.
84. What are the other causes for the increase in the value of property in this district? There seem to have been a general desire to purchase property and settle in the district.
85. Do you know what area of land is in cultivation in the Kiama electorate? There are 23,000 acres under grass.
86. The Statistical Register gives the acreage under cultivation as 62,000, so that there would be 23,000 of that under grass? Yes.
87. Do you know how many dairy cattle there are in the district? About 17,000, and ordinary cattle about 9,000.
88. And horses? About 3,000.
89. Pigs? About 10,000.
90. Can you say how many factories have been established in the district during the last five years? Eight butter factories within the electorate.
91. Do you know if separators are used by any of the farmers, and how many? There are about ten or twelve farmers using separators at the present time.
92. Can you state the quantity of milk sent per day to the factories? About 20,000 gallons per day to the eight factories.
93. That would be an average of about 2,500 gallons per day to each? Yes, some send more and others less.
94. Do you know if the butter made by those factories is sent to the metropolis by rail, or by steamer? Some is sent by rail, and some by steamer. I think all made north of Kiama and within a convenient distance is sent by rail.
95. Can you say what the difference is between the freight by steamer and that by rail? I cannot say.
96. Are you aware that a great many deputations have from time to time waited upon the various Governments to urge the extension of the railway line from the present terminus to Shoalhaven? Yes.
97. Do you believe that if the line were extended further south there would be an increase in the traffic sufficient to cover the working expenses and the cost of construction? Yes. I look upon the present line as only touching the productive part of the district.
98. How far south must the extension be continued before reaching the boundary of the electorate of Kiama? About 12 miles.
99. And is the whole of that land used for dairying purposes? Yes.
100. Can you say how many tenant-holdings there are in the municipality of Kiama? About 600 or 700.
101. Do you know, or can you approximate the average extent of the present holdings? From 70 to 150 acres.
102. Would a very large portion of the people be served by the extension of the railway? Yes, very large.
103. Do you think the whole of the traffic between Kiama and the Shoalhaven River would go by the railway if extended to Nowra? I believe it would.
104. *Mr. Hurley.*] You said just now that there was a desire to settle in the district and purchase property. How can that be when people have gone elsewhere out of it—what do you mean? I mean there is a desire to settle in the district; but there is no land for them.
105. Are there no Crown Lands? No, not that a person could buy and settle on.
106. What is land worth here? It is worth about £50 per acre.

Mr.
J. Somerville.
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- Mr. J. Somerville. 107. What do tenants pay per acre? £1 12s. 6d. down to a pound per acre.
108. Then if a land tax were introduced that class of land would turn in a very good revenue? It would.
- 25 Jan., 1890. 109. What do the rates in the Kiama municipality amount to? About £1,500 per year, with a levy of 1s. in the pound.
110. Upon what basis would you make up the increased returns were the railway extended into town? Upon that of produce and passengers. At the present time there are large quantities of butter going to the London market from this district.
111. And are the returns favourable to a continuation of that industry? Very favourable.
112. Has the railway paid fair interest up to the present time? I believe it has.
113. Have you any idea of the cost of construction of the railway from Sydney to Kiama? No.
114. It cost £1,725,421—Looking at the extension of the railway into the town to the Church Point, do you think that that extension will lead to settlement and the development of new industries? I cannot say, but at the present time I believe there are three trains leaving Kiama daily which convey something like 350 tons of metal.
115. Has not the stone trade been almost an annihilation to you as a town? It has been unfortunate to the municipality.
116. Your Council has been somewhat unfortunate with it? It is not the tramway that has failed, but the stone trade.
117. Was it attributable to the decrease of the stone trade, or the action of the Council with the tramway? To the removal of the stone trade from Kiama to Bombo.
118. Do you know if there are any industries to the south of Kiama, and have you any knowledge of them? I know that in the mountains there are valuable coal seams.
119. Are you interested in any land through which this railway would pass? No.
120. You are not likely to personally benefit by the extension of the railway? No.
121. Mr. O'Sullivan.] Was there any milk trade between this district and Sydney before the railway opened? Very little.
122. Then the railway has developed this trade in milk and extended the butter industry? Yes.
123. Will they be still further extended by taking the railway further south? Very much so.
124. Is there any other industry in the district that has been benefited by the railway? Yes; there is the bacon industry.
125. Have you any timber trade in this district? Not much.
126. What are the crops mostly grown in the electorate? Maize and potatoes. Not much wheat or hay.
127. Is there a fair trade in these products? There would be, with increased facilities.
128. I suppose most of the land in the district is already occupied? Yes.
129. And being a dairying district, there is not likely to be much more cultivation? I think not.
130. Dr. Garran.] How far back from Kiama is the coal-bearing seam? About 7 miles.
131. The easiest way of making that accessible would be a branch line from Jamberoo? Yes.
132. About 7 miles in length? Yes.
133. You could not ship coal from Kiama? Yes, we could; we could put five or six vessels in the basin at one time. We have about the same capacity as at Wollongong.
134. What size vessels could you load at the Kiama wharf? Vessels of about 400 tons.
135. You could not do a large foreign trade? No.
136. If you wanted to do such a trade the vessels would have to go to Sydney or to Jervis Bay? Yes.
137. How far would it be from the mines to Sydney? About 60 miles.
138. And to Jervis Bay? About 25 or 30 miles.
139. Then other things being equal, Jervis Bay would have the preference? Yes.
140. And if it would pay to ship at Jervis Bay, this line, we are considering, would get all the traffic? Yes.
141. Apart from the coal traffic, in what other way do you consider the railway would add to the benefit of the place? In the settlement of population, and in developing the richness of the soil.
142. You say there is no land to be taken up, and except for residential settlers where would be the benefit? There would be country residences; there have been inquiries for land for that purpose, and I think there will be a large demand before long.
143. I understand you to say that the railway has not stimulated the production of the district? Not in the south.
144. Do you think the extension of the railway to Shoalhaven would stimulate further production? I believe it would.
145. There is more room there? There is a larger extent of good land in the Shoalhaven district than in this one.
146. The land would be more arable? Yes.
147. You think there is good reason for believing it would be made to produce more if the line was extended there? I do.
148. Do you know the proposed route of the extension? I do.
149. Do you know of any improvement that could be made in it? I do not.
150. Do you agree with the Mayor of Kiama that the extension should go by the Church Point route? I believe that that route would be impracticable. I am in favour of the present route as the best.
151. Chairman.] What was the quantity of butter sent from the district last year? There were about 2,500,000 lb. made in the district last year.

Mr. Stephen Major, storekeeper, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. S. Major. 152. Mr. Hurley.] What is your name? Stephen Major.
- 25 Jan., 1890. 153. And what is your business or occupation? Storekeeper.
154. Have you been in the district many years? Nearly thirty.
155. Then you must know something of the resources of the district and its trade;—what proportion of trade does the railway get? I know that the railway is not getting anything like the goods trade in comparison to that of passengers. That is on account of the inconvenience experienced by people like myself in getting goods from the station, which at present is so awkwardly situated.
156. Is not the freight a considerable item at the present? Yes; but at the present rate of freights I think that if the railway was brought into town, the steamers would be stopped altogether.
157. What are the resources of the district? Chiefly dairying. 158.

158. Do you think there is sufficient trade to warrant the extension of the line? I do. The best land ^{Mr. S. Major.} has not yet been reached.
159. Do you know anything of the exports? Yes; our exports in butter alone amount to £114,000 or ^{25 Jan., 1890.} £115,000 per year—that is exclusive of bacon, eggs, cheese, and poultry.
160. It is estimated that the cost of construction of the line into Kiama would be about £94,000;—do you think, from your knowledge, that there would be a sufficient increase in your imports to warrant the construction into Kiama? I think so. Our imports cannot be less than £160,000 a year.
161. Do you supply the outlying districts? We supply Gerringong, Jamberoo, and other places.
162. What is the circumference of the district you serve? A radius of about 12 or 13 miles.
163. Have you any idea of the number of people in the district? About 8,000 or 9,000.
164. Have you any experience as regards the mineral resources of the district? I have not, but I know there is any quantity of coal in it.
165. Would the line tap this? It would if it went further south, when it would run parallel with the range containing coal, and branch lines could be constructed to the mountain containing the coal measures or seams.
166. Have you any interest in the extension? No.
167. Do you believe it would be of national importance if the extension was made? I believe it would, and at the same time it would tap the mineral land.
168. Do you think it would increase the population of the district? No, except the mineral resources are developed, as it is sufficiently populated for dairy purposes, and the land being nearly all taken up, there is not much room for further increase of a farming population. The land is paying well as at present being used—that is for dairying purposes, and it could not grow hay and other things, like Victoria or Adelaide. If they did go in for growing these crops, mowing machines could not be used with advantage, on account of the hilly nature of the district.
169. You have to bring produce like that into your district from other places? Yes, we get it from Victoria and other places.
170. Is it not because the people have not been educated up to agriculture that they have to do that? No, it is because the people found dairying paid better.
171. Have you any idea of the dairying industry further south? I believe it is good.
172. Do you know what is the difference in the cost of carriage of goods of that description by rail and steamer? We used formerly to pay from 2s. 6d. per keg of butter by steamer, while now the charge for a box of butter per train is about 8d. or 9d.
173. Do you know of a detour having been made through Saddleback in connection with this railway, and do you know what was the reason for it? I believe it was caused by a prejudiced feeling. The Kiama route is a better one, and if it went to Jamberoo it must go further south.
174. Do you believe the blue-metal trade would develop by the extension? Yes, I believe it would. At the present time, I have been informed, one small contractor alone has paid away about £50 per week for sending out stone by rail to Sydney.
175. Then do you think the exports will increase if the line is extended? Undoubtedly.
176. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Are you aware that in some places people pay the storekeepers annually? I am not aware of it.
177. Is that the case here? No.
178. Have your customers money enough to pay their debts? Yes, the fixed population are right enough in that respect. It is only the floating population we have trouble with.
179. Have you any idea of what would be the leading industry after the extension? I believe the milk industry will be.
180. *Dr. Garran.*] To whom is the district indebted for its factories? I think the Fresh Food and Ice Company started them with the Pioneer Factory.
181. Do you think the milk trade pays? I understand from the manager that he can take all the milk he can get from the district, and I am going to erect cool chambers myself for it. The suppliers were getting 5d. per gallon for it. At that price it is the best paying industry in the colony.
182. And have the farmers near the train the benefit of that? Undoubtedly; but unless the demand grows in proportion to the increase then of course it will become less profitable to send it to Sydney. Milk at 5d. was a paying industry to anyone.
183. How long have you been in the district? Nearly thirty years.
184. Do you know if the land has deteriorated during that period? It had not deteriorated very much, for the reason that in good seasons, and when the grass was plentiful, it became a source of manure to the land when it decayed, and the cattle return to the land almost as much as they take from it in manure. Dairying on the land is not like growing potatoes or other crops, and has not such an exhausting effect upon the soil.
185. You just stated that the grass became a source of manure to the land;—do you know of any farm where the production of grass has deteriorated? I know splendid farms which during the number of years I stated have retained the excellent quality of their soils and grass-growing capabilities without any deterioration whatever.
186. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you cart your own goods? Yes.
187. What is the cost of cartage per ton to town from the railway? 2s. 6d., I believe.
188. What is the cartage rate? I do not know, but 1s. is charged for passengers from the train.
189. Then if the freight was 2s. less by rail it would be equal to that of the steamer? I do not exactly know the railway rate, but in some instances I think it would be less. I think the railway rate is about the same.
190. Would you prefer to get your goods by rail? Yes.
191. This extension into the town is to cost about £100,000, what would you expect to pay the Government per ton as freight? About 3s., I suppose.
192. Perhaps you would only have to pay 2d. where now you pay 3s.? I think that would be it.
193. Do you believe it would benefit the town, and that the Government would benefit by the extension? I believe the town would be benefited, but I cannot say what the exact amount of freight would be, and what proportion of that it would take to pay the interest on the outlay.
194. Do you think it will pay the Government to go on to Shoalhaven with the extension? Undoubtedly. Some persons in Kiama might not care about it going further south, but I believe in the extension. I fail

- Mr. S. Major. fail to see how it will injure Kiama as it will become a centre, and I believe the town will be more likely then to get the trade of Gerringong than now.
- 25 Jan., 1890. 195. Do you think it would be more difficult to extend it from here to Shoalhaven than from there to Ulladulla? I cannot say.
196. Looking at the extension into Kiama and to Jervis Bay, do you believe it is worth while to extend it; as a general taxpayer, would you vote for the extension to Kiama? I would say, "Extend it."
197. How is it that wheat will not grow here—is it on account of weevil? No, it is on account of the richness of the land.
198. How much more profitable is it to grow grass than hay? It is 100 per cent. more profitable.
199. Then your idea is to produce what you can, and purchase what you cannot produce? Exactly so. I am a thorough freetrader.
200. I am not asking you a political question. You were speaking about the blue-metal trade. Does the railway tap any of the quarries? Yes, it goes right through metal, and the Government has purchased one of the quarries.
201. Is there any cartage there? No, none at all.
202. Are there any other quarries? Yes, there are some in town, and on top of Mount Pleasant it is all blue metal. The railway would open up some splendid quarries there.
203. What is the cost of carriage by water and rail? By water it is 5s. for a few items, but 10s. for sugar and similar goods. The railway charges are very anomalous. In some cases 5s. 8d. per ton is charged, and in others as high as £1 per ton. I never could understand the absurdly anomalous charges of the Railway Department. Why flour should be carried for 5s. 8d. per ton, and nearly £2 charged for sugar, while the same amount of energy is expended in the haulage and handling of both.
204. Has the railway increased the price of goods? Yes, that for poultry, butter, and milk.
205. Has the railway in town had the effect of cutting down prices? It has increased competition considerably by bringing us into contact with the Sydney business houses. This I regard as one of the evil effects of concentration.
206. How do you account for the increase in prices? Under the old system it was very injurious to send butter by steamer to Sydney, and the I.S.N. Company used their monopoly very harshly while they had it.
207. Is it far better to send butter by train? Yes, far better.
208. Has the Government provided cool chambers for your butter? No, but I believe it will. I believe Mr. Dymock has been trying to induce the Commissioners to put on trucks. They promised to do so, and I believe there will be a margin of profit open to the department in that item.
209. *Chairman.*] What are the carrying capabilities of the district? It carries 1 cow to the acre, and at the present time there are about 23,000 acres under grass.
210. What is the average value of the land? Some parts £30, and others could not be purchased for £60 per acre.
211. What is the average rent? From 25s. to 30s. per acre.
212. Can you say whether the passenger traffic has increased since the opening of the railway? Yes; very materially—more than double.
213. Has the traffic between the southern portion and here increased;—that is from Shoalhaven? Yes. There are three coaches per day, which carry about 150 passengers to Nowra and other places south weekly.
214. Do more people travel by rail than by steamer? I believe the I.S.N. Company does not, on an average, take five passengers a week.
215. And do nearly all the goods come by boat? Nearly all.
216. Do you think if the extension were made that all the goods would come by rail? I believe they would.
217. And that the whole traffic would be taken from the steamer and diverted to the train? I believe the whole trade of the coast would go to the railway.
218. How many municipalities are there in the electoral district of Kiama? There is Shellharbour, Kiama, Gerringong, and Broughton Vale, and Kiama embraces a large area, taking in all Jamberoo.
219. Who are the aldermen in the Kiama Council representing Jamberoo Ward? Aldermen Cole, King, and Noble.
220. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How do the mails leave here, and for where? They go through Jamberoo to Moss Vale, and from Kiama to Albion Park, Gerringong, Broughton Village, and Nowra.
221. Do all those places trade with Kiama? Not much further south than Gerringong.
222. What is the average size of dairy farms in this district? We have 570 landholders, with an average of about 112 acres.
223. How many cows do you think a family of four could live on? Ten.
224. *Mr. Hurley.*] Do you know if there is a weed in the district known as *sida-retusa*? I do not know it by its botanical name, but I believe the weed does exist.
225. Does it destroy the quality of the soil? I do not think so. It might take certain qualities from it, but the cattle will eat it, and do so.
226. Have you heard any complaints about it destroying the land, and of persons leaving the place in search of better? There are a number gone to the Richmond River, but not from that cause.

Mr. John Thomas Cole, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. T. Cole. 227. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is your name? John Thomas Cole.
228. What is your occupation? Dairy farmer.
229. What is the size of your holding? About 125 acres.
- 25 Jan., 1890. 230. I suppose you find dairying more profitable than cultivation? It depends upon the prices.
231. I suppose you know all the land about the district? Yes.
232. How long have you been here? Lived here since I was born.
233. You have a thorough knowledge of its resources then? Yes.
234. Can you rely upon the permanency of its resources? Yes, they are thoroughly established.
235. Is there room for any further settlement? Not what was understood by settlement. There might be room for production. By improved methods of agriculture the production might be increased very much—perhaps twofold.
236. What is the reason people are leaving this district and going further north? To get more scope. As a man's sons grow up they go to find holdings for themselves, and take what they can get. 237.

Mr.
J. T. Cole.
25 Jan., 1890.

237. Then I take it that they are simply going to wider spheres to carry on the occupation of dairy-farming? Yes, they are.
238. It is not that the district has deteriorated then? No; they are simply turned out for want of land.
239. Can you give any idea of the changes made in the district since the railway came into it? The railway has paid very well since it was opened, and the further south it went the more it must increase. Of course the milk trade has become a very paying trade, and that must increase as the railway extends, as that article can only be carted some 4 or 5 miles with safety.
240. How is it that the men cart it such distances in Sydney as they do? I suppose that accounts for the quality of the milk they sell.
241. Are you in favour of the extension of the line? Yes.
242. Have you any personal interest in the extension? No; I am more interested in Jamberoo.
243. I presume the people of Jamberoo will be satisfied with a branch line? Undoubtedly.
244. Are you aware of the quality of the land about Gerringong and Nowra—and is it as good as in Kiama? Yes.
245. Then if the railway is taken on to Nowra we may look for the same improvement as has been made in the Kiama district? It is reasonable to expect it.
246. *Mr. Hurley.*] Do you know anything of the weed in question—*sida-retusa*? I suppose it is that known as pig-weed.
247. It is a weed originally introduced for the manufacture of paper. Can you keep it down? Yes; I consider it my duty and that of every farmer to keep it down.
248. Well, that means it is destructive? Undoubtedly.
249. Do I take it then that the people are not well aware of agricultural practices, and that that is the reason more of it is not done? More agriculture will only pay when there are increased facilities for sending it to market.
250. It has been said that the land was lying idle because of the indolence of the people of Kiama—is that a fact? It is not true; it is because dairying pays better. The chief agriculture here is in growing fodder for the cattle.
251. Do you export butter? No, not personally.
252. Are you in any way interested in this line going further south? I am not.
253. Do you believe it will lead to settlement, and be a good national investment? I do.
254. What class of people do you believe it will cause to settle on it—agriculturists, or do you think it would simply be a kind of sanatorium? I believe it would be a sanatorium.
255. *Chairman.*] You have been asked about the cultivation of the land; has it not been necessary to use artificial grasses? Certainly. Originally, Illawarra was a wheat-growing district, but it has been found more profitable to go into the dairying. Besides, rust was troublesome with the wheat, and it would not pay now to grow it or any other cereal crops.
256. What would be the average cost of clearing and laying down the grass? That would depend upon the quality of the land. If heavy brush land, it would not be less than from £7 to £10 per acre—perhaps more—according to the density of the brush.
257. If it was said by a previous witness, then, that there are about 60,000 acres under artificial grass, it would mean an expense of about half a million of money? About that.
258. You have taken a great interest in the working of the factories; have they been a success? Undoubtedly.
259. Have they been the means of stimulating the production of butter? Certainly.
260. In what way? It relieved the people from a lot of the home slush they were previously accustomed to, and gave them more time to look after their cattle. Besides, the factory system paid them better, and stimulated an increased production.
261. Is it giving a better price to your farmers? Undoubtedly it is. We could not in olden times always obtain the top price.
262. Then do you believe it pays better under the factory system of making butter? Certainly, and the very fact of our butter having obtained the highest price in the London market proves it.
263. Do you look upon the English market as likely to take the surplus portion of your supply? Yes.
264. Can you say at what price butter would pay when sold in the English market? I do not know the cost of shipping.
265. We will presume it to be 3d. per lb.—would 9d. pay? Nine-pence would barely leave a profit to the producer.
266. Do the factories pay a better price than you obtained by sending your butter to the metropolis? Yes; frequently in the flush seasons, under the old system, butter was as low as 3d.
267. Has the demand for milk since the opening of the railway been fully supplied? I cannot say.
268. Do you think if a larger quantity was sent there would be a demand for it? Yes.
269. Why? Because the Fresh Food and Ice Company were paying 5d. for it, while the factories were only paying 3d.
270. Do you think the extension would be injurious to the Kiama farmers? Quite the opposite.
271. Can you say what price would pay the farmer for sending his milk by rail—would 3d. per gallon pay? It would leave a profit.
272. Do you believe at less than 3d. it would pay? Yes, we had 2½d., but I believe the price has been 5½d. per gallon for the last two years.
273. Does that leave a margin of profit? Yes, very good.
274. Do the dairy-farmers in Jamberoo at present use the railway? There was the butter from the two factories sent by rail, but no milk whatever.
275. Have you examined the plan showing the proposed line from Kiama to Shoalhaven? No.
276. Are you familiar with it? Yes.
277. Can you say, as a resident of Jamberoo, that it is desirable that the line should be constructed as at present proposed? It is desirable, but I certainly think the line should have gone through Jamberoo at first.
278. Having regard to the extension from its present terminus to the south—are you quite favourable to the proposed route? Yes, quite so.
279. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Can you give the Committee any idea of the bacon and cheese industries in this district? There is very little cheese made, but the bacon industry is an important one in connection with the factories and private dairies. There are several large bacon factories in the district.

- Mr. J. T. Cole.
25 Jan., 1890.
280. What is their output? I cannot say.
281. Is the industry progressive? It is an industry that keeps pace with the dairies, according to the quantity of milk supplied to the factories, and at home pigs are kept.
282. You say that you do not think a distance further than 5 or 6 miles from the railway would serve the milk producers? Certainly not.
283. How far is Jamberoo away? About 6 miles.
284. Does not the Fresh Food and Ice Company draw milk from Bowral and Wingecarribee and surrounding district? I believe so, but I am not acquainted with the districts.
285. Is the Fresh Food and Ice Company taking milk from this district? I believe it is taking all the milk it can get.
286. According to a statement made by you this district of Kiama has been a sort of nursery to its young men—is that so? Yes.
287. Wingecarribee has been populated from this district, has it not? Yes.
288. You say that more scientific farming will develop the population? Well, not exactly that, but it would increase the production and value of the land.
289. You think then that a higher class of farming would turn in more wealth? I do.
290. And that it would stimulate it? I do.

Mr. Michael Nesbitt Hindmarsh, dairy-farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. M. N. Hindmarsh.
25 Jan., 1890.
291. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Dairy-farmer and freeholder.
292. How many years have you been a resident of the district? I was born in it—about fifty-seven years.
293. You are the owner of property here, are you not? Yes, in Gerringong and Kiama.
294. Shall you be personally affected by the railway? It passes through some of my land in Kiama.
295. But not through any of your dairying property? No.
296. Have you examined the proposed route, and are you in favour of it? Yes.
297. Can you state the progress of the district during the last eight or ten years? It is more cleared, and more people have settled in it.
298. There are a number of people leaving the district and going further north to settle;—what is the reason for that? To get land; but with the extension of the railway there will be a lot of land available in Gerringong and at Berry's Estate.
299. As far as the railway has gone, has it passed through the best portion of the district or otherwise? It certainly has not.
300. Will the extension serve a larger population? It will.
301. Can you state the value of land during the last ten years? From £20 to £50 per acre.
302. And what is the rent? From 25s. to 30s. per acre.
303. Can you say whether any alteration in the route of the proposed extension would afford better facilities? I do not think it would be possible. The present is the best for the general public.
304. Are you of opinion that the construction would pay interest on the outlay? I believe it would.
305. Do you think there would be an increased settlement by the extension going further south? Undoubtedly.
306. Is there a large quantity of Government land unalienated in the Shoalhaven district? Not much.
307. It is said that there are 40,000 acres of Government land there? That is on the top of the mountain, between this and Robertson.
308. What sort of land is it? More coal land than anything else.
309. And would it be increased in value by the extension of the railway? Undoubtedly.

Henry Whittingham, Esq., bank manager, sworn, and examined:—

- H. Whittingham, Esq.
25 Jan., 1890.
310. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Manager of the E.S. & A.C. Bank.
311. How long have you held that position? For the last eleven years.
312. Do you know of the position of the people? Generally, the commercial position of the people is sound. I give that as my opinion from a connection with the district for about thirty years, and I can bear testimony that the district is one of the most solvent and prosperous portions of the Colony.
313. How many branch banks are there in Kiama? Four; one in Jamberoo, and two in Gerringong, making seven.
314. Can you say if the farmers generally have deposits at interest to their credit? Yes, there are a large number of dairy-farmers with accounts in the banks at interest. All the intelligent and good managing freehold and tenant farmers have.
315. As to the general body of farmers—are they in a good position? Yes. I have held my present position for eleven years, and have not lost a penny during that time.
316. Then you think that the people are as a rule prosperous? Yes.
317. Have you examined the line? I know it thoroughly.
318. Is all the land good dairying land? Yes—no bad land until you get to the near bank of the Shoalhaven River.
319. What is its value and rent per acre? The value is about £30, and the rent of the best land 30s.
320. What is the general opinion of the proposed route? The general opinion is that it is a good one. There have never been any large organizations against the route. The people have always been favourable to the Government proposals.
321. Will the line run through your bank? No; it will come pretty close to it, but will not interfere with the building.
322. Do you think that the construction of the line into town would increase the trade? It will. Our trade in poultry and eggs is nothing to what it is on the continent of Europe.
323. Has the construction of the line to the present terminus increased the value of property in Kiama? Yes; people are not inclined to sell. There is not much building going on, because people are in doubt as to where to build.
324. Can you give us any idea of the value of land in the street where your bank is? About £20 per foot. One lot was sold some time previously to the advent of the railway at £12 or £14 per foot.

325. Looking at it as a commercial man, and one holding an important position, do you think the line would be a good national investment and a paying thing for the Colony? I do.
326. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] From your evidence I take it that your people are very solvent? Yes.
327. Are mortgages unknown here? No. A man might buy a farm for £3,000, and be only able to pay £1,500. But there is no difficulty in obtaining advances.
328. With regard to the railway, can you say, as a business man, that it is likely to pay interest on the construction to Bomaderry? Yes; it would pay working expenses from the start, and in twelve months' time, more.

H.
Whittingham,
Esq.

25 Jan., 1890.

Samuel Smith Wells, Esq., surveyor and civil engineer, sworn, and examined:—

329. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Surveyor and civil engineer.
330. Do you live in the district? Yes; I have done so for the last two or three years. I was one of the surveyors who pegged the railway from here to Jervis Bay, and can only speak of that route.
331. *Dr. Garran.*] You are aware that some heavy and expensive work must be done for 4 or 5 miles to get out of Kiama? Yes.
332. Have you been right on to Jervis Bay? Yes, I worked from Nowra to the coast.
333. What was the country like there through which you passed.—Would it be equally easy to go to the south and make the line? No, you must go east to get the level country.
334. You are familiar with these surveys right through to Nowra—you do not know of any better route? No, I do not.
335. If we took the line to Jamberoo, would it be a saving in the price? It was not worth while taking it that route.
336. Do you know anything of the Jervis Bay route? Yes, it is all timber and scrub, but would be good for agricultural or dairy purposes. There is very little population at Jervis Bay.
337. Have you any knowledge of the coal measures? Yes.
338. Have you any interest in them? I take no interest in them.
339. Do you think the construction of the railway would be likely to lead to settlement? Yes.
340. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Is the land around Jervis Bay reserved? No.
341. Is it fit to settle on? Yes. There is a private town there—Huskisson—called South Huskisson and a Government township called North Huskisson.
342. Why has the land not been settled on? For this reason—you cannot get there.
343. I understand there is a splendid harbour at Jervis Bay? So there is.
344. Have you had considerable experience in the profession? Yes, in Wellington, New Zealand.
345. Is there great engineering difficulties there? Yes; the North Island is very rough.
346. Are there any difficulties on the present line to compare with those of New Zealand? No.
347. *Chairman.*] Can you say whether the construction of the railway from this district to Jervis Bay would be a profitable investment? It would.
348. And pay working expenses and the cost of construction? Yes.

S. S. Wells,
Esq.

25 Jua., 1890.

Mr. Alexander Campbell, farmer and auctioneer, sworn, and examined:—

349. *Dr. Garran.*] What is your name? Alexander Campbell.
350. And your occupation? Farmer and general auctioneer.
351. How long have you been in the district? I was born in it.
352. Do you corroborate the evidence given by previous witnesses as to the value of the land? Well, yes; the profits of the land have increased, and for one farmer that leaves there are any amount of applications to fill the farm, and it usually happens that a higher price is obtained for it.
353. Is the population on the land leasehold or freehold? The majority is leasehold.
354. There is no advantage derived by the leaseholders of the land, is there? Some use it to the best advantage.
355. Does the tenant make his own improvements? Not always.
356. Do you think that the opening of the railway has quickened the industry of the district? Yes, through the starting of factories and the railway opening, farmers have more time to work upon their farms and raise higher values.
357. And you think the farmers have given that time to their farms? Yes.
358. Well they have not only got the time, but have found out how to use it to their advantage? Yes.
359. Do you agree with a previous witness that improved methods of agriculture and improved soil would increase the produce of the district? Yes; there is room for improved agriculture. Hitherto the farmer only studied growing fodder for his cattle; but by this means they have been able to get a good production, and under the factory system all the butter is extracted from their milk, while under the old system it was not.
360. Do you sell dairy cows? Yes.
361. What breed are the cattle here? They are what is known as the Illawarra breed, a cross between an Alderney and Shorthorn. They have been crossed until worked up to a high state of perfection, and I do not think they can be improved.
362. What are they worth? From £8 to £10 per head.
363. What is the grass in the district? Rye, couch, and clover.
364. Is there no native grass? Very little.
365. Do you find anything better than clover and rye-grass? No.
366. Have you noticed since the railway opened that a stimulus has been given to production? I believe it has; but the railway at present has only put the thin edge of the wedge in as it were in that direction. It has not reached the most productive parts.
367. You are aware, as a farmer, that butter has been going to the London market? Yes; we have been sending to the home market.
368. Is the butter sent from here as much appreciated as that sent from Victoria? Yes, we obtain a better price for our butter.
369. What do you attribute that to? To the fact that we are ahead of Victoria in the process of manufacture.
370. Will cows give good butter if fed on hay? No.

Mr.
A. Campbell.

25 Jan., 1890.

- Mr. A. Campbell.
25 Jan., 1890.
371. Do you think the succulent herbage of this district will give better butter than hay? Yes.
372. Having got a market for your produce in London, you expect to get rid of your surplus in that way;—you do not think the Richmond River will injure you? I do not think so, because the Richmond River butter would be inferior to ours in the summer months.
373. Then you do not think that the young men who went to that district from here will be able to injure you in that respect? No.
374. Do you believe the section to Nowra will pay? I believe it will pay better than any other portion, as there are various sources of revenue likely to be developed.
375. Then the line only runs to the edge of the rich district, and requires to go further? Yes.
376. Do you know anything of the district further south? I have travelled to Nowra, and been to Jervis Bay. The whole district is rich, and large blocks of the Berry Estate are lying idle which, I expect, will before long either be sold or leased, and make room for population.
377. The railway will be practicable to nearly all the settlers on that property—is that so? Yes.
378. Do you think the river will compete with the railway? I do not think so.
379. Do you think they will send their produce 10 miles to the railway? Yes.
380. How far will butter carry? Almost any distance, if carefully handled.
381. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] I understood you to say your cattle were mostly one breed? It is hard to define the breed, but they are known as the Illawarra breed. They are a cross breed, and have been worked up to a high standard. Some of them give a very high yield of milk—as much as 7 and 8 gallons per day; but that is with a high pressure or special feeding.
382. What is a good average for a cow of an ordinary herd? About 3 gallons.
383. Do you mean to say that all the cows in the district could yield 12 quarts of milk per day, and that, if a man owned 100 of that breed of cows he would get 300 gallons of milk per day from them? Yes, I have known cows to make that average.
384. I presume you are acquainted with the Jervis Bay district—can you tell why it is not settled in? The land between the Bay and Nowra is not very well adapted for dairying, but more for growing crops and fruit—fruit grew excellently at Tomerong.
385. Is the land there reserved? There is a portion reserved for timber, but, when the railway goes there and the timber is cut down, it will be available for other purposes.
386. The coal measures—do you know anything of them; and are there any other minerals in that district; I believe it is the best of coal; and the gold mines are valuable. They are nearly west to Nowra, and paying. Coal is found all along the mountains for a very considerable distance. At Yalwal, where the gold is, the stone is there in a large quarry, and yields about 2 oz. to the ton.
387. Are there any other mines there? There are several there.
388. How many miners do you think there are engaged there at a time? I could not say.
389. Is the Shoalhaven district well adapted for agricultural purposes? Yes, the greater portion of it.
390. *Chairman.*] Have you examined the route? Yes, I have been all along it.
391. Are you of opinion that it is the best route that can be adopted for the extension? Yes; the eastern route as surveyed is the most advantageous. If the western route was taken, the people on the eastern side would stick to the water traffic; whereas, by the eastern route, all the western traffic would be secured, as people must go to the east to get export; and, if run to the west, probably all the traffic between that point and the last would be lost.
392. Do you know of any better route for bringing the line into the town of Kiama? I do not.

MONDAY, 27 JANUARY, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Kiama, at 10 a.m.

Present:—

THE HONORABLE FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY (CHAIRMAN).

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Kiama to Nowra.

Mr. Hubert Keon, shipping agent, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. H. Keon.
27 Jan., 1890.
393. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? I am shipping agent for the Illawarra Steam Navigation Company.
394. How long have you been here? Seven years at Kiama.
395. Are you well conversant with the various products of the district? Yes.
396. Can you give us any idea as to the outward and inward freight receivable by your Company? I am only a paid servant of the Company, and I think that that information is their property. If I am compelled to answer, I suppose I must do so, but you could get that information from the head office in Sydney.
397. Then, you think there would be an objection on the part of the Company to making public their earnings or their outward and inward freight in connection with this port? I should think so.
398. You think it would be a breach of faith on your part to give such information? I think it would. I would not take upon myself that responsibility.
399. What is the freight charged between here and Sydney by your Company? I will hand in a list of our charges. They are starvation rates.
400. Are these your regular charges, or only for large consignments? These are the standard rates.
401. Since the opening of the railway have you made any material difference in your charges? Yes. You will see by the lists that we have reduced the fare, formerly 10s., to 5s. per ton. Our charge for maize, pollard, flour, bran, &c., is 5s. per ton—the railway charge is 7s. 2d.
402. And the passenger fares and the charges on other goods have been similarly reduced? Yes. The passenger rate is 7s. 6d., and 4s. 6d. steerage.
403. Are these the charges which have been in existence ever since you have been in the employment of the Company? No; 15s. 6d. was the cabin fare formerly, but we used to provide meals. We do not provide meals now. The passengers have to pay for them.

404. Then you look upon the railway as materially affecting the returns of the company? It has taken away all the passenger traffic. It is only lovers of the sea who travel by steamer now, or persons who are sending stock. Mr. H. Keon.
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405. Do you give greater facilities now for the carriage of goods than you did formerly? No.
406. Do you take more care in regard to the carriage of butter? No; we have always tried to look after the interests of the company by attending to things as fairly as possible.
407. Have you any knowledge of the district generally outside the port? It is only a dairying district. There is no produce. We occasionally have a few bags of potatoes.
408. Do you carry stone? No, that is done by sailing boats. It would not pay to carry stone in the boats that we have.
409. Is your company likely to continue in opposition to the railway? Well, I am only an employé. I do not know. We have four boats a week running here, and I fancy it would not pay if the boats did not make trips to the south, and pay flying visits to Kiama.
410. Your company is an incorporated public company? Yes.
411. Could you give any idea of the amount of the last dividend? It was 10 per cent. I am not a shareholder. I did not take particular notice.
412. Have you seen a balance-sheet of the company's business? No. As far as I can make out they did earn that dividend. It was paid, and a small balance brought forward.
413. Is that attributable to adverse circumstances—loss in connection with the steamers? There is no passenger trade.
414. Looking at it from a capitalist's point of view, would you say that the carrying trade by water between here and Sydney would be a safe investment? By altering the class of boats it might be made to pay, but the trade would have to be worked very economically.
415. Water carriage is looked upon as cheaper than carriage by rail, is it not? It is about one-third less all round than railway carriage. There is at least a difference of £1 per ton in a great many articles. What we carry for 10s. costs 30s. by rail.
416. Therefore the company will always be able to compete with the trains if that is kept up? Yes; but if the railway authorities alter their tariff so as to crush private enterprise they will soon do it.
417. Do you pay any dock charges here? No, we have not paid any for some years. We pay the ordinary town rates.
418. Do you pay any harbour dues? No, they were knocked off by Mr. Watson.
419. Do you think your boats could stand a tax in the shape of harbour dues? Well, scarcely.
420. Has not this port been created for the benefit and advantage of shipowners? I suppose it was. The dock was supposed to be a fine one, and it was opened with great *eclat*.
421. Could you give us any idea of the amount of the traffic per week or month? I could not, because we charge by package. You can get the information from the head office.
422. Can you give us any idea as to the amount receivable per quarter from the passenger traffic? The fares are collected on board by the mate. I should say that it is nil compared with what it has been. There would not be an average of three.
423. As a servant of the company do you know whether the traffic is likely to be remunerative? I am not in a position to state.
424. Do you do any work on behalf of the Government? No.
425. You receive no allowance for anything that you do in connection with the shipping? No.
426. Is there anyone who represents the Government? There is the harbour master, who is also a pilot and light-keeper.
427. Can you give us any idea as to the most suitable place for a railway station at Kiama? I think that the best place would be the fig-tree, here, near the Council Chambers.
428. You think that that site would suit the people of Kiama and Jamberoo? I scarcely think that it would suit the people of Jamberoo. They want a line to themselves.
429. Why do you express that opinion? Everyone likes to have a railway at his own door. It is to save the land carriage.
430. Do you think it would be inconvenient for the people if the station were placed some distance to the south? If it was it might be out of the way. I think that the next best site is where the Chinaman's garden is.
431. Have you any property on the route of the proposed line? It skirts my property; the mark is on the fence.
432. Do you think that the construction of the line to the town will be an advantage to the people? It will be more or less convenient, but it will make no difference in the travelling, no more than the removal of the railway station from Redfern to Hyde Park would. It would not induce more people to travel from the country to the town. The station is in a convenient position where it is; we can get out to it for 6d.
433. Do you know anything about the route which embraces Jamberoo? No.
434. Have you taken any part in the controversies which have taken place as between Kiama and Jamberoo? No.
435. You do not know the reasons why the Jamberoo route has been advocated as against the Kiama route? A little jealousy as regards business. Jamberoo was to be the southern city.
436. Do you hold any decided opinion as to the suitability of one site or the other? They say that the Jamberoo mountains are full of coal which is going to be developed.
437. Do you know of any coal within a radius of 20 miles of this place? No.
438. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Your company is the Illawarra S.N. Co.? Yes.
439. Are they the only company regularly trading here? The only company. Other boats occasionally call in.
440. Your company did a lucrative trade here? Yes, a splendid trade.
441. I presume that the railway has reduced it? It has reduced our freights from 10s. to 5s. a ton in many cases. On all heavy goods we get nearly the same amount of freight as formerly. The railway has made a difference with regard to the carriage of goods through from Newcastle, Gundagai, and other towns. The freights come by rail right through to Kiama. Formerly they were shipped from Sydney.
442. You say that you get almost the same amount of traffic, but the receipts are lessened because the rates are reduced? Yes.

- Mr. H. Keon. 443. Do you carry many oysters? None from here.
444. Do you carry any pigs or other live-stock? Not a great number. They principally bring pigs down from Sydney. The railway and the boats divide that traffic.
445. Do your steamers go to Shoalhaven? Yes, to Wollongong, Kiama, and Shoalhaven twice a week.
446. I suppose you get the larger proportion of your produce from the Shoalhaven district? I am not acquainted with that trade. We have opposition there. Two boats are running in connection with the Berry Estate.
447. How far down the coast do the steamers run? To Eden.
448. And touch at every port? Yes.
449. I suppose it would not pay to run steamers to Kiama alone? In my opinion, it would not.
450. And if the railway goes to Shoalhaven your company will still continue their trade down the coast? I should think so. I do not think it will materially affect them; the charges are so low now.
451. You cannot tell us the tonnage which your steamers carry to Kiama? I should not like to divulge that. The information can be got from Sydney.
452. *Chairman.*] I suppose the inhabitants of the district are very largely benefited by the reduction of the charges which has taken place since the opening of the railway? They get the benefit of it.
453. What was the freight on butter to Sydney before the opening of the railway? It was 1s. 6d. and 2s. a keg.
454. What is the present freight? It varies from 9d. to 1s. a keg.
455. Has there been any alteration of the freight as far as Shoalhaven? No.
456. Then the rates for both passengers and goods to Shoalhaven are the same as they were before the opening of the railway to Kiama? I think so; 22s. 6d. was the passenger rate then.
457. Would not the people of the district be benefited by a railway between the present terminus and Shoalhaven to the same extent that the people of Kiama have been benefited by the opening of the existing railway;—they would benefit in proportion by the reduction of freights, would they not? Yes; passengers—but there is a port at Gerringong, and the principal goods are put out there by some of the boats.
458. Assuming that the railway is to be constructed as far as Shoalhaven, would not the people there be benefited in the same proportion by the reduction of rates as they have been here? I should think so.
459. Steamers would have to reduce fares and freights? Yes; but it would be only those near the terminus that would be benefited, because when they have to carry goods any distance it does away with the benefit. Water carriage is cheaper than train carriage.
460. There has been a reduction in the steamer fares and freights since the opening of the railway to Kiama? Yes.
461. Do you not think the people would be benefited by the reduction in steamer freights? It would do away with coaches that carry passengers now; we get no passengers now.
462. The goods traffic is not served by coaches, is it? There are teamsters who carry the traffic.
463. I am speaking of steamer freights;—if a railway were made to Shoalhaven would there be a reduction in fares and freights to that place similar to the fares to Kiama? The company would certainly cut under the price; if necessary they would try for it.
464. What is the present passenger fare to Shoalhaven? 22s. 6d., I think, but the fares are always collected on board.
465. Was that the rate before the opening of the railway to Kiama? I think it was.
466. Then there has been no reduction in passenger fares to Shoalhaven and Ulladula? We had it published in the papers, I really cannot tell.
467. Did you say in answer to Mr. Hurley that the extension of the railway would not lead to any increase in the passenger or goods traffic? Yes, I do not see that it could as this is only a dairying district, and is fully stocked.
468. It has been stated in the evidence that the existing railway only taps the edge of a productive district, and that if it were extended to the Shoalhaven River it would serve a large population and the traffic would be very greatly increased, is that your opinion, or do you adhere to the opinion you have expressed? I adhere to my former opinion, you get all the passengers now that travel, and it would be very easy to calculate the mileage by train on to Shoalhaven.
469. Do you not think there would be a large quantity of milk sent to Sydney by the dairy farmers occupying land between Sydney and Shoalhaven? No, I think Sydney is particularly well supplied from the north of Kiama.
470. You do not think there would be any increase? They will send in milk if it pays better than butter.
471. Do you think that the butter between Kiama and the Shoalhaven River would still be sent by water if the railway was made? I think so. Water carriage is much cooler than railway carriage and it is equally convenient. It is a matter of economy.
472. Then it is your opinion that the extension of the railway would be of no benefit whatever to the people residing beyond Kiama? Yes, to travelling passengers it will do away with coaching and save time and expense.
473. Do you wish to make any further statement? I should think it would be fair to tax the districts through which the railway runs. There ought to be a tax towards the cost of the railway levied as a guarantee that the railway will pay working expenses and interest on the capital expended.
474. *Mr. Hurley.*] You think that if a land tax were levied when the railway is constructed that that would be a good thing? Tax the district that would be benefited by it.
475. Would you be benefited by the railway? I should be willing to pay my share.
476. *Chairman.*] Your opinion is that the railways of the Colony should be constructed out of the proceeds of a direct tax per head of the population benefited by them? A tax should be levied on the value of the land until the railways pay for themselves.
477. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You think they ought to pay it, because they are benefited by the railways? Yes, and the value of the land is increased by the railway.
478. Do you not think that your company ought to pay for the basin here which they use for nothing? It is made for the convenience of the public.
479. *Mr. Hurley.*] Did not the company reduce the rates and fares between Kiama and Sydney after the railway was opened? Yes, of course.

480. Have the rates been reduced to ports south of Kiama? No. There may be a reduction.
 481. The company hold a practical monopoly, do they not? Other companies tried to compete with us, but they have caved in. I do not think our charges are exorbitant.
 482. Will your charges be reduced if the railway is extended to Shoalhaven? Certainly; the company will try to keep the trade.

Mr. H. Keon.
 27 Jan., 1890.

Andrew Nelson, Esq., Mayor of Gerringong, and dairy-farmer, sworn, and examined:—

483. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What are you? A dairy-farmer.
 484. Where do you reside? At Gerringong.
 485. How far distant is that from Kiama? I reside about 6½ miles from here.
 486. Do you hold any public position? Yes; I am Mayor of Gerringong.
 487. Have you been a long time in the district? About thirty-three years.
 488. Do the people of Gerringong get their goods from Kiama? They do when the steamer does not call at Gerringong.
 489. In fine weather they get their goods by the steamers? Yes.
 490. Are the steamers always able to run there in fine weather? Yes.
 491. And do the people of Gerringong send their produce to Sydney by steamer? Yes.
 492. What does that produce consist of? Butter, bacon, eggs, potatoes, and maize.
 493. Do you send any milk to Sydney? We have not done so yet.
 494. Do you think that if the railway went by way of Gerringong it would take the trade that now goes by steamer? I think it would take all of it.
 495. I presume it would also lead to the extension of the milk trade by enabling the people to send their milk to Sydney? Yes, I am sure it would.
 496. Is there any land there open for settlement? Yes, and it will be settled if the railway goes there.
 497. Will it go through any reserves or large properties? It will go through the property of the late Mr. Berry, between Gerringong and Nowra.
 498. What is the name of that estate? The Coolangatta estate.
 499. Are the people of Gerringong inclined to support the railway if it goes that way? I believe they are.
 500. I presume that they would prefer a railway to the steamers? Yes.
 501. And they would be likely to get their stores from Sydney by rail? Yes.
 502. What is the population of Gerringong? I could hardly tell you.
 503. Is it 600? Fully that. I should think there are 1,400 people in the municipal district.
 504. Before you get to Berry, are there any other places? Yes, Broughton Village.
 505. Where do your mails run to from Gerringong? One goes to Foxground, and another to Berry.
 506. Do you not run a mail down to Greenwell Point? Not from Gerringong.
 507. Are there no other populous places along the coast or in the back towards the mountains? No.
 508. Those are the only places that the railway would be likely to serve? Yes.
 509. Is there a good site for a station near Gerringong? A very good site, I believe.
 510. Is the country pretty level between here and Shoalhaven? Yes; it is level all the way from Mount Pleasant.
 511. Is there no trade done in timber down there? There would be if they had a railway line.
 512. Is there no oyster-culture there? I think not.
 513. Then if a railway went past Gerringong it would have to depend for its trade upon the dairy produce of the district? Yes, but coal-mines might be opened up.
 514. How far from the coast? About 3 miles.
 515. Are there any other minerals down there? No.
 516. No diggings? None.
 517. *Mr. Hurley.*] Are the farmers in your district freeholders or leaseholders? They are both.
 518. Are leaseholders or freeholders occupying the larger area? On Mr. Berry's estate they are all leaseholders.
 519. Can you give us any idea of the rent they pay? They pay different rents, I think.
 520. Could you strike an average? I should think the average of that estate will be 15s. per acre.
 521. You say the population of the district would be immensely benefited by the construction of a line of railway there? I believe it would.
 522. They will take advantage of it to trade with Sydney, which they cannot always do now? Yes.
 523. Can you give us any idea of the revenue of your municipality? Our rates are about £450 a year.
 524. Has property increased in value there since the proposal to make a railway became talked about? I suppose it has. There has been none put up for auction lately.
 525. *Chairman.*] Can you speak as to the character of the land along the line between Kiama and Shoalhaven? It is good agricultural land from Kiama to Nowra.
 526. Is there a very large area of land occupied between Kiama and the Shoalhaven River? Yes; I have the figures. The area under cultivated grass is 62,343 acres. The number of stock—cattle, 27,308; horses, 2,554; pigs, 6,942.
 527. Might the produce of the district be regarded as of a perishable character? Butter certainly is.
 528. Would it not be a great advantage to have quick transit to Sydney? Yes.
 529. Have you examined the route of the proposed extension? I have not been along the route, but I have seen which way it goes.
 530. Could you say that the line if constructed as proposed would best serve the district between Kiama and Shoalhaven? Yes, I think it is about the best route.
 531. Could you suggest any alteration that would be an improvement? No, except that the line might run closer to the Gerringong township.
 532. Would it be more beneficial to the producers of the district if it did? I do not know that it would.
 533. The agent of the Illawarra Steam Navigation Company expressed the opinion that the extension of the railway would not lead to any increase in the amount of traffic, or in the number of passengers;—do you support that opinion? No; my opinion is that it will increase the goods traffic.
 534. Have you considered whether the railway would pay the interest on the cost of construction and the working expenses? If it pays at present, I think it will pay still better when it goes further south.

A. Nelson,
 Esq.
 27 Jan., 1890.

- A. Nelson,
Esq.
27 Jan., 1890.
535. Do you think it will be entering a better district? I do.
536. Do you desire to make any further statements? No.
537. You are favourable to the extension of the railway line? Yes; I think it would be a great benefit to the district.
538. *Mr. Hurley.*] Can you give us any reason why agriculture has been practically abandoned for a considerable number of years in this district? Growing wheat was a failure in consequence of rust.
539. Do you import large quantities of potatoes and grain? We do.
540. Can you say why these products are not grown in a district where the soil is so good for agriculture? I do not know, except that dairying pays better than cultivation.
541. But if you put the rent down at £2 an acre, would not agriculture pay better? I believe, with better means of transit, we should have more cultivation.
542. Is it not a fact that your young men have not been brought up to agriculture, and that you have to import all the produce that you require for the cattle? We do not import all, but we import some.
543. Are there any minerals in this district? I do not know, except that I have heard that there is coal in the mountains.
544. Does the railway pass through any land owned by you? No; it runs near a piece of property of mine, but not through it.

Mr. John Alex. McLean, railway station-master, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. J. A.
McLean.
27 Jan., 1890.
545. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Station Master at Kiama.
546. How long have you been here? A year and eleven months.
547. Then you came here in February, 1888? Yes.
548. The railway to Kiama was open then? No; at that time only a section of it—from here to Clifton.
549. How long is it since the line was opened right through from Sydney to Kiama? It was opened through from Sydney to Kiama on the 3rd October, 1888.
550. Can you say whether there has been a great expansion of traffic by the railway since the line was opened right through to Sydney? Yes, there has been a very great increase in the traffic.
551. Could you state what the traffic was between February, 1888, and October, when the through traffic commenced. I wish you to make a distinction between the traffic on the railway before and since? For the six months before the opening of the line the revenue amounted to £705 12s. from all sources. For the six months after the opening of the line through to Sydney the revenue from all sources amounted to £4,347 8s. 10d.
552. And what is the amount for the last six months? £5,239 11s. 1d.
553. Has there been an appreciable and continual increase? Yes, it is continually increasing; the last month was the best month we have experienced since the line was opened.
554. Are you carrying much butter now? Yes, the produce of three factories in this district.
555. Does the milk traffic vary a good deal.—could you state the quantity in gallons that goes from here? At present two vans go from here daily—one in the morning, and one in the evening.
556. Can you state the quantity in gallons? No.
557. Do you know the district between Kiama and Shoalhaven? Yes.
558. Are you prepared to express an opinion, as to whether in the event of the railway being extended to Shoalhaven River, there will be a probable increase in the passenger traffic? I feel confident that there will be a substantial increase. I believe that at the port of Gerringong the railway will secure the whole of the traffic, because the boats are running very irregularly. In stormy weather the steamers very often cannot get in. The people are strongly in favour of a railway, and from inquiries which I have made, I feel sure that they will send the whole of their goods by the railway.
559. Do you think that there will be such a return upon the cost of the line as to justify the Government in constructing it? I do.
560. I ask you as station-master, speaking in your public capacity, if you think it justifiable, having regard to the cost, to carry out the proposed line? I do. I think it is desirable to extend the railway.
561. *Mr. Hurley.*] You think that the returns will justify it? I do.
562. Have you formed any opinion as to the most suitable site for a railway station at Kiama? My opinion is that the most suitable site is in front of Teralong-street, if there are no engineering difficulties.
563. Do you think that that would meet all the requirements of the district? In the event of the railway being carried further, I think it would be a good central position as regards Jamberoo, and it would be near the stone quarries.
564. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] At the present time, does any produce from the Shoalhaven district come to your station? No.
565. *Chairman.*] You think that the figures which you have given us may be regarded as accurate? Yes; they are taken from the books at the station.
566. The actual revenue then for the past twelve months has amounted to about £10,000? Yes.

Samuel Smith Wells, Esq., surveyor and civil engineer, sworn, and further examined :—

- S. S. Wells,
Esq.
27 Jan., 1890.
567. *Mr. Hurley.*] You have paid attention to the question of the choice of a site for a railway-station at Kiama? Yes.
568. Would you give us any idea as to the reason why you think the site you have selected is most suitable? According to the permanent line which I staked, the railway would cross the present road on a level, but after Mr. Wright came he thought that by putting an overhead bridge it could do away with the station where I proposed to put it, but I believed he could not carry out his intention; therefore, as the railway will have to cross on a level, I thought it could be put in front of Teralong-street, and I shall be able to point out why. Shoalhaven-street to the north of the church might be closed, and the traffic diverted along Collins-street; then I think there would be sufficient space from the mouth of the tunnel to the eastern side of Shoalhaven-street. This is a suggestion of mine.
569. Would the site pointed out by you be of general public convenience and also on Crown land? Yes, and would intercept the traffic from Jamberoo. Thinking over the matter yesterday, I thought, were it possible to put a station there, it would be suitable to all parties concerned.
570. You had formed an opinion that the most suitable place for a railway-station would be between Manning-street and Shoalhaven-street? Yes, originally.

571. Now you think the railway station should be near Shoalhaven-street and Collins-street? I was of that opinion, but after examining the place I have changed my mind. S. S. Wells,
Esq.
27 Jan., 1890.
572. You hold the opinion that if the station could have been there, the public convenience would have been served, and the site would have been a more central one? Yes; if we had sufficient space between Collins-street and Shoalhaven-street.
573. Will you tell us where you now think would be the most suitable place for the construction of a railway station? What we term Chinaman's Garden.
574. Have you taken into consideration that there would have to be large goods-sheds? Yes; we should have to make an arrangement for the accommodation of future traffic, so that there would only be one expense.
575. Can you give us any opinion in regard to the route spoken of, by Jamberoo, as against that *via* Kiama to Nowra? I think I gave that the other day; since then I have seen a plan, and I think the Jamberoo line would be a most expensive one. It is altogether out of the question. There would have to be a tunnel, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, and a very steep gradient. It would be ridiculous to entertain the idea at all. I may add that Mr. Wright has made several diversions which will reduce the cost of the line considerably, and I do not think that the cost can be reduced any further, and I think that the line is now laid out in the best possible way.
576. You favour the Kiama route as against the Jamberoo route because it will be less costly? Yes, and it will meet all the requirements of the district.

Mr. Robert Miller, dairy-farmer, sworn, and examined:—

577. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Dairy-farmer. Mr. R. Miller.
27 Jan., 1890.
578. Are you a landed proprietor? Yes.
579. How long have you lived in the district? I have been here since 1838—fifty-one years.
580. Have you examined the route of the proposed extension? Only in a casual way. I know it by riding along the road.
581. Do you think it will be the best to serve the district through which it will pass? I do.
582. Do you desire to make any statement as to any alteration of the route? None whatever.
583. Are you perfectly satisfied with it? I should have been more satisfied if it had not gone through my property; but I believe it will in the public interest. I have heard the opinions of surveyors on the subject, and I believe that the route is the best they can get.
584. How many acres of your land will it take? It depends upon the width that it is from where it crosses the main road till it intersects the by-road behind my place.
585. Do you think it will necessitate the resumption of 5 acres of your land? Yes.
586. Will you inform the Sectional Committee what is your opinion as to the quality of the land and the area? I cannot give the area. The land, generally speaking, is of a very superior character.
587. What is the average rent? The average rent between here and Gerringong is 30s. per acre. On Mr. Berry's estate it has been lower up to the present time.
588. Do you think the extension of the railway will be the means of increasing to any appreciable extent the goods and passenger traffic? I believe it will take all the produce of the district, and I believe there will be a very large increase in the passenger traffic. The district possesses attractions of a kind which, I think, will increase the passenger traffic very much, and I am satisfied that all the produce of the Gerringong district will go by rail. I am connected with one of the butter factories, and when we cannot send the butter away by steamer we send it to Kiama to go by rail.
589. Do you believe that the revenue of the line will cover working expenses in a short time, and pay interest on cost of construction? I think so; more particularly as the passenger traffic will be increased to a very large extent.
590. Have you any knowledge of the figures as to the cost of construction? I have not.
591. On what do you base your opinion that the railway will be a profitable one? The fact that it goes through a very large producing district, and my belief that there will be a great increase in the passenger traffic. On account of the district becoming a holiday resort I believe that the passenger traffic will be very greatly increased.
592. *Mr O'Sullivan.*] How many factories have you in your district? There are three factories in this district.
593. Do you produce bacon? Yes; there are two large bacon factories at Gerringong.
594. Do you manufacture cheese? Very little.
595. Then this ocean competition is not likely to interfere with the railway? No; the ocean competition from Gerringong would cease entirely.
596. If the railway were taken *via* Jamberoo and the Saddle-back Mountain, would it tap the district of Gerringong? It would not if we had any harbour accommodation, because it would be difficult to get to the railway.
597. Do you send any milk to Sydney? Not at present. We are only wishing that we had a railway, so that we could send it.
598. It would be as easy then to send milk from Gerringong as it is to send it from Kiama now? Yes; there would only be a difference of a few miles.
599. You have been here fifty-one years? Yes.
600. Can you tell us why cultivation failed in the early days? It was discontinued because we could make more out of dairy-farming than from cultivation. The property of my late father was cultivated for many years to a large extent. 300 or 400 tons of produce, mostly potatoes, were sent from there every year, including quantities of grain. But my father found that dairy-farming paid better, and gave up agriculture altogether. I am satisfied that agriculture, as compared with dairy-farming, would be a loss.
601. What are the average profits of a dairy-farm per year? I cannot give the figures.
602. I suppose an acre would run a cow? Generally speaking, the land does not produce as it used to do.
603. What are the returns per year from a cow? I have not gone into that.
604. Do you know how many quarts of milk a cow would give? Yes.
605. Can you not calculate how much that would amount to per week or per year? I cannot.

- Mr. R. Miller. 606. In estimating the average profits do they take into consideration the time that a cow would be dry? Yes.
- 27 Jan., 1890. 607. I suppose a cow would give at least 5s. per week—that would amount to £13 per year—and I suppose it would cost about one-third of that to keep a cow? No.
608. Can we say that a cow would give a profit of £10 a year? I should think so.
609. And the average profits of cultivation are about £2 10s. per year? There has been very little cultivation here for years.
610. Had rust anything to do with the giving up of cultivation? I do not think so. It did affect the crops. If it were not for rust we might grow grain for our own consumption. We grow food for winter for cattle.
611. Would the estimate I have referred to for a cow be for milk or butter? For butter at the present time. I have no doubt that if the railway were extended the dairy-farmers would make more out of milk than they do out of butter.
612. Then it is more than likely that the milk of one cow would bring in £15 a year? Not that.
613. Would £12 a year be a fair average? Yes.

Mr. George Somerville, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. G. Somerville.
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614. *Chairman.*] You are a farmer? Yes.
615. How long have you been in the district? I have lived in the district about nineteen years, but I have known it for thirty years.
616. You desire to make a statement in reference to the subject of this inquiry? Yes. It has been stated here that the railway is not likely to benefit the lower end of the district, and that it will not increase the traffic. I think quite the contrary. It has been said that the freight of butter from Kiama before the advent of the railway was 1s. 6d. and 2s. a keg, but I always paid 2s. 6d. a keg before the railway was opened. The charge for the carriage by the steamer of the larger kegs, from 100 lb. to 120 lb. weight was 2s. 6d.; for kegs weighing 60 lb., 2s.; for kegs weighing 40 lb., 1s. 6d. I paid these rates for a long time. At present the charge for the larger kegs is 1s. They are all charged for at the same rate by water. I may mention that I should prefer to send my butter by rail, but I understand that there is a difficulty about getting the butter from the station in Sydney at an early hour. That is the reason why I do not send my butter by rail.
617. *Mr. Hurley.*] How far do you live out of Kiama? 3 miles.
618. Have you a large number of cattle? I have about 90 head on a farm of 100 acres.
619. Are you connected with any of the Companies? No.
620. Do you use your own separator? Yes.
621. Do you think that the extension of the railway will cause a larger population to settle in the district? I do.
622. If the Railway Commissioners were to afford facilities for the delivery of your butter earlier in Sydney, would you use the railway instead of sending your produce by the boats? Yes. I believe that butter will arrive in Sydney in a better condition when sent by rail than when sent by steamboat.
623. And you could send milk? I am rather too far away to send milk. I should prefer to send butter.
624. Do you make cheese? No.
625. Do you make bacon? Only for home consumption.
626. Do you grow maize? Only for fodder.
627. The land is more valuable for dairy-farming than for agriculture? Yes, I find it so.
628. Have you practised agriculture at all? Not to any extent.
629. Do you know the country leading to Nowra? I have only a general knowledge of it.
630. Are there any Government Reserves or any land locked up in the district? Not close to the route of the railway this side of Broughton Creek.
631. Do you know of any at the other side of Broughton Creek? I do not.
632. Do you know anything of the district of Jervis Bay? I do not.
633. Have you any knowledge of the mineral resources of the district? I am aware that there are extensive coal deposits.
634. Very far from the proposed line? 6 or 7 miles; in the Jamberoo Range.
635. Is the coal on Crown land or on private land? What I saw was owned by private persons, but it runs back into Crown land.
636. Will the proposed railway lead to the development of those coal measures? Yes.
637. What port would the coal owners seek? They would send the coal by rail from Kiama.
638. Is not the district practically closed against larger settlement on account of land being let to land monopolists? Near Kiama there are no farms to be got.
639. So that the country around here cannot carry a larger population? Only by subdivision. It would increase the population if some of the farms about Kiama were divided into building allotments.
640. What would be a fair average price for the land? I can hardly say. About the lower end of the district land will sell at from £30 to £50 an acre.
641. Do you lease any land yourself? No.
642. Nor let any? No.
643. Have you any idea as to the most suitable site for a railway station? Considering the public convenience irrespective of engineering difficulties I am in favour of what is called the "water reserve," a piece of vacant land on the road going towards Pike's Hill. I believe that that site would be suitable for all purposes; but I am told that there are some engineering difficulties in the way.
644. Do you belong to any dairy farmers' society? I do not.
645. Can you say whether those who carry on the same business as your own in the district are in a sound financial condition? I believe they are. As a rule people who are industrious can make a good living at it.
646. Has ensilage been tried here? It has been tried by Mr. Dymock.
647. Are there any silos in the district? No.
648. Do you believe that the construction of the proposed railway would be of great benefit to the district? I do.
649. And that it is likely to be a remunerative investment? Yes.
650. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Where is your farm? It is situated near Saddleback, to the south-west of the town, about 3 miles.
651. Would it pay you to send milk to Sydney? No, I prefer to make butter.

652. Are you aware that there is a greater profit made by the sale of milk than by the production of butter? There is some difference of opinion about that. I think that it pays me better to make butter than to sell milk, considering the distance of my farm from the station.
653. What is the size of your farm? 130 acres.
654. How many cows are there on it? About ninety head.
655. What do you estimate the profits per acre to be? I could hardly say without going into the matter. I should think that taking one season with another a good cow would bring in £8 to £12 a year.
656. That would be clear profit? No, the working expenses would have to come out of it.
657. Do you take into consideration the time when the cows are dry? Yes.
658. And you estimate that the average profit would be about £10 a cow? That would be with good keeping.
659. How much of your farm do you cultivate? Not any except to grow a few garden products and winter food for the cattle.
660. How much do you cultivate for that? About 10 acres.
661. Is that enough to keep the cattle in food? Yes.
662. *Mr. Hurley.*] You say that you live near Saddleback? Yes.
663. Would the route *via* Jamberoo suit you better than the line through Kiama? No, the line through Kiama will be the most beneficial to me.
664. You know something of the line surveyed *via* Jamberoo? Yes.
665. Which line would it be the more beneficial to adopt? The one through Kiama.
666. *Chairman.*] From what you know of the proposed line, do you think that a better route could be obtained? I do not think so.
667. You have no suggestion to make as to any alteration or deviation? No.

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Mr. William Cocks, storekeeper, sworn, and examined:—

668. *Chairman.*] What is your business? I am a storekeeper.
669. Have you been long in the district? About seven years.
670. Do you know the district through which it is proposed to extend the railway? I know the district, but I have not seen the line.
671. What is your opinion of the proposed line? I think it will be of very great value. It will open up splendid country, and in due time it will bring in a good revenue.
672. Are you of opinion that the line ought to be constructed? I am of opinion that it ought to be constructed as quickly as possible.
673. Do you think that the return from the line will cover the interest on capital, and the cost of working? It may not for the first year or two, like all other lines. The Western line was a drawback for a time, but it is paying its way now.
674. Are you aware that the construction of the line will be very costly? It will be a costly affair, but it is a thing that will have to be done.
675. You are of opinion that the Government will be justified in incurring this expense? I am.
676. Could you say anything as to the difference to the residents of the district in regard to fares and freights which the opening of a line between Kiama to Sydney has made? The Steamship Company have of course reduced their rates to compete with the railway; but as far as I am concerned, as a storekeeper, even if the railway rates were only equal to the steamer rates, it would not pay me to cart goods from the railway unless the terminus were in the town.
677. Would all the goods that you get from Sydney be forwarded to you by rail, if the station were in the town? Yes; unless the rates of carriage by the steamers were reduced.
678. Do you know where the intended site for the station is? I heard that it was to be on Mr. Hindmarsh's property.
679. Do you think that that would be a convenient position for the townspeople? I think so.
680. Do you know of any better site for the station? I do not.
681. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How far out of the town does your trade as a storekeeper extend? As far as Gerringong. I go as far as Berry sometimes.
682. How far to the west? To Jamberoo.
683. *Mr. Hurley.*] Do you import any produce? Yes.
684. Where do you get it from? From Sydney.
685. Do you know why agriculture is not followed in the district? On account of smut I believe. The farmers find it cheaper to purchase the grain that they want and to keep cattle.
686. Do you know the difference between the present freight charges and those imposed before the railway was made to Kiama? There is a great difference—a reduction of 50 per cent. in some cases.
687. So that the inhabitants have been benefited very much by the railway? Yes.
688. And if the railway is brought into the town, the traffic will not be carried by the steam-boats? A great portion will not, unless a great reduction is made in the freights by the steamship company—it will be more convenient for us to get our goods by rail. We cannot depend on the steam-boats sometimes.

Mr. W. Cocks.
27 Jan., 1890.

TUESDAY, 28 JANUARY, 1890.

The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Nowra, at 10 a.m.

Present:—

The HONORABLE FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY (CHAIRMAN).

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Kiama to Nowra.

Edward Seccombe, Esq., Mayor of Nowra, sworn, and examined:—

689. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am Mayor of the Municipal District of Nowra.
690. How long have you been there? Three years.
691. Were you an Alderman before that? Yes, for two years.
692. How long have you been a resident of the town? Six and a half years.

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- E. Seccombe, Esq.
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693. Before that where were you residing? At Ulladulla.
694. Are you able to give information as to the progress of this district during the time you have been an Alderman, and the time that you have been Mayor? Yes; more particularly as regards my own municipality.
695. Will you make a general statement in regard to the increase in the population, the expenditure on private buildings, the area of the land which you know to be subject to taxation, and the revenue it produces? I shall be in order, I presume, in glancing back to show the material progress that has been made within ten years.
696. Yes;—how many municipalities are there on this side of the river? Three this side of the river—Numba, Central Shoalhaven, and Nowra.
697. Are they within a radius of 5 miles of the proposed railway? The railway will be about 6 miles from the central points of Numba and Nowra.
698. Will those centres be within a radius of 5 miles of the termination of the proposed line? Just about 5 miles. In 1879 the municipality of Nowra struck their rate on a valuation of £40,000, and in 1888—ten years later—they struck their rate on a valuation of £100,000. A new assessment will be made within the next few weeks for the present year, and in consequence of the very material progress that has been made in building and street making, we fully anticipate that next year the valuation will be over £140,000. The annual value of rateable property, on which the rate was struck ten years ago, was £3,040, and the annual value for this year will be £14,000.
699. What was the amount of the revenue from the rates for 1879? That year we had a deal of assistance from the Government—the rate itself hardly reached £230.
700. What was the amount realized five years later? In 1884 it had only reached £250. At the present time it is very close to £500. The total voting strength within the municipality in 1879 was 227—that was the number on the rolls. At the present time there are 431 on the rolls. The returns in 1884 show the population of the town to be 1,009. The returns for the present time are not complete, but we estimate the population at 1,500—that shows an increase in the town of 100 souls per annum for five years. We estimate that we have in open and made roads $26\frac{1}{2}$ miles, within a radius of 4 miles, costing over £20,000. Within the town boundaries we have at present 67 places of business, 3 manufactories, 183 private residences, and 30 residences that form parts of business establishments. We have 5 churches in the town, 4 hotels, and 3 banks. There is one bank in the Municipal District of Central Shoalhaven. We have 1 public school and 2 private schools. We have 3 wheelwrights' and smiths' establishments in the town of Nowra. The Municipal Council expended on permanent works in the municipality last year £1,139 Os. 11d.
701. Can you say how much has been expended by private individuals within the last five years—I mean exclusive of public buildings? We have had no public buildings erected in the district since my arrival here.
702. Within the last five years how much has been expended within the town of Nowra on buildings, exclusive of public buildings? In 1884 the estimated value of property was £50,000; last year, five years afterwards, it was £100,000, and evidently the value of property had increased during that period by £50,000.
703. Do you know the route of the proposed extension of the railway from Kiama to the Shoalhaven River? Yes, I have been over it several times.
704. Do you think that that route will best serve the people settled between those points? I should think so—it strikes all the centres of industry.
705. Have you any reason to believe that any alteration of the route would be beneficial to the district? Not within the electorate of Shoalhaven.
706. Do you know the estimated cost of the line? I have heard it stated.
707. Have you any reason to think that the construction of the railway will entail a loss on the country? I am not in a position to state that exactly. I should hardly think so, judging from the manifest progress and prosperity of the district. There are 11,000 people in the district who have to have every necessary brought to them, and everything that comes and goes must be carried by some means.
708. Do you think that if the railway were carried out within a reasonable time it would defray the interest on the cost of construction and pay the working expenses? We believe so.
709. Do you think that the traffic at present carried by steamers would be carried by the railway? To a very large extent it would be. Perishable goods are a general product of the district, and no doubt there would be many other perishable articles produced if the railway were made, so that the people could get their goods to market in a proper state. No doubt fruit and milk would be sent by the railway.
710. Have you any reason to believe that there would be an increase of population after the completion of the railway? Decidedly.
711. Is there scope for the increase of the settlement? There is immense scope—there are plenty of Crown lands, and the mining resources of the district have not yet been developed.
712. You cannot give us any idea of the passenger traffic between Sydney and Shoalhaven at present? I could not.
713. Generally you are favourable to the construction of the line as proposed? Decidedly.
714. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] The figures you have given us apply only to the municipality of Nowra? Only to this municipality.
715. Near Nowra there are two other municipalities, are there not? Yes—Terrara and Numba.
716. Can you give us any idea of the population and the annual value of rateable property in those municipalities? No one is a great deal on private estate, and we could not get all the information.
717. Can you give approximately the number of persons resident at each place? I could not.
718. Are you well acquainted with the district surrounding Nowra? Yes, in all directions.
719. What industries are carried on here? Farming in all its branches. There is one tannery on this side of the district, and on the southern side timber-cutting, fishing, oyster-culture are carried on, from Jervis Bay up, and agriculture is carried on generally on the river bank, except where the land is used for dairy-farming.
720. What crops are cultivated? Corn principally.
721. Are there any orchards? Very few.
722. Should not this soil and climate be suitable for orchards? It is more suitable south of us—the soil is no doubt suitable to the production of grapes, apples, and wine.
- 723.

723. With regard to mining, how far is the auriferous country from Nowra? Eighteen miles.
724. Further up the river? Nearly west from us—at Yalwal. That is the principal gold-field that we have here. It is up the river.
725. Is there any mining below Nowra? No.
726. Is Nowra a centre for the gold-miners? They have no through access northward except through Nowra.
727. What localities is Nowra the centre of? Tomerong and Nerriga, and the district between here and Braidwood. Nearly all the business in connection with those places is done through Nowra, and nearly all the water trade between us and the sea to Greenwell Point.
728. Is Tomerong near Jervis Bay? About 6 miles off.
729. Are there many people there? Yes.
730. What are they doing? Mostly farming, timber-cutting, and fishing.
731. Is Nowra a centre for Kangaroo Valley and Cambewarra? Yes.
732. If a railway were made the trade from those districts would come into Nowra? Yes; it comes there now.
733. Is this a district where much stock is raised? A great deal of stock is raised in the district.
734. Where do they find a market? At Kiama and towards Braidwood. A great deal of the young stock goes to Braidwood.
735. Whence does it go then? A great deal returns in the following spring—the farmers prefer their own stock for dairy purposes. One head out of every three returns.
736. Would the stock be likely to be sent to the metropolis if this railway were made? I could hardly say that. We have not sent much to the metropolis.
737. Is the fishing industry carried on largely in this neighbourhood? Very largely, but not exactly in Nowra. The produce passes through Nowra to Sydney.
738. How do they send fish to Sydney? By steamer.
739. Where do they carry on their fishing? Between here and Jervis Bay—14 miles.
740. If a railway were made to Nowra, would they make Nowra the centre, and despatch fish to the metropolis from here? Yes, very likely.
741. Therefore a railway would develop that industry? Yes.
742. Is there any timber trade here? Principally local. A few years ago there was a large timber industry at Jervis Bay—there is a large mill there now, but the ruling prices are against it.
743. What woods have you? Black butt and spotted gum.
744. Have you no cedar? None now.
745. Have you any timber reserves? Yes, to the south of us, for many miles—from Redhead nearly up to Shoalhaven.
746. How far south and west of Nowra would the trade come into Nowra, to be served by the railway? Fully 20 miles. Of course it would take nearly all the passenger trade from Milton. The passengers travel through to Kiama, a distance of 60 miles.
747. I suppose that the people who want to visit the metropolis drive from here to Kiama and take the railway there? They do.
748. How many coaches are running? Generally four, five, and six a day; there are usually three or four permanent ones.
749. Are they well patronised? Very extensively, indeed; they carry from nine up to fifteen and sixteen persons.
750. Did you say nearly 11,000 people had settled in this district? Yes.
751. And that they would be served by the railway? Yes.
752. *Mr. Hurley.* Have you any knowledge of the statistics that were furnished by the Works Department from the district—to show the capabilities of the district? I have never seen them.
753. Do you know who furnished them? I do not.
754. If I were to give you the items, could you verify them? I do not think I could.
755. You are not in a position to corroborate anything stated in them;—you have heard that the cost of the construction of the line will be £381,000? Yes.
756. You have facilities now for getting to market by water? Yes.
757. Of what benefit would a railway be, seeing that water carriage is so much cheaper than railway carriage? People will always take advantage of a regular and certain means of communication, and in most instances the goods can be carried to Sydney by rail in better condition than they would be in if carried by steamer. Nearly all the milk in the district is being sent to the butter factories, as it would require better means of transit to carry it to Sydney.
758. Have you ever heard complaints about the neglect of the Government in regard to public expenditure in this district? I have never heard any complaints in that respect, but we have sometimes agitated for assistance.
759. Have you not read in the press that the people think that they are badly dealt with in regard to the expenditure of public money in this district? I may have seen it, but I did not attach much importance to it.
760. Have you seen it stated that the Government have been somewhat negligent in regard to the construction of a railway from Kiama to Nowra? I have seen that in the press.
761. Do you think that any hardship will be done to the people of Nowra if a line is constructed to the township of Bomederry instead of to the Bomederry bridge; the people of Nowra are somewhat antagonistic, I believe, to the erection of a station at the township of Bomederry, and have been using some pressure to get it brought nearer to Nowra? Yes; there was some opposition to that. I do not know that the people brought so much pressure to bear; but the Commissioners thoroughly approve of the line being brought to the terminus already decided upon.
762. You will see by the map that it is proposed to extend the line across the river to Jervis Bay? Yes.
763. Having in view the extension of the line to Jervis Bay as a national investment, have you any objection to the station being placed in the Bomederry township? It would create a large amount of inconvenience to the people on the southern side of the river. It is a considerable distance, and it is rather an awkward situation to meet the requirements of the district.
764. Having in view the probable extension of the line from that point, do you think it advisable to extend

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- extend a branch line from Bomederry township to the proposed terminus? I think the extension to Bomederry bridge is absolutely necessary to make the railway of any service to Nowra. Bomederry is out of the way for us.
765. Do you think it in the public interest that the line should be carried to Jervis Bay and Bateman's Bay? I do.
766. Do you think it wise then to extend the branch line to Bomederry Bridge? We do not anticipate that there will be a further extension for some time, and the Government would be justified in meeting our requirements by that extension.
767. What would be the distance from the township of Bomederry to the bridge? About a mile.
768. Would the public suffer any great inconvenience if that branch line were not constructed, having in view the construction of the proposed line to Jervis Bay? If we had any guarantee that the line would cross the Shoalhaven River in a reasonable time the people of Nowra would be content that the terminus should be at Bomederry township, but not having such a guarantee, it is necessary that the line should be brought as far as the bridge.
769. Have you ever seen the water over that bridge? I have not.
770. Have you ever heard that it overflows that portion of the land on which it is proposed to build a station? Yes. I have heard that it has been over the bridge during flood-times.
771. What occurred in the past is likely to occur again, is it not? Yes.
772. Do you think it would be advisable to build a station on the site which is liable to floods? Hardly. I suppose the Government have made their calculations with regard to that. We look upon the site as a place subject to floods in wet seasons. Water lies there during many months of the year.
773. You think it would be advisable not to build a station at Bomederry, but to bring the terminus to the Bomederry bridge for the convenience of the people of Nowra? It is necessary to bring it nearer the town than it would be at Bomederry. Some express the opinion that the terminus should be near Mr. Berry's wharf—between Bomederry Creek and the river.
774. Has that opinion been expressed at any public meeting? Not at any public meeting.
775. Is it the opinion generally expressed in town? I have heard many express the opinion that if we had bad weather it would militate against the public convenience, if the terminus is made where it is proposed to be.
776. If it is the north side of the bridge it will be liable to floods? Yes.
777. Do you think it would be wise then for the Government to construct a terminus on the site which would be liable to floods? I can hardly say; we desire to get the terminus as near to the town as possible, and particularly on the main road.
778. Looking at the town of Bomederry, do you not think that that would be sufficiently close to Nowra for the convenience of the people? Not as a permanent thing.
779. Is it not a fact that the antagonism to the erection of a station at Bomederry is because of a large number of people having built at Nowra, and their being afraid that a competing town will arise at Bomederry? I have heard it said that a township might spring up there, but I do not think many believe it.
780. Then, supposing the station to be at Bomederry, the people here do not anticipate that it would injure their business? I do not think so. I have not heard many say so.
781. Therefore, if you were the engineer, and looking at the line apart from any interests in it, would you not put the terminus where there would be no danger of floods? I should certainly advocate going to the expense of the extension.
782. Have you any knowledge of the country between here and Jervis Bay? Yes.
783. Are there any difficulties of an engineering character in the way of an extension of the line to Jervis Bay? None whatever, I should think.
784. Do you think it would pay to take the line to Jervis Bay? I think it would, on the whole. The increased value which it would give to the Crown lands alone would be twice or three times as much as the cost of the line, and that increased value would take place immediately.
785. Therefore, looking at the probable opening up of the country beyond here, and the probability of that bridge being constructed within eight years, do you think it would be wise to leave out the branch line and have the terminus of the line at Bomederry township? I have not seen any conditions of that kind. If it is possible to make the terminus at the bridge, and if it will be required for eight years, I think the Government would be justified in making it there.
786. And leaving out the branch line? No; they should bring it to the Bomederry bridge. I do not believe that it would be damaged by floods.
787. How many years have you been in the district? About six and half years.
788. Have you noticed whether the people have given more attention to agriculture of late years than they did formerly? I do not know that they have. During the last few years the dairying industry has been more encouraged than agriculture. Dairy produce has been dear, and dry seasons have been a great deal against agriculture.
789. You said that there were three manufactories in the town;—do they employ a large number of hands? A fair number.
790. Would these three manufactories give employment to twenty-five people? I think altogether they would give employment to more.
791. Would the number exceed fifty? No.
792. Do the people of the district give attention to fruit-culture? They are doing so further south, about 18 miles from here, where the land is more suitable.
793. Has it not been successful in this district? There has been very little inducement to cultivate—there has been no market—no means of getting the produce away.
794. You do not know whether the land is suitable for fruit-growing? There are immense areas which are suitable for nothing else—particularly suitable for vineyards. Those areas are to the south of us, and are mostly Crown lands.
795. It is an industry that might be entered into with success? I know a gentleman who has been experimenting for eight or nine years with great success.
796. Do you know anything about the coal-measures in this district? There have been no satisfactory results yet. They are testing some ground south of Nowra with the diamond drill, in the hope of finding coal.
797. Is the testing being carried out by private enterprise, or by the assistance of Government? By private enterprise.

798. Can you give us any idea as to the extent of the export trade in fish? I could not.
799. You are aware that the extension of the railway into the Kiama district has given a wonderful impetus to the cheese, bacon, and butter industries? Yes, and to the milk business.
800. Do you think that if the railway is extended to Nowra it will give a similar impetus to those industries in this district? It would, most decidedly.
801. Have you any knowledge with regard to timber reserves? Nothing very definite. The reserves are nearly south of us, and they cover a very large area of land—the whole of the area from Canjola to Jervis Bay—nearly 20 miles.
802. You say that you expended £1,139 last year? Yes.
803. And that the Municipal revenue is about £500. Yes.
804. Are you building up a town on borrowed capital? We have no borrowed money.
805. Then how do you balance your accounts? The people contribute largely to make the main streets in addition to their rates, and the Government also grant assistance.
806. You have 26½ miles of roads open and made? Yes.
807. Have any of these roads been constructed with Government aid, or solely from local revenue? Only a portion of the South Coast Road was made with Government assistance.
808. You said that there were only four hotels in the town? Yes.
809. And you have a population of 1,500? Yes.
810. Is the local option vote taken here? Yes.
811. I suppose that is the reason why there are so few hotels? I do not think so. The four hotels that we have, have been built within the last five years in their present form; previously they were only roadside houses, with four or five rooms each.
812. Have the steamship companies trading here had a remunerative return from their investment? I should think so. They must have had. They offer to assist the Government in extending the wharfage accommodation.
813. Can you give any idea of the cost of carriage between here and Sydney? I could not, except on small parcels.
814. You have had no large consignments yourself? No.
815. Notwithstanding that you have had water communication with the metropolis, do you think that a railway would be preferable, and that it would be supported in opposition to any steam-boat company? Yes; because the railway is a more ready way of sending things to market.
816. Has land advanced in value in the town since the railway was talked of? It has, enormously. It has doubled the value of all property in the town within the last five years.
817. Can you give us any idea of the value of property per acre in the town? There have been three allotments of 9 acres each offered, and they went at from £1,600 to £1,800—about £200 an acre.
818. Would not that be an excessive price as compared with other land in the district? That land was bought by auction. There are no buildings on the property, and we regard it as being out of town.
819. What is the value of agricultural land here? You would not get it under £70 an acre.
820. Will you give us an idea of what you consider a fair value for Crown lands in the district in anticipation of the construction of the proposed railway? No. It would be difficult to do that, because we have hardly got the class of people who would purchase it and apply it to remunerative purposes.
821. Would the railway increase the value of the land? No doubt it would double the value of all Crown lands, as well as of private lands. In Jervis Bay land has been cut up and sold in subdivisions, realizing £6½ an acre, down to a very few shillings, and there are thousands of acres of Crown lands better situated than that.
822. *Chairman.*] Are you clearly of opinion that in the event of the railway not being brought across the river the station should be at Bomederry Bridge? I am.

Henry Gordon Morton, Esq., surveyor and land agent, sworn, and examined:—

823. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is your position? Surveyor by profession, and now land agent and manager of the Shoalhaven estate, belonging to the family of the late Mr. Berry.
824. Can you tell the Committee the extent of that estate? The area is 62,587 acres of freehold land. It commences at the point at the Boat Harbour, Gerringong; goes due west to a point above Broughton Creek, township of Berry, a little to the west; then it proceeds south towards the Shoalhaven River, and is bounded by the river; then crosses into the county of St. Vincent—the county we are in now—and goes from a point on the Shoalhaven River to the Crookhaven Creek; then across the creek to the tidal waters of Jervis Bay; then down the bay to the sea, and back to the point of commencement at the Boat Harbour, Gerringong.
825. On that estate there are a number of tenants, are there not? Yes.
826. Can you tell us the number? There are 400 holding leases, one-eighth of which are householders.
827. On the estate also, there are several small townships, are there not? There are. There is one township at Greenwell Point—the township of Numba, a small hamlet at Bomederry, a part of the township of Gerringong, and the town of Berry.
828. What is the size of the tenants' holdings? They go from about 40 acres up to 250 acres.
829. What industry do they carry on? Agricultural pursuits principally, growing maize, oats, barley, and potatoes. The land fit for dairy purposes is used for that—producing milk, butter, cheese, and stock.
830. Have you much competition for the leases when they fall in? Yes, very great competition. When a holding has become vacant I have known as much as £500 to be given to the outgoing tenant for the residue of his lease, extending over five or six years.
831. Do all these tenants hold leases? They all hold leases or agreements for leases.
832. But are not a number merely tenants at will? Yes, a great number; but they are all under agreements.
833. Their holdings are safe? They are perfectly safe. The leases are not under seal, but the agreement stands in the place of a lease.
834. Then there is no danger of a number of them being turned out as they have been in Scotland by the Duke of Sutherland, for the purpose of converting the land to other uses? I do not think so. I think that the liberal laws of this Colony, and the beautiful climate we have, would not allow that to come into operation.

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835. I notice that the roads round that estate are very well made—have they been made by the Government or by the proprietor of the estate? Before Municipal institutions were established the roads were all made and fenced by the proprietors of the estate.
836. Have any of the buildings such as schools or show buildings been erected by the proprietors? Every building on the Shoalhaven estate is private property, all belonging to the owner of the estate, except a few that were put up lately under the Lands Resumption Act—some five or six public schools—and portions have been sold to private institutions such as the Commercial Bank and the E.S. and A.C. Bank.
837. Is the proprietor of that estate now running a line of steamers? Yes.
838. Over how long a period does your knowledge of this country extend? Since the year 1854.
839. When you first became connected with this district what was the population? It would be under 500. There were not twenty farmers in the Shoalhaven district when I came here. Every farm in the estate has been laid out by me or by my assistants.
840. Have you noticed the growth of the town of Nowra? Yes. I think that it was in 1862 that the Government sent down a surveyor, who was drowned in the river. At that time Nowra was nearly bush—there not being a single house.
841. It lay dormant for a number of years? It lay dormant for eighteen years, and you could have bought the allotments for a mere song.
842. What caused a sudden impetus to be given to it? The idea started many years ago of making the new bridge over the Shoalhaven River. The completion of the bridge altered the whole geography of the district. We used to get across the river by ferries, and in flood-time for days we could not get across at all. Once the bridge was made, a traffic came over it which gave the place a start.
843. What attraction brought the population? The good land, the liberal landlord.
844. I suppose you are well acquainted with the whole of the surrounding country? Yes.
845. Can you tell me what area of Crown land is available for settlement? I cannot.
846. What is your opinion about the construction of this short line from Bomederry town to the bridge—do you think the Government would be justified in making that line? No, it would be a waste of money.
847. Are you aware that the Kiama storekeepers complain very strongly about being compelled to send their produce some distance out of town to the railway, and that they frequently prefer to send their produce by sea to submitting to that inconvenience, and would not the same inconvenience arise here? Decidedly they would patronise the steamer in preference to hauling their goods to the other side of the river.
848. Would not a line to the Bomederry Bridge be preferred? No, I think the Government will have to build a bridge and continue the line to Jervis Bay—not so much for the population as for grand national purposes.
849. You object to the short extension to the Bomederry Bridge, because you think that a railway should be constructed to Jervis Bay at once? Yes.
850. If the line went to the bay do you think that the trade of the district would go by railway to Sydney or by Jervis Bay, and thence by ship to Sydney? If the fares were reasonable the trade would go direct to Sydney by railway.
851. Would not the people be likely to take advantage of the railway to ship their goods by Jervis Bay? I do not think so.
852. I suppose you are aware that the rates by water are usually much lower than the rates for land carriage? I understand so.
853. Would the construction of the line to Jervis Bay take to Jervis Bay a trade that would otherwise come to Nowra? No, the trade would go direct to Sydney from Nowra.
854. If the terminus of the line remains where it is for seven or eight years, is it not probable that Nowra will become the centre for all the trade from the coast side to be forwarded to Sydney? Nowra will always retain its importance because there is a trading population here which there is not at Bomederry.
855. If the terminus remains at the bridge would Nowra retain the trade of the coast district which has to go to Sydney? But you are not bringing the line to the bridge, you are a long way from the bridge, and before I could get to the terminus in flood-time I must go through 4 feet of water.
856. But the surveyor proposes to bring the line nearer to the bridge? Yes, to 400 or 500 yards from it, perhaps more.
857. Are you aware that the proposal is to construct the station on the bank of Bomederry Creek? I believe so.
858. Have those banks ever been flooded? Not to my recollection.
859. Then if they had not been flooded, how is it likely that water will impede the traffic there? Because there is a swamp between the terminus and the main road which people must travel through.
- [Mr. Wright, C.E., explained the proposed position of the railway station as follows:—The proposed terminus ends close to the Bomederry Creek bridge, and is above flood-level, but sloping to the northward, and is subject to floods, but it would be filled up to such an extent that both the station and the approaches to it will be above flood level.]
860. Having heard the explanation given by Mr. Wright do you think now that that gap between the bridge and the end of the station is likely to be flooded? Not if it is filled up above flood-level.
861. Would not that prevent the danger you anticipated? Decidedly it would.
862. Would it not be to the advantage of the people of Nowra to have that short extension constructed so that they might be saved a considerable distance? Yes, it would be to their advantage whilst the proposed new railway bridge is being built, and the extension of the railway to the deep waters of Jervis Bay is being effected. It would be an advantage to have the terminus as close to the town as possible.
863. Another point I desire your opinion upon is this, whether it would be to the advantage of the State to construct the proposed line to Jervis Bay? Yes.
864. If the line is brought on to Nowra no doubt there would be a very large trade with Sydney? Decidedly.
865. And it may be a very profitable work? Yes.
866. But if the line be taken to Jervis Bay, is there not a danger of producing steamship competition? If this is going to become an important mineral district that extension is necessary. Jervis Bay is the only place for large vessels. You cannot bring a large vessel into the Shoalhaven River—not a vessel drawing more than 8 feet of water. There is plenty of deep water in Jervis Bay, and if the country is to progress

- progress in accordance with what we have seen it do during the last twenty years, Jervis Bay must be an important place for coal for outgoing ocean steamers. Those steamers would take in coal at Jervis Bay and land passengers, who could travel by train after coming off their voyage.
867. You think the natural aspect of the matter should outweigh the fear of competition by the shipping? Decidedly. Every good general guards the outskirts of his camp, and why should not the Government pay attention to such an important place as Jervis Bay.
868. You think that Jervis Bay will be a great shipping-place? It must be; Nature ordained it to be so.
869. And you think that mails could be landed there more quickly by train? Just the same as at Holyhead, where the Irish mails are landed and forwarded to London.
870. You have no hesitation in pronouncing an opinion in favour of the extension of the railway to Jervis Bay? That work ought to be carried out immediately. Money ought to be no object in the completion of that line as a great national work.
871. Why has settlement been so limited at Jervis Bay? Because there are no roads to it; there are no wharves and no shipping.
872. If there is a good harbour there would be easy access to the shipping? Yes, but there is no population.
873. Why is there no population—is the soil inferior? It is not so good as at Nowra. It is freestone loam, good for growing fruit, but not for agriculture.
874. Are there any timber reserves? Yes; there is plenty of timber, blackbutt, blood wood, and ironbark.
875. At one time they carried on shipbuilding there, did they not? Yes.
876. Has it ceased? No; it is going on to a small extent still.
877. Is it the seat of a fishery? Yes, a very extensive fishery.
878. Do you know anything about the discovery of coal there? I have heard that there is plenty of coal, but it is at a great depth, and it is expensive to get.
879. *Mr. Hurley.*] Do you think that the railway by passing through the Berry estate will increase the value of it? Yes.
880. Do you think it will give an advance in the value of 25 per cent.? No; not so much as that. I do not think we should be in a position to increase our tenants' rent by 25 per cent., because of the railway.
881. Seeing the advantage of having a railway through the estate, do you think that the owners would give the land required for the construction of the line? I cannot answer that question. I have no knowledge of what their intentions may be.
882. You have never heard that they would give the land? No.
883. There is a quarry within a short distance of the east side of the bridge;—that quarry is close to the main road leading in from Broughton Creek;—is that the place that you say gets flooded? Yes.
884. So that in time of flood it would be impossible, unless the flood were bridged over, to reach the railway-station? The road would have to be raised 4 feet at least before you could get to the railway.
885. That is from the quarry? Yes.
886. You are of opinion that if the line of railway should be carried on by a bridge across the Shoalhaven River to Jervis Bay a branch line to the bridge would be a useless expenditure? Yes, after the railway had been completed to Jervis Bay.
887. That branch, after the completion of the line to Jervis Bay, would not be used at all? No; it would be an absolute loss, as the station would be at Nowra.
888. Do you know anything of the timber reserve between here and Jervis Bay? I know from Government plans that there are large timber reserves, but the timber has been taken off during the last twenty years by splitters and timber licensees.
889. Could you give any idea as to the advance that would take place in the value of the land in the event of a railway being constructed from here to Jervis Bay? I think it would increase the value of the land at the very least by 50 per cent. The selling price now is 25s. an acre, and I think it would increase up to 30s. or 35s. an acre.
890. Knowing the value of the land here, and the purpose to which it is applied, can you say that the people in this district put the land to the best possible use? At present they do.
891. Maize is not grown to a very great extent, is it? There is as much grown at present as there has been during the last ten years. Some 5,500 acres of maize are grown in the district. In some parts, where the land is very low, they are more inclined to grow grass and convert the land into dairy farms.
892. *Chairman.*] How many acres of land are occupied by the 400 tenants on the Berry's Estate? About 25,000 acres are now under lease.
893. And the difference between 25,000 and 62,000 acres is in the hands of the proprietors? Yes. Another 25,000 acres could be brought under cultivation, and this area is about to be let to 400 more tenants.
894. Is it the intention of the proprietors to lease that land? It is their intention to lease a great portion of it. I think about 3,000 souls may be settled on the lands now under grazing. There is no limit to population in this district; it goes on increasing whether the times are good or bad.
895. Is it the intention of the proprietors of the estate to throw open to settlement the land which has been reserved for timber? There are portions of the timber reserves which will not be thrown open, as the timber is more valuable than anything you can get for the land, but that area does not exceed 2,000 acres.

Mr. John Macarthur, general storekeeper, sworn, and examined:—

896. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you been long in the district? Thirty-seven years.
897. Are you a landholder? Yes.
898. Do you hold a large area? Not a very large area.
899. What is your occupation? I am a general storekeeper.
900. Do you lease any of your land? Very little. It is nearly all built upon.
901. Could you tell us what you get per acre for it? I have no agricultural land at all. The only area that I lease is a farm near Curembene.
902. Where do you get your goods from? From Sydney principally.
903. Do you import direct? Yes, a good deal.

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904. Do you get any goods by steamer? Yes; we get everything by steamer.
905. What do you pay per ton? 10s.
906. Has that long been the charge? I think so.
907. They have not raised or lowered the freights? It was double that a great many years ago.
908. For some years the charge has been 10s. a ton? Yes.
909. Are you favourable to the construction of the proposed railway? I am.
910. Will it give you greater facilities for getting your goods? Yes.
911. Are you prepared to pay increased charges in order to get your goods by rail instead of by water? For a certain portion of the trade only.
912. What is that? Drapery and light goods—because the steamship company charge by measurement.
913. Do you think you could pay twice the amount that you pay to get your goods by water? We could for certain goods, not for flour, salt, and similar articles.
914. In going to Sydney, would you go by rail in preference to the water? Decidedly.
915. Have you any idea of the area of the reserves belonging to the Government beyond this town? I know they are large, but I do not know their extent.
916. Have you known of any inquiries being made in order to secure a certain portion of Crown lands here not now available? I heard of land down at George's Lake being very much inquired about.
917. If the lands were thrown open, would the Government have any difficulty in finding purchasers? None whatever.
918. So it would give facilities for increased population in the district? Yes, a very large increase.
919. I suppose the other storekeepers in the town are labouring under the same disabilities as yourself in regard to getting their goods to market? Just the same.
920. Do you know anything about the fruit-growing industry? The future of that industry will be very important, I am sure.
921. Why is that industry not entered upon at present? Owing to the difficulty of reaching the markets before the produce is spoilt.
922. Is there enough fruit grown for local consumption? It would not pay; the demand is not sufficiently great.
923. Are you interested in the butter factories? Not directly. I am indirectly interested.
924. Can you say whether the butter factories have given an impetus to dairying in the district? I think they have.
925. Do you think that the construction of the proposed railway would increase the trade very much? I am quite sure it would.
926. Have you any knowledge of the locality which has been described to Mr. Morton by the engineer as the place for a railway-station? I have.
927. Do you think that a station at that place would serve the general public better than a station at Bomederry? I agree with the remarks made by Mr. Morton. It would serve the purpose until the line was carried on to Jervis Bay.
928. Do you think that the extension of the railway to the north side of the Shoalhaven River towards Jervis Bay would be a good investment? I do.
929. Do you think that the traffic would be sufficient to pay the interest on the cost of the construction of the line between here and Kiama? Eventually it would. It might not for the first few years—perhaps not until the mineral wealth of the district was developed.
930. You think that the mineral resources of the district will bring large returns if the railway is made;—what minerals do you refer to? There is coal and lime in the district, and I have no doubt iron also.
931. Can you speak of your own knowledge with regard to the existence of coal? No; only from what I have heard and read.
932. Have you taken up any coal land yourself? I have not.
933. Have you been to Yalwal? I have.
934. Have you any interest in the mines there? I have not.
935. Are they progressing? I am told so.
936. Sufficiently to attract capital from other colonies? Yes; they are attracting capital to a very large extent.
937. And all the traffic goes through this place? Yes.
938. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How far does the trade of Nowra extend? I should say it extends about 25 miles in a southern direction.
939. What outlying places then does Nowra serve? There is a settlement between here and Tomcrong, and the trade extends as far as Burrier and Yalwal to the west.
940. Does it go to the north-west at all? Yes, to Cambewarra, and often as far as Bugong.
941. Do the residents of Nerriga come to Nowra? Yes.
942. I suppose they bring produce? Yes.
943. We can regard Nowra as the centre of a trading radius of 20 miles? Quite so.
944. Is there any bacon industry here? Yes. There is one very large establishment at Brundy—another at Pyree.
945. Any butter factories? Yes; a great number. One at Jenniandie, one at Worrigee, one at Cambewarra. There is a cheese factory also at Cambewarra.
946. Then these industries are showing signs of progress? They are all full of vitality.
947. Are there any other indications that industries of a similar character are likely to start? I think that the railway would encourage fruit-growing and fruit-preserving.
948. Was there not a canning industry at Jervis Bay at one time? No. I do not think much has been done in canning, because it is too far from a market.
949. I understood you to say that, if a railway were constructed, you would be certain to get your light goods by rail—but what about the heavy goods? It would not pay to get the heavy goods by rail if there is a great difference in the price.
950. Suppose a rise took place in flour, would it not be to your advantage to get it up speedily by rail, instead of having it sent by ships that might be weather-bound? They are never weather-bound on this coast. We can leave Sydney on Monday night and get here on Tuesday morning.
951. Can you always reckon on entering the haven? Certainly.
952. Do the steamers face the storms? It is very seldom that the storms are sufficient to prevent steamers from coming in. It is a very safe entrance.
- 953.

953. How long does it take to travel from Sydney to Nowra? Ten hours.
954. Including passage up the river? No; that would make it about twelve hours. You would come by rail in about six hours.
955. I suppose there would always be a certain amount of competition with the railways carried on by the shipping? I have no doubt of it.
- 956-7. Making due allowance for that competition, do you think that the railway would pay the working expenses, and the interest on the cost of its construction? I think so.
958. What would it cost you to send your goods over to the Bomederry site of the station from Nowra? About 2s. 6d. per ton.
959. Then that 2s. 6d. per ton would have to be added to the railway freight? Yes.
960. And the result would be, that the railway freight and cartage would make the charge so high that you would prefer to get your goods by water? Certainly.
961. Would it be to the interests of the community to extend the line from Bomederry to the bridge and save half the cost of cartage? That would depend on the length of time that would elapse before the line was continued to Jervis Bay.
962. Suppose we assume that seven years may elapse before the line would be extended to Jervis Bay ought we to incur an expenditure of £3,000 in carrying out that extension? I think so, most decidedly.
963. You are favourable to the construction of the extension? Yes.
964. *Chairman.*] You quite approve of the proposed extension to the bridge as a temporary expedient, pending the extension of the railway to Jervis Bay? Certainly.
965. Would there be a large and immediate goods and passenger traffic on the completion of the railway to Nowra? I think so.
966. Therefore it would not be necessary to wait for the making of the railway to create a traffic that would cover the working expenses? I do not think it would. I think that the traffic is awaiting the railway now, and that it would be increased materially day by day.
967. Have you examined the route of the line? I have not.
968. You have no suggestion to make as to any alteration or deviation? No.

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Frederick Huleat Galbraith, Esq., Clerk of Petty Sessions, &c., sworn, and examined:—

969. *Chairman.*] What position do you occupy? I am Crown lands agent, Clerk of Petty Sessions, and Warden's Clerk, and Mining Registrar.
970. How long have you occupied that position? Twelve months.
971. How long have you been in this district? Eight months. I was appointed on the 1st January, but I did not come till a few months afterwards.
972. Have you any knowledge of the Crown lands in the electorate? Yes.
973. Will you state how much unalienated land there is in the district? About 270,000 acres.
974. Where is it situated? Principally on the south side of the Shoalhaven River.
975. Give, approximately, the acreage and the position of the land? It is within this district.
976. What distance from Nowra? I think the district extends about 15 miles south of Nowra.
977. The whole of the land to which you have referred is within 15 miles of Nowra? Yes.
978. Is the whole of that available for settlement? Yes.
979. Is it suitable? I do not know.
980. Is any portion of it reserved? Yes, there are two large reserves. The whole parish of Jerriwanglo is reserved.
981. Comprising how many acres? I think about 22,000 acres.
982. For what purpose was it reserved? For timber.
983. What other large reserve is there? I should have to look at the map to refresh my memory before I could tell you. There are about 50,000 acres of land reserved.
984. And the rest is open for selection? Yes.
985. What area has been taken up by the selectors in the district? I could not say, but I could ascertain.

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John Maclean, Esq., journalist, sworn, and examined:—

986. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What are you? Journalist.
987. Have you any other business than that of journalist? No other fixed business.
988. I suppose that you have become well acquainted with Nowra and the surrounding districts? Yes.
989. I presume that you keenly watch the progress of the district? Yes.
990. Can you state what progress has been made here during the last ten years? The population has increased in that time from about 7,000 to 11,250, on the 30th March, 1889, according to the Statistical Register.
991. In what callings of life has this been apparent? In grazing and agriculture chiefly.
992. Can you state what description of agriculture is carried on here? The growing of maize, potatoes, and fruit in a small way, but chiefly the cultivation of rye grass for dairy purposes and the development of the natural grasses of the district.
993. Is the land in this district suitable for cereals? Cereals were largely grown here until 1867, but rust interfered, and since then the growth of cereals has not been successful. I refer now to wheat and the cultivation of oats for making hay. The rankness of the crop often induces rust, and the soil does not produce as good hay as poorer land would.
994. Has there been much grazing carried on here? There are 225,000 acres under occupation, chiefly for grazing purposes.
995. Sheep or cattle? Dairying and fattening—mostly for dairying.
996. You are Secretary of the Railway League? Yes.
997. Have you prepared any statistics? I have.
998. Will you read them? The number of holdings under 1 acre was 1,232. The area cultivated in grasses, &c., in the Shoalhaven district is 66,646 acres; the area enclosed in the Shoalhaven electorate is

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223,573 acres; the area unenclosed; 35,227 acres; the total area of holdings in the Shoalhaven electorate being 258,799 acres. The Murrumbidgee is the only district in the Colony that beats this electorate for the area of land under cultivation, and for the number of holdings within the same area. The total number of freeholders in the Shoalhaven district is 1,232; the number of conditional purchase applications received in 1886 was 133—taking up an area of 12,930 acres. There was no selection in the two adjoining districts for that period, the land having all been taken up. I have also the statistics of the revenue of several municipalities in the district up to 1886. The estimated value of ratable property in Terrara is £110,000. The estimated value upon which the rate is struck is £2,238; the annual income from the rates, £224 16s. 1d. The estimated capital value of the ratable property of the municipality of Numba is £46,000, the rate being struck on a value of £4,497. I may add here that the valuers are usually tenants in that part of the country, and that we generally regard that estate as more valuable than the rates show it to be. The annual revenue from rates in the municipality of Numba is £220. The area of land in the Shoalhaven district is 625,000 acres—that is the land under occupation—the area of Crown lands still unalienated is estimated at 400,000 acres. This is land southward, but within the district of Shoalhaven.

999. How much of that is mountainous country? It is all undulating country.

1000. This is within the electorate? Within the electorate, and would, I estimate, make traffic for the line.

1001. Can you tell us what has been the increase in the number of electors in the electorate during the last five years? It has gone up some 800 during the last ten years.

1002. Have you any particulars with regard to mining? Yes. There are about fifty leases in existence at Yalwal—the areas varying from 3 to 12 acres.

1003. How much do you think is expended in wages weekly there? At the present time between £300 and £400 a month—the wages are paid monthly. There is one mine alone the expenditure in connection with which is over £200 a month.

1004. Have you any further data to give? The amount of gold won since 1882 has been about £75,000 worth. That quantity has been got chiefly from four leases.

1005. What are their names? The Homeward Bound, about £36,000; the Eclipse, £13,000; the Pioneer, £12,000; the Pinnacle, £16,000; and smaller sums from the Golden Crown, the Caledonian, and a number of new claims in process of development. There are four crushing batteries either erected or in course of erection, which I estimate to be worth £10,000.

1006. Have not some of these claims been taken over by Victorian syndicates lately? Yes, the Homeward Bound has been purchased by a Victorian syndicate.

1007. Are they giving indications of an intention to expend capital in the development of these mines? They have spent about £5,000 in the purchase of machinery which is now in course of erection. They purchased this property, and the capital value of it now is registered at £120,000. The shares are selling at 37s. 6d. and £2. I should like to say a word about the unalienated Crown lands within a radius of 15 miles of Nowra. I have been at the Baulkham Hills, Blacktown, Lane Cove, and other fruit growing centres, and judging from the geological character of the soil at those places, and comparing it with the unalienated lands at Shoalhaven, I say that if we had the same class of people here, and the same facilities that they have in those places, the land now unalienated would be worth on an average £5 an acre. Hudson Brothers have been purchasing blocks of Crown land, 20 miles west of Parramatta, at £12 an acre, and selling it at from £40 to £50 an acre, but there they have the advantage of railway accommodation. Here our bar-bound rivers and high freights are sending the fruit growers out of the district. There is a witness here who can tell you, from practical experiment, what the lands in this district will produce. I have had people visiting at my place from Lane Cove, who said:—"This is the outlet for our sons." There is nearly £1,000 worth of fruit consumed annually at Nowra, and it all comes from Sydney and California—apples are sold at Nowra from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per dozen. As regards the climate, I have kept a record here for the Government Astronomer, and taking the average of the main station, 20 miles south, the rainfall for twenty years has been 51 inches a year. Frosts are rare in this district, and we may be said to have no winter. The highest average in summer is 80 degrees in the shade, and in the winter it is a rare thing for the thermometer to go below 37° I have only twice recorded the fall of the thermometer below 37° in twenty-five years. The Government Astronomer classes the climate of this place with that of Naples in his comparative geography. I conclude that, with the facilities the proposed railway would afford, all the unalienated land in the district would come into occupation, and that it ought all to be measured and sold as special areas. I would like to say a word about the proposed extension. I consider it a distinct mistake to stop on the north side of the river. Mr. O'Sullivan touched the point in examining Mr. Macarthur, when it was stated that 2s. 6d. should be added to the freights if the station is placed at the Bomederry township. Whether you carried a ton or a cwt., the charge would be increased by 2s. 6d. The steamers will be much nearer to Nowra, and I say it will be a decided mistake to make the terminus at Bomederry township.

1008. Are all the mountain lands good for grazing? All the mountain lands north of us are, and some west of us. All the mountain lands on the north of the river are occupied for grazing purposes.

1009. Who prepared the statistics which you have supplied? They were furnished by Mr. Coghlan, the Government Statistician, and aggregated by myself from numerous returns obtained by the courtesy of the member for the district and Mr. Fuller, M.P. for Kiama.

1010. Then you have taken steps to verify the figures? I have in many cases found them to be understated. The tenants are in a constant state of terror, lest their rent or taxes should be increased, so they are inclined to understate the facts.

1011. Of course you know that some Progress Committees have a tendency to give a roseate colour to their statements when they want a railway? I do not know that myself.

1012. You have taken every precaution to supply an accurate statement of the resources of the district? Yes; I wish to say something of the estimate of the cost of working the line, about £18,000. I have compared the Kiama electorate and its imports and exports with the Shoalhaven electorate. The receipts of the Kiama Station went up to something like £10,000 last year for passengers and goods. This should give something like £18,000 for the two places without calculating the increase sure to follow on the sale and occupation of the vacant lands. I forgot to mention that there are 8,000 acres of land taken up for coal-mining 7 miles south-west of Nowra, and the diamond drill is to be put into it. It is expected to cut this coal at a point within 8 miles of Jervis Bay.

1013. *Mr. Hurley.*] You made some reference to the question of the erection of the station on the other side of the river;—have you not at various times written to the *Sydney Morning Herald* and to the *Daily Telegraph*, in reference to the vexed question of the site for the station? I have.

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1014. On one occasion you wrote on the subject as to whether the Crown had any morality in its transactions in connection with this matter? Yes; as regards the logical outcome of that particular transaction.

1015. Am I right in saying that you stated it to be a repetition of the policy of having the railway terminus at Redfern and stopping the railway 2 miles short of St. Leonards? Yes; and I think so.

1016. Can you say if the railway were brought across the river, how far the station would be from the places of business? I cannot say where it is to be.

1017. Do you know where the station would be if the bridge were constructed? Mr. Wright has just shown me the spot on a tracing in Court.

1018. What distance would that be from the centre of the town? It would be about 30 chains from the centre.

1019. What distance would the station be on the other side from the wharfs? It would be about 300 yards.

1020. And practically, you would have further to cart your goods on this side, than on the other? You said "from the wharfs," but they are nearly half a mile from the town. The proposed station, if constructed south of the river, would be within 30 chains of the population, and would have 28 chains of advantage over the wharfs in distance from Nowra.

1021. If the railway were on this side of the river would you not have to cart your goods 30 chains or more? Yes, but the point that was formerly shown by survey would be about 15 chains nearer the town.

1022. Looking at the proposal to in future extend the railway to Jervis Bay, do you still think that the railway ought at present to be brought nearer to the town? It would be a choice of evils to adopt either proposed terminus north of the river. We should afford the best possible facilities to the public.

1023. You have spoken strongly about this site on the other side of the river? Yes, on these grounds: that it looks to me like a breach of faith for the Crown to come here and sell land, put up Court-houses, and provide the essentials of civilization, then for another Department of the Government, ignoring what has been done, to put a railway station on private land away from the town to foster a private-estate town.

1024. Did the Government, in selling these lands, sell them with the condition that a railway should be constructed through them? They sold them as town lands and railways are important factors in the establishment of towns.

1025. Can you show that the Government have acted in a way that can lay them open to a charge of repudiation? I say there is an act of repudiation implied in making the railway terminus where it will offer temptations to land syndicates. Government towns have been ruined in this way.

1026. Is not the antagonism of the people here to the station being placed at the Bomederry township owing to the fear of another town being erected on private property at Bomederry? There is no antagonism.

1027. Have you not written to the press upholding this town as against Bomederry? Yes. It is an act of repudiation, after putting people on the land here and setting up one set of Government institutions in this town to use public money to erect the terminus of a railway so as to start a private-estate town elsewhere to the disadvantage of the Government town.

1028. Was the deviation of the line from Bomederry to the Bomederry bridge advocated by you in any way or thought of by you for years? Not in any way.

1029. Do you think it a wise thing for the Government to make that deviation at a cost of £3,000 or £4,000, seeing that they have in view the probable construction of a bridge and the extension of the railway to Jervis Bay? I regard it as a choice of evils, and I think it is the better of the two. The line ought to cross the river without a temporary terminus remaining there at all.

1030. You know that the proposed site of the terminus is liable to floods? I think the plan suggested by the engineer would get over that difficulty.

1031. *Chairman.*] Are you satisfied that if the railway [were constructed it would become a profitable line? I have no doubt of it.

1032. Are you favourable to the route as shown upon the plans? On the whole I think it is the least expensive route, and as far as its course in this electorate is concerned it is distinctly the best that could be adopted.

1033. You do not suggest any alteration? I do not. I have a map which illustrates the opinion of the Progress Committee on the subject. It shows that the line touches the sea at Coal Cliff, and as it progresses southerly the coast range recedes, leaving a wider area of arable land between it and the sea.

1034. *Mr. Hurley.*] Can you give me any idea as to the difference between the distance to the proposed railway on this side of the river and the distance of the proposed railway on the other side of the river;—you know where the station on either side is to be? Mr. Wright, the engineer, has pointed them out on the north and south sides. One is on the main avenue of traffic.

1035. What is the difference in the distance to the one and the other from the business centre of the town? There are 28 chains in favour of the one on this side of the river.

1036. Do you think the little inconvenience that you will suffer in the town through the difference in the distances would warrant the Government in constructing a bridge for that mile of railway at a cost of £70,000? I think the extra goods freights would meet the annual cost of the bridge.

1037. Therefore, you maintain that the Government are warranted in spending money in making that bridge and lessening the inconvenience that you would have by having a station on the north side of the river? I do not say so. I say that the bridge should be made as part of the line to Jervis Bay. In advocating the bridge I advocate it as part of the original plan of the promoters of the line to go to Jervis Bay, and I say that to stop short at this stage will be to lose a large amount of traffic, which will go to the steamers, whose wharves will be nearer the town.

1038. I put a question which you did not answer; I want to know whether the Government held out any inducement for the purchase of land on this side of the river that caused you to make the statement that the Lands Department had caused a town to be built up on this side of the river, and that the Railway Committee were endeavouring to undo what had been done, questioning the morality of the action of the Government? By building public buildings. Although they did not state it in the deeds of grant, they have stated it by implication, that this is a central site for a Government town; but another department of the same Government, from some cause, is trying to create another important avenue of traffic, and draw the traffic away from this place. They do, in fact, repudiate the intention previously formed.

1039.

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1039. Can you tell me where the repudiation comes in in any form in connection with a railway and the selling of land by the Commissioner for Lands? It comes in this way: When the terminus of a line is made on freehold land, away from the Crown land which had been sold, and when it creates a traffic in another place, the effect of which will be to deteriorate the value of the land in the town. I can show what the effect has been. There was a meeting, presided over by the Mayor, in reference to this matter, at which a Committee was appointed to go to the Minister for Works, not to ask him to construct a line, but to submit the question to the Works Committee as to whether the line should come into Nowra or not.

1040. Do you maintain that the erection of a station at Bomederry will depreciate the value of the land at Nowra? It will distinctly do so. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying so.

1041. Upon what justification do you make that statement? From facts that have come to light since the thing was proposed. I could call several land-holders who have called at my office and said, "Do you think that it is now worth my while investing money?" and they have refused to invest their money in Nowra on account of the proposal to put the station at Bomederry.

1042. You can pay the interest on the cost of the construction on the proposed bridge into the town of Nowra seeing that you will have such a small distance to carry your goods, and that the freight charged will be so low? If they come over the present bridge. Another department has guaranteed that a railway can cross it.

1043. Do you know that it would carry a railway? I know that a load equal to the weight of a locomotive was sent over it, and the deflection was something like $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch in the longest span. I wish to point out that I do not say that any Government intentionally repudiated their obligations in regard to this town. I only say that that is the effect of the course which it is proposed to take.

1044. Have you not written to the *S. M. Herald* and the *Daily Telegraph* making charges of repudiation against the Government? Nothing of the kind. I said that in effect it was repudiation, but without that intention. I also wish to say that there was a distinct protest from the people of the town against the terminus being at Bomederry, and if the town were polled to-morrow only a few would say that it would injure the interests of Nowra if the railway came into it. Some think that they would be injured if the railway came into the town, and passed beyond it, and those people have always been in favour of its staying at the other side of the river.

1045. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How would this depreciation of property take place? Simply because if the terminus was there anyone coming from Sydney would naturally stay at an hotel near the railway instead of going to one a mile from it. If you could get all that was necessary there you would not come here, and this illustration applies to all the traffic coming at present from north of the river to Nowra.

1046. The difficulty then is the establishment of a rival town and the depreciation of the property in Nowra? It is the dread of the terminus staying there many years. The department have set up £100,000 barrier. Of course they are not asked to speak on oath, but we are prepared to prove everything on oath. The terminus may remain at Bomederry for twenty years.

1047. You said that if the bridge was constructed and the railway were brought into Nowra it would pay the interest on the cost of construction? What we may be charged for the extra distance.

1048. Do you mean the freight for the extra $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, or do you mean that by bringing the railway into the town it would get a large amount of the traffic that goes by the shipping? That is what I mean. Mr. Wright's arrangement has improved the matter, but by having the terminus at Bomederry the rates would have been so prohibitory that the steamers would have had the best of the competition, except with regard to the passenger traffic.

1049. *Chairman.*] Then your evidence is that by the extension of the line as proposed by the engineer to Bomederry bridge the engineer has neutralised the injury that would have been done by putting the station at Bomederry township? Yes. If the line were brought into Nowra I do not say that Nowra traffic alone would pay the cost of the bridge, but the Crown lands which would be opened up for sale would pay it, and the extra traffic therefrom would help to pay it. The branch which it is proposed to make has largely neutralised the injury that might be done by having the line end at the other side of the river, but that was not decided upon until a deputation went to the Minister from a public meeting. It was after that that we ascertained that Mr. Wright had proposed to make a branch line which would largely neutralise the ill effects of having this station so far away from the town.

Mr. James Booth, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
J. Booth.
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1050. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? A farmer.

1051. Have you been long in the district? I came in 1855.

1052. What is your profession? I have been a teacher by profession, but I retired from the Public Service two or three years ago.

1053. Since then what have you done? I have been farming.

1054. Have you gone in for fruit-growing? On a limited scale—merely to provide for my own family, there being no sale for fruit. I confine myself to 2 or 3 acres.

1055. Do you think the soil is adapted for fruit-growing? Eminently so.

1056. And if you had the means of getting your fruit to market would it be profitable? Yes.

1057. What do the farmers grow in this district? Maize, wheat, oats, barley, and other crops.

1058. How many bushels of wheat do you get per acre? From 15 to 20 bushels.

1059. How many bushels of maize? From 35 to 60 bushels an acre.

1060. Is there a large area of land suitable for maize in the district? Not so much for maize as for fruit. The country is undulating, similar to the Pennant Hills and Ryde; there is not much flat ground.

1061. Does the district suffer from drought? Not very much.

1062. Is there always plenty of feed for the stock? Yes.

1063. Have you ever to import feed? I have never imported feed.

1064. Have you had any experience in regard to ensilage? None.

1065. Have you done any exporting from this district? Occasionally, by water.

1066. What have you to pay for outward freight? About 6d. a bushel.

1067. What would you have to pay for the same freight by train? I do not know.

1068. Suppose you had to pay twice the amount, would you take advantage of the train as against the steamer? I do not think I should, but if I had railway accommodation I would give my whole attention to fruit-growing.

1069. Have you had experience in water conservation? No; it is not necessary on my property.
1070. Can you give us any idea as to the prospects of the district? With a market available, I think it would be one of the finest districts in the colony for fruit-growing, particularly for apples, pears, plums, and oranges. I have not seen a district equal to the Tomerong district for the production of oranges. I have never seen the slightest sign of blight on it.
1071. Have you any knowledge of the carrying capacity of the land? The fruit trees bear amazingly. I may mention that this year I picked nine gin-cases of plums from one tree, and they realized in Nowra 10s. a case.
1072. You have no doubt as to the success of fruit-growing in the district if proper facilities are afforded? None whatever.
1073. With regard to cattle? It would require 4 acres to each beast out our way all the year round.
1074. About Shoalhaven the carrying capacity would be about 1 acre to a cow? Yes.
1075. Therefore, you are living on inferior land? Yes.
1076. Have you formed any opinion as to whether a payable return would be obtained if a railway were made to this place? I have not given the matter much thought.
1077. Have you any knowledge of the mineral resources of the district? No.
1078. Is there any other local industry that you could give us information about? No. The land is very suitable for grazing purposes.
1079. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Where is your farm? At Wondandian, near Jervis Bay.
1080. How many miles from Nowra? About 20 miles, and 10 or 12 miles from Jervis Bay.
1081. Has any attempt been made to cultivate the vine in your district? Only in a few isolated cases.
1082. Do you recollect whether a canning factory ever existed at Jervis Bay? I do not remember it.
1083. Do you say that you can produce all English fruits side by side with the orange? We can produce pears, apples, peaches, nectarines, plums, and oranges; gooseberries, which require a colder climate, will not grow here.
1084. I understand that strawberries and raspberries have been cultivated in the district? Yes.
1085. Would the extension of the railway to Jervis Bay lead to the expansion of the fruit industry? Most decidedly.
1086. Is the whole of that 2,000-acre reserve down there fit for fruit-growing? I do not say the whole of it, but a large portion of it is.
1087. I presume that if the railway were made down there, and the reserve were thrown open for settlement, a large portion of it would be made into orchards? I think so.

Mr.
J. Booth.
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Mr. Charles Gordon, Assistant Inspector of Fisheries, sworn, and examined:—

1088. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What position do you hold? Assistant Inspector of Fisheries under the Fisheries Board.
1089. What district do you superintend? The Shoalhaven district.
1090. Is the fishing industry largely carried on on this coast? It is in winter when they can send the fish to Sydney, but not in summer-time.
1091. Which waters do the men fish in? Shoalhaven River, often Jervis Bay, and Sussex Inlet.
1092. What fish do they catch? Whiting, mullet, garfish, bream, and schnapper.
1093. How are those fish taken to the Sydney market? The fishermen have to put them on board the steamers at Shoalhaven.
1094. Is it a long journey? You can make the journey from the Lake Berry-werry to Nowra 14 miles, or you can make it 25 miles.
1095. Are the fish liable to injury whilst being carried in the casks? Yes.
1096. How many men are there engaged in fishing there in the best seasons? Last season a good many were engaged in catching schnapper in the bay; I think twenty-five or thirty men.
1097. How many are engaged on the fishing-grounds in this district? About fifty.
1098. Are the Sydney men the men who fish here? Some Sydney fishermen come down here in winter time.
1099. Then they carry on a regular trade in Sydney? Yes.
1100. Do you think that if a railway were brought to Nowra it would materially aid this industry? I certainly do.
1101. Is it likely that if a railway were taken down to Jervis Bay more men would enter upon the fishing pursuit? I think a good many more men would come down here in winter time. They should come down here in winter, and the Sydney water should be kept open in summer.
1102. Would it be possible to carry on this business more successfully if you had better communication? Yes, by the use of a cooling-chamber. I suppose that that is the idea in connection with the railway.
1103. How many tons of fish a year are sent out of this district? The fishing is only carried on for about three months, and about 5,000 baskets are sent away in that time.
1104. And how many baskets make a ton? The baskets weigh 70lb. or 80lb.—probably about thirty baskets to the ton on the average.
1105. Then 5,000 baskets at thirty per ton would mean about 160 tons a year? Yes; and all that is sent away during three or four months at the outside.
1106. And the trade could be very considerably increased? It could be.
1107. We might look to the fishing industry as an important factor in connection with the traffic of the railway? Yes.
1108. Is there any oyster-fishing about your way? Yes, there is a great deal of it; but this year the spat has settled in a good many other waters besides here, and they are reserving the oysters in this district.
1109. How many oyster leases have you under your jurisdiction? I think about 17,000 yards altogether.
1110. How many tons of oysters are sent from here? This year only 660 bags went away; last year there were about 1,200.
1111. I suppose the average yield would be about 1,000 bags a year? Yes.
1112. Do the oysters go by steamer? Yes.
1113. Where are they obtained? On the Shoalhaven River, Berry-werry and Jervis Bay, and Crook-haven,

Mr.
C. Gordon.
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- Mr. C. Gordon.
28 Jan., 1890.
1114. Will the railway get the oysters if they are sent from places south of Shoalhaven? The oysters will keep better than fish.
1115. Do you think that the oyster trade will be diverted to the railway? I could not say for certain.
1116. Is there no oyster-culture round St. George's Basin and Jervis Bay? Yes.
1117. The railway would get that portion, would it not? Yes; I think so. It would improve that place.
1118. You think that the trade would be considerably affected by the freight on the railway? I think so.

Mr. Jacob Ellmoss, fisherman, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. J. Ellmoss.
28 Jan., 1890.
1119. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? A fisherman.
1120. Are you working on your own account? Yes.
1121. Have you been long in the trade? Yes.
1122. Had you any experience before you came to the country? Only a little.
1123. Have you had any experience in the fishing-trade in any other part of the country besides Shoalhaven? Yes; I have also been at Jervis Bay.
1124. Do you look upon Shoalhaven as a good place for your labour? Yes, if I can get the fish away.
1125. The difficulty that you have is to get your fish to market? Yes.
1126. If you had facilities for reaching the market, could you supply large quantities of fish? Yes.
1127. What kind? Whiting, bream, black-fish, and schnapper.
1128. Could you double your supply? Yes; I could treble it.
1129. So you think that the railway would lead to the further development of your industry? Certainly.
1130. Are you engaged in oyster-fishing? No.
1131. Do you employ many men? Generally three men.
1132. And there is an abundance of fish? Yes.
1133. Do you produce a return showing what fish you have sent away? Yes; during four months of the season ending May, 1888, I sent away 207 baskets from St. George's Basin.
1134. What would the average be? From 80 to 90 lb. per basket.
1135. How many baskets did you send away in June? 186 baskets; in July, 154 baskets; in August, 173 baskets. That was all for the season of 1888. In 1889 I sent away, during part of April, 68 baskets, and of these 60 baskets were spoiled on account of not getting to Sydney in time to be sold.
1136. Could you tell us how many fish you lost altogether through their not getting to market in time? In 1889 I sent away 585 baskets of fish, and out of that number 148 baskets were spoiled on account of delay in reaching the market.
1137. But if you had had railway communication that would not have happened? Certainly not.
1138. And the market would have been supplied? Yes. During part of that time I could not send any fish at all, the roads being too bad.
1139. Have you endeavoured to start an industry for drying and preserving fish? I have tried it, but could not make it pay.
1140. Was that in consequence of your want of knowledge? I do not think Sydney people care about salt or dried fish.
1141. You think the fish industry would be successful at Shoalhaven if you only had reliable communication with the metropolis? Yes. At present I send fish to the metropolis on two days in the week, but if we had a railway I would send it away on six days in the week.
1142. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Did you ever attempt to carry out well-boat fishing? Yes; but I have done nothing at that since I lost my brother at sea.
1143. How much do you think you have lost in one year through steamers not being able to catch the market? About £75 last year; the year before was not so bad.
1144. I suppose other fishermen are subject to similar losses? Yes.
1145. Do you belong to Sydney or the district? I come from St. George's Basin.
1146. Are there any other fishermen in that district? Yes; the greatest part of them are there.
1147. Where do you reside? At Sussex Inlet.
1148. Have you a garden there? I have a selection there.
1149. And do you cultivate it? Yes, a little.

Cyril Blacket, Esq., architect, sworn, and examined :—

- C. Blacket, Esq.
28 Jan., 1890.
1150. *Chairman.*] What are you? An architect by profession. I have been speculating in land a little.
1151. Where do you reside? At St. George's Basin, on a selection.
1152. Of how many acres? 640 acres.
1153. How long have you been there? Five years.
1154. What portion have you cleared? I have about 350 acres more or less cleared.
1155. How many acres under cultivation? Not more than 20 acres; it is heavily-timbered land; it takes a long time to get the timber off.
1156. What are you engaged in? I took the land up to fell timber. What I mostly do is to rear cattle and horses.
1157. Did you hear the evidence of Mr. Booth? I did.
1158. Do you confirm his evidence as to the possibilities of the fruit industry? Yes. There is one thing which I could add to his statement. In one instance when oranges were selling in Sydney at 4d. per doz. I bought a man's crop down here at 1d. per doz.
1159. Do you think the extension of the railway to Jervis Bay would lead to a large increase in settlement? I am sure of it.
1160. What occupations could settlers follow? The fishing industry is a very good-paying occupation. It has grown up in the last few years, and is increasing rapidly. If there were better facilities for getting fish to Sydney it would increase more rapidly still. Very frequently they can't get their fish away, and they only work two days a week, and yet many of the men are in comfortable circumstances. They only fish four months in the year. The St. George's Basin teams with fish. I have known 7 tons of fish to go from one wharf to Sydney in a week.

1161. Do you wish to make any further statement? I should like to make a remark as to the extension of the railway to Jervis Bay. At present there is an immense area of Crown land reserved for various purposes with water frontages. Some are reserved as timber reserves, some for water, and others for other reasons. There are many reserves near Jervis Bay and it seems to me that if the railway were extended to Jervis Bay the value of these lands would be greatly increased. If the improved value of the land would not pay the whole cost of the construction of the railway it would at all events pay a very large portion of it. In making this statement I am not speaking at random. Some months ago a company with which I am connected bought land adjoining the Government township, Jervis Bay, at £4 10s. per acre, and afterwards sold it for £64 per acre. In the township of Huskisson the Government holds 47½ acres. A private individual, some years ago, bought some Government land at auction and he is now asking, with every probability of getting it, £300 per acre for it. If the railway passes within a reasonable distance of that 47½ acres at Huskisson it will probably realise £300 per acre.

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1162. You are of opinion that the extension of the railway to Jervis Bay would largely increase the value of the unalienated Crown lands? Yes, I say so from practical experience.

1163. And the increased value of the land would contribute largely towards the cost of construction of the line? Yes.

1164. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How far is St. George's Basin from Jervis Bay? One part is about a mile and a half from Jervis Bay, but the wharf that we usually go to would be about 4 miles.

1165. Is the land round the Basin superior to that of Jervis Bay? For the most part the land close about the lake is good for agricultural purposes.

1166. Are there many settlers round there? Yes; during the last four or five years many have settled there, and with the exception of huge reserves, there is very little land left for selection. A good deal of the land has been taken up for summer residences under the non-residential clauses of the Land Act.

1167. Are those settlers round St. George's Basin improving and cultivating? Yes, very much. Within a 5 miles radius improvements must have been effected to the value of between £4,000 and £5,000.

1168. Therefore there is every evidence that it is a growing settlement? Yes.

1169. Do you frequent the shores of Jervis Bay? Yes.

1170. Is there any population at Huskisson? There are a few, but it is not such a thriving place as it was a little while ago. Ship-building is carried on there, but that industry has been suffering from depression. It received a check from which it has not recovered.

1171. What caused the check? It was the same thing that effected the whole world—iron ship-building came into fashion. There was once a fish canning establishment at Huskisson.

1172. Has it ceased operations? Yes. Some thirty years ago there was a good deal of wheat produced down there, but in consequence of the improved facilities given to the northern rivers in the shape of better steamers, and railway communication, the competition was carried on at a disadvantage to the southern districts, and the growers in that part of the colony were run out of the market. A good deal of the lands originally under wheat cultivation is now used for rearing young cattle.

1173. Is there much stock-raising done there? Yes. Young cattle are left there till they are two or three years old and then they are brought to Nowra and sold.

1174. Do you know any persons who hold coal-mining land down there? Yes. I think the whole of the bottom of Jervis Bay is leased for coal, and the other day an application was made for the whole of the bottom of St. George's Basin.

1175. What do you mean by the bottom? The right to go under water and get the coal.

1176. No coal-mining has been carried on at Jervis Bay has it? A good many bores have been put down but the coal has been, so far, at too great a depth to pay.

Frederick Huleat Galbraith, Esq., Clerk of Petty Sessions, &c., sworn, and further examined:—

1177. *Chairman.*] Do you produce a return showing the conditional purchases taken up in this district to the 31st December, 1884? Yes; the area is 64,541 acres.

1178. Those are complete returns? Yes. The area taken up under the Act of 1884, since the 1st of January, 1885, is 14,739 acres; mineral leases, from 1st January, 1885, 15,253 acres; gold leases, 418 acres.

1179. Can you say approximately the number of conditional purchases and the applications for mineral conditional purchases? That would be rather difficult to get at.

1180. Can you state, from personal knowledge, whether the large area you have just mentioned as having been taken up under conditional purchase is in the hands of few or a great many persons? It is in the hands of a great many.

1181. Can you locate them? The greater number of them are in the parishes of Cambewarra, Bugong, Nowra, and Broughton, and the rest are distributed through the other parishes. Many are in this parish (Nowra).

1182. Can you say whether they would be benefited by the construction of the proposed railway from Kiama to Shoalhaven? I should say that they would be.

1183. They would be afforded facilities for conveying their produce to market? Yes.

1184. Can you tell me what have been the returns of the Land Office in Nowra for the last ten years? No; but at the end of the year I made up a rough return for last year.

1185. Could you not state what the returns were from 1880? I daresay I can make it out.

1186. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What size holdings do the conditional purchasers apply for? As a rule, from 40 acres.

1187. Up to what area? 640 acres. There are a few 640-acre selections.

1188. Have you had many forfeited selections in this district? Not a great number.

1189. Do you hold the Land Court at Nowra? Yes.

1190. And is there anything like an approach at dummyism in the district? No; I have not heard of a dummy selection.

1191. The land is too good? Yes. It costs too much to improve it.

1192. You think that the selection that goes on is of a *bonâ fide* character? Yes. I have no doubt of that.

1193. Do the returns show that it is progressing? I do not think so.

1194. Then the rate of selection is not increasing? No.

1195. Does that arise from the fact that the land available is decreasing largely? Yes, and from want of rapid communication with the land now open to selection. The land is taken up principally on the north side of the line.

F. H.
Galbraith,
Esq.
28 Jan., 1890.

Mr. Zacchias Bice, retired farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. Z. Bice. 1196. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you been long in the district? About fifty-two years.
 1197. What do you do? I am living on my means at present.
 28-Jan., 1890. 1198. That you have accumulated in the district? Yes.
 1199. From farming? From dairy farming.
 1200. Do you believe that the same facility for acquiring a competency exists for other people who come into the district? I think so.
 1201. You think that there is a living to be made by very many more if they have energy and a knowledge of their business? Yes; I think the district is capable of sustaining more than double its present population, and if the railway is made very likely the population will be doubled within the next five years, and the quantity of produce will be doubled within that time.
 1202. Is there sufficient land to give employment to a large number of people? Yes.
 1203. I think Mr. Morton stated that the number of farmers on the Berry estate might be doubled? Yes; and the same thing might take place throughout the district.
 1204. Do you think that a railway would be likely to bring about that increased population? I think it is the only thing that would do it.
 1205. Are the people favourable to the importation of fresh enterprise into this country? I think so. They wish to see the district progress.
 1206. Have you any knowledge of the Crown lands in the district? Yes.
 1207. Can you say what they are suitable for? I cannot say from actual experience; but I am given to understand that the whole of the land between here and Jervis Bay is most suitable for fruit-growing.
 1208. Supposing the land were thrown open, do you think that there are people who are anxious to occupy it? Yes, perhaps at an increased price.
 1209. What do you mean by an increased price? From 35s. to £2 an acre.
 1210. What are they asking for the worst lands immediately around the town? Immediately round the town the land is of very great value.
 1211. Are you acquainted with the land between here and Mr. De Mestre's place? That would bring from £10 to £20 an acre.
 1212. Is it not similar land? Yes; as you go further away of course the land becomes of less value.
 1213. I suppose you agree with what has been said by other witnesses as to the probable future of this place in the event of the proposed railway being made? I do.
 1214. And the dairying and farming industry will benefit by such extension? Yes, to a very great extent.
 1215. Do you do any trade with the steam-boats? I do not.
 1216. How do you go to Sydney? By coach and train.
 1217. Do you know anything about the timber reserves in the district? Yes.
 1218. Is the timber suitable for all purposes? It is suitable for building purposes. A great deal of timber has been taken away, but there is a great deal left.
 1219. Do you know anything about the proposed railway route *via* Jamberoo? I have only a general idea of the locality. I believe that that route would save 6 or 7 miles in the distance to Sydney, but it would be a very expensive line to make.
 1220. At all events you are not prejudiced against the Kiama line in favour of that? No. I should have liked the line to have gone by Jamberoo, because that place is nearer to the metropolis.
 1221. Have you done any fruit growing in your time? Yes; fruit grows very well in the district.
 1222. All kinds? Peaches, nectarines, and apricots, but further south apples and plums grow better.
 1223. Do you find that the agricultural population are decreasing—that young men are not being reared up to agriculture? No, it is not so.
 1224. Do you think they will avail themselves of the model farms and agricultural college? Yes, they will have to do it.
 1225. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You have been fifty-two years in the district? Yes.
 1226. I suppose you have had a good chance to observe the progress made by the people of this district as well as the condition of the population? Yes.
 1227. Has there been a general progress made by the people? Yes;—not so much in the first twenty years that I was here, but during the last twenty years there has been a uniform progress.
 1228. What was done in the early days? Maize and potato growing. There was very little dairying then.
 1229. Was the timber industry carried on? Yes; cedar was taken very largely from the district.
 1230. I suppose that in those days you went up to Sydney by coasting vessels? Yes.
 1231. When did the farmers turn their attention to dairying? About twenty years ago. It began at Wollongong and Kiama. The industry was in a better position then than it is at the present time; it did not extend so far south until twenty years ago.
 1232. And they have made more progress and accumulated more wealth than they did before they resorted to dairy-farming? Yes, a great deal. The land is more suitable for grazing than for cultivation.
 1233. Have you known old settlers in the district to go away for a time, and afterwards return? No; some of our best settlers went to the Richmond River twenty years ago and settled there, and they have done well.
 1234. You have not noticed that any settlers who left the district afterwards returned? No.
 1235. *Chairman.*] Do you know how many bushels of maize were sent from the district last year? I do not.
 1236. Have you examined the route of the proposed railway extension? Yes.
 1237. Are you satisfied that it is the best route to be obtained? I think it is the best that could have been selected.
 1238. Have you any alterations to suggest? No, I have not.
 1239. Would it be better for the southern side of the river to have the railway station close to Bomederry Bridge or at the Bomederry township? The best place would be between the creek and the river.
 1240. At the site proposed by Mr. Wright? At the one on this side of the creek.
 1241. Only two sites have been proposed—one at Bomederry, 50 chains from the bridge, and the other near the bridge—which of those do you think would be the best? The one at the bridge, of course.
 1242. Would that be more convenient to the people of Nowra than the site at Bomederry? It would.

1243. Are you clearly of opinion that unless a railway-bridge is built across the river it will be better that that branch should be made as a temporary expedient? Yes. Mr. Z. Bice.
 1244. Have you ever seen the water over that route leading from Bomederry? Yes, and you could not have walked across without the water going over your head. 28 Jan., 1890.

Mr. Robert Taylor Thorburn, livery-stable keeper, sworn, and examined:—

1245. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I keep livery stables and run mails.
 1246. You have always resided in the district? I was born in the district.
 1247. Do you conduct the coaching traffic between Shoalhaven and Kiama? I do.
 1248. How many coaches do you run? Three up and three down every day except Sunday.
 1249. Do you let out any vehicles for taking passengers from Shoalhaven to Kiama besides the ordinary coaching traffic? Yes; I keep three or four drivers driving special coaches between Kiama and Shoalhaven and other places. I have forty-two horses engaged in the regular Kiama work, and every day I am without spare horses.
 1250-1. Have you any objection to state what the gross receipts are between Shoalhaven and Kiama? About £400 a month.
 1252. Could you state what the coaching traffic was before the opening of the railway to Kiama between Kiama and all the places south of that town? I am prepared to say that there was not more than £20 a month for passenger traffic—that is not including commercial work.
 1253. And you now receive £400 a month? That is for all the work. Of course the commercial work means carrying samples as well as passengers.
 1254. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you run any branch lines? I run a branch line from here to Moss Vale, and a branch line from Berry to Kangaroo Valley.
 1255. Have other people been running lines? There is one from here to Yalwal.
 1256. Do you run to Milton? Yes, to Milton and Ulladulla
 1257. Is there a branch towards Jervis Bay or St. George's Basin? No.
 1258. Does Moss Vale branch serve Kangaroo Valley and Cambewarra? Yes.
 1259. These are the only branch lines? Yes. Of course passengers come from where there are no branch lines. They come from Terrara, Numba, and other places, although no coaches are running to those places.

Mr. R. T.
Thorburn.
28 Jan., 1890.

Mr. Jeremiah Green, retired storekeeper, sworn, and examined:—

1260. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? A retired storekeeper.
 1261. You have sent a great deal of freight between here and Sydney? I have.
 1362. What charge do you generally have to pay? From £100 to £150 a year.
 1263. How much per ton? The Illawarra Company charge 10s., but where we felt the high charge most was on produce. Mr.
J. Green.
28 Jan., 1890.
 1264. Did you suffer loss by having to send your produce to Sydney by steamer—did you run great risks? Yes, besides the deterioration of the produce.
 1265. Have any of the steamers by which your goods were carried ever been wrecked? I lost goods once by the wreck of a sailing vessel.
 1266. I suppose other people in the town were losers, likewise? Yes.
 1267. Do you have your goods insured? Not as a rule.
 1268. I suppose you are in favour of the construction of the proposed railway? Yes; it would be a great advantage to the district.
 1269. Do you think it would tend to develop agriculture here? Yes.
 1270. You have heard about the fisheries and the oyster industries? Yes; I quite understand what has been said about that.
 1271. Have you had experience in fruit-growing? Not in fruit-growing.
 1272. Do you know the value of the land in the district? I know the value of the land in the town.
 1273. Has the value of the land in the town increased since the proposed railway was spoken of? Very much.
 1274. You have heard the evidence with regard to the station? Yes.
 1275. Have you heard where the station would be situated? Yes.
 1276. You are acquainted with the site at the Bomederry Bridge? I have seen both sites.
 1277. Looking at those two sites, and the distance the storekeepers and others engaged in trade would have to travel, do you think the country would be justified in spending £70,000 in the construction of the proposed bridge to benefit the people of this district? I do not look upon it as an immediate benefit, but a prospective benefit, anticipating that the railway will have to go further south. The bridge will have to be built. I approve of the bridge site for the station.
 1278. You know the distance between the Bomederry township and the site of the proposed station near the bridge? Yes.
 1279. Do you think the public will suffer great inconvenience by having the station at Bomederry? It would entail great loss on the Nowra storekeepers, owing to the distance they would have to travel. The proposed branch would be a great convenience.
 1280. So the construction of the railway to Bomederry Bridge would be a great advantage? Yes.
 1281. And the construction of a station at Bomederry would be an inconvenience? It would be almost valueless to the people of Nowra, as the steamers would offer greater facilities.
 1282. Therefore you would prefer to see no railway at all than for it to stop at Bomederry town, as proposed? No, I would not; but decidedly, if the railway cannot come to the south side of the river, bring it to the bridge.
 1283. Is it not a fact that the people of this town are afraid of the probability of a new town springing into existence at Bomederry, if a station is made there? I can only speak for myself.
 1284. Have you not heard them say that? I have heard that rumour, but I attach no importance to it.
 1285. Has there not been correspondence in the press in which that argument was used? It was in the papers. 1286.

- Mr. J. Green. 1286. Does not the correspondence decry anything like the establishment of a railway-station at Bomederry proper? I think he is anxious to see the terminus at Nowra.
- 28 Jan., 1890. 1287. Have you any dread of another township springing up at the other side of the river? I have no such dread.
1288. Yet you believe that the erection of a station there, and the railway stopping short a mile and a half from your township, would be a serious injury? Yes. It would destroy the advantage of a railway to the district.
1289. Would people use the coaches as before? They would have to go in coaches to the station.
1290. You think that the line ought to be brought into the town? Decidedly.
1291. Have you any special knowledge of the country between here and Jervis Bay? Yes.
1292. What is the character of the country? It is very suitable for fruit-growing. When Mr. Angus Mackay, the lecturer on agriculture, was here he spoke very highly of it.
1293. Are you interested in property between here and Jervis Bay? No.
1294. Do you believe that, in the interests of the general public the line should be brought into Nowra? If possible.
1295. And you believe that it would be a remunerative speculation? I think so. It will tend very much to develop the country.
1296. Have you any knowledge of the minerals of the district? Only from report.
1297. Are you interested in Yalwal mines? No.
1298. Have you been to Yalwal? Yes.
1299. Can you say anything as to the probable permanency of the gold-field? My impression was that it would prove a very permanent field.
1300. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Would it be to the advantage of the Government, as well as of the people, to have this railway constructed to Bomederry Bridge? It would, in my opinion.
1301. Why? Because it will secure a larger traffic if it terminates at the bridge. If it terminated at the Bomederry township I think it would lose all the heavy traffic of the district and diminish the passenger traffic. According to my experience, the more convenient a station is, the more it encourages travelling. Strangers are attracted by the convenience of getting into town without having to use coaches.
1302. Do you think that one person would be deterred from going by railway if he had to choose between going to Bomederry and travelling by sea? Yes.
1303. Do you think they would rather go by sea than walk to Bomederry? I think they would.
1304. You think that charge of 2s. 6d. per ton for getting the goods from Bomederry into the town would turn the scale in favour of the sea trade? I think that the cartage and the distance would deter a great many from going by train, and they would go by steamer. If the station is at Bomederry Bridge it will get the traffic.
1305. The cost of bringing the traffic to it would be less, I suppose? Yes.
1306. The storekeepers would have a certain amount of haulage from the wharf to their stores? Yes; but not so much as they would have in going to the station at Bomederry.
1307. What is the charge per ton for hauling from the wharf? They generally do their own hauling.
1308. What is the cost? When I was in business I calculated upon having eight loads a day. But going over the Bomederry Bridge they could not carry more than four a day. To the Bomederry township the number would be considerably less than four loads a day.
1309. Then you think, as a business man, that it would be unwise to have the station at Bomederry, lest the charge of 2s. 6d. for cartage would drive the trade away from the railway? Yes, I am sure it would.
1310. Are you of opinion that the line should be extended to Jervis Bay immediately, and not stop at Nowra? I think that the country towards Jervis Bay requires railway development. If we had a railway to Nowra it would tend to develop the land between here and Jervis Bay.
1311. Are you in favour of the construction of a bridge, with a view to the extension of the line to Jervis Bay? I prefer a bridge across the river, but failing that, the station ought to be at Bomederry Bridge.
1312. Do you advocate the construction of a bridge over the river in order to afford the Nowra people better facilities? I am in favour of a bridge being constructed, with the view of ultimately opening up the country between here and Jervis Bay.

Mr. Frederick Skinner, public school teacher, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. F. Skinner. 1313. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What are you? Public School teacher.
- 28 Jan., 1890. 1314. How long have you been in Nowra? Over three years.
1315. How many children had you under your care when you first arrived here? About 180.
1316. How many have you now? About 220.
1317. So there has been a pretty fair increase? Yes. In addition to that there are two other similar schools with an attendance of about thirty.
1318. Are there any other Public Schools near Nowra? Yes.
1319. Where? At Terrara, Pyree, Nowra Hill, Bomederry, and Warrigee.
1320. Which is the nearest of these? The Bomederry school, I think.
1321. Do you know anything about the attendance? Yes. At Pyree there are eighty, at Terrara fifty, at Warrigee I think about thirty, at Cambewarra about eighty, at Bomederry a little over twenty. I am giving the average number of children attending. The full number would be one third as many again.
1322. Those figures are not certain and definite? No; they are the lowest averages.
1323. Are there any private schools in Nowra? Yes, two small ones; one a Roman Catholic school.
1324. How many attend that? Less than twenty, I think, and the number at the other school will be about twenty.
1325. Are there any private boarding schools? No.
1326. Has the attendance of your school fluctuated? It has steadily increased, although those other schools have been opened.
1327. Then the population is steadily increasing? Yes.

John

John Maclean, Esq., journalist, sworn, and further examined :—

1328. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You indicated this morning that you had some returns from the post office? Yes, but not here. I have not got them for the last few years. J. Maclean,
Esq.
1329. I understood that they came up to 1887? Yes. 28 Jan., 1890.
1330. Will you read them? Yes. I can give the number of telegrams sent, and the profits of each office. The total annual revenue from the post offices in the Shoalhaven district is £2,460—that is, from the sale of stamps and so forth. Total revenue from telegraphs, £739. I wish to add also to my evidence that the district of Kangaroo Valley sends its produce to the north. The imports and exports from Kangaroo Valley, where there are about 46 square miles of agricultural country, with three large dairy factories and the Osborne Estate, are all carried by steamer to and from Nowra, and if there was a station at Nowra or Berry the traffic would go by rail. I state this because it is said, in Mr. Seccombe's evidence, that we should only get the traffic from Cambewarra.
1331. Can you say how many bushels of maize were sent from the district last year? 144,000 bushels.
1332. How many pounds of butter? We could not get the statistics of that on account of the bulk of the butter going by steamer. It is sent in kegs which vary very much in size. About two-thirds of the butter goes to factories, and this year we shall get exact statements. There are about 17,000 dairy cattle in the district.
1333. *Mr. Hurley.*] The return shows that the annual production of butter is 1,891,267 lb.? Yes, that is given by Mr. Coghlan, but I do not know whether that does not include some of the factories on the borders between the two districts.
1334. The quantity of cheese produced is 58,708 lb.? Yes, I saw that in one of the returns sent to me.
1335. Hams and bacon, 123,319 lb.? At Berry they will have a better knowledge of that than we have here.

Edwin Charles Hewlett, Esq., bank manager, sworn, and examined :—

1336. *Chairman.*] What is your position? Manager of the E.S. and A.C. Bank. E. C. Hewlett,
Esq.
1337. How long have you been in that position? Ever since the end of 1883. 28 Jan., 1890.
1338. Where were you before that? At Bulli.
1339. Have you been in any other part of the south coast between Kiama and Ulladulla? I have not.
1340. Your first acquaintance with the district was in 1882? No; I was here before that; went away for fourteen months, and returned.
1341. Can you say whether the business of the bank has been progressive since then? It has been.
1342. Has the annual total of the fixed deposits increased or diminished during that time? It has increased.
1343. Has the number of depositors increased or diminished? I believe it has increased.
1344. Can you speak as to the general prosperity of the district? Yes.
1345. Is the district generally prosperous? Yes.
1346. Are the traders financially sound? I think so.
1347. And are the settlers in good positions? Yes; the average settler's position is very good.
1348. And you regard the district as a prosperous district? I do.
1349. Can you make any comparison between this and any other district? Not in a financial way. I should say that Shoalhaven is equal in financial position to any of the south coast districts.
- 1350-1. Have you given any attention to the extension of the proposed railway? Not much.
1352. Do you believe the extension of the railway to Nowra will be the means of largely increasing the trade of the district and promoting settlement? I have not formed an opinion on that.
1353. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Would the statement which you have made in regard to your branch apply to the other branch? Generally speaking, it would.
1354. Do you know if any of the selections and farms are mortgaged to the storekeepers? I think very few, if any.
1355. I suppose there are a few mortgages in the district? Certainly. In the usual course of business there must be. I might say, as to the financial position of the people here, that I have never made a bad debt during the time that I have been in the district—over seven years.

Frederic Walter Flatt, bank manager, sworn, and examined :—

1356. *Chairman.*] What is your position? Manager of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney, Nowra. F. W. Flatt,
Esq.
1357. How long have you been in that position? Sixteen years last April. 28 Jan., 1890.
1358. Can you give us any information as to the state of the district during the time that you have been here? From a financial point of view I think it has increased at least 300 per cent.
1359. Has the total amount of fixed deposits been increasing? It is four times more than it was when I joined sixteen years ago, and at that time I was the only bank manager between Kiama and Milton, but now we have nine banks. There are three at Berry, three at Nowra, two at Gerringong, and one at Kangaroo Valley.
1360. Although there are now nine banks, the fixed deposits have increased fourfold? Yes.
1361. Have your fixed deposits increased during the last five years? Yes, they have increased at least one-third during the last five years.
1362. Can you say that there is an annual increase in fixed deposits? Yes.
1363. Can you speak as to the financial condition of the people in general? It is very sound.
1364. Have you been as fortunate as Mr. Hewlett;—can you say you have not made a bad debt? I cannot say that, but I have made only two bad debts in sixteen years.
1365. Do you remember when butter factories were first established in the district? Yes.
1366. Has that led to an increase in the prosperity of the people here? It has. They get larger returns, more prompt payment, and something like an idea of their income.
1367. Is there anything further that you desire to state? The financial position of the people generally is remarkably good. From what I can learn the Sydney merchants have no trouble, and are glad to do business down here. They are never asked for assistance to meet bills.
1368. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Have you been during the whole of that sixteen years in Nowra? No; I was in Terrara nine years. 1369.

- F. W. Flatt, Esq. 1369. And do your remarks apply to Terrara? The business there has decreased.
 1370. I suppose Nowra flourished and Terrara declined? Yes.
 28 Jan., 1890. 1371. Owing to what reason? I attribute it to the bridge being put across the river.
 1372. Did the inundations have any material effect upon Terrara? They had a few years ago. The last flood was in 1873.

Mr. Frederick Skinner, public school teacher, sworn, and further examined:—

- Mr. F. Skinner. 1373. *Chairman.*] Have you got the Nowra school returns? Yes. The numbers are—1886, 272 pupils; in 1887, 283; in 1888, 309; in 1889, 324. To that last should be added the attendance at two similar schools which, I think, would bring the attendance up to 350. That would be an increase from 272 to 350 during the four years.
 28 Jan., 1890. 1374. There has been an increase each year? Yes.

Frederick Huleat Galbraith, Esq., Clerk of Petty Sessions, &c., sworn, and further examined:—

- F. H. Galbraith, Esq. 1375. *Chairman.*] Will you now state what the revenue in the district has been from conditional purchases since 1880? In 1880 the revenue from conditional purchases in this district was £1,726 19s. 7d.; in 1881, £2,668 0s. 2d.; in 1882, £3,188 13s. 4d.; in 1883, £3,316 7s. 6d.; in 1884, £3,476 13s. 9d.; in 1885, £2,381 0s. 1d.; in 1886, £3,897 2s. 10d.; in 1887, £2,893 8s. 2d.; in 1888, £2,418 14s. 5d.; in 1889, £3,251 6s. 6d. That is the whole land revenue for those years.
 28 Jan., 1890. 1376. These are exclusive of the returns of mineral conditional purchases? Yes; I do not think there are any mineral conditional purchases here. It does not include mining or auction sales or timber licenses.
 1377. What was the amount of interest received last year? About £2,000 on about 400 selections.

WEDNESDAY, 29 JANUARY, 1890.

[*The Sectional Committee met at the School of Arts, Berry, at 10 a.m.*]

Present:—

The HONORABLE FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY (CHAIRMAN).

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Kiama to Nowra.

Mr. John Stewart, auctioneer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. Stewart. 1378. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Auctioneer.
 29 Jan., 1890. 1379. How many years have you resided in the district? About twenty-five years.
 1380. How have you been engaged during that time? For a period of about ten years I was engaged in farming.
 1381. As a freeholder or tenant? Tenant farmer.
 1382. Can you speak as to the progress of the district during the last ten years? Yes.
 1383. Can you say how many farmers there were in this part of the Shoalhaven district ten years ago? I cannot say how many there were then, but I can say how many there were about five years ago. My information relates to the north side of the Shoalhaven River, and westward into the Kangaroo Valley.
 1384. The information you are now about to give the Committee will be concerning the district bounded by the north side of the Shoalhaven River, including the Kangaroo Valley, and extending northward to the boundary of the Kiama electorate? Yes. Five years ago there were, as nearly as possible, 450 farmers engaged in dairying within that boundary.
 1385. About how many of those were tenant farmers and how many freeholders? About one-half, as nearly as I can judge.
 1386. Were the holdings of the freehold farmers taken up as conditional purchases? The great bulk of them were, but some of them had been taken up before 1861, but they were comparatively few. The bulk of the land was occupied by persons who had taken it up under the Act of 1861.
 1387. How many souls do you think that would represent? I would take it to represent about 4,000, including employees.
 1388. When you say that 450 persons were settled on the soil, do you mean that the farming population was 450? There were 450 men who owned farms.
 1389. You do not mean the people engaged in business in the towns? No; and that number does not include the wives and families.
 1390. Could you say how many stock there were on the land five years ago? About 20,000 cattle and horses.
 1391. Can you say what quantity of maize was grown in this district five years ago? I suppose about 150,000 bushels a year.
 1392. Can you say what quantity of butter was produced? No; I could tell what quantity is produced now.
 1393. Can you state the number of farms that were in occupation at that time? They have not increased much within the last five years, because most of the good land available for dairying purposes had been taken up, and the only improvement which has taken place between then and now is that more land has been placed under grass and made useful for dairying purposes.
 1394. Can you state what number of acres of available land is held by the proprietors of the Berry estate? Roughly speaking, I think about 20,000 acres.
 1395. About how many families could be maintained on that area? About 500.
 1396. How many souls would that represent? I think about 3,000. In connection with that I would like to state that about a quarter of that 20,000 acres is available for maize-growing.
 1397. About 5,000 acres out of 20,000 acres? Yes. The yield of maize is about 40 bushels to the acre. That would give 50,000 bags, or about 5,000 tons of maize to be exported every year.

1398.

1398. Can you speak as to the production of the past year;—how many lbs. of butter were sent away? I can give you a pretty accurate estimate of that by referring to the factories. The factories include two at Gerringong, one at Foxground, one at Berry, one at Jasper's Bush, two in the Kangaroo Valley, two at Cambewarra, and two at Shoalhaven. These, I believe, would be within the influence of the proposed railway.

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1399. Are you speaking of public factories? Yes.

1400. Are any private separators used? I suppose there are fifteen or twenty separators in addition to the factories. The approximate quantity of butter sent from the butter factory is 183 tons in twelve months, which I value at a little over £9,000. The approximate quantity from the other factories—eleven or twelve of them—would be 1,351,820 lb. of butter in a year.

1401. How many factories are there altogether? Eleven or twelve. There is a factory on the mountain belonging to Mr. Graham which I did not include. All the factories would send their butter by rail.

1402. What is your reason for saying that the butter would go by rail instead of by water? The Kiama people can get their produce cheaper by rail than by steamer.

1403. Would the rapid transit be an advantage? Yes.

1404. Is it probable that a milk trade would be opened up in the event of a railway being constructed? I think so.

1405. Is there at the present time any milk trade from here? No; the only means of transit is by steamer, and milk deteriorates very rapidly.

1406. Do the farmers send their milk to the factories at present? Yes. They are worked on the co-operative principle, the proceeds being shared at the end of the month.

1407. Can you say what has been the average price paid to the farmer? The price of milk is from 4½d. to 5d. a gallon, which, I suppose, would represent 1s. a lb. net profit for butter.

1408. Has any butter been shipped from this district direct to England. Yes. The company in Sydney has sent large quantities of butter home by the Orient Company's steamers within the last three or four months.

1409. Do they ship through their Sydney agents? They employ a company to send the butter.

1410. They do not employ people who ship to England? It is a kind of mutual arrangement. All the butter that has been sent to England from this district has gone through the South Coast Co-operative Company at Sydney.

1411. Has that company been established to afford facilities for disposing of the produce of this and the Camden district? Yes; it was established exclusively by the farmers of those districts to get the highest advantage from the sale of butter.

1412. Where do the principal shareholders live? On the coast here—from Shoalhaven to Wollongong. The directors are all south-coast men.

1413. Have you seen the plan showing the route of the proposed railway between Kiama and Shoalhaven? No, but I know the route.

1414. Do you think if the line be constructed as proposed it will serve the district? I think so. I do not think it could be improved upon.

1415. As far as convenience for travelling and giving people facilities to send away their goods are concerned, do you think there will be a large passenger and goods traffic on the line between Shoalhaven and Sydney? I think so. The population of the district is considerable at present, but by the opening up of more land on the Berry Estate, and the opening up of other land between Shoalhaven and Jervis Bay I am sure both the population and the traffic will increase.

1416. The cost of the railway will be £381,000. The working expenses will be £5,000 or £6,000 a year, and the interest on the cost of construction will be between £13,000 and £14,000 making an annual charge of £20,000—do you think that Parliament would be justified in authorizing the construction of that line in the expectation that the revenue from the traffic will, in a short time, defray the working expenses and pay a portion of the interest on the cost of its construction? I am confident that it will pay within a reasonable time as well as any line that has been opened. I understand that the line from Sydney to Kiama has come up to expectations and I am convinced that the revenue will be greatly increased if the line were extended to Shoalhaven which is a large and populous district.

1417. Do you think there would be a large goods and passenger traffic within the first year of the opening of the line? I do not know that it would be up to expectations in the first year. It takes some time to break off people's connection with the steamers. They might not be in a position to send their goods by train immediately—that would come within a reasonable time.

1418. Why would they not be in a position to select their own mode of transit? There might be temptations placed in their way by the owners of the steamers.

1419. In the shape of a reduction of freight? Yes.

1420. Is there any bacon sent away from here? Yes, both from Gerringong and here.

1421. Can you say what is the value of the bacon sent from here during the past twelve months? I could not.

1422. Is there a bacon factory here? Yes.

1423. How long has it been established? Some years, and within the last month it has been very much improved. All the appliances necessary for making a good article have been obtained.

1424. Can you say how many pigs were slaughtered last year at the factory? I could not.

1425. What is the passenger fare at present between Broughton Creek and Sydney? About 13s. or 14s.

1426. What is the passenger fare by steamer? I do not know at present—it used to be from 15s. to 17s. 6d.

1427. How much a ton do you pay for freight between Sydney and Broughton Creek? That I do not know.

1428. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Are there other lands unsettled in the district besides those on the Berry estate? Yes.

1429. Where does that land lie? Some is in the Kangaroo Valley, some at the western end of Cambewarra.

1430. Then the district is by no means settled up to its fullest capacity? At present there are very large areas of land on the south side of the river unoccupied.

1431. Do you think it likely that settlers to the eastward and southward round Broughton Creek will use the railway? I am certain they will.

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1432. Do you think they will use the railway when they have to cart to the railway from their farms—the steamers calling at the wharves alongside their farms? There are not many farmers who live on the river bank.
1433. I suppose there will always be a certain amount of competition on the part of the steamers? I suppose so. There is another matter I want to refer to—there is a great area of coal land within 4 miles of this place.
1434. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you any knowledge of the mineral resources of the district? I have some knowledge of the coal.
1435. Do you produce a plan showing the locality referred to with regard to coal? Yes.
1436. Is it Crown land? It is at present, I believe.
1437. What distance from the proposed line of railway? About 4 miles from the probable site of the railway station.
1438. Does this coal run on the level from the mountain side? Yes. To get the coal it will be necessary to tunnel into the mountain. About 4,500 acres were taken up by Sir Henry Parkes and Mr. J. Sutherland.
1439. What is the size of the seam? Mr. Taylor, the Victorian geologist, Mr. Scott, Mr. James Wilson, and others went up to the coal-field, and they found the base of the seam 15 or 16 feet of unbroken coal of excellent quality.
1440. What did the analysis of that coal give? I can only give an opinion expressed by the geologist that it is good steam coal.
1441. Have they tried it in any quantity? I do not think that they did that.
1442. Do you know of the existence of coal from your own personal inspection? Yes.
1443. Do you own any land on the route of the proposed railway between Kiama and Nowra? None.
1444. Do you own any land between Nowra and Jervis Bay? No. I own some allotments in Nowra.
1445. Do you know of any statistics that were prepared in the district? I do.
1446. Had you anything to do in preparing them? I had not.
1447. Can you say that they were true? I honestly believe that they were.
1448. Have you any interest in the butter or bacon factories round here? Not the slightest; but being a business man I like to see the place prosper.
1449. Have you been accustomed to any special class of agriculture? The agriculture that is most successful here is the growing of maize.
1450. Does fruit grow here? Fruit is not grown here extensively, because there is no market for it. I have no doubt that the construction of a railway would lead to the development of a great fruit industry. We have splendid fruit lands.
1451. Are the charges for freight by steamer higher than the charges for freight by rail? Yes. Mr. Dymock and others have told me that they can send butter to Sydney by rail cheaper and more quickly than they can by steamer.
1452. You recognize the fact that the steamers will always compete with the railway? I suppose they will.
1453. And if farmers can get their produce carried cheaper by steamer than by rail they will send it by sea? As regards butter, I do not think they will.
1454. You said that 5,000 tons of maize were produced at a certain time? I said that it could be produced. What I mean is, that the land would produce about 5,000 tons of maize in addition to what is now growing.
1455. Does it not stand to common-sense that the farmers will adopt the cheaper means of transit? Yes.
1456. Then there is a probability of that 5,000 tons of maize going by water instead of by rail? It depends upon circumstances.
1457. Will not maize generally be sent by water instead of by rail? I should think it would if the water carriage were cheap.
1458. Do you know of any land belonging to the Crown—any reserves—within a distance of 5 or 10 miles of this place? Yes; in the Kangaroo Valley, to the westward of the township, there is a considerable amount of land. I cannot say how much available for dairy-farming.
1459. If it were thrown open for selection, would the people in the district be eager to buy it? I think they would.
1460. What price would be a fair one for it? About 25s. an acre.
1461. Do you look upon that land as being equal to the land immediately round this district? It is not quite so good.
1462. Is the carrying capacity of the land immediately around Berry equal to a cow to the acre? The level land would be.
1463. Would it take 2 acres of Crown land to carry a cow? About 3 acres.
1464. What is the value of the land around here? The best of it is worth £50 an acre.
1465. Yet, according to you, the Crown land is worth only about £2 an acre? You must consider the distance it is from the market.
1466. Would you rather give £50 an acre for land around here than £6 an acre in the place you have referred to? I would.
1467. Have you had any experience in regard to pig-curing? I know the process, but I have not been engaged in it.
1468. Can you give us any idea of the trade in fat cattle in the district? The district is not able to supply itself with butcher's meat. The chief supplies are got from Sydney and Braidwood. About 2,650 cattle are slaughtered between Gerringong and Tomerong annually, three-fourths of which and all the sheep have to be imported. If railway facilities were provided the bulk of the fat cattle would come from Sydney by rail.
1469. Do you believe that the construction of a railway would increase the population if the land were thrown open and greater facilities were given for the people? I am certain that it would.
1470. By 50 per cent.? Yes; in a reasonable time—say five or seven years.
1471. *Chairman.*] Could you say what the annual auction sales aggregate in the district? I suppose, between Shoalhaven and here and the Kangaroo Valley, the auctioneers put £60,000 or £70,000 a year through their hands.
1472. Principally in sales of stock? Yes; and lands.

1473. How much exclusive of the land? About £30,000. I am only giving a rough approximation.
 1474. Do they make any bad debts? I cannot say that they do.
 1475. What have your losses amounted to during the last five years in bad debts? About 1 per cent.
 1476. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You several times referred to the Kangaroo Valley;—do you include the produce of that district with that of the Berry district? Yes.
 1477. You are not, perhaps, aware that the Nowra people are doing the same? I am doing it for railway purposes.

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Mr. Lewis M'Intyre, farmer and dairyman, sworn, and examined:—

1478. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you been long in the district? Thirty-five years.
 1479. What are you? A farmer, growing grain sometimes, and at other times dairying.
 1480. Then you have followed the industry successfully for a great number of years? Yes.
 1481. Are you still carrying it on? I am.
 1482. Do you think there is any opening in this district for more of your class? I am sure that there is.
 1483. What is the reason that they are not here? My reason for the statement that I have made is this: Out of the very large acreage we have here there is only a very small portion that is yet cleared and occupied. The land is all taken up, but not improved. There is really very little of the land, comparatively speaking, that is improved to such an extent that it would not hold any more population. There is a great deal of it in a state of nature. Gradually, no doubt, this land will come to yield produce when it is cleared. One-fourth or one-third part of it is not yet cleared.
 1484. Are you a freeholder? I am.
 1485. To what extent? About 400 acres.
 1486. Did you take the land up under the Land Act? Yes.
 1487. Is there any land of a similar character available within 10 miles of this place? Yes; there is a reserve of about 170 acres at Cambewarra Mountain, and there is another reserve of about 50 acres, which has been thrown open, but not yet taken up.
 1488. That is not likely to give settlement to a large population, is it? No. I am speaking merely of the land almost adjacent to this place. There are considerable quantities not taken up besides that.
 1489. Is there a large area of land near your own that was held by monopolists, and remains unimproved? There are 200 acres near me which have been taken up a considerable time, but which are only improved to a very small extent. There are considerable portions of the holdings left unimproved.
 1490. Do you grow anything upon your land? Principally rye grass for cattle.
 1491. I suppose you have met with a great deal of difficulty in reaching a market? Yes. The difficulties, however, are not now so great as they have been in the past. I had a great many difficulties to contend with in the early days.
 1492. You had to depend on vessels or steamers? In the early days we had no regular steam communication—sometimes we had only a punt, at other times no communication at all. Now there are two steamers running twice every week, besides other droghers.
 1493. Have you lost your produce by any crafts trading here? Not to any extent.
 1494. Have your cattle been visited with any disease while you have been here? Yes, with the pleura.
 1495. Was it very disastrous? Yes; it was very bad some years ago.
 1496. Suppose such a thing were to occur again, would the farmers be able to make a livelihood by dairy-farming? They would probably inoculate their cattle, and be able to save them with a small amount of loss. They would be debarred from sending their produce to market for some time on account of the infectious nature of the disease. We do not consider it so serious a matter as we did when we did not know how to treat the disease.
 1497. Do you look upon the advent of the railway as bringing great advantages to yourself and others? I think it would be a very great advantage.
 1498. In what way? It would enable us to send our produce to market much quicker, and there would be a very large passenger traffic. There is another thing which, I think, must be well known to every one in the district, and it is that all our mountains contain rich seams of coal, and I have no doubt that if there were a railway from Kiama to Jervis Bay a large trade in coal would be carried on.
 1499. Do you make that statement on hearsay? No; simply from what I have seen myself. I could point out rich seams of coal cropping out on the surface.
 1500. If a coal company were formed here, would you be prepared to go into it? I should certainly be one of the shareholders.
 1501. And if the freight charges on the railway were 25 per cent. in advance of what they are now, would you send your goods by rail or by steamer? I think that the railways are the proper means for the conveyance of coal.
 1502. Do you think such a railway would be preferred to the steamers? I think it would, especially for dairy produce. Butter being a perishable article, the dairy-farmers would use the railway, even if the railway charges were higher than the charges by the steamer.
 1503. Do you think the passenger traffic would be absolutely in the hands of the railway? Almost entirely.
 1504. Have you any idea of the two routes between here and the Shoalhaven River—that by Jamberoo and that by Kiama? Yes. I have always held that the route through the Saddleback was a preferable one.
 1505. Why? Because it would be a shorter route, and, in my opinion, it presents fewer difficulties than the other.
 1506. You think the engineering difficulties would be less by that route? I think they would be less if a tunnel were cut through the Saddleback, and the line carried on through the Fox Ground.
 1507. Do you speak from any professional knowledge? No; simply from my knowledge of both routes.
 1508. You have heard the cost of the line stated;—do you think that the construction of the line would be beneficial as a national undertaking? I believe it would pay well. I believe it would pay as well as any railway in the country except those near the metropolis—that is on account of the fertility of the soil, the large extent of it, and the output of coal that is likely to take place when the line is open. I am certain that a large output of coal will take place here, and that the coal will be sent to Jervis Bay and Melbourne.
 1509.

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 L. M'Intyre.
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- Mr. L. McIntyre.
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1509. How far is the outcrop of coal from the line of the proposed railway? From 3 to 4 miles.
1510. Have you any knowledge of the land in the district between Nowra and Jervis Bay? Yes. I believe it is well adapted for fruit growing, and I anticipate that it will be largely used for that purpose.
1511. Is it likely to provide homes for large populations? I think there will be a large population there, and fruit and wine growing will be largely carried on. A party of Germans have lately started fruit-growing there, and I have no doubt that others will follow their example. My impression is that the land between Nowra and Jervis Bay will yield a very large revenue.
1512. You admit that the railway will be of great advantage to the district? I do.
1513. Do you think that the people would stand a general land tax to defray the cost of the construction of the line? I cannot speak for others, but I shall be willing to pay it myself.
1514. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You prefer the Saddleback route? Yes.
1515. Are you aware that that route passes through very high country some distance from the coast? Yes.
1516. Do you think it likely that people along the coast would take their produce up the hills to the railway when they would have easy access to the steamer? I do not; but I think there could be a loop-line from the Fox Ground to carry the Gerringong produce.
1517. If that line were constructed would it not encourage competition by the shipping? I think that a line along the coast would encourage that more than a line on the Jamberoo route.
1518. Are not the Jamberoo people already within 5 miles of Kiama? I should say perhaps about 5 miles.
1519. Would they not be served by a branch line into Jamberoo? They might be.
1520. Are you aware that it would cost £183,000 more to construct the line through the Saddleback? If that is so, the present line would be the best. I was under the impression that the Jamberoo route would be shorter and cheaper than the Kiama route.
1521. What industries do the farmers carry on? Principally dairying and growing maize. It has been stated that we do not rear many cattle, but the reason of that is that the holdings are small, and it pays better to produce butter than to fatten cattle.
1522. What becomes of all the young bull calves? Some we keep. A good many we kill.
1523. Produce, when sent by sea, is liable to depreciation, is it not? Yes, if it is not well taken care of.
1524. Would not butter be likely to be depreciated in a sea voyage? It would go safer by rail.
1525. Would it not be in the interest of the farmer to have his maize carried by rail? I think it very likely that maize, not being a perishable article, the steamers would be largely used for carrying it.
1526. Is there likely to be any development of the Shoalhaven trade if the line is made? Yes, I think so. Milk pays even better than the butter that is made in the factories.
1527. Are we likely to have, in the Shoalhaven district, anything like the development of the milk trade that has taken place since the opening of the railway to Kiama? I think it is very likely that it would take place here.
1528. Do you not think that you are outside the range of the milk trade at Berry? I should think not, considering the short time that it would take to go from here to Kiama.
1529. You think there would be a large coal trade developed here? Yes.
1530. Why have no steps been taken to develop it? Because, with such facilities as we have for carrying the coal away, it would not pay. It would not pay to send it by the steamers.
1531. How far are the coal seams from the coast? Three or four miles.
1532. You seem to think that the coal will be sent down to Jervis Bay, and from there to Melbourne? Yes; and to other markets.
1533. Are you aware that there is coal land about Jervis Bay? Yes.
1534. Do you think it likely that the coal mines here could compete with those of Jervis Bay at that port? There may be greater difficulty in getting the coal at Jervis Bay. They may have to go to a great depth for the coal.
1535. The difference would be that they would work in a shaft there, and the coal miners here would work in an adit? Yes, but the fact that coal mining was carried on at Jervis Bay would not prevent it from being gone on with here.
1536. If the remainder of the Berry Estate is thrown open to settlement and the district is rendered accessible by railway, I suppose it would be no stretch of imagination to say that the population of the district would be increased by one half within ten years? I think it would not be too much to say that the population would be doubled.
1537. Is there room for the present population? Yes, and for more.
1538. Then why are so many young men going away from here to the north coast? Families have left this district and gone to the north coast because they were tenants here, and they desired to have land of their own. They were able to sell the goodwill of their farms for considerable sums, and to take up large areas of land on the north coast, and they have left this district to take up larger areas than they could get here; and further, they could get those lands for a few shillings an acre. It was men with large families who went to the north coast. Those men settled here on small holdings, but when their families increased, they found their farms too small, and being able to sell out at a high price, they realised a sum of money with which they took up land on the northern rivers. It is not because the district is not in a prosperous state, or because there is no land that those people left the southern district for the north.
1539. Do you think that a tenant farmer in this district with 100 acres of land under lease is as well off as a freeholder in a comparatively inferior district with the maximum area? The tenant farmer here is well off. Many of the tenant farmers are better off than those who are on their own land. The farmers on the Berry Estate are very prosperous.
1540. And that notwithstanding that they have to pay a yearly rent? Yes.
1541. And this class of settlers are likely to remain in the district? Some may leave, but most of them will remain.
1542. Then there is no danger of their going away for the mere sake of their getting a freehold? I do not think there is any danger of many of them going.
1543. *Chairman.*] How many years is it since you arrived in this district? Thirty-five years.
1544. Have you any objection to state whether, on your arrival, you were in possession of large or small means? My means were small.
1545. Were you a tenant farmer? Yes, I took a clearing lease.
1546. How many years were you a tenant farmer? For nearly thirty years. 1547.

1547. Have the means which you possess been the result of your industry in this district? Yes, the whole of my means.
1548. You are comfortably off now, I suppose? Pretty comfortable—well enough off now.
1549. Can you say that your experience has been the same as that of many others who have arrived in this district? Yes, of many of them who have come within my own observations, where they have been industrious.
1550. Notwithstanding all the vicissitudes of dairy farming, those who have been a long time in the district, who have commenced with small means and been industrious, are now comfortably off? Yes. Every one who has been industrious and looked after his business, is in comfortable circumstances.
1551. The community is a very prosperous one? Yes, I think that this is as prosperous a community as any that I have known.
1552. *Mr. Hurley.*] If you were disposing of your land, what would you take per acre for it? I am not disposed to part with my land, and if I was I should have to sell it under considerable disadvantages. There are no good roads to the land.
1553. What price per acre would you place on your land? I may state plainly that I would not take £20 an acre for it.

Mr.
L. M'Intyre.
29 Jan., 1890.

Alexander John Colley, Esq., bank manager, sworn, and examined:—

1554. *Chairman.*] What is your business? Manager of the E.S. and A.C. Bank.
1555. How long have you been in the district? I have been Manager of the Bank here for twelve years, and I have lived in the coast district all my life.
1556. Has your business grown during that time? Yes.
1557. Has it doubled? Yes; more than doubled.
1558. Will you tell us what progress has been made in your business up to the present time? I think that the business has increased nearly tenfold within the last twelve years.
1559. Has the increase been continuous, year by year? Not year by year. The increase has been most marked since the establishment of the South Coast and West Camden Co-operative Company; since then the increase has been very rapid.
1560. When was that? About six years ago.
1561. Have the fixed deposits been largely increased? Yes.
1562. Can you state what the increase has been in the last ten years? I think the deposits have about quadrupled.
1563. Have you built in the township? Yes.
1564. At what cost? Our premises and land cost £6,300.
1565. Have you made any bad debts? Not any.
1566. Can you speak as to the prosperity of the people in the district generally? Yes. Taking them as a whole I regard the people in this district as remarkably prosperous compared with those of other districts with which I have been acquainted.
1567. Have you examined the route of the proposed railway? Yes; as far as Bomederry.
1568. Can you suggest any alteration or deviation in the route? None whatever.
1569. You are favourable to the construction of the line as shown on the plan? Yes.
1570. Do you think it will lead to the expansion of the trade of Berry? There is no doubt that the trade of this district must expand in the natural course of events; but I have no doubt that the construction of the proposed railway will materially assist its development.
1571. Are you prepared to express any opinion having regard to the cost, as to whether the Government would be justified in constructing the proposed railway? I consider that they would be justified in so doing.
1572. Do you think that the revenue from the railway will be sufficient to cover the working expenses and to pay the interest on the cost of its construction? I certainly think so.
1573. Will that be within a reasonable time? I think there will be a very large return immediately.
1574. How many banks were there here when you first came? Only our own.
1575. How many are there now? Three.
1576. And, notwithstanding the establishment of two other banks, your business has increased tenfold? Yes. One of those banks only opened within the last six months.
1577. Are mortgages known here? Yes.
1578. I mean out of the ordinary run of business—mortgages caused by distress? Mortgages are very numerous here.
1579. Are they all pretty sound mortgages? Oh, Yes.
1580. Do you know the site for the station here? Yes.
1581. Is it satisfactory to the inhabitants? Quite so; I have heard no complaints.
1582. *Mr. Hurley.*] You are acquainted with the land between here and Nowra? Yes.
1583. If you were a member of a company that was asked to make this railway, considering the proposal to carry the line on to Jervis Bay, would you recommend the company to make a line from the Bomederry township to the Bomederry Bridge at a cost of £5,000, considering that that bridge will be useless when the extension to Jervis Bay is completed? No.

A. J. Colley,
Esq.
29 Jan., 1890.

Mr. John M'Kenzie, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

1584. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? A farmer.
1585. Have you been long in the district? Forty-eight years.
1586. You have watched the progress of the district during that time? I have.
1587. And it is of a progressive nature? Very much so.
1588. And is it likely to progress still further if facilities are given to reach the market? At the rate we are going at it cannot be otherwise.
1589. Do you hold any public position in the district? Yes; I am Mayor of Broughton Valley.
1590. What is the population of your municipal district? I could not tell exactly.
1591. Could you give the amount receivable as rates upon the property there? Yes; the amount is about £200 a year.

Mr.
J. M'Kenzie.
29 Jan., 1890.

- Mr. J. M'Kenzie.
29 Jan., 1890.
1592. What does your town consist of? It is a rural district—there is no town.
1593. What are the farmers engaged in? Rearing stock, and dairy farming—they also grow some maize.
1594. Where is your market? At Sydney.
1595. How do you reach the market? By steamer.
1596. Do you suffer any inconvenience through the delay of the steamers? There is a deal of inconvenience with regard to live stock. We cannot send live stock by steamer, because if they become weatherbound considerable loss is caused.
1597. Are you a freeholder or a tenant? I am both a freeholder and a tenant.
1598. Do you know the district within a radius of 10 miles? I do.
1599. Is there any Crown land here useful for dairy purposes? There are Crown lands that would do for fruit growing and wine growing.
1600. Have you any fruit? Yes, plenty going to waste. We have no market for it.
1601. If you could reach a market by rail, would you be prepared to put more land under cultivation? Yes, all kinds of fruit grow well in this district.
1602. Has the result of your labours as a farmer been satisfactory? Yes.
1603. You believe there is an opening here for a large number of people to settle? I do.
1604. Does the proposed line of railway run through your land? No.
1605. If you could have the benefit of railway communication would you be prepared to pay a tax on your land? I should.
1606. Have you any knowledge of the land beyond Nowra? I had some years ago.
1607. Do you believe it is suitable for population? It is more suitable than the land that is populated between Sydney and Wollongong.
1608. As a resident farmer, would you utilise the railway if it were constructed? I should.
1609. If you intended to dispose of your land how much per acre would you ask for it? I purchased at four guineas per acre from the Crown, and I could get nineteen guineas or twenty guineas per acre for it now.
1610. Do you know of any reserves in your district that might be thrown open for settlement? No.
1611. Have you any knowledge of the coal in the district? I have.
1612. Can you say whether the coal measures are satisfactory? I know that there are seams in sight. In one place there are no less than six cropping out one above another. I have seen a sample of kerosene shale got in this district which was pronounced by Mr. Williams to be the best in the country.
1613. Do you know where it is? I have an idea of the locality.
1614. Is it within 4 miles of the railway? It is nearer than that.
1615. Do you know of any other industry that is likely to come into existence if the railway is made? We can produce poultry, but if we send poultry by water they get injured. In Sydney there is always a demand for poultry.
1616. During your residence of forty-eight years here have you ever known the district to suffer from droughts or depression? Yes. The year that I came here we had one of the most serious depressions that have ever occurred.
1617. What caused it? Drought.
1618. Has the district been so bad since? It has never been so bad since.
1619. I suppose that when drought does occur it is not so bad here as it is in the interior of the country? No; we are supplied with streams of water from the mountains.
1620. Are they always flowing? More or less—sometimes they get small, but they are always available.
1621. In dry seasons you have very little grass? Yes. The cattle die, and we have to skin them.
1622. Have the people here suffered much loss through these droughts? No; most of the people here now were not here during the drought of 1848; and in recent years we have not had serious droughts.
1623. Do you grow fruit? Yes.
1624. Do you cultivate the orange? Yes.
1625. Do you cultivate the vine? Yes, and also the olive.
1626. I presume that if a railway gave you the command of a market you could develop the fruit-growing industry? Most decidedly.
1627. You appear to have local government well developed in this part of the country? Yes.
1628. And the people are satisfied to tax themselves to make their roads? Yes.
1629. The whole of the South Coast district seems to be under local government? Yes.
1630. So that in addition to paying the ordinary taxes the farmers in this district are also paying for local government? Yes.
1631. They show their faith in the district by contributing towards local improvements? Yes, that is evident. When I came here you could not drive, except a bullock dray and six bullocks through the district. There were no roads.
1632. You say that the whole of the country is under local government? Yes.
1633. *Chairman.*] Were you possessed of large or small means when you arrived in the district? I had no means.
1634. Have many others been equally prosperous? Yes.
1635. At present are there many settlers in Broughton Creek who are similarly prosperous? Yes. The farmers of this district are a very prosperous class.

Henry Laidley Lovegrove, Esq., bank manager, sworn, and examined:—

- H. L. Lovegrove, Esq.
29 Jan., 1890.
1636. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is your business? I am manager of the Commercial Bank here.
1637. How long has your bank been established in this district? A little under five years.
1638. How long have you been here? Three and a half years.
1639. Is your business a progressive one? Yes.
1640. Is it progressing at a rate that is satisfactory to the management? Yes, it has gone ahead with sufficient rapidity to encourage them to give £1,000 for a quarter of an acre of land on which to erect a new building.
1641. What will that structure cost? £3,500, when it is completed.
1642. Do you find the people here in a sound financial condition? Yes, in a very sound position.
1643. Have you any bad debts? No.
1644. Do you hear of any foreclosing of mortgages? No. 1645.

1645. Have the people of the district many deposits in your bank? Yes, a very fair amount.
 1646. I suppose the bank deposits are a good barometer as to the state of affairs in the district? Yes.
 1647. *Chairman.*] Have they been increasing? Yes, every year.
 1648. Could you say what proportion of deposits you have now as compared with what you had when you came into the district three and a half years ago? The business was only started three and a half years ago, and the deposits at that time were very small.
 1649. Say as compared with three years ago? My business has trebled within that time.
 1650. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you any knowledge of the line between here and Nowra? Yes, I have a fair idea as to where it will run.
 1651. I want to ask you this question:—If you were manager of a company asked to construct a line of railway from Kiama to Jervis Bay and you got your line up to Bomederry—where it was likely to remain say for five years, would you recommend the expenditure of £4,000 or £5,000 in making a branch line to Bomederry Bridge for the convenience of the people of Nowra, seeing that that branch line would be practically useless after the railway had been carried across the river? I think it will be very necessary to have that branch line, if the terminus is to remain at Bomederry four or five years.
 1652. Even if it would be practically useless after that? Yes, I certainly think it would be necessary.

H. L.
Lovegrove,
Esq.

29 Jan., 1890.

Mr. John Gray, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined:—

1653. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you been long in the district? Yes, I came here as a boy.
 1654. You were formerly Mayor of this town? Yes, two years ago.
 1655. Could you tell us the annual expenditure in the municipality? Altogether it amounts to from £1,000 to £1,200.
 1656. Are you a tenant farmer? Yes.
 1657. A dairy farmer or an agricultural farmer? A dairy farmer.
 1658. Where is your market? At Sydney.
 1659. If a railway were constructed through this district would you send your goods by rail or by steamboat? By railway—certainly.
 1660. Even though the charges are higher than by steamer? Yes, quick transit for perishable articles would justify a higher rate.
 1661. Do you consider agriculture and dairy farming to be a success in the district? Yes.
 1662. And do you think there would be an increase in the population if the railway were made? Yes.
 1663. Are you satisfied with your position as a dairy farmer? Yes.
 1664. Can you say whether there are any Crown lands available which would be suitable for dairy farming and agriculture? Very little.
 1665. Do you know the country beyond Nowra towards Jervis Bay? Yes.
 1666. Can you say anything as to its suitability for agriculture? It is very suitable for fruit growing.
 1667. Do you know anything about the timber of the country? Yes, there is some fine timber down that way—a good deal of it.
 1668. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Can you tell the Committee anything about the growth of the bacon industry here? Yes, at present something like 7,800 pigs are slaughtered annually at the factory at Berry, but it is not the largest factory.
 1669. How many factories are there in the district of Nowra? There is one in Gerringong, one at Jamberoo, one at Warrigee, and one at Pyree.
 1670. You say they slaughtered 7,800 pigs in the factory at Berry, and that it is not the largest factory? No, the Gerringong factory is larger.
 1671. Then I suppose more pigs are slaughtered at Gerringong? Yes.
 1672. Are the other factories about the size of yours? They are not so large as this factory.
 1673. Will there be an average of 25,000 pigs slaughtered annually? Not so many—probably 10,000 or 12,000.
 1674. And that bacon trade would be likely to come to the railway? Yes.
 1675. Do you manufacture cheese here? Very little.
 1676. What is the reason that cheese is not produced in this district? There is a cheese factory just starting in Cambewarra, but not in the Berry district.
 1677. Is that the only one on the coast as far as Shoalhaven? I think it is.
 1678. Are you of opinion that the railway will develop a milk trade here? I think it would.
 1679. You think this district is not too far off to supply the metropolis with fresh milk? No, it is not too far off.
 1680. What is your opinion with regard to the competition of the shipping with the railway? I think the railway will take all the butter milk, and poultry and other perishable articles to the Sydney markets.
 1681. Do you think that the shipping will continue to take away the bacon and maize? It would not take the bacon. Whether the shipping would take the maize would depend on the freight.
 1682. Where is your farm? About $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from here.
 1683. Are the people of the town of Berry freeholders or tenants? All tenants except the banks.
 1684. And they are willing to carry on business here as tenants and to pay rent? Yes.
 1685. Are the farmers round Berry freeholders or tenants? They are all tenants within a radius of one mile and a half of Berry.
 1686. And outside that radius do the freeholders begin? Yes; at Broughton Vale and so on.
 1687. What area is sufficient to keep a wife and three children upon? It depends upon what the farmer does.
 1688. Say in the dairying industry? A man with his wife and two children could not do much in that industry.
 1689. What area would be required to keep a family of five in comfort while paying rent? From 50 to 100 acres.
 1690. What is the general size of the holdings of the tenants in this district? Some farms comprise no more than 20 acres, others 150 acres, some up to 200 acres, and others up to 300 acres.
 1691. If a railway were made through the district and it gave an impetus to the dairying industry, do you think it would cause young men to remain here, and divide the farms of their parents? I do not think

Mr. J. Gray.

29 Jan., 1890.

Mr. J. Gray. so. There is room for a great deal more population in the district, but the population increases so fast that it might overgrow itself, and people might have to leave in search of a more extensive field elsewhere.

29 Jan., 1890.

1692. *Chairman.*] Do you know the unoccupied portion of the Berry Estate? I do.
 1693. Do you know how many acres of that land would be suitable for settlement? I could not say exactly, but there is such a large extent of it that there might be room for from 200 to 400 families.
 1694. Then if the proprietors of the estate were to throw it open for settlement, and to grant leases of areas of from 50 acres to 150 acres, do you think the land would be readily taken up? Yes.
 1695. And it could be profitably occupied? Yes.
 1696. Is that land equal in its productive capabilities to the land already occupied around Berry? Not all of it, but some of it is.
 1697. How much an acre do you consider that that land would be worth as rent? At present it is not worth a great deal, because it is not improved.
 1698. How long have you been in the district? I came to the district in 1858.
 1699. Have you been a tenant-farmer the whole of that time? No.
 1700. Did you take up a farm here in an unimproved condition? No; my farm was improved when I took it.
 1701. Have the results of your industry been satisfactory? Yes.
 1702. Has the municipal revenue increased within the last five years? It has.

Henry Taylor Esq., Council Clerk, sworn, and examined.

H. Taylor,
Esq.
29 Jan., 1890.

1703. *Chairman.*] Are you Council Clerk in the town of Berry? Yes.
 1704. How long have you been Council Clerk? Twenty-one years.
 1705. Has there been a municipality here for twenty-one years? Yes.
 1706. What has the growth of the municipality been during the past ten years? Very great. In the first year our revenue was only about £200; fifteen years ago it was about £320; ten years ago it was £400.
 1707. What was it five years ago? There was not much increase then.
 1708. What is the present revenue? Close upon £500 a year, and we get from the Government a subsidy of £50 a mile. We have 14 miles of road, and we get £700 a year from the Government.
 1709. Can you say what proportion of revenue has been received from farms, and what proportion from business premises? There are very few business premises in town. The revenue from them will be £15 or £20 a year, and the balance is received from the farming population.
 1710. Do you know what buildings have been erected in Berry by private enterprise during the last four or five years? All the shops have been erected by private individuals.
 1711. Has there been a large expenditure in improvement during the last four or five years? Yes, very large.
 1712. Is there an agricultural show-ground? Yes.
 1713. Can you say what the expenditure on that has been? I cannot say. It must have been a large amount of money, as the land was all forest before it was cleared.
 1714. Have any new hotels been built? Yes; one new one has been built, and additions have been made to the other.
 1715. Can you tell what expenditure was incurred? It amounted to £4,000 or £5,000. One thing I may mention with regard to the maize not going by the railway—there is a lot of corn used in Wollongong, and instead of shipping it to Sydney to have it brought back to Wollongong the farmers will send it by rail.
 1716. The produce of this district then would be marketable at and beyond Kiama? Yes; but it would be necessary to continue the railway to Shoalhaven.
 1717. Do you think the produce would have to be sent to Sydney in order to be shipped to Melbourne? Yes

Philip Morton, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

P. Morton,
Esq., M.P.
29 Jan., 1890.

1718. *Chairman.*] You are a Member of the Legislative Assembly, representing the district of Shoalhaven? Yes.
 1719. What is your position as regards the Berry estate? I am assistant manager.
 1720. Can you say how many acres of land forming part of that estate are still held by the proprietors unlet to tenants? About 35,000 acres.
 1721. Is it the intention of the proprietors to subdivide the land? Yes; they intend to throw part of it open as soon as they can get the survey completed. They have engaged special surveyors, and they intend to have the land under swamp drained, and to throw the bushy parts and the hilly land open to settlement.
 1722. Is it intended to subdivide it into small farms? Into farms suitable for a man and his wife and family to settle on. There are applications from hundreds of people wanting to settle there, chiefly sons of present tenants, who wish to get farms in the district in which they have been reared, and the soil and climate of which they are acquainted with.
 1723. Have you examined the route of the proposed railway extension? Yes, every bit of it.
 1724. Can you say whether the line, as laid out by the engineer, will probably serve the residents of the district through which it will pass? I do not think it could be made to serve them better than it will if the line is carried out according to the last survey from Kiama to Shoalhaven.
 1725. Have you any suggestion to make as to any alteration of the proposed line? None whatever.
 1726. Do you believe there would be a large increase in the railway traffic on the opening of the line? Yes; I believe that it is only waiting for the railway, and that there will be an increase in every branch of traffic.
 1727. Do you know that the cost of the construction of the line will be £381,000? Yes.
 1728. Do you believe that the revenue from the line will pay the working expenses and defray the interest on the cost of construction? I do, judging from the great traffic that there is between here and Kiama, the traffic to Moss Vale, and the traffic by the steamers to Sydney. I am sure that all the passenger traffic will be carried by the railway to and from Sydney.

1729. Do you think that the Government would be justified in going to the expense of making this railway? I do.

1730. And that it will be a profitable line? Certainly.

1731. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is the general condition of the tenants on the Berry estate;—are they solvent? They are all solvent, and though I have been in almost every other part of New South Wales, having been for many years connected with the Commercial Bank as a manager, I have never known a class of men so prosperous and having so much money as they have.

1732. They are able to pay their rents, and at the same time to make good profit on their occupation? They pay their rents, and a great many of them are able to save money and to take up land in other parts of the country.

1733. Have any of the tenants ever been turned out of their holdings for non-payment of rent? Very few; and those who were turned out were turned out for other reasons than the non-payment of rent. When a man went insolvent he had to be turned out, because the value of the lease had to be handed over to the official assignee. Tenants have had to be turned out through roguery, but never where they worked their farms have they been unable to pay the rent.

1734. Any industrious man on a fair area can make a living? Can make his rent and save money. We have had a proposal from gentlemen to take land for the flax-growing industry, and as soon as affairs are settled in connection with Mr. Berry's decease, the matter will be dealt with. The application has been made for inferior land on a reasonable lease to grow flax upon it. Those who wish to obtain leases for this purpose have visited the district, and think that the swampy lands will be very suitable.

1735. Have all the tenants the leases? No; not many of them.

1736. Are their holdings secure? They are.

1737. The tenants are not likely to be turned out? No. We rather encourage them to stop on.

P. Morton,
Esq., M.P.

29 Jan., 1890

Mr. John Sheedy, post-office assistant, sworn, and examined:—

1738. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What are you? Assistant at the Berry post-office.

1739. Can you tell us how many mails per week leave this post-office? Eleven mails leave every day. We send away eleven and we receive eleven.

1740. To what places? Woodhill, Coolangatta, Kiama, Foxground, Gerringong, Kangaroo Valley, Broughton's Village, Nowra, Jasper's Brush, and Sydney. There are two mails daily to Sydney.

1741. Do you know the amount of receipts from telegrams at your office during the last year? I only know from reference to the Blue Book. The number of telegrams transmitted last year was 2,741.

1742. Do you know the amount received from the sale of postage stamps? I do not.

1743. Has the business of your office increased during the last three years? I have only been here six months; but I think it shows an increase since I have been here.

1744. Could you have a return made out showing the amount received for telegrams and for stamps during the last five years, and showing whether the business is increasing or not? Yes. The postal revenue is £427 for 1889, and £156 from telegrams.

1745. How many depositors have you in the savings bank? 274.

1746. Do you know the amount deposited? £968. The number of money orders issued during last year was 916, and the amount £2,253. The number of money orders paid was 226—the amount being £665. The number of letters posted was 51,891. We do not keep an account of the letters received.

Mr. J. Sheedy.

29 Jan., 1890.

Mr. John Boxsell, dairy-farmer, sworn, and examined:—

1747. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? Dairy-farmer.

1748. Have you been long in the district? Twenty-seven or twenty-eight years.

1749. Are you on leased land? No, my land is freehold. It was bought by auction before free selection commenced.

1750. You use it for grazing purposes? Yes, and we grow crops for our own use.

1751. Have you been sending away any quantity of butter? Until about seven months ago, but now I send my milk to the factory.

1752. Are you a shareholder in the factory? Yes.

1753. Can you say whether the factory is likely to use the railway? Yes, there is every probability of it because it affords quick transit.

1754. Will the railway run through your land? No.

1755. Seeing the advantages that a railway would afford, would you be prepared if a land tax were brought in to pay your quota towards the cost? I suppose we should have to do it.

1756. Do you look upon dairy-farming as a success in this district? I do.

1757. Do you think that the construction of a railway here would lead to an increase of the population? I think so.

1758. Are there any lands open for selection outside the Berry estate? There is not a great quantity of good land, but there is some towards Jervis Bay that will be taken up.

1759. What price would you take for your land? I would not take £40 an acre for it.

1760. Is the land adjacent to yours equal to your own? Yes; my land adjoins the Berry estate.

1761. Can you say whether the railway as proposed will meet the wishes of the residents? Oh, yes. I have not been over the line, but I know the country well, and I do not think that the route of the railway could be improved upon.

1762. Do you know anything of the alternative route, called the Jamberoo route? Not much.

1763. Do you know anything of the land between Nowra and Jervis Bay? I do; it would make fine vineyards, and there is some very good grazing-land amongst it.

1764. Do you think that with railway facilities large orchards would be likely to be brought into existence in that district? Yes; the land is just adapted for that.

1765. Is it suitable for the growth of olives, grapes, and oranges? Yes; they can grow splendid grapes there.

1766. Do you know anything about the mineral resources of the district? I do not, except what I have heard.

1767. Do you think the inhabitants of the district are in a good financial position? Yes; they are well to do there as a rule.

1768.

Mr.
J. Boxsell.

29 Jan., 1890.

- Mr. J. Boxsell.
29 Jan., 1880.
1768. Have you heard complaints about the inconvenience of the present means of communication with Sydney? Yes. In rough weather we cannot get our produce away.
1769. Are you a shareholder in the bacon and ham factory? No; I think one man has that himself.
1770. Can you say whether there are hundreds or thousands of acres of land suitable for maize-growing? Yes, there is plenty of land on the Berry Estate.
1771. And you think that it would give employment to a large population if a railway were made? Yes, there are thousands of acres of land covered with bush.
1772. Do you look upon the construction of the proposed line as a national investment? I do. The line has reached Kiama, where it just commences to get into the best part of the district.
1773. You think that the proposed line from Kiama to Nowra will be more productive than the line from Sydney to Kiama? Yes.
1774. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Is much produce lost through being sent by sea? Not a great deal. If butter is delayed it gets bad.
1775. Are the steamers often weather bound? Very often.
1776. Does that deteriorate the live stock and butter? Yes, very much.
1777. Do you think the farmers would be likely to use the railway for the conveyance of their produce if it were carried out? I do.
1778. How would maize and perishable productions be taken to market? It would depend upon the cost of carriage. If the rates by the steam-boats are lower than the rates by the railway the steam-boats may get the traffic, but that consideration will not influence every one. Farmers will not haul their produce 6 or 7 miles when they can put it on a railway close at hand.
1779. How about the farmers on the eastern side of the district, near Broughton Creek and the river? There are only a few farmers there.
1780. Do you think that the farmers on the river are likely to cart their stuff to the station when they have steamers calling at a wharf near their property? It depends on freight.
1781. Will not the fact that they can save cartage cause them to use the steamer? They could take three or four loads a day, as the distance to the railway is not very great.
1782. How many acres have you? 160 acres.
1783. How many cattle have you? I have 150 head altogether on this farm.
1784. Do you think the land would carry a cow to the acre? Yes.
1785. What is your estimate of a return of a cow per annum? I never went into that. I could not tell you what a cow is worth.
1786. What is a cow worth per year? £9 or £10.

Mr. Richard Morris, police constable, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. R. Morris.
29 Jan., 1890.
1787. *Chairman.*] What is your position? First-class constable in the police force stationed at Broughton Creek.
1788. How long have you been here? Six years.
1789. Have you collected the statistics of stock? I have collected my portion of them.
1790. What does your district comprise? The district is subdivided between us. My portion of the district extends from the boundary here to Broughton Village and to Bomederry including Coolangatta, Broughton Vale, Brogle's Creek, and Kangaroo Mount.
1791. Will you give us the figures for your portion of the district? I can only give you the approximate figures. I should think there are about 12,000 head of horses and cattle, and 7,000 pigs—that would be a low estimate and would not include the stock on Mr. Hayes' property which would number a couple of hundred.
1792. Can you say what quantity of butter is sent away from this portion of the electorate? I could not say. The greater portion of the milk is sent to the factories.
1793. Do you know how many pigs are slaughtered at the bacon factory? I think that the number which they stated to me at the factory was 4,845 pigs slaughtered during the year 1889—I speak from memory as I sent the returns in long ago.
1794. Can you speak as to the progress made by the district during the time that you have been here? It has progressed wonderfully. It is progressing in every way. We have an increase every year in the schedules in which we insert the number of acres of occupied land.
1795. Can you say that the community as a body are prosperous? Yes, the majority of them.
1796. Are there many insolvencies in the district? No, very few.
1797. Can you say about how many have occurred during the period that you have been in the district? I should say not more than a dozen and those not for any great amount.
1798. Do you know how many hotels have been built within the last four or five years in your portion of the district? There is only one hotel—"The Great Southern"—that has been built since I came here, and additions have been made to Mr. Lambert's hotel.
1799. Do you know what the cost of building that hotel has been? The landlord told me that it cost £5,000.
1800. Is it built on freehold land? No, on a twenty-one years leasehold.
1801. Do you think that if the railway is constructed as proposed there will be a very large traffic upon it? I should say there would be a great deal more than there is at present—a great many people would avail themselves of the chance to go to Sydney who at present do not go once in twelve months.
1802. Why do they not go now? People object to travel by the steamers, many not being able to stand the sea, and it is not very convenient travelling by coaches which are often over-crowded, especially at holiday times.

Mr. Jonathan Goldsmith Lambert, publican, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. J. G. Lambert.
29 Jan., 1890.
1803. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What are you? Hotelkeeper in this town.
1804. Have you been long in Berry? Five years.
1805. Has much progress been made by the district since you arrived here? New buildings have been erected and the whole district has progressed.
1806. Has the population increased much? I could not say.
1807. You have added to your hotel, have you not? Yes.
- 1808.

1808. Do you care to state how much you expended? The new additions to my hotel cost me £3,000.
1809. Is your land freehold or leasehold? Leasehold; twenty-one year's tenure.
1810. Do you consider that you will be well rewarded for your expenditure, notwithstanding the cost of the additions? I suppose I shall.
1811. Are the other properties in the town built on leasehold lands? Yes; everything is leasehold.
1812. What is your frontage? I think it is 72 feet.
1813. What rent do you pay? £200 a year after paying my own expenses for building it.
1814. Do you pay all taxes? Everything.
1815. Is £200 a year a fair average rental for an hotel in the principal street? No; it is too much.
1816. Do you think there would be much competition if you offered your good-will for sale? I could not say; I do not think there would be very much competition.
1817. Are all the hotelkeepers in Berry doing well? I could not say.
1818. Do you consider Berry a good business town? I think it is.
1819. Berry is the centre, is it not, for the surrounding farmers, and markets are held here once a week? Yes.
1820. Therefore it is likely to be a good railway centre? I could not say; I think it would be a good centre. We have steam-boats within a mile of the town. I suppose that the boats would compete with the railway, and it is cheaper to get goods by water than by train.
1821. Do you think you are likely as a business man, to use the boats instead of the railway? Considering the way the coaches are running between Kiama and Nowra, there must be a deal of passenger traffic. I would rather patronize the boats than the train.
1822. If the boats carry goods at a lower rate you will patronize them? Of course they will run at lower rates. We get goods here cheaper by the boats connected with the Berry Estate than they can get them at Kiama.
1823. I suppose that a little delay does not matter in your business? No.
1824. Do you think from the attractions of this district that it is likely to be a resort for visitors? Most decidedly.
1825. Have you many now? Not at present; but when the railway is made there will no doubt be a great many more. Every one who comes here, and who has seen Mount Victoria and the Blue Mountains, considers that the Blue Mountains cannot be compared with this place.
1826. Then this portion of the Illawarra district is likely to be a favourite resort of tourists? I think so.
1827. And that will add to the revenue of the railway? Yes.
1828. *Chairman.*] Did you lease the land upon which you have built your hotel direct from Mr. Berry? Yes.
1829. Before that, did you buy the good-will of the old property? Yes; I gave £2,500 for the good-will of the old house.
1830. You have spent altogether about £5,500? The amount is nearly £6,000.
1831. And you are under a ground rent of £200 a year? Yes.
1832. Am I to understand that you are paying your way? I have done, so far.

Mr.
J.G. Lambert.
29 Jan., 1890.

Mr. George Frederick Davis, storekeeper, sworn, and examined:—

1833. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? Storekeeper.
1834. Have you been long in the district? I have been upwards of four years in Berry.
1835. Has your trade increased much during the last twelve months? It has.
1836. Is your trade satisfactory? Yes.
1837. Have you many bad debts on your books? There are a few, not many.
1838. How do you get your goods? By the "Meeinderry" and the "Coomonderry."
1839. What is the freight? 10s. a ton.
1840. Do you think the railway would be an advantage to yourself and others in the same line of business? I do.
1841. Would you take advantage of the railway, as against the boats? I should.
1842. Do you recognise the fact that the railways could not carry freight at 10s. a ton? I think it would pay me to get my goods by rail.
1843. You would rather have your goods carried by rail than submit to the inconvenience and risk of steamer carriage? Yes.
1844. Do you insure your goods? In some cases.
1845. From your general knowledge of the people, can you say whether they are in a healthy financial position? I should say that they are.
1846. The district is progressing? Yes.
1847. Is the railway likely to bring about an increase of population? I am sure that it will.
1848. Have you any knowledge of the country beyond here? No.
1849. Do you know anything of the agricultural or mineral resources of the district? No.
1850. Do you buy any grain? Yes.
1851. What trade in grain do you do in a year? Between £500 and £600 worth. I sell it in the district.
1852. Do you sell much fruit? Only canned fruits.
1853. Where do they come from? We sell both American and colonial.
1854. Do you sell Californian fruits? Yes.
1855. Do you think that sufficient fruit could be grown in the district? Yes.
1856. And that it is not done you attribute to the apathy of the people? Yes; to their indifference. They are engaged in a more profitable business.
1857. Do you think it would be good policy on the part of the Government to make a railway through this district on to Nowra? I do. I am sure it will be a good paying line.
1858. Do you think it will pay working expenses and something towards the interest on the cost of construction? I am sure of it.
1859. Do you think it will pay one half of 3½ per cent. on the cost of construction? I think so.

Mr.
G. F. Davis.
29 Jan., 1890.

- Mr. G. F. Davis. 1860. Therefore you look on the advent of a railway to the district as likely to be most beneficial to the country as an investment, and of great utility to the revenue? I do.
- 29 Jan., 1890. 1861. Are the accounts of the farmers paid weekly, monthly, or yearly? They are paid monthly.
1862. Do they regularly meet their engagements? Yes; the majority of them.
1863. You consider this a sound business district? Yes, one of the soundest in the colony.

Mr. John Cook, junior, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. Cook. 1864. *Chairman.*] What are you? Farmer, of Woodhill.
- 29 Jan., 1890. 1865. How far is that from the township of Berry? Seven miles.
1866. How many acres do you farm? About 480 acres.
1867. How long have you been resident at Woodhill? About twenty years.
1868. Is your farm freehold or leasehold? I have 380 acres of freehold and 100 acres of leasehold.
1869. What number of stock have you? About 100. A portion of the land is not improved yet.
1870. Have you any land under cultivation besides that for grazing? Very little—only a few acres.
1871. Is your farm a dairy-farm? Yes.
1872. Do you send your milk to the factory? No; I use a separator.
1873. What quantity of butter do you produce monthly? About 800 or 1,000 lb.—about half a ton.
1874. Do you send that to Sydney? Yes.
1875. What price do you get for it on the average? About 10d. net all the year through.
1876. Have you any other sources of income? We have pigs and calves, grass and potatoes, but we do not grow much grain.
1877. What do you regard as the average earnings of your milking herd? I consider that a cow should bring in an average of about £10 a year.
1878. Can you say whether this district will be much benefited by a railway? I have always been of opinion that it would be. The district is kept back for want of a railway.
1879. Do you think that the railway will be a profitable investment? I think so.
1880. Do you think that there will be a large traffic from here in goods and passengers immediately upon the opening of a railway? Yes.
1881. Have you heard what the cost of the line will be? I have.
1882. Do you think that the revenue from the line will be sufficient to defray the working expenses and cover the interest on the cost of construction? Yes, within a reasonable time.
1883. Have you seen the route of the railway? Yes.
1884. Have you any suggestion to make as to any alteration or deviation of the line? I think it cannot give any reasonable return unless it goes to Nowra Bridge. I think it will lose all the trade of Nowra if it is not carried to the bridge—the trade will go down the river and by sea.
1885. Do you think that the line should be extended to Jervis Bay? I do.
1886. What is your reason for so thinking? Because there are minerals in that direction, and I think that a considerable trade would spring up between the South Coast district and Melbourne.
1887. Are there many settlers in that direction? Yes, the land is very rich, and there are homesteads scattered all over it.
1888. Are they freeholds or leaseholds? Freeholds. Between thirty and forty are settled in or at Broger's Creek.
1889. Are the settlers prosperous? They are very prosperous, and almost without an exception they have made comfortable homes for themselves.
1890. *Mr. Hurley.*] I heard you say that if the line stopped short at Bomederry instead of going to the bridge it would be a failure? I do not know whether it would be altogether a failure, but it would lose a great deal of the trade at Nowra.
1891. Would it get the trade from Broughton Creek? Yes, that would go by the line, but the Nowra trade would go by sea.
1892. Do you mean to say that a great deal of the trade will be lost to the railway if that branch line is not carried up to the Bomederry Bridge? I think so. The people would not like to come far to this side of the bridge with their goods.
1893. Do you think they would patronise the steamers in preference to crossing the bridge? If they had only to cross the bridge that would not be much, but they would have to go some distance at the other side of the river.
1894. Would the people of Nowra not prefer the railway to the steamer? If it was near the bridge they would.
1895. It is 50 chains from the bridge to the Bomederry township. This line is to go on to the Nowra township and Jervis Bay, and under those circumstances do you think that the Government ought to construct the branch line? I think they ought, because we cannot depend upon getting the railway carried over the river for a number of years. I think for all the cost of it the construction of the branch would be amply justified.
1896. Have you any knowledge of the country beyond Nowra? Only as regards its timber.
1897. How far do you live from here? Seven miles.
1898. Are you influenced in regard to what you say by any talk that you have had with persons of Nowra? No. I am not influenced in any personal way—only by my desire to see the railway reach Nowra.
1899. Are you influenced by any conversation that you have had with people from Nowra? No.
1900. Have you had a conversation with any one in reference to that branch line? Not with any one in particular.
1901. Have you not had a conversation with a person who took a very prominent part in the controversy with regard to the construction of that branch line to Nowra? No.
1902. Have you not had a conversation with a person who has been advocating that branch line in the newspapers? Not one word.
1903. Your opinion then is formed upon your own judgment? Yes.

Mr.

Mr. Daniel Fraser, storekeeper, sworn, and examined :—

1904. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is your calling? A storekeeper.
 1905. How long have you been in Berry? Two years.
 1906. Have you noticed any marked progress since you arrived here? Yes, a great deal.
 1907. Has the population of the town increased? I think it has, as regards the working classes.
 1908. What is your opinion of the financial position of the district? I think it is a first-class district.
 1909. Do you think it is such a district as the people are likely to remain in, although attractions may arise elsewhere? Yes; I believe the people will remain here, although the land all belongs to one person.
 1910. Have you any bad debts? Not that I know of.
 1911. Are the storekeepers in the district in the habit of giving mortgages of their property? Not that I am aware of.
 1912. How do you get your stores down here? By Mr. Berry's steamers.
 1913. I suppose you are likely to continue to get them that way, unless the railway rates are lower than the steamer rates? If the railway is more convenient I would pay a little more to have my goods carried by them.
 1914. Do you think that is the general opinion of the storekeepers in the district? Yes.

Mr. D. Fraser.
 29 Jan., 1890.

Alexander John Colley, Esq., bank manager, sworn, and further examined :—

1915. *Mr. Hurley.*] You desire to make some addition to your evidence? Yes. I wish to give some statistics with regard to the local Agricultural Association to show the resources of the district. We have one of the best agricultural associations in the colony, and the figures which I am about to lay before the Committee are rather remarkable, as showing the quantity of our products. At present there are over 320 members of the Association, and at last show £381 7s. 6d. was paid away in prizes. At the show of 1889 there were 2,668 entries, of which 378 were horses; cattle, 388; poultry and other animals, 178; dairy produce, 147; vegetables, 239; fruits, 120; flowers, 437; saddlery, 8; implements, 5; needlework, 151; household manufactures, 292; works of art, 325; total, 2,668. The society has a fixed deposit of £500 in the bank. I do not think that any other local show in the Colony has ever had so large a number of entries.
 1916. Can you give us any idea of the amount receivable from your members? The annual income is about £200.
 1917. Are your grounds free from debt? They do not belong to us; they belong to Mr. Hay.
 1918. Was the show-yard provided by the Association or by Mr. Berry? Mr. Berry bore the entire cost of it.
 1919. I suppose he still retains the right to it? Yes.
 1920. *Chairman.*] Were the buildings also erected by Mr. Berry? Yes. The area of the ground is 10 acres.
 1921. What was the cost of the buildings? Between £3,000 and £4,000; I believe.

A. J. Colley.
 Esq.
 29 Jan., 1890.

Mr. Andrew Gardiner, public school teacher, sworn, and examined :—

1922. *Chairman.*] What are you? Teacher of the public school.
 1923. How long have you been here? Two years last Christmas.
 1924. Has there been any increase in the number of pupils in your school? Yes; a considerable increase.
 1925. How many were there on the rolls when you took charge of the school, and what is the present number? I cannot give the exact number on the rolls of the school when I took charge, but I can give the attendance, which was about 120. The present attendance is from 160 to 180.
 1926. Are there any other public schools within a radius of 5 miles? Yes; there are six.
 1927. Can you say whether the attendance at those schools has increased during the time that you have been here? Yes; it has increased in two of them, especially at Jasper's Brush and Harley Hill.
 1928. Can you tell what the increase is? I could not say exactly.
 1929. Do you think it has been proportionate to the increase in your own school? Yes.
 1930. Have you any private schools in the district? Yes; there is one in this town.
 1931. What is the attendance? I really could not say. I know that they have a fair attendance.
 1932. What do you consider a fair attendance? I should say between a dozen and twenty.

Mr. A.
 Gardiner.
 29 Jan., 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Kiama to Nowra.

[SECTIONAL COMMITTEE]

APPENDIX.

A.

RETURN OF REVENUE COLLECTED AT THE LANDS OFFICE, NOWRA.

Sir, Crown Lands Office, Nowra, 31 January, 1890.
In compliance with a request made by the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, I have the honor to enclose herewith a return of revenue collected at the Lands Office, Nowra, from 1 January, 1880, to 31 December, 1889 I have, &c,

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Sydney F. GALBRAITH,
Crown Lands Agent.

LAND REVENUE			MINING REVENUE		
	£	s d		£	s d
1880	1,917	2 8	1880	57	10 0
1881	2,909	13 9	1881	48	0 0
1882	3,848	6 7	1882	37	5 0
1883	3,675	7 3	1883	66	10 0
1884	3,784	19 11	1884	28	15 0
1885	2,559	16 7	1885	86	0 0
1886	4,861	17 6	1886	149	0 0
1887	3,257	3 1	1887	55	10 0
1888	2,829	17 11	1888	419	0 0
1889	3,251	6 6	1889	1,732	6 0
Total	£32,895	11 9	Total	£2,679	16 0

B.

[To Evidence of Mr H Keon]

Sir, Kiama, 30 January, 1890
I have the honor to supplement my evidence re railway Kiama to Nowra, if it is admissible I am under the impression that the evidence given by me was not very clear as to alterations of freights When handing in the revised list of freights I should have stated that several items have never been altered, but have been the regular charge for the past twenty years as they appear on the list 10s (ten shillings) per ton, viz, ironmongery, hardware, and all that class of goods, drapery, and measurement goods, which includes furniture, &c

I may also mention that the railway did more injury to the sailing vessels trading to this port than to the steam boats, as they carried all the lumber, such as bricks, timber, coal, and blue metal, which comes and goes per train We used only to carry small quantities, to oblige our customers, as bricks and timber did not pay for handling and detention of our steamers Those items form the chief cargo for the train Bricks are made along the line, and can be landed at the Kiama terminus almost as cheap as they could be delivered at the Sydney wharf for shipment to Kiama, coal also from Wollongong, live stock from Homebush We never carried any fat cattle—they used to be driven overland The whole of this trade is secured by the train now, and has been from the start But I think it will be very slack shortly, as the chief buildings are now nearly completed, and there are plenty of vacant houses and stores in Kiama now

The great loss to the I S N Company was the passenger trade and the reduction in the freight of butter from 2s per keg to 1s, and the loss of the factory butter from Jamberoo and Gerringong, all of which now goes per train, although our rates are cheaper The annual yield of butter in a good season does not reach 33,000 kegs of 60 lb each from all sources—Shellharbour, Jamberoo, Kiama, and Gerringong, and this estimate will not allow for any milk to be shipped, for the more milk going away, the less butter Mr Somerville's estimate is pretty correct—a little over the mark, and no allowance made for the milk I may also mention that cartage from Kiama wharf is 1s per load, and from Kiama railway present terminus 2s per load, so we only have the advantage of 1s per load in that way

The Hon F T Humphery,
Chairman, Sectional Committee, Kiama to Nowra Railway Extension

I have, &c,
HUBERT KEON.

B 1.

RATE OF FREIGHT ON GOODS SHIPPED TO OR FROM WOLLONGONG AND KIAMA, PER ILLAWARRA STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY

Description, &c	Single			Quantity.		
	£	s	d.	£	s	d.
Cases, 1 doz	0	0	9	0	0	6
" 2 "	0	1	0	0	0	9
" 3 "	0	1	6	0	1	0
" 4 "	0	1	6	0	1	0
Casks, 4 doz	0	1	6	0	1	0
Hhds. Beer, &c	0	3	0	0	2	6
Barrels "	0	3	0	0	2	0
‡ casks "	0	2	6	0	1	6
18 gallon Kegs Spirits, &c	0	1	6	0	1	0
10 " "	0	1	0	0	1	0
5 " "	0	1	0	0	0	9
Chests Tea	0	2	0	0	1	6
Half chests Tea	0	1	6	0	1	0
Boxes Tea	0	0	9	0	0	6
Parcels, medium size, 6d Extra, according to size, &c						
Soap, per box	0	1	0	0	0	6
Candles, per box	0	0	6	0	0	3
Fruit, per half case	0	1	0	0	0	6
" other sizes in proportion						

APPENDIX.

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Description, &c.	Single.	Quantity. £ s. d.
Eggs, per case, sizes 1 to 4 doz. cases, at same rates as cases.		
Butter	Medium size, 9d. ; per keg	0 1 0
Horses	Stallions, 10s. each	0 5 0
Cows	Bulls, 10s. ,, ,,	0 5 0
Pigs	each	0 1 0
Calves	,,	0 2 6
Sheep	under 20 head, 9d. each ; over 20 head ,,	0 0 6
Maize, Oats, Barley, &c.	per single bag	0 1 0
Flour	at per ton	0 5 0
Chaff	,,	0 5 0
Hay, pressed in bales	,,	0 10 0
Carts	each 10s. to	0 15 0
Buggies	,, 10s. to	0 15 0
Drays	,, 15s. to	2 0 0
Bricks	per 1,000	1 0 0
Slates	,,	1 0 0
Timber	per 100 feet super.	0 3 0
Cement	per ton	0 6 0
Iron, bar or in cases	,,	0 10 0
Measurement Goods (Drapery, &c.)	,,	0 10 0

C.

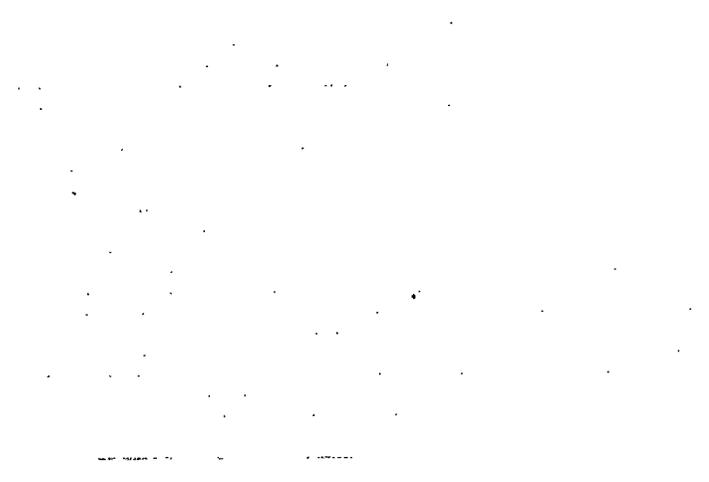
BUSINESS TRANSACTED AT THE POST AND TELEGRAPH OFFICE BERRY.

Sir,

In reply to your request as to the amount of business transacted at the Post and Telegraph Office, Berry, during the last five years, the amount of stamps sold here is as under:—1885, £429 12s. ; 1886, £442 2s. 6d. ; 1887, £475 15s. ; 1888, £427 ; 1889, £471 7s. 6d.

Berry, 4 February, 1890.
I am, &c.,
JOHN W. CLINCH, P.M.

[Four Plans.]



1890.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

KIAMA TO NOWRA RAILWAY BILL.

(MESSAGE No. 12.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 2 July, 1890.

By Deputation from the Governor,
ALFRED STEPHEN,
Lieutenant-Governor.

Message No. 12.

In accordance with the provisions contained in the 54th section of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends, for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly, the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses in connection with a Bill to sanction the construction of a line of Railway from Kiama to Nowra.

Government House,
Sydney, 25th June, 1890.

1890.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDICES, AND PLANS,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

GRAFTON TO THE TWEED.

Presented to Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act,
51 Vic. No. 37, section 8.

SYDNEY: CHARLES POTTER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

1890.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable JOHN LACKEY, Vice-Chairman.
 The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN.
 The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
 The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
 The Honorable GEORGE HENRY COX.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esquire, Chairman.
 JACOB GARRARD, Esquire.
 HENRY COPELAND, Esquire.
 JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esquire.
 WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esquire.
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esquire.
 JOHN HURLEY, Esquire.
 CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esquire.

MEMBERS OF THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esquire, Chairman.
 The Honorable GEORGE HENRY COX.
 JACOB GARRARD, Esquire.
 CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esquire.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO THE TWEED.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, and the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Grafton to the Tweed," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the railway should be constructed from Lismore to the Tweed; and, in accordance with the provision of sub-section IV, of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

1. The proposed railway would commence at Grafton on the north bank of the Clarence River, and passing through the counties of Clarence, Richmond, and Rous, touching population-centres at Casino, Lismore, Bexhill, Clunes, and Cavvanba (Byron Bay), would extend to Murwillumbah on the Tweed River, the length of the line being 140 miles 76 chains, and the estimated total cost £1,728,100, exclusive of the cost of land and compensation. Description of the proposed railway.

2. In making their inquiry as to the expediency or otherwise of constructing this railway the Committee have, for several reasons, been more than ordinarily impressed with the importance attaching to the proposal. The line is not put forward as a branch railway, or a feeder to any railway in existence. It is contemplated by its authors that it shall form part of what eventually shall be a great trunk-line, extending from the Queensland border north of the Tweed to the Hunter River, costing, as near as an approximate estimate will show, £6,080,000; and several other contingencies come into view. At present the proposal does not go beyond the idea of the railway being a feeder to the Clarence and the Richmond, and to Byron Bay, but at the same time this portion of railway is regarded by the Government as a part of the contemplated trunk-line, and to a certain extent this circumstance becomes an element in the inquiry. Furthermore, the proposal is, in certain respects, affected by those for the improvement of the Clarence River, the Richmond River, and Byron Bay, and by the general question of making those places important centres for the carrying on of a large shipping trade. Important nature of the proposal.

3. The information before the Committee at the commencement of their inquiry was not as complete as it should have been. At the time when the proposed railway was referred by the Legislative Assembly to the Committee the route for the line had not been properly surveyed or examined, no sectional plan had been prepared, and the estimate of the cost of the railway was, in a large measure, approximate. Before the taking of evidence was brought to a conclusion a surveyor went over the route, and a better knowledge of it was obtained, but up to the present no plan showing the sections of the railway has been before the Committee, and no plan of the kind can, therefore, be published with this Report. The absence of complete plans has somewhat interfered with a satisfactory understanding of all the important details of the proposed railway, but this circumstance did not appear to the Committee to be of sufficient moment to prevent them from proceeding with the inquiry, and they have been able from the information which they have obtained from witnesses, and from a personal inspection by a Sectional Committee of the country through which the proposed railway would pass, to arrive at a conclusion which they consider is sound and justifiable. Information before the Committee.

Method of the
Committee's
inquiry.

4. The Committee commenced their inquiry by examining the Under Secretary for Public Works, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, and some other witnesses whose evidence it was thought desirable to have, in order that the Committee might have a good general idea of the proposed line and the reasons put forward in support of it; and when that testimony was obtained a Sectional Committee, consisting of four members of the Committee, was appointed to visit the districts concerned in the construction of the proposed railway, take the evidence of witnesses in those localities, and, as far as possible, personally inspect the country through which the railway would pass. After the return of the Sectional Committee further evidence was taken in Sydney; and in this manner the inquiry has been made as full and complete as possible.

Principal
matters
upon which
evidence
has been
obtained.

5. The principal matters upon which, in relation to the proposal before them, it has appeared to the Committee desirable to obtain evidence, have been:—

- (1.) The details of the proposal.
- (2.) The necessity, or otherwise, for railway construction in the districts concerned.
- (3.) Whether the route for the railway has been wisely chosen.
- (4.) The questions of cost and probable traffic returns.
- (5.) How far, or in what respect, if any, the improvement of the Clarence and Richmond Rivers affects the proposal.
- (6.) To what extent, if any, the improvement of Byron Bay is associated with the proposed railway.

Details of the
proposal.

6. The details of the proposed railway will be found chiefly in the evidence of the Under Secretary for Public Works, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, and the railway surveyors engaged in connection with the line. The estimate of cost has been made up in two parts—one from Grafton to Byron Bay, 108 miles 26 chains, to cost £1,271,300, and the other from Byron Bay to the Tweed, 32 miles 50 chains, £456,800. Taking the whole line into consideration the estimate of cost represents £12,256 a mile, irrespective of land and compensation. For the section from Grafton to Byron Bay the cost per mile is £11,736, and for the length between Byron Bay and Murwillumbah on the Tweed, £14,000. As will be seen further on, the Committee consider it expedient that the line should be constructed from Lismore to Murwillumbah, not from Grafton to Murwillumbah, and this reduction in the length of the railway means, at the same time, of course, a corresponding modification in the total cost. The length of line in the proposal before the Committee is 140 miles and 76 chains; the length represented in the decision of the Committee is about 60½ miles, the probable cost of which would be about £800,000. The altitude and ruggedness of much of the country between Lismore and Murwillumbah are so great that anything like a straight line is impossible, and the only means of laying down a railway through the district appears to be to adopt an irregular route by which the line will run from Murwillumbah towards the coast at Byron Bay, and then bend at a sharp angle away from the coast again to Lismore at the head of the Richmond River. The ruling gradient on the line, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways considers, may be regarded as 1 in 50, though in a descent to Byron Bay there is a portion of the route, 1¼ mile in length, where the grade may be as steep as 1 in 40. Efforts are being made to reduce this heavy grade, and also to improve the line in other respects where improvement is found to be practicable, but at present the grade is as stated. Several rivers and creeks will have to be crossed, a circumstance which forms a large feature in the cost of the line; but the cost of these bridges—given roughly as £175,500—may, ultimately, be found to be much less than the amount at present set down for them. For example, a bridge across the south arm of the Richmond River at Casino, the estimated cost of which as put before the Committee is £51,730, can be built, it has since been ascertained by recent borings, for £15,000, a reduction to the extent of nearly £37,000. This is an instance of the incomplete information alluded to in a previous portion of this Report as available to the Committee at the commencement of their inquiry, as well as an indication of a possible reduction in the estimated cost of the bridges generally. The principal watercourses are the Richmond River, Leycester's Creek, Wilson's Creek, and the Brunswick River;

River; but the crossing of the Richmond River and Leycester's Creek is not involved in the Committee's recommendation for the construction of a portion of the proposed railway. Regarding the proposal generally, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief considers the line to be the easiest and cheapest that could be made from the Richmond to the Tweed, and that it will serve more country than any other line that could be laid down there.

7. In considering the question of the necessity or otherwise for railway construction in the districts concerned, there can be no doubt from the evidence adduced by the Full Committee and by the Sectional Committee that railway facilities for the country between the Richmond and the Tweed Rivers are not only a necessity but the right of the settlers who have taken up land there. The land for the most part is as rich and productive as any land in the colony; its powers of production are in some respects almost unlimited; but cultivation, and the increase of population by the progress of settlement, are retarded by the want of suitable means for the conveyance of produce to market. This difficulty is referred to and explained very fully in the Committee's Report upon the proposed breakwater at Byron Bay, and what is said in that report need not be repeated in this. All that it is necessary to say here, in addition to what has already been said on this point, is that the construction of a railway through the districts, lying between the Richmond and the Tweed, is a work likely to be not only useful to the population of those districts, but of great advantage to the colony.

Necessity or otherwise for railway construction in the districts concerned.

8. It has already been stated that the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways considers the proposed railway to be the easiest, cheapest, and most generally advantageous that could be laid down from the Richmond to the Tweed. That statement summarises effectually the advantages expected from the route, but an examination of the evidence given by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief, and by the surveyors employed by him in connection with the line, will show the reasons why he is of this opinion. A direct line from Lismore to Murwillumbah would have "to cross a range, in which some of the points are 2,700 feet high, and others 2,000 and 1,400, gradually falling towards the coast to about 1,100," and the route for the line has been chosen, as shown on the plan, "in order to get round the hills and up the gullies," or, in other words, so that the line may be constructed in the easiest manner possible. Except in one instance, the route has not been laid down specially to serve any particular place between the terminal points, and generally regarded it is considered to be the most direct and best route that could be adopted. "Approximately," the Acting Engineer-in-Chief states, "it is the only route you could take," and, it is of importance to observe that he states that in any line from Grafton or Lismore to Murwillumbah it is necessary to go round by Byron Bay. Whether the question of improving Byron Bay is or is not considered, the railway must, owing to the nature of the country, go within easy distance of the bay. The instance where the route has been laid down specially to serve a particular place is a locality called Tyagra-grass, between Byron Bay and the Brunswick River, a point through which four lines of road pass, and one which is expected to be an important centre of population. The route has been made to touch that point designedly, because of the advantages likely to accrue to the railway by so doing; through the other portions of the country to be traversed by the line the route has been chosen where it has appeared most practicable for the railway to be taken.

Whether the route for the railway has been wisely chosen.

9. The estimated cost of the railway, already stated, is described in one part of the evidence of the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways as to a great extent only approximate, but this refers apparently chiefly to the cost of the bridges. He says, however, that when the estimate was made "there was not sufficient information to allow of anything but a mere approximation. When all the information is to hand the matter will be carefully gone into, and the greatest economy will be exercised." Taking the estimates all through he believes them to be ample; so that while there is a possibility of their being reduced, it would appear to be improbable that they will be exceeded. The estimated cost of the bridges may be reduced materially. It is probable that the traffic returns will be satisfactory within a reasonable period after the construction of the railway. The Railway Commissioners have carefully inspected the route and also a good deal of the surrounding country,

The questions of cost and probable traffic returns.

and, as will be seen by their report, are favourable to the construction of the railway. They found the land to be for the most part of an exceedingly rich character and capable of producing "almost any tropical or temperate zone product;" that practically every acre available for settlement has been taken up, but that in consequence of the difficulty of getting produce to market, only a portion of the land has been placed under cultivation; and that large supplies of very fine timber exist along the route. They are convinced, as well from their own observation as from assurances made to them, that if the railway were authorized a large number of the present holdings would be subdivided and "at least six families would locate themselves where at present there is only one;" and they "feel that the country urgently requires a railway, and are of opinion the demand should be complied with, although," they go on to say, "it will be some considerable time before the large capital required for its construction will receive a fair return." This difficulty, they suggest, should be met by setting aside as railway capital from the time it may be determined to make the railway one-half the money realised from the sale of Crown land along the route and within 10 miles of it on either side, the Railway Commissioners, at the same time, to have a voice in the arrangements for the subdivision and mode of selling the land. There are along the route, and within the distance from it mentioned, Crown lands to the extent of 622,000 acres, the present value of which is £761,000, and the probable value, when the railway shall have been made, twice this amount. The report of the Sectional Committee is also strongly expressive of the richness and value of the land through which the railway, if constructed, would go, and of the probability that cultivation would be carried on extensively immediately railway facilities for getting produce to market were available. Roads, as feeders to the line, would have to be provided. It was at first thought that the construction of the railway would effect a saving in road construction and maintenance in the district, but the result, naturally, will be an increase rather than a decrease in road expenditure. The main roads must be kept very much in the same order as now, and in addition to this tributary or branch roads will have to be made. This expense, however, should be more than covered in the traffic the roads should bring to the railway.

To what extent the improvement of the Clarence and the Richmond affects the proposal.

10. One of the primary objects in view in the construction of this proposed railway is the attraction of goods and passenger traffic to the Clarence and the Richmond Rivers—principally to the Clarence. Proposals to improve the entrance of each of these rivers involve the expenditure of a large amount of money, and it has been thought desirable to attract to the rivers as much of the trade of the surrounding districts as can be done. But for reasons which will be found in the evidence, and which are summarised in the Sectional Committee's Report, the Committee do not consider that the proposed railway would be the means of drawing traffic to the Clarence, and therefore they do not recommend that portion of the proposed line which would run between Grafton and Lismore. Except on the banks of creeks and in the immediate vicinity of rivers, the land between the Richmond and the Clarence is of very poor description, not at all likely to be cultivated to any very profitable extent; and, as produce from the country to the north of the Richmond would not be likely to pass that river and be sent 80 miles further on to the Clarence, the probability is there would be no appreciable goods traffic to the Clarence. Passenger traffic also would in all likelihood be very limited, for it would be confined to travellers between Lismore and Casino and Grafton, and they would be few. Passengers from north of the Richmond to or from Sydney would, doubtless, make the Richmond or Byron Bay their terminal point on the railway, and would not travel to or from the Clarence. To the Richmond traffic by the railway is certain to go, for the river and its improved entrance will be the available outlet for the produce from a large portion of the district north of the river, and towards the country in the neighbourhood of Byron Bay.

The improvement of Byron Bay.

11. In a manner similar to that in which the proposal for the railway is affected by the improvement of the Richmond River, the question of improving Byron Bay has a certain relation to the scheme. The route of the railway has been so laid down that the portion between the Tweed and the Richmond converges at Byron Bay, and unless a large proportion of settlers are to be compelled to send their produce along the railway many miles further than seems to be necessary, it should be shipped from Byron Bay. The improvement of Byron Bay for that purpose

purpose need not draw from the Richmond traffic which should legitimately go there. To those shippers of produce or to railway passengers whose nearest port of shipment is the Richmond, Lismore will be the traffic centre; and to those nearer to Byron Bay than to Lismore, Byron Bay will be the place where they will expect to trade with the most convenience and the least expense.

12. The Committee have decided to recommend that the proposed railway be carried out from Lismore on the Richmond River to Murwillumbah on the river Tweed, and they have come to this decision because they consider that traffic is assured between those two points, and not between the Richmond and the Clarence. To some extent their reasons for not supporting the construction of the portion of the railway between Lismore and Grafton have been already stated, and they will be found more fully stated in the Report of the Sectional Committee. The evidence obtained on the subject, together with the plans, &c., was finally considered on Thursday, 20 March, 1890; and the following extract from the Minutes of Proceedings will show the position of the Committee in the matter:—

Mr. Cox moved (*pro forma*, notice of a similar motion having been given by Mr. Lee, and Mr. Lee being unavoidably absent),—"That in the opinion of the Committee it is expedient the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out from Casino to the Tweed."

Mr. Dowel seconded the motion (*pro forma*).

Mr. O'Sullivan moved, as an amendment,—“That all the words after the word ‘out’ be omitted.”

Mr. Dowel seconded the amendment.

The amendment was negatived on the following division:—

Ayes, 2.		Noes, 10.
Mr. Dowel.		Mr. Abbott.
Mr. O'Sullivan.		Mr. Lackey.
		Dr. Garran.
		Mr. Humphery.
		Mr. Trickett.
		Mr. Cox.
		Mr. Garrard.
		Mr. Copeland.
		Mr. Tonkin.
		Mr. Hurley.

Mr. Garrard moved, as an amendment,—“That the word ‘Casino’ be omitted.”

The amendment was seconded by Mr. Copeland, and passed.

Mr. Garrard moved, as a further amendment,—“That the word ‘Lismore’ be inserted in the place of the word ‘Casino’.”

The amendment was seconded by Mr. O'Sullivan, and passed on the following division:—

Ayes, 9.		Noes, 3.
Mr. Abbott.		Mr. Copeland.
Mr. Lackey.		Mr. Tonkin.
Dr. Garran.		Mr. Dowel.
Mr. Humphery.		
Mr. Trickett.		
Mr. Cox.		
Mr. Garrard.		
Mr. O'Sullivan.		
Mr. Hurley.		

The motion, as amended, was then agreed to.

J. P. ABBOTT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 15th April, 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO THE TWEED.

TUESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

JACOB GARRARD, Esq. (TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.
JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JOHN HURLEY, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Joseph Barling, Esq., Under Secretary for Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Temporary Chairman.*] What is your position in the Public Service? I am Under Secretary for Public Works.
2. Are you prepared to lay before the Committee a statement showing the position of the proposal now before them;—the Grafton to the Tweed Railway? Yes.

J. Barling,
Esq.
12 Nov., 1889.

I do not think it will be necessary for me to give any lengthy statement in regard to the proposal before the Committee, viz., for a Railway from Grafton to the Tweed. I hand in a pretty full *précis* of the papers, which will supply any detailed information that may be required (*Vide Appendix A.*). I may mention, however, that a sum of £1,980,000 for a line via Casino, Lismore, and the Brunswick was voted by Parliament in the Session of 1884, and the plan, section, and book of reference for the first section—a distance of about 20 miles from Grafton—were laid upon the table of the Legislative Assembly and unanimously approved on the 15th September, 1886, and in the Legislative Council the proposal, by 15 votes to 7, was referred to a Select Committee, from which stage it has not since emerged. On the 27th September of this year, the proposal was remitted by Parliament to the consideration of this Honorable Committee. The line may be shortly described as follows:—

“Grafton to the Tweed River. Length, 140 miles 76 chains. The amount voted for this line was £1,980,000 for an assumed length of 165 miles, at the rate of £12,000 per mile, but the length has since been ascertained by survey to be under 141 miles, and the estimated cost is £1,728,100 for the works of construction, exclusive of the cost of land and compensation. The estimate has been made up in two parts, viz.:—From Grafton to Byron Bay, 108 miles 26 chains, £1,271,300; from Byron Bay to the Tweed, 32 miles 50 chains, £456,800; total, £1,728,100.”

The Commissioners, in their report, have treated the estimated cost of the line as £1,652,000; but their report was written before the estimate had been again revised by the railway engineers.

“The line, as proposed, commences in Mary-street, Grafton, on the north bank of the Clarence River. It passes in its course through the counties of Clarence, Richmond, and Rous. The centres of population touched are—Casino, at 62½ miles; Lismore, at 80 miles; Bexhill, at 85½ miles; and Cavanba (Byron Bay), at 108½ miles. Brunswick is passed through at 118 miles, and Murwillumbah, on the Tweed, is reached at 140¾ miles. The large rivers crossed are—the Richmond, at 62 miles 33 chains; Leycester's Creek, at 79 miles 43 chains; Wilson's Creek, at 88 miles 76 chains; and Brunswick River, at 118 miles 36 chains. August, 1888.”

With the permission of the Committee, I will now read the report of the Railway Commissioners on the subject:—

“Proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed River, *via* Casino, Lismore, and Byron Bay, 3rd May, 1889. In accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act, 1888, section 13, we beg to report as under:—The Engineer-in-Chief estimates the cost of construction of a single line of Railway (exclusive of land and compensation) at £1,652,000. Capital expenditure, at 3½ per cent., £57,850. We have carefully inspected the route of the proposed Railway, and also a good deal of the surrounding country, and find the land, for a great portion of the distance, to be of the highest and most productive character we have seen in the Colony. The roads, however, are of the most defective kind. From Grafton to a point 10 miles south of Casino the country generally is excellent for grazing purposes, whilst the banks of the various creeks are well suited for cultivation, and the land is being taken up for this purpose. Very fine timber also exists along the route, both hard and soft woods, ironbark, cedar, pine, &c., largely prevailing. After passing from the pastoral country, the whole of the land thence to Casino, Lismore, the Brunswick, and the Tweed, is of an exceedingly rich character, and capable of producing almost any tropical or temperate zone product. We inspected about 140 miles of river and creek frontages in the district, and found that practically every acre of the land available for settlement had been taken up, and was under cultivation, thus clearly showing that where the means of getting the produce to market exists, the fertility of the land brought settlement.”

In a conversation which I had with Mr. Eddy this morning, he specially emphasised this point, and gave it as one of the principal reasons for constructing a railway, that wherever there are facilities for the conveyance of produce to market, there the land is taken up and cultivated.

“A considerable quantity of land has been taken up in the vicinity of the proposed route of the Railway; but, in consequence of the difficulty of getting produce to market, only a small proportion of the land has been cleared. We were assured, and we feel that in all probability such would be the case, that if the line is authorized a larger number of the existing land owners who possess 640-acre lots, and in some cases more, would at once subdivide their holdings, and that at the least six families would locate themselves where at present there is only one. The soil is so rich that a good income can be obtained even from a 40-acre holding. We feel that the country urgently requires a railway, and are of opinion the demand should be complied with, although it will be some considerable time before the large capital required for its construction will receive a fair return, and we therefore think an exceptional course should be followed in regard to its construction. Along the route of the railway, and within 10 miles of it on either side, there are Crown Lands to the extent of 622,000 acres, at present valued at £761,000, and undoubtedly if the line is made, this land, if sold judiciously, would realise to the State quite, if not more than, double this amount; and as the cost of making the railway will be very heavy, owing to the numerous waterways

J. Barling,
Esq.
12 Nov., 1889.

to be crossed and the broken character of the country, we would suggest for the consideration of the Government that the Railway Capital should be credited with one-half the money realized from the sale of this land from the time it is decided to make the railway, the Railway Commissioners to be allowed to have a voice in the arrangements for the subdivision and mode of sale of the land, which could otherwise be sold in accordance with the provisions of the law relating to Crown Lands. We are aware that our proposal is one having no precedent in this country, but it is doubtless within the knowledge of the Government that, to a large extent, lines have been made in America on the Land Grant System, the Railway Companies in that country having had conveyed to them alternate blocks of land to a depth of 20 miles back from the railway on either side, and the sale of these lands has enabled railways to be pushed forward into districts which could not otherwise have had such communication. This district in being isolated from the trunk line cannot contribute any additional traffic thereto, and in consequence of this, and also because of its great richness, we think in the interests of the State we are justified in making this proposal for consideration. In the sister Colony of Victoria too, the Government write down the Railway capital each year to the extent of £200,000 from moneys received from the sale of Crown lands, the total amount so credited up to June, 1888, being £2,200,000. It has been pointed out by deputations in various parts of the Colony that the American railways precede the population very considerably, and that, as a consequence, very speedy settlement follows, but we do not think this state of things is applicable generally to Australia; the fact is lost sight of, that the population of America is exceedingly great, its growth from 1870 to 1880 having been eleven and a half millions, and that there is a continuous pouring of emigrants of all nationalities into the country. On some days, there have been as many as 6,000 emigrants taken into New York alone by ships from Liverpool. If the line is authorized, very careful consideration will have to be given to fixing the position of the terminus at Grafton and Murwillumbah, as ultimately the railway will have to be extended south or west of Grafton, and in the north the line will, ere long, have to be taken forward to join the Queensland system of railways. We have not given the usual statement of estimated working expenses and traffic, as the figures cannot be laid down with any degree of certainty. We therefore ask to be relieved from giving this information, as we feel the figures would be, to a very great extent, speculative, and the subject is one requiring to be dealt with on broad principles of State. With regard to the line itself, if authorized, we would make arrangements for the station accommodation to be laid in the cheapest way, so as to keep the first cost as low as possible until the income from the line justified a more liberal expenditure. (Signed) E. M. G. Eddy, Chief Commissioner. (Signed) Charles Oliver, Commissioner. (Signed) Wm. Fehon, Commissioner."

The Commissioners have pointed out the extraordinary fertility of the land through which a portion of this line would pass, and this is no doubt due not only to the richness of the soil, but also to the abundant rainfall with which the district is favoured. Mr. Russell gives the mean average rainfall at Grafton—I am quoting now from the last meteorological report;—as 36 inches; Woodburn, 56·46 inches; Casino, 40·26 inches; and Lismore, 46·63 inches. The significance of this will be apparent, when it is stated that the mean average for the entire Colony is only 23·68 inches. As illustrating the value of some of the best land on the Clarence, I notice from a report made by the Chief Draftsman of the Mines Department to the Minister, dated February, 1887, that tenant farmers are paying rent in some cases as much as £2 10s. per acre per annum. I am informed, however, that the general average rent for farm lands is at present about 30s. per acre per annum. Comment has been made on the inferior character of the soil between Grafton and Casino. The Commissioners for Railways, however, make it clear that it can only be called poor in comparison with the phenomenally rich lands which are to be found in the Richmond and Tweed River districts. Mr. Lyne, when Secretary for Works in introducing the proposal to the House, said: "The country through which the line passes nearly as far as Casino is not rich agricultural land, but the line will open up a considerable area of Crown land, and will pass through fairly good country, here and there, in the neighbourhood of streams; and in those parts there will be considerable agricultural development." I may also perhaps be allowed to quote the words of Mr. Gullet, of the "Daily Telegraph," who is a very competent witness, and he exactly bears out the remarks of the Railway Commissioners. He says: "With respect to the land between Casino and the Clarence, some widely different accounts were given to me. According to one version, it was very poor land; according to another, it was as rich as any agriculturalist could desire. I did not distrust the good faith of any of my informants, but found it difficult to explain such a conflict of estimate. I afterwards had an opportunity of seeing some that was described to me as first-class land, and then I understood the difficulty. It all arose from the difference of the standards of quality adopted. Coming to this land, with an average estimate of the agricultural land of the Colony in your mind as a standard, you take this as good, easily cleared, easily worked, highly improvable soil, capable of profitable tillage over a great portion, and good for grazing over the rest. But coming to it with the standard supplied by the fertile volcanic soil of the scrub, it certainly looks poor in comparison. The fact is, it is good second-class land, all more or less available for settlement, and certain to be selected were access to it afforded by the construction of a railway. I have no doubt that this case could be made out for the construction of the whole length of railway that, were it formed, within five years of its opening it would run through country occupied by genuine and prosperous settlement from one end to the other." Mr. Campbell, of the Mines Department, in his reports, also touches on the same question. In his pamphlet on "Certain Agricultural Districts in New South Wales," page 33, he says:—"There can be no doubt that the Clarence River district is capable of producing a very great variety of crops, and of supporting an immense population. The extensive area of upland and hilly country, at present considered of little worth, will, in time, be found to be exceedingly valuable for many purposes—such as fruit-growing, dairying, grazing, &c. The Italian settlement called 'New Italy,' situated on this upland 'poor' country, between the Clarence and Richmond Rivers, is a good illustration of the value of such land. For the last six years the remnant of the Marquis de Ray's emigrants have been settled here—thirty Italians and two French families. By dint of the very hard work of men, women, and children, these people have made themselves comfortable homes, fenced in their farms, made considerable clearings, planted small vineyards, which are just now coming into bearing, a few fruit trees, some olives, and mulberries, and pretty little flower gardens around their homes, which, as a rule, appeared to be kept extremely clean and neat." Mr. Clifford, in his report on "New Italy," referred to by Mr. Campbell, speaks as follows:—"Ever since the settlement of the Clarence and Richmond districts, the land hereabouts, and, in fact, for the whole 20 odd miles between these two rivers, had been looked upon as too poor, and useless for other than lumbering purposes, for supplying local needs and the larger markets of Victoria and New Zealand; and it was not until after the dispersion of the Italian immigrants by the 'James Paterson' in April, 1881, which had the effect of sending one Rocca Communiti to the Richmond district, and who, in April, 1882, just twelve months after the dispersion, selected 40 acres of land in the parish of Donaldson, was any attempt made to set aside the damnatory verdict. For some years, being off the main line of traffic, the progress made by these hard-working people was almost unknown, even to the residents of the district, who certainly knew there was a settlement of Italians somewhere, but of any further knowledge people generally were destitute; but, when loads of grapes and healthy-looking succulent vegetables began to appear in the larger townships and settlements, local interest in the little colony was awakened, and visitors thereto astonished at the amount of sterling work these people had so quietly and unostentatiously done." I have also here a letter from Mr. Angus Mackay, in answer to a letter which I sent him asking about the character of the soil between Grafton and Casino. I will hand it in as an appendix. [Vide Appendix B.]

From the foregoing, I venture to think it will be seen that the construction of the line is justifiable on purely local grounds. It has, moreover, a very distinct national bearing, and I am authorized to say that the Minister for Works looks upon the construction of this line as portion of a national undertaking to construct a coast line from the Hunter River to the Tweed, of which this will form a part. When Sir Henry Parkes introduced the railway proposals in June, 1888, he made the following remarks in reference to this coast line:—"Then we come to what must be regarded as a gigantic undertaking, one which will probably occupy a number of years; I should think, at least, five years. But we attach so much importance to it, after the most careful inquiries that we have been able to make, that we think that Parliament will be fully justified in sanctioning this great work. This is a line of a permanent character to strike off from the Hunter River, and extending to the Tweed River. We purpose, if Parliament assents to the proposal, to commence the line at both ends. [Mr. McElhone: It will cost £12,000,000 or £14,000,000!] Not quite. The estimated cost is £6,080,000. We regard this as a trunk line. I have some personal knowledge of the country in places, and a very good knowledge of the whole of the country from trustworthy reports. The line will pass through country than which there is no finer in New South Wales or in the world. This country in many places is richly timbered, and is of great value for its forests. [Mr. McElhone: Only on the banks of the rivers! Mr. Crouch: That is untrue!] I have reason to believe that, from river to river, there is hardly any diminution of good land. I have travelled over some portion of it, which is certainly as rich as land can well be imagined to be; and I do not know that there is in all Australia a tract of country more capable of sustaining a dense, industrious, and prosperous population. There are several rivers which will have to be bridged, and this must be borne in mind in considering the total cost. The estimates are not based on superficial information, as I believe that the whole distance has been surveyed; I am not quite sure on the point, but I think I am correct. The distance from the Hunter River to Grafton is 307 miles, and the estimated cost

cost of construction is £4,100,000. The distance from Grafton to the Tweed—a perfect garden all the way—is 140½ miles, and the estimated cost of that section is £1,980,000, making the total cost—which I think must be spread over five or six years—£6,080,000, according to the calculations of the Engineer-in-Chief. We purpose, if the House sanctions this proposal, asking in the first instance for a quarter of a million of money to commence the line.”

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I have further to point out that this line will piece in with the proposal to connect the coast line with the tableland. At the present time there is a trial survey being made of a line from Guyra through the Don Derrige scrub (a very rich country), to South Grafton, which promises to be practicable. Lastly, the line may be taken in its strategical aspect, viz. :—The necessity of being able to concentrate troops rapidly at any point on our coasts which may be menaced, and the creation of the harbours which are proposed, will render this more imperative still. Regarding the effect the construction of this line would have on the common roads in the district, the Commissioner for Roads has given me the following memorandum, which, with the permission of the Committee, I will read :—

“In the event of the proposed railway being constructed from Grafton to the Tweed, *via* Casino, Lismore, and Byron Bay, what saving (approximately) would be effected in expenditure upon roads. Will Mr. Hickson kindly say.—J. B., 5/11/89. Roads affected :—

Class.	Length.	£	s.	d.
2	24 miles, Grafton to Cross Roads.....	600	0	0
1	34 miles, Cross Roads to Cosino	1,700	0	0
1	12 miles, Casino to Lismore	600	0	0
1	14 miles, Lismore to Ballina	700	0	0
1	20 miles, Ballina to Cape Byron	1,000	0	0
2	14 miles, Ballina <i>via</i> North Creek to Byron Bay	350	0	0
1	30 miles, Lismore to Brunswick	1,500	0	0
1	26 miles, Brunswick to Tweed River	1,300	0	0
Total.....		£7,750	0	0

“Indirectly, but at considerable distance westerly from proposed route, on the roads from Lismore to Queensland Border, now endowed to the amount of £5,750. When the new line of these is opened the other will probably fall into disuse. The only road on which saving could be effected by construction of a railway from Grafton *via* Casino, Lismore, and Byron Bay to the Tweed, would be on the road from Grafton to Casino, which would be almost abandoned, and its endowment, £2,300 annually, might be omitted from schedule. Nothing could be saved from the other roads shown on list; on the contrary, with the increased settlement the railway would undoubtedly cause even larger endowments in the form of special grants, which would probably be required, and a number of tributary roads would also have to be made.—F.W., 6/11/89. The only road affected by this line would be that from Casino to Grafton, which at present costs £2,300 per annum. I am not at all clear, that much, if any, of this amount, would be saved; as several portions of it would be still required as approaches to railway stations, and as such would have to be kept in repair. The expenditure on the other roads would certainly not decrease, more likely increase on the grounds of being feeders to the railway.—R.H., 6/11/89.”

In regard to statistics of the district generally, these I have already handed in to the Committee, in connection with the proposal for a breakwater at Byron Bay, and I would ask that they be also taken into consideration in reference to the present proposal.

With regard to that portion of the Commissioners' report, in which it is stated that the Government of Victoria write down railway capital annually to the extent of £200,000, it may, perhaps, be interesting to the Committee if I quote from the Victorian Act, which deals with this question, and which the Minister has consulted, and which was referred to by him in the House. I refer to the Land Act of 1869, 33 Vic. No. 360, sections 42 to 44, which read as follows :—

Section 42. From and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and seventy, there shall be paid within each year out of the Consolidated Revenue, from the moneys arising from the sale and alienation of Crown lands, under this Act, to the credit of a Trust Account to be called the “Railway Loan Liquidation and Construction Account” the sum of two hundred thousand pounds.

43. All such moneys as shall from time to time be standing to the credit of the said account shall be and be deemed to be appropriated, and be legally available for the following purposes, viz.:—The repurchase of any debentures heretofore or hereafter to be issued to provide for the construction of State Railways to such an amount as shall from time to time be approved of by the Governor in Council. The making of any railways, the construction of which shall hereafter be authorized by any Act of Parliament.

44. The Minister shall lay before Parliament in the Session next after the passing of this Act, and in every following year, an estimate of the quantities of land which it is proposed to sell by auction during the ensuing year; and such estimate shall specify as far as may be practicable the quantities of each description of land proposed to be sold.

While on this question I may mention that a sum of £862,833 has been paid out of the Consolidated Revenue on account of capital charges in connection with railway construction. This amount is chiefly made up of the cost of the Engineer-in-Chief's establishment to date, and a further sum of £1,047,975 has been paid out of the Revenue to meet debentures as they fell due. I may also point out,—though no doubt this is common to all railway construction in the various Colonies—that the state land through which the railways pass is handed over to the Commissioners without any credit being given to the land revenue, which in fact means using what would otherwise be land revenue for construction purposes. I find that up to the present time, the quantity of Crown land taken for railway purposes amounts to 22,300 acres 2 roods 5 perches. The quantity of private land taken is 21,212 acres 1 rood 24 perches, and the amount paid on account thereof to date is £1,238,151 4s. 7d. With regard to the whole of this important question, I am authorized to say that the Ministers for Works and Lands are in consultation with a view to bringing some tangible proposal before the Cabinet in relation thereto.

The question of writing down the capital value of any new railways from the proceeds of land, increased in value by the construction of such railways, is to be considered by the Cabinet as a separate question, and it is not thought desirable by the Minister to connect the two matters in an isolated case of railway construction. In the Commissioners' report on another railway to come before this Committee, a similar proposal has been made, and the whole question will, therefore, be more fitly dealt with, apart from such considerations the desirability of railway construction.

3. *Mr. Trickett.*] Have you a description of the country traversed, with which to complete your statement? The Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, and the surveyors who will follow me, will give you that.

4. *Temporary Chairman.*] You have no personal knowledge of the country, or of the proposal? No, I have not. I have simply given an historical account of the proposal, and, to a certain extent, the policy of the Government in regard to the matter.

5. *Mr. Dowel.*] You referred to one particular class of country as being very inferior—bad?—I said “comparatively speaking inferior.”

6. Have you any information as to a large discovery of minerals having been made on that land? I believe that mineral discoveries have been made there; but I have no information on that point at the present moment.

7. *Mr. Cox.*] Do you know the country between Casino and Grafton? I have been to Grafton; but I have never travelled between Casino and Grafton.

8. In your reference just now to the Italian settlement on the Richmond, you said that the land there was comparatively poor? Yes. I think my object in referring to that settlement was not quite understood. I did not wish it to be inferred that the railway passed by there. I was only trying to show what could be done on comparatively poor soil in the district.

9. Do you think it desirable that we should spend large sums of money in making comparatively poor country valuable, when we have a large amount of rich country that could be made available? I pointed out that

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- that there were national reasons for constructing the line, and I then endeavoured to point out that what is called poor country is only comparatively poor,—that very good results can be obtained from it which would justify the construction of a railway *per se*.
10. Is it not more desirable that we should give the people, who are settled on really rich land, opportunities of getting their produce to the coast, than that we should afford those opportunities to people on comparatively poor country? Undoubtedly, if it stands by itself.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

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11. *Temporary Chairman.*] You are Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways? Yes.
12. Do you know the proposed route of the railway from Grafton to the Tweed? Yes.
13. Have you visited the country itself? No; I have not been over the country.
14. You have no personal knowledge of the country nor of the proposed route? No.
15. What surveyors have been engaged on this work? The surveyors at present in the field are Messrs. Lloyd, Wilkins, and Caswell.
16. Is there any officer in the head office who has been engaged on this survey at any time? Yes; Mr. Alexander has examined a portion of the line between Byron Bay and the Brunswick.
17. That portion only? Yes; and Mr. Burge has been through the first portion, from Grafton to Byron Bay. Mr. Alexander is in the head office, but Mr. Burge has left to examine the line from the Brunswick to Murwillumbah, and he will be able to give information to the Sectional Committee visiting the district.
18. You have only one officer in the head office who has been employed on the line, and he only knows that portion of it from Byron Bay to the Brunswick? Yes.
19. All the other gentlemen are at present in the field? Yes.
20. It would be very inconvenient to bring them here? Yes; it is a long journey, and it would delay the work very much.
21. Have you gone personally through the reports and data upon which this proposal is based? Yes.
22. What are the ruling gradients on the line? The ruling gradient on the line I think we may say is 1 in 50; but there is a small portion in the descent to Byron Bay where I am very much afraid we shall not be able to get less than 1 in 40.
23. Then it is a 1 in 40 grade? The 1 in 40 grade is confined to that one place.
24. Is it a short pinch? $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile.
25. If the proposed railway is to be worked as a continuous railway from the Tweed to Grafton, that pinch will govern the whole line? No. You can have a banking engine if you confine your steep gradients to one place.
26. Is this pinch necessary to enable you to get down to Byron Bay? Yes; but Mr. Burge is going to examine it himself; and if necessary one of the surveyors will be deputed to examine it very carefully, because we are very anxious to get rid of the steep grade if possible.
27. At all events this grade of 1 in 40 occurs in the piece with which Mr. Alexander is familiar? I believe Mr. Alexander is familiar with that portion.
28. Have there been many deviations and alterations since the first survey of the route? Yes; a good many alterations. There are a number of short lengths which have been altered, and altogether the amount of alteration is considerable.
29. Have these alterations been made for the purpose of avoiding difficulties such as rivers and ascents? Yes.
30. The railway will have to cross several rivers, or the arms of rivers? Several important rivers and small creeks will have to be crossed.
31. Will there have to be a bridge over the north or south arm of the Richmond? Yes.
32. At Lismore and at Casino? We shall cross the river at Casino; but we do not cross it a second time; we cross the Leicester Creek at Lismore.
33. At each place there will have to be a bridge? Yes.
34. Is there any serious river or creek crossing near your starting point at Grafton? There is only a small creek in the town of Grafton.
35. What is the object in taking the railway so close to the banks of the Clarence as is proposed? Do you mean near Grafton.
36. Yes? That is the only high ground there that is not flooded.
37. The line is above the flood level? Yes.
38. Is it not the case that the banks of the Clarence near Grafton and at other places are frequently washed away? This has been reported to be perfectly safe. It was picked out by the surveyors, and Mr. Burge has examined it.
39. Will it be necessary to protect the river banks along which the railway proposes to run to get into Grafton? I think not.
40. What is the next creek of considerable importance requiring to be bridged—nothing until we come to Casino, I suppose? The only important bridges are those over the Richmond and over Leicester Creek at Lismore. There is the Myall Creek and another creek which will have to be crossed, but those bridges will not be of much importance.
41. What is the estimated cost of the bridge across the south arm at Casino? £51,730.*
42. Is it to be an iron or a wooden structure? An iron structure.
43. Is not the district noted for its timber. Could not a wooden bridge be used with advantage. What is the difference between the cost of iron and wood there? Wood must be cheaper for the superstructure; but it would not answer for the piers? The piers would be too high.
44. What is the estimated cost of the Leicester Creek bridge? £42,637.
45. Is it also to be of iron? Yes.
46. What is the next bridge of any magnitude? The next bridge is that over the Brunswick.
47. What is the estimated cost of it? £9,246.
48. Is that also to be an iron bridge? No; it is estimated as a timber bridge, with truss spans.

49.

* NOTE (on revision):—Borings have now been taken, and the results show that this bridge can be built for about £15,000.

49. Are there any other rivers or creeks to be crossed before the Tweed is reached? Nothing of importance—nothing calling for special construction.
50. You do not cross the Tweed at all? No.
51. Could you tell us the ruling gradient between Grafton and Casino;—what is your steepest gradient there? 1 in 50.
52. And between there and Byron Bay? The same, with the exception of one small portion where it is 1 in 40.
53. I understood that the 1 in 40 gradient was between Byron Bay and the Brunswick? No, on this side of Byron Bay.
54. Between Lismore and Byron Bay? Yes.
55. Then the remainder of the line, from Byron Bay northward is 1 in 50? There will be nothing worse than 1 in 50.
56. Will this be an expensive line to construct? Yes, it will be, taking it all round. The bridges of course will make a considerable difference in the cost. Two bridges alone come to £94,000.*
57. On the plan behind you there are two lines shown from Byron Bay northward. Which is the one we are considering,—the inner one? The line along the coast goes to Chindorah; the other line goes to Murwillumbah.
58. Was the coast line surveyed? Yes, it has been surveyed, and it has also been staked out.
59. And it has been discarded in favour of the line running more inland? Yes. Both lines have been staked out, but the inner line is the line for which the estimate has been prepared.
60. What is the reason for taking the inner line instead of the coast line? It serves the better country.
61. Are there any more engineering difficulties on one line than on the other? The coast line would be on flatter country, and would be cheaper.
62. Whereabouts is it proposed to join with the Queensland line, at the border. That line at present stops at Southport? Yes. I cannot tell you exactly; but Mr. Burge is going through Brisbane, and he has instructions to see Mr. Stanley and ascertain what surveys have been made to the border, so that we may be able to connect with them. I understood from some of the residents that it was impossible to connect from Murwillumbah, and we thought at one time that it would be necessary to adopt the coast route for this purpose.
63. It is quite possible that after the line has been constructed, the Queensland authorities may not find it possible to come opposite to you on the other side? We should then have to continue our line for some distance in order to meet their line. An officer will examine the country to see approximately where a line can be taken.
64. What are the instructions given to the surveyors in the field at the present time,—to try and reduce the grades, or are they staking out the line permanently? They are staking out the line permanently. If they have any deviations which they think desirable, they submit them.
65. How long have the officers been in the district? I do not remember exactly when they went there.
66. Their knowledge of the character of the country would not be worth much, I suppose. They could only give us an idea of the character of the country through which they have passed, from an engineer's point of view? Yes.
67. *Mr. Trickett.*] When was the first survey for the line made? A good many years ago. Did not the Under Secretary give you that information?
68. How much a mile will it cost? The present estimate is £12,256 a mile.
69. Is that right through? Yes.
70. That is irrespective of compensation for land? Yes.
71. Will you give us the information for the two sections? The estimate for the section from Grafton to Byron Bay is £1,271,300. The length of that portion is 108 miles 26 chains, and the cost per mile £11,736. The estimate for the portion from Byron Bay to Murwillumbah is £456,800. The length of that portion is 32 miles 50 chains, and the cost per mile £14,000.
72. *Mr. Lee.*] What is the distance from Murwillumbah to the Brunswick? Approximately, 22 miles.
73. From the Brunswick to Byron Bay? $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
74. From Byron Bay to Lismore? 28 miles.
75. From Lismore to Casino? $17\frac{1}{2}$ miles, Casino is $62\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Grafton.
76. *Mr. Trickett.*] This line may be regarded as a comparatively expensive one? Yes; it is, compared with other country lines that have been considered by the Committee.
77. What instructions were given to the surveyors as to the ruling grade in this case;—any particular instructions? They have had no general instructions. Latterly the object has been in all cases to improve the older line, which had gradients of 1 in 40. The object has been to cut out earthworks and, if possible, to put in flatter grades.
78. Do you think it would be possible to reduce the grades still further without much extra expense? I am afraid not; but everything possible is being done. The worst part is that going down to Byron Bay.
79. As far as you are acquainted with the route is the bulk of it easy for railway construction. Do the difficulties occur at frequent intervals? There is a good deal of flat country between Grafton and Casino.
- 79½. After passing Casino the country gets ridgy? Yes; you can judge the character of the country pretty well by the course of the line as shown on the plan. The more crooked the line, the more difficult the country.
80. Do I understand that the surveyors are out now trying to improve the line? Yes; they are staking out the line permanently, and as they do the permanent staking they look out for improvements.
81. How long do you think it would take to make the line if you started, as is suggested, at both ends simultaneously? I hardly know.
82. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] The route of the line between Byron Bay and Murwillumbah appears to be very sinuous;—is it the straightest possible line that could be obtained? Yes; it is by no means flat country through which the line passes, and you cannot choose your direction. You have to follow the lay of the land.
83. The country between Byron Bay and Murwillumbah is of a very rough character? Yes; a great deal of it is very rough.

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* NOTE (on revision):—This has now been modified.

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84. And in order to avoid the roughest portions you have to make the deviations which give the line such a sinuous appearance? In going through hilly country you must curve about a good deal.
85. I notice that there is a second line depicted on the plan as going from Lismore to Byron Bay. Which of the two lines are we now considering? The eastern line has been abandoned.
86. Adopting the western line you come right down to the point near Byron Bay? Yes.
87. Then I notice that you go back almost parallel for a long distance. The line depicted on the map has since been improved upon by a deviation after leaving the township at Byron Bay, which serves better country, and avoids the hilly portion at the back of Byron Bay? Yes; between Byron Bay and the Brunswick there was a coast line, and an inland line surveyed. Neither of these lines has been adopted; but a middle line has been taken which combines the advantages of the two others.
88. *Temporary Chairman.*] That is the line that is depicted on the tracings before the Committee? Yes.
89. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Which is the line beyond the Brunswick? The inland line.
90. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] The line between Cavanba and the Brunswick will not have to submit to competition with water carriage, owing to the fact that there is no harbour between those two places? No.
91. Therefore it is a perfectly safe proposal to run the line so close to the coast? Yes.
92. In reply to a question asked by the Chairman, you said that at one place near Byron Bay, you were compelled to use a grade of 1 in 40? Yes.
93. Is there any possibility of avoiding that? The country is going to be examined. I have given instructions for the line to be carefully examined again. At present I am afraid that it cannot be done; but the utmost endeavours will be used to improve the grade.
94. From the information at your disposal do you consider the country of such a character that it would be impossible to make roads there at a reasonable cost? I should think there would be no difficulty about making roads. They would be expensive. The more hilly the country, of course the more expensive you must expect the road to be.
- 94½. I am given to understand that the country is so difficult in many places that it is almost impossible to construct roads at a reasonable cost? The hills are very steep, and the country is very thickly timbered.
95. On this point, I suppose, you would not care to express a definite opinion? No.
96. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Can you tell us the distance from the coast to Casino in a direct line? 27 miles.
97. Then the line runs on an average about 27 miles from the coast between Grafton and Casino,? About half way between Grafton and Casino, it is only about 20 miles from the coast.
98. Would it not be possible to continue that line direct to the terminus as you have it now, without going into Byron Bay at all? No; the country is far too rough.
99. You have to leave Casino and run north-east, or east north-east, to get to Byron Bay? Yes. If you ran in a direct line to Murwillumbah you would have to cross a range, in which some of the points are 2,700 feet high, and others 2,000 and 1,400, gradually falling towards the coast to about 1,100.
100. If you continued the line 27 miles inland you would go behind those hills altogether? Yes. Mount Warning is only 20 miles from the coast, and it is 3,000 feet high.
101. Has the line been twisted about in the manner shown on the plan, for the express purpose of getting to every little township? No; in order to get round the hills and up the gullies.
102. For no other purpose than to construct it in the easiest possible manner? Yes.
103. It is not taken out of its course to serve any township? That is correct.
104. Then the line is surveyed in the most direct route you could have it? Yes. If you wished to connect Grafton, Casino, Lismore, Brunswick, and Murwillumbah, you could not have a more direct route. Approximately it is the only route you could take.
105. Suppose you wanted a line direct from Grafton to Murwillumbah, would it be necessary to go round in the same manner? Yes; you would have to go round by Byron Bay.
106. How many different surveys of the line have been made? I could not tell you. Practically there has only been one survey; but there have been repeated improvements of portions of the length.
107. What was the grade of the first survey;—was it 1 in 40? Yes. Until lately it has been 1 in 40. Before the present surveyors went out to do the permanent staking the grade adopted was 1 in 40.
108. With the exception of one place at Byron Bay, you have a grade of 1 in 50? Yes.
109. Do you think that it would not be possible to reduce that to 1 in 66 without materially altering the cost? I doubt very much that that could be done; but I know that we have the best line in any case. If it can be done, it will be done. There are sometimes certain points that you have to go over. There may be a saddle, and you may be bound to take a certain direction. Then it is only a matter of laying down the grades on the section. If you put in 1 in 40 you have less earthworks; if 1 in 50, a little more; if 1 in 66 more still. If the extra earthwork involved is not too great, there is no reason why a grade of 1 in 66 should not be adopted.
110. Cannot a grade be sometimes altered by a curve, without increasing the earthworks? Yes, in some cases; but the best line has been adopted in all cases here, so as to give the greatest possible flatness.
111. Are the surveyors instructed to get a grade of 1 in 50, or a lesser grade if possible? A lesser grade if possible.
112. Do you know how long it will take these men to go over the survey before they will be prepared with the plans? I believe that they will have finished the field work in about two months.
113. Of course you cannot tell the Committee for certain what the grade will be until you get the sections. It may be less than 1 in 50? When the section comes to be considered in the office, it is a matter for calculation whether it is desirable to increase the earthworks so as to improve the gradients. If the grades were only heavy at one spot, we should be inclined to go to a considerable expense to improve them, in order that they should not be worse there than on other portions of the line.
114. The estimated cost of the line is £12,256. This will be a very expensive line to construct? Yes. Some parts of it are very heavy indeed. The earthworks are very heavy.
115. Do you know whether the portion from Grafton to Casino and thereon to Byron Bay will cost very much less per mile than the portion between Byron Bay and Murwillumbah? From Grafton to Casino is the lightest portion. A great deal of it goes through very flat country, and the line is scarcely above the surface of the ground.
116. *Mr. Lee.*] Although the line is submitted as a whole it is practically in two distinct parts, is it not—the Grafton portion and the Richmond portion? Yes.

117. Where would the Richmond and Tweed portion of it terminate? The good country is from Casino on. It is fair country from Grafton to Casino; but very different from what you get between them and Byron Bay.

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118. The object of the surveyors now in the field is to reduce the grades and to straighten the line as much as possible? I should say to improve the line. That implies a good deal.

119. That would mean reducing the grades and making the line as straight as possible? It might, or it might mean making it more crooked in order to save earthworks.

120. Between Casino and Grafton there are two big creeks—the Myall and the Myrtle Creek? Yes.

121. Those will require expensive bridges? Nothing out of the way;—some timber openings.

122. With reference to the grade of 1 in 40 at Byron Bay, would the existence of such a grade prevent the hauling of the ordinary trade over the line? I doubt very much whether it would. A down-hill grade in the direction of the principal traffic is not a great disadvantage. Supposing, for instance, you have an undulating line, and a grade of 1 in 40 downhill in the direction of the heavy traffic, there is no great hardship, because an engine that would take produce up a grade of 1 in 60 with a full load might be quite equal to taking a lesser load in another direction over a grade of 1 in 40.

123. You are acquainted with the line between Singleton and Glennie's Creek? Yes.

124. Has it ever been brought under your notice that there is any portion of that line that has blocked the traffic, because of the heavy grade? Yes.

125. What is the heaviest grade between Singleton and Glennie's Creek? I think 1 in 33.

126. In three different places? Yes.

127. There is no grade of 1 in 33 on the Grafton-Richmond line? No.

128. You feel quite capable of coping with a grade of 1 in 40 with an ordinary engine and ordinary rolling stock? Yes.

129. Supposing it were desirable to leave the Byron Bay question out of the calculation altogether, could the line from Murwillumbah to Casino be made much shorter than it is now proposed to make it? No.

130. The difference would be insignificant. Whether the improvements to Byron Bay are considered or not, the railway must go to within easy distance of it? Yes. I believe that the line that is now being taken is the easiest and cheapest line that you could make from Casino to Murwillumbah.

131. And will it serve most country? Yes.

132. As to the general policy. Is it within your province when proposing lines of this character to take into consideration their ultimate connection with existing lines? Yes, I think so, decidedly.

133. Supposing it were decided to construct this line as proposed, how could it be connected with the main northern line, and where? It could be connected between Tenterfield and Casino.

134. What would be the distance? Eighty-seven miles.

135. Has any survey been made between Casino and Tenterfield? Yes.

136. Have you the trial plans in the office? No; they were burnt.

137. Consequently you are not prepared to speak as to the character of the country? No. There are no plans and sections, and the reports are very meagre. I tried to get what information I could.

138. At all events if it became a question of connecting this line with the main northern system, it could be connected at Tenterfield? Yes.

139. Supposing it were thought desirable to connect it by way of Grafton, South Grafton, and Glen Innes, would that be a practicable route? There is a line staked out from Glen Innes to Grafton; but it is a very bad line. I believe the only practicable line has been taken, because other lines were tried and abandoned. The line that has been staked out contains eight chain curves and 1 in 33 gradients.

140. Has it been abandoned? No.

141. Is it looked upon as a practicable line? It is looked upon with very great disfavour.

142. Is there any other surveyed route from the main northern line to this one? A line was recently explored from Guyra to South Grafton.

143. A line has been surveyed from Guyra to Grafton? It has only been explored. Some surveyors have been sent out to make the survey.

144. It has not yet been discovered whether a practicable route could be obtained? There is every probability of it.

145. What is about the distance from Murwillumbah to the Queensland border? From 7 to 8 miles.

145½. Where would this line join the Queensland line? We cannot tell that. An officer has been deputed to see the engineering authorities in Brisbane, with a view to finding out whether they have made any surveys to the border.

146. You know, of course, to about what point the Queensland railways have now been made? Yes; to Southport.

147. From the Queensland border to Brisbane is 75 miles? Yes.

148. If at any time it should be thought desirable to have a uniform gauge between the Colonies, by a construction of 75 miles of railway the Queensland trains could run through from Brisbane, and through Tenterfield, Werris Creek, Nyngan, Cobar, and Broken Hill, to the border of South Australia, and if South Australia reduced her gauge there would be as direct a route between Brisbane and Adelaide as it would be possible to make? Yes.

149. Did you ever take the trouble to ascertain the distance that would be saved by going by that route instead of by the existing route? No, I have not; but I believe that it would be a great deal.

150. Do you think 500 miles could be saved? Instead of going through Sydney and Melbourne?

151. Yes? I could calculate the distance.

152. Perhaps you will send in a return, showing the actual distance from Brisbane to Adelaide by this route? Yes.

153. I believe that the Engineer for trial surveys has been over this district? He has been over the line from Byron Bay to the Brunswick.

154. You have simply dealt with this question from an engineering point of view? Yes.

155. You have not considered it as a matter of railway policy? No. I have not been directly in charge of the surveys until recently.

WEDNESDAY,

WEDNESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER, 1889.

EVENING SITTING.

Present:—

JACOB GARRARD, Esq. (TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.
JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

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156. *Mr. Lee.*] I should like to ask if you can tell us the distance from Brisbane to the Tweed and so forth? I have a return showing the distances between places on the route between Brisbane and Adelaide. I will read it. I will give the details of the distances between Brisbane and Adelaide, taking this particular route. The distance from Brisbane to Murwillumbah *via* Southport 60 miles, Murwillumbah to Casino 81 miles, Casino to Tenterfield 87 miles, making 228 miles. Tenterfield to Werris Creek 225 miles, Werris Creek to Dubbo 154 miles, Dubbo to Nyngan 99 miles, Nyngan to Silverton 373 miles, Silverton to Adelaide 319 miles—total 1,398 miles. By going along the Queensland line *via* Warwick and Tenterfield, the distance is 16 miles longer, making a total of 1,414 miles.
157. The route under discussion is 16 miles shorter than the existing line? Yes, including the length from Casino to Tenterfield.
158. That is of course 16 miles saved in Queensland, or the difference between the line from Brisbane *via* the Tweed to Adelaide, and from Brisbane *via* Wallangarra to Adelaide? Yes. The distance from Brisbane to Adelaide *via* Sydney and Melbourne, the present route—is 1,808 miles. It shows a reduction in the distance of 410 miles.
159. *Mr. Humphery.*] I did not catch the last reply. The distance from Brisbane to Adelaide *via* Sydney? 1,808 miles, and the distance by the Tweed and Richmond line crossing by Werris Creek, Dubbo, Nyngan, Wilcannia, and Silverton would be 1,398 miles.
160. Without touching at Sydney? Yes, without touching at Sydney.
161. From Brisbane by the Tweed you branch off at Werris Creek? Yes.
162. *Via* Murwillumbah, Casino, and Tenterfield is 1,398 miles? Yes.
163. You don't touch at Sydney? No. *Via* Warwick is a distance of 1,808 miles.
164. *Via* Warwick coming to Sydney first? That is 1,808 miles.
165. Then suppose you come by way of the Tweed? That would be 16 miles shorter—1,792 miles.
166. *Mr. Dowel.*] What are the chief engineering difficulties on this coast route that cause this large estimate of cost? The bridges and the rough nature of the country.
167. Can you tell the Committee the cost of the whole of the bridges? Roughly £175,500.
168. Including all the minor bridges? Yes.
169. A number of the bridges that you propose to construct will be of iron? Two of them.
170. Is it not a fact that in this particular district excellent timber abounds? Yes.
171. What do you estimate the cost of an iron bridge per lineal foot? It comes to about £50 a foot.
172. What would be the cost of a timber structure per lineal foot? I think that timber piers would scarcely be admissible. The piers would be very high.
173. What would be the length of the cylinders? I have not that information.
174. Could you give an approximate estimate from memory? I am afraid not.
175. I want to ascertain whether there are any insuperable difficulties in the way of obtaining timber? I think the length of the cylinders would be from 30 to 40 feet. The bed of the Richmond River is 70 feet below the banks.
176. Your cylinders would not be above 50 feet above low-water mark would they? I cannot tell exactly. I am giving an approximate estimate at present. The estimate has been made as a rough approximation, because at present we are waiting for the results of the boring.
177. If the £50 a foot for an iron bridge is only an approximate estimate, surely you can give something like an idea of the cost of a timber structure? They vary from £15 to £25 per foot, according to the piers. When we have had timber piers the height of which was not great the cost has been as low as £15, but with higher piers built of brick and stone the cost has been as much as £25.
178. Is it not a fact that our timber bridges have not exceeded £15 per lineal foot when there have been no great difficulties, such as you have pointed out in regard to their construction? Yes.
179. Suppose the length of the piles required for the bridges should not exceed 70 feet, is it not a fact that the timber for them can easily be procured in the district? I should think it would be possible to get piles 60 or 70 feet in length.
180. Suppose you could not get those lengths, have you not another mode of construction by fish joints that would answer the same purpose? Yes; we could cut off the piles at a certain height, and frame them into the pier.
181. Bridges constructed at £15 a foot would answer all practical purposes for many years, would they not? If those bridges were built of timber I do not think you could get the piers at £15 a foot. The timber bridges built at the rate of £15 a foot have been bridges which have not stood more than 20 feet off the bed of the river.
182. At any rate £20 a foot would cover the whole cost? I am not sure about that without going carefully into it.
183. With reference to the designing of our iron bridges, have you an officer in the Department who does that specially? Yes.
184. What is his name? The draughtsman who is entrusted mostly with the ironwork is Mr. Howarth.
185. You are aware that a gentleman has lately been imported from England for the purpose of designing these bridges in the Public Works Department? No; I am not.
186. Do you know Mr. McDonald? Yes.

187. You are aware that his whole attention is now specially occupied in designing and carrying out the construction of iron bridges? Yes; I know that he has designed a number of road bridges of iron.
188. And that he was brought from England specially for that purpose? I do not understand under what circumstances he came here. He has been here a great number of years, I think.
189. Are you aware that he has a special knowledge of the construction of iron bridges? I know he has paid special attention to the construction of iron bridges.
190. And that he has been engaged on that for some time? Yes; that is part of his duties in the Roads Department.
191. Will any part of the proposed line compete with water carriage, and, if so, where? I think not. It could not be said to compete with water carriage.
192. At no particular point? No.
193. It would not be in the position that some of our railways are in—of having to compete with the rivers? No.
194. I suppose that the line has been designed with the idea of its being a feeder to the rivers? Yes.
195. When the whole project is completed how will it affect Sydney or the northern rivers? I should think that any railway that is carried out would be indirectly to the advantage of Sydney, as well as of the whole country. It would increase the product of the district, and indirectly increase the trade of Sydney.
196. In designing the line, you have had that in view I presume—the bringing of traffic to Sydney—or have you considered the desirability of bringing the traffic to the various rivers on which it is proposed to spend large sums of money? That has been the object of the line more than anything else—to bring the produce of the particular districts to the ports available to the rivers themselves.
197. That is the object of the railway generally? Yes. You see it is a detached system of railway. It is not connected with the existing railway system. Consequently, all that it can do would be to promote local traffic, or bring produce to where it can be carried to Sydney—to bring it to the ports.
198. In designing the line from Grafton to the Tweed was it taken into consideration that in all probability the portion from Grafton to Maitland would also be constructed? That was not a necessary part of this scheme, which, I believe, was considered as a system by itself,—being a railway intended for getting produce to the rivers; in one case,—chiefly to Grafton.
199. Was not the proposal to make a line from Grafton to Maitland taken into consideration when the proposed line was designed from Grafton to the Tweed, or was it determined, on its own merits, to make Grafton a terminus? The House considered this, and the vote was taken upon it separately.
200. I am speaking of the railway policy in your department? I think it may be said to be a separate matter.
201. In reality they are two separate proposals? Yes.
202. I suppose that a very large amount of local as well as departmental information was obtained when you were laying out this line? Yes; I believe so.
203. As to the character of the country, for instance, and of the population? Yes.
204. Is this line not surveyed? Yes.
205. And the whole of the particulars are to hand about the matter? Yes. The character of the country was fully reported upon.
206. Are the reports available? I have not got them here. We have not produced them because the latest statistics have been collected by the Commissioners.
207. The reports have been handed over to the Commissioners? No; the Commissioners collected the information themselves. They have much more recent information about the district than we have. I believe that their object in visiting the district was to obtain information.
208. Have you any other information to give the Committee? No.
209. And the Committee are in possession of all the information necessary to guide them in this matter from your departmental point of view? Yes. With regard to the estimates, it should be considered that to a great extent they are only approximate. They must be again revised, and I believe that if anything the estimate will be reduced. I believe it will be possible to reduce the estimated cost of the bridges materially. As I said before, when this estimate was made there was not sufficient information to allow of anything but a mere approximation. When all the information is to hand the matter will be carefully gone into, and the greatest economy will be exercised. We shall know then what the bridges are likely to cost. At present, rather a large margin has to be put on the estimate to allow for unforeseen contingencies.
210. Nevertheless, you are of opinion that the estimates you have allowed are ample? Taking it all through, I believe that the estimates are ample.
211. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Was a line ever surveyed from the Tweed to the Richmond River? This is the Tweed to the Richmond River line.
212. Was a line ever surveyed by your Department from the Tweed River to the Richmond River near the heads? Not that I know of.
213. Was a proposal ever made by the residents that such a line should be carried out? I cannot tell you—not to my knowledge.
214. Did the departmental scheme for surveying this northern coast district embrace a line from Grafton to Glen Innes? Yes; that is to say, among the same proposals. Among the proposals which were made when this line was voted upon, a line from Grafton to Glen Innes was also passed. That was included in 1884.
215. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Did your Department receive any report from the Commissioners at all with regard to this railway? I have not seen it. The Minister probably had a report.
216. As a rule, you do not receive reports from the Commissioners before you estimate the cost of new lines? No.

Colonel F. R. de Wolski, Director of Military Works, sworn, and examined:—

217. *Temporary Chairman.*] What position do you occupy in the Government service? I am Colonel in the New South Wales Forces.
218. Are you in charge of some portion of the defence work? I am Director of Military Works.
219. You have had some considerable experience in military matters? Yes.
220. What is the nature of the evidence you purpose giving the Committee on the subject under consideration? On the strategical advantages of a coast railway—the necessity for coast railways in Australia.

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Unless the Government of the country are prepared to fortify all the important harbours of refuge, sooner or later it will be an absolute necessity to make such a railway. There will be two alternatives,—either defence or a coast railway, by which troops can be rapidly thrown upon any threatened point.

221. If an enemy attacked our Colony, is it not likely that the attack would be upon the metropolis, where they could get the most loot? No; it is not likely that they would knock their heads against the metropolis—they would probably start from another point.

222. What would be the good of their landing in an inaccessible part of the country like the Tweed? Well, they might seize colliers. The first thing that they would want would be coal. They cannot coal in the open sea. They might go into Byron Bay, and make that place their base of operations. They must have a place of that sort.

223. That would be an argument against the making of Byron Bay into a harbour, or fortifying it when it was constructed? No; it would be an argument in favour of the making of railways to bring up an adequate force to prevent an enemy from landing. General Edwards points out in his report that Australia may be threatened, not at centres of commerce, but at some out-of-the-way place.

224. Is not that a reversal of what it is ordinarily thought would happen—has it not been thought that an enemy will attack some principal city or port along the coast, instead of going to inaccessible places? Not necessarily.

225. Is it not a reversal of what it has been understood would be the tactics of an enemy? I think it is a new light upon the subject. General Schaw and others, in their report, have always ignored the danger that would arise from an enemy getting a footing in any part of Australia, and forcing you to undertake the task of driving them out.

226. Then you think that an enemy would not attack the metropolis because of its being comparatively well guarded, but that they would attack an outlying place? The probability is that the enemy would have to create a fresh base, and that he would not at first attack Sydney. He would require to have a footing on the Australian coast, before he could take Sydney.

227. Do you think it likely that an enemy would land in the country between the Tweed and the Clarence, where there is very little to attract him, and where he would be such a distance from the metropolis? It is comparatively near the metropolis—it is only a few hours' sail from Newcastle.

228. Yes, but you are speaking of travelling by land? No; I do not mean landing; I only mean landing in the sense of making a fresh base of operations—perhaps taking his convoys in. Probably the enemy would take five or six ships into Byron Bay, and make them secure there.

229. Would not that be dangerous unless Byron Bay is made fairly secure as a harbour for him? If you make it secure you must defend it, or provide a railway by which we could throw in troops to drive an enemy off.

230. And there is that danger—we shall have to defend the harbour or construct a railway to it for the conveyance of troops? Yes, and the same with regard to all the rivers. If you open the Clarence River you will make it more dangerous.

231. Then you regard this proposed Grafton to Tweed Railway as a portion of a through coast line? Yes, and the lines should afterwards be connected.

232. Would it not do for your purpose if connected with our northern railway at Tenterfield, without carrying it down the coast? That would only meet one point. If you connect from the watershed line to the coast at different points, you multiply the number of lines. If you want to move troops to Grafton or to the Macleay you would have to go a long way round. It would take a month at present.

233. Unless the coast is protected by forts all the way along you must have a coast railway? I think so. As long as you have harbours of refuge, or places where they could make a basis, they would not come to Sydney, they would get to some secure place, where they could form a base.

234. Of course you have no knowledge of the coast from the Tweed down to Sydney? Only to Newcastle.

235. And it is from that point of view that you think the proposal would be beneficial as being a portion of this coast line? It will be almost a necessity to have a coast railway in Australia.

236. You are looking at it purely from a military point of view? Purely from the view of a field army being rapidly moved to meet any possible invasion. The object of an enemy might not be to take any particular place—it might be to get a footing, and secure terms of peace. They might say: "Peace is declared. We have a footing in Australia. Give us a share." That is one of the arguments about the channel tunnel. The opponents of that scheme say it would be a danger, because, in the event of peace being declared, an enemy might make it a term of peace that the channel tunnel should be handed over. Any footing obtained in the country by an enemy would be a very great danger.

237. Do you think it at all likely that so large a force would be thrown upon the shore of Australia that it could not be dislodged by the local forces? I do not think that the Germans or the French would do it by half measures. They would send a large force, and trained men—not volunteers.

238. And take some portion of territory rather than levy blackmail? I think it more probable.

239. They would come to stay? I think they would come to stay. There are not many parts of the world left now, and the Germans especially like ready-made colonies. I think Australia is quite enough to tempt any power, and they are unscrupulous enough to take advantage of any opportunity.

240. That is characteristic of all military powers, is it not? It is, unfortunately.

241. *Mr. Humphrey.* Would not the fact of most of our harbours having not more than from 12 to 15 feet of water on the bars be a protection against a foreign force? At present I think there would not be much danger from the harbours that are very shallow, but proposals will ultimately be made to open those rivers.

242. Assuming that the Richmond River has 12 or 15 feet of water on the bar, and that the Clarence has about 15 feet, do you think that there would be any danger? There would be no danger of a big ship running in there, but there would be danger at Byron Bay.

243. In the event of its being converted into a harbour of refuge? Yes, it would be a very great danger.

244. Otherwise, you say there is no particular risk of invasion if the harbours are left as they are at the present time? Very little. There would be very few points of danger between Byron Bay and Port Stephens.

245. Which would be likely to tempt a foreign force to land? I should think any of those open harbours—Port Stephens, or the others.

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246. I suppose Newcastle would be dangerous? It is fairly well defended, and it is on the railway.
247. As a matter of fact, unless we improve the various harbours along the coast, there are at present no points which would require this coast railway for the purposes of defence? A coast railway is only necessary when there is any possibility of ships coming in. An attack on Newcastle would probably be preceded by the occupation of Port Stephens. Ships cannot lie outside a port with the liability of a storm coming up next day and sweeping them off with their transports. It would be necessary to form a base.
248. A large ship would draw more than 15 feet of water? Cruisers might not take more than 18 or 20 feet of water.
249. The only port that might require defence is Port Stephens? Or rapid railway communication. If we could throw a couple of thousand men into that place in twenty-four hours it would be rather awkward for an enemy coming in there. They would not be easily able to coal in the face of even field guns. It would be a great thing to have the means of throwing troops rapidly on a spot where there was a possibility of ships coming in.
250. In the event of this railway proposal being carried out we shall be safe in concluding that unless the Richmond, the Clarence, and Byron Bay, are improved, so as to admit vessels of greater draft than 18 feet, there will be no danger? I think there are one or two points along the coast where, during particular winds, there is very safe anchorage.
251. If we improve the harbours sufficiently to admit vessels of very large tonnage, then it will be necessary, for the protection of those harbours, to construct a railway to convey troops for the defence of those points? I think that ultimately a railway will be an absolute necessity.
252. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You appear to think that some day there will be danger of a very large force of Germans, or a contingent from some other military power, landing here;—do you think it possible that any nation in Europe could spare so large a number of men as would be necessary to make an impression on New South Wales? I think that in the event of our losing the command of the sea there would be an enormous danger to Australia. General Edwards quite coincides with that.
253. You think it possible to find transports to send a sufficiently large force out here? I think it quite possible.
254. On what points are we in danger? I think all along the coast of Australia, right down to King George's Sound, at a number of points.
255. We are dealing with the New South Wales coast line, along which you say this railway will afford a useful service by the transport of troops;—what other port than Byron Bay do you think likely to be seized upon? I am looking to the future. Undoubtedly, if the country is to be opened up, you will have to open out the harbours along the coast. The Richmond, the Clarence, and other rivers will ultimately be made navigable.
256. I suppose that an enemy could not seize those points without a considerable fleet? If you have nobody there it will be an easy operation.
257. Are they likely to come without a convoy? Men-o'-war must come.
258. Then how are our land forces to drive them away? They would not drive them away, but they would prevent them from coaling. They cannot coal in the open. They must go to some sheltered place.
259. You consider that the north coast railway would afford valuable assistance to the military authorities in the transport of troops to points of attack? Ultimately they will have to have some communication by land to the different points. A coast railway is a necessity for Australia from a strategical point of view.
260. I suppose we may look upon this as a portion of a federal line from Adelaide to Brisbane? Yes; by which troops can be thrown upon a given point. It will be necessary to have a line nearer the coast than the present watershed line.
261. *Mr. Cox.*] Suppose that a fleet landed troops at Byron Bay, and there was no railway—what harm could they do without roads or railways? They could coal there. They might hold that place, and then they might see their way to attack Newcastle, or they might simply hold Byron Bay during the whole war. You would not be able to drive them out if you gave them four or five days preparation.
262. In the event of their landing would they take possession of the railway? No; I think you must rely for the defence of Australia on the forces. They would prevent the possibility of any advance by railway.
263. At present there are no roads, so that troops could not travel from Byron Bay to the interior; but if there was a railway could they not take possession of it and get into the country? Yes; but it would be rather difficult to move up any force. Even if they captured a couple of trains they could not do much. They would have to capture a large quantity of rolling-stock, and to get the control of the whole line before they could move.
264. Then what harm could they do? The danger is, their occupation of the place with a view of waiting until the declaration of peace, when they would claim that they had a footing in the country.
265. What would our troops and men-of-war be doing in the meantime? There is a possibility of our losing the command of the sea. The fleet might have to go off to defend Hongkong or Singapore. We should then be open to attack by the first enemy.
266. You say they would have an opportunity of going into Byron Bay to coal;—how could our troops prevent them from coaling if we had a railway? They could not coal in the face of even field guns. They might seize passing mail steamers, deprive them of their coal, and scuttle them.
267. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you know the position of this railway on the coast? Only as far as it is marked on the map.
268. Did you make a study of it before you came to-night? I had the line explained to me.
269. What distance from the coast should a line be that you would call a coast railway? At any point where it tapped a river.
270. How far inland should it be, not touching the coast? It might be a considerable distance back from the coast line, provided it tapped a river where you could run your men down by boats. On the Clarence the railway touches at Grafton, and I suppose they could run down from Grafton to the sea by water transport.
271. Do you think that the Government would be justified in spending £2,000,000 under existing circumstances on the construction of this railway for military purposes? Not altogether for military purposes; but

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but when a railway is designed, in many countries they take into account the possible movement of troops in the future. If it also will meet other conditions, it is a great point to have the line to serve possible future contingencies. If war broke out next March, and we found that we could not move up troops to those points under six weeks or two months, we should think the money had been very badly spent, because the railway did not answer that purpose.

272. Do you know that we have already a railway constructed to within 140 miles of the places this railway will serve;—if you are within 140 miles of the coast line, will that be near enough? That would be fifteen days, even over good roads, to move men and material. You give the enemy twelve or fifteen days start of you. He might have served his purpose and be off. I think General Edwards has clearly pointed out that an enemy will not necessarily go to any centre of commerce. He may attack any portion of the Colony, obtain a footing, and make it necessary for you to drive him out. The country is not safe unless we are prepared to oppose him by a superior force within a reasonable time.

273. *Mr. Lee.*] Your evidence is given from a purely military point of view, I presume? Yes.

274. And your remarks with reference to a coastal railway apply to the military defence of the coast? Yes.

275. Not taking into consideration the commercial relations sought to be established between New England and the northern portion of the coast? No; I had not taken that into account.

276. I presume your remarks with reference to Byron Bay will apply with equal force to Port Stephens, the Hawkesbury, Jervis Bay, Twofold Bay and Wollongong? Yes; to all similar points.

277. On the general principle that a coastal railway is requisite to defend all these places, which are points of weakness at the present time? Certainly.

278. There will be just as much danger of an enemy landing at Port Stephens as at Byron Bay? Probably more.

279. I am basing my questions on the presumption that if our naval defence were found to be insufficient, and an enemy once gained the coast, they would be just as likely to land at Port Stephens, Jervis Bay, or Twofold Bay as at Byron Bay? Yes; they would have to select some point to work from on the sea coast before they could attempt a larger enterprise.

280. You do not wish the Committee to understand that works of progress should be kept back because it is likely that an enemy may visit the country in the future? No; I think it should be before the minds of the Committee that some day or other they will have to construct a line of this description.

281. Are you acquainted with the distance between Byron Bay and Brisbane? I know that it is not very far distant. I do not know the distance.

282. The route of the proposed railway will go as far as a place called Murwillumbah, and thence to Brisbane; it is a distance of 60 miles, and a large portion of the railway is already made on the Brisbane side of the range; Suppose that line were connected, would it not be a very easy matter to concentrate troops at Byron Bay from Brisbane? Certainly; but if you want to move them south again after the enemy moved on, you would have to take them back again.

283. Suppose, looking at the matter from a federal point of view, Byron Bay were threatened by an enemy, troops could be sent from Brisbane very much more quickly than from Sydney? Certainly.

284. And Byron Bay, if made a good anchorage for tolerably large shipping, would not present any greater attractions to an enemy than any of the existing ports at the present time? No.

285. It will be no greater source of danger to the country than any of the existing ports? Certainly not.

286. Your object in attending is to point out what action the country may have to take as regards the protection of its ports both near the metropolis and at a distance? Yes; unless you are prepared to defend in a military way each of these points, have an increased standing army, and ultimately spend a great deal more money than probably you could build the railway for.

287. Suppose that at a place like Byron Bay, harbour works were constructed, and a railway brought down to those works, if an enemy could land there and use the railway to go inland, I suppose it would be within the power of troops or civilians to rip up the line in various places and stop their progress? They could not move unless they captured a large quantity of rolling stock, and obtained control of the line.*

288. If a small number landed there they could destroy the coast railway at various points? They certainly could.

289. And thereby stop the concentration of troops at various points? They would have to guard the line of railway, as they will in war time, between Sydney and Newcastle.

290. Suppose a squadron sufficiently large were to come down the coast and overpower our naval defence, a portion of the squadron might occupy Port Stephen's as a base of operations, and another portion might run into Broken Bay and blow down the railway bridge? That would be very possible.

291. The attacking party might possibly devote attention to more than one place at the same time? They probably will attack Australia in several places simultaneously.

292. Suppose the Hawkesbury River bridge were blown away, it would prevent any troops from being sent to the northern portion of the coast? It would certainly. It is proposed, however, to defend the Hawkesbury.

293. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you and General Edwards considered this question from a federal point of view to a large extent? Yes.

294. In the light of the possibility of massing troops from all the Colonies? A fairly considerable force.

295. Have you taken into account the various railway gauges in the different Colonies? No; but I am acquainted with the remarks made by General Edwards, in which he draws attention to the break of gauge in the Colonies.

296. What is your opinion? I think the break of gauge is a very serious question. Changing stores and troops from one gauge to the other would be simply a hopeless business.

297. The sooner that state of things is altered the better? I saw the same thing happen before my eyes in India, in connection with the Punjaub railway. I was not four years in the country before I saw the railway—it was the meter gauge—ripped up from end to end for a distance of about 150 miles, and the broad gauge put down.

298. In order to move troops with advantage, you strongly recommend that there should be a uniform gauge throughout the Colonies? Certainly; it seems to be a very great point to make a uniform gauge, so as to run carriages right through.

299. Have you studied the advantages of the various gauges? No.

300. Do you favour the 4 feet 8½ inch gauge? I have really no knowledge which would guide me as to what would be the best gauge.

Charles

*NOTE (on revision) :—See question 263.

Charles James Saunders, Esq., Chief Draughtsman, Department of Lands, sworn, and examined:—

301. *Temporary Chairman.*] I believe you are chief draughtsman in the Lands Department? I have been chief draughtsman for about two and a half years.

302. Did you furnish the Under Secretary for Public Works with a return of the reserves and land unalienated in the Grafton, Richmond, and Tweed districts? Yes. I have a copy of the return with me.

303. Will you read the return? It is a return of areas in the counties of Clarence, Richmond, and Rous? In the county of Rous 630,900 acres have been alienated which are tinted red on the map. I include land actually sold, land held under conditional purchase, and land under conditional lease—land which may be converted into fee simple at any time. We have reserves containing 306,800 acres, and we have 444,700 acres unreserved and unsold.

304. Do you know the character of the unalienated land—does it compare favourably with the alienated or reserved land? I have a general report from the district surveyor at Grafton.

305. What are the particulars in regard to the other counties? In the county of Richmond there are 216,700 acres alienated, 127,200 acres reserved, and 352,420 acres unreserved and unsold. And in the county of Clarence there are 266,200 acres alienated, 141,400 acres reserved, and 431,840 acres unreserved and unsold.

306. Can you say whether much land has been taken up lately in any of these districts? I have not made any inquiries in that respect. I think there is a fair amount of selection going on now.

307. How many land districts are there in the three counties? Casino, Lismore, Grafton, and Murwillumbah.

308. Have you ever been in that portion of the Colony? No.

309. You have no personal knowledge then? No.

310. Have you heard from any of the officers in the Department as to how the unalienated land compares with the alienated land. Have the eyes of the district been “picked out”? I think that most of the good land in the accessible localities has already been taken up.

311. What are all these reserves you have mentioned—railway reserves? This strip—a mile wide—is a railway reserve; but I think that the bulk of the reserves are for timber.

312. With the exception of that mile the reserves are for timber? Some of them are notified in anticipation of subdivisions being made, some for water supply and different public purposes, but timber reserves predominate.

313. Does that complete the return? I have a memo. of the district surveyor with regard to the character of the unsold land. He estimates that 10 per cent. of the unsold land is fit for agriculture, 55 per cent. fit for occupation by selectors for pastoral and dairying purposes, 25 per cent. fit for pastoral purposes, but not good enough for profitable occupation by selectors, and 10 per cent. practically inferior and useless land. This estimate includes all the reserves which may be cancelled.

314. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you state in round numbers the total area of land unalienated and under reserve in the whole of the districts? In round numbers it is about 1,804,360 acres.

315. Can you state what portion of that amount is in the leasehold and what portion is in the resumed areas? No. More of the leases expire in July of next year. A part of this district was never held under pastoral lease. It formed part of what was known as the old settled district. Half of the country was therefore not included under pastoral lease or occupation license.

316. Is it not a fact that a very large proportion of the 1,800,000 odd acres of Crown lands is locked up at the present time in leasehold areas and in reserves? A very large proportion is in reserves. The reserves aggregate at least half a million acres.

317. I was wanting to ascertain whether the land would not have been taken up if it could have been obtained for purposes of settlement? No doubt it would if the leasehold areas had not existed.

318. In all probability if they had not existed, a large proportion of that area would have been alienated? I would not say a large proportion; a considerable area no doubt would have been taken up.

319. Have you any information about the character of the timber? No.

320. Or about the mineral resources? No.

321. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Can you state if many conditional purchases have been forfeited or abandoned in the Richmond River district? I could not say without investigation.

322. It has not come under the notice of your Department that many settlers have left the district owing to the want of immediate transit to centres of population? No. I scarcely think it would come under the notice of our Department.

323. It has been stated that men have been compelled to abandon their holdings round Byron Bay and other places because they were unable to get their produce to market, and therefore could not work their holdings profitably. I desire to know from you if that has come under the notice of the Department as a prominent fact? I do not think it would. The Department could tell how many conditional purchases were forfeited in any district last year or the year before.

324. You have not come prepared with that information? No.

325. *Temporary Chairman.*] Have you any other information to supply to the Committee? I hand in a map of the Government township at Byron Bay showing the alienated portions, the unalienated portions, and the reserves. I also hand in a schedule showing the prices realised for the town lots; two maps showing the unalienated, alienated, and reserved land in the parishes of Brunswick and Byron, and a schedule giving particulars as to the various reserves—the purpose for which they were made, and the areas.

326. What was realised by the sale of allotments in the Government township of Cavanba? The total area sold in the township was 30 acres 3 roods $4\frac{1}{2}$ perches, and the total sum realised was £2,072 5s.; the average price per acre being £67 7s. 9d.

327. *Mr. Lee.*] When was the last sale of allotments? On the 14th October, 1887. The first sale was held on the 28th July, 1886.

328. That was some considerable time before the Byron Bay project was formulated? I hardly think so. I think that larger prices were realised at the last sale on account of the possibility of the place being improved. At the first sale the average price realised per acre was £47; at the second sale, £43; and at the third sale, £164.

C. J. Saunders,
Esq.
13 Nov., 1889.

Charles Smith Wilkinson, Esq., Government Geologist, sworn, and examined.

C. S.
Wilkinson,
Esq.
18 Nov., 1889.

329. *Temporary Chairman.*] You are Government Geologist for New South Wales? Yes.
330. *Mr. Dowel.*] You know the proposal before the Committee? I understand that it is the construction of a line of Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.
331. Have you a geological map showing that particular part of the country? Yes.
332. Will you hand in that map as an appendix to your evidence? Yes.
333. Does it show the whole of the country represented by the map on the easel? Yes.
334. Taking the map in your hand, will you please tell the Committee your opinion about the mineral resources and the development of that country? The district traversed by this line of railway consists, to a great extent, of coal formation, but with basalt volcanic rocks in places. The basalt formation occupies an area of about 1,000 square miles, or 640,000 acres. Nearly the whole of that volcanic formation is in the county of Rous, between Casino and Byron Bay and the Queensland border. The rich agricultural soil of that district is chiefly produced by this volcanic soil. I reckon that fully 1,000 square miles consist of good agricultural land, comprising what is generally known as brush land, which is so very rich. North of Lismore, running from near Ballina in a north-westerly direction, and from Ballina northward to the Tweed, we have a slate formation containing gold-bearing reefs. None of these reefs have been worked yet, though a few have been prospected, yielding encouraging prospects; but very little attention has been given to them yet. Near Ballina, and some distance north and south along the coast, the debris from the basalt formation has furnished gold-bearing sand on the coast, though it has only given profitable employment to a few miners for a great many years. I have no doubt that patches of this basalt formation, especially to the northward of Ballina, between the Richmond Heads and Cape Byron, and in fact nearly the whole of the watershed of the Brunswick River, between the Brunswick and the Richmond, will be found payably gold-bearing; so that I anticipate the settlement of a fair mining population in that locality. Hitherto it has been very little prospected, as far as I have been able to learn. I have been through a large portion of this district—I have been from Drake to Casino, Lismore, and the Head of the Brunswick, and thence down to the mouth of the Richmond, and overland to the Clarence and Grafton. In fact I have been through the principal portion of this locality.
335. *Mr. Cox.*] What is the nature of the country between the Clarence and the Richmond? The hilly ground between the Clarence and the Richmond, as far as I have seen it, is poor agricultural ground; but in nearly all the valleys we have rich alluvial deposits. The climate is favourable to the growth of vegetation in these flats, or somewhat moist places, and it has created a rich vegetable soil. The hills, however, consist almost entirely of coal formation, which, as a rule, does not produce good soil where the rocks crop out. In the valleys the alluvial is moderately rich, though it is not to be compared with the volcanic soil in the Lismore district.
336. *Mr. Dowel.*] You have not referred to any silver-bearing country—is there any in the county of Rous? In the slate formation, where they are likely to find silver-bearing lodes, none have been found. The formation is like that in which we do usually find them—like the formation at Drake.
337. You have traversed a pretty good portion of this country? Yes.
338. And you had exceptionally good opportunities of obtaining information as to its mineral wealth? Yes.
339. Do you think that if the proposed line of railway were constructed the mineral resources would give any revenue to the line? Not to any large extent, because the chief production would be gold and silver, which, being small and heavy, would be carried by water rather than by land.
340. Although the railway may be constructed, you think the miners would send their gold and silver by water instead of by rail, and receive their produce in the same way? It would go to Lismore, and then I think it would be shipped.
341. Do you think the line, as proposed, would favour the development of the district's mineral resources? I suppose the miners would be able to get their produce a little more cheaply.
342. In all probability, if there is a large settlement—which mining enterprise always brings about—there must be a considerable passenger traffic on the line? Yes. I do not think the mining population would be very large. It will be a moderate mining population, but the agricultural capabilities of the country are so great that I think they far outweigh the mining, and many families will be settled there.
343. You do not anticipate any Broken Hills being discovered there? No.
344. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Can you state at what point on the map the coal measures join the volcanic formation? About 6 miles west of Ballina we have slate formation, which extends northerly along the coast more or less to the Tweed, and from the same point it runs south as far as Wardell, on the Richmond River, and also from a point 4 miles to the west of Ballina it extends 30 miles. I have seen it for 30 miles north of Lismore in narrow strips. It runs in narrow strips through the country. The other portions consist of volcanic rocks, and coal formation.
345. The coal formation does not run down to the ocean? Not in the Richmond district. The first place on the coast where it occurs is near Wardell, in the southern bend of the Richmond River.
346. *Temporary Chairman.*] That is not more than 15 miles from the coast? Yes; but the formation extends from the coast to there.
347. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Have you come across any granite formation in going through this country? Not in the portion I have referred to. It comes in west of the Clarence, at the foot of the ranges. The red portion of the map indicates the granite area.
348. Do you think the coal formation is sufficiently strong to warrant the belief that there will be large coal-mines opened in the district, by which the railway would receive a large amount of traffic? I think the Clarence district will shortly entirely supply its own coal. I saw one seam between 30 and 40 feet thick, but with numerous bands, causing the coal to be in such a state that it would not compete with Newcastle coal. I have since advised parties to try and open up a seam cropping out in the sides of the hill, higher up, and they say they have 4 feet of clean coal. If so, they could send that to Grafton, and completely shut out the Newcastle coal. Therefore I am quite sure that the district will supply its own coal, and the railway will be consequently benefited by it.
349. Where is the coal? It is about 20 miles west of Grafton. It crops out at the surface there, but the formation dips under Grafton. I calculate that the same seams will be found under Grafton at a depth of between 600 and 700 feet.
350. Do you know whether the granite formation here is the granite which, as a rule, contains tin? Yes; but hitherto they have not found it in payable quantities. I have seen tin from granite south-west of

of Grafton, and right to the north-west in the Tabulam district. I have had nice specimens from there. Miners have prospected the district, but they have not found payable deposits yet.

351. Is there any large extent of auriferous sand on the beach you mentioned? I think for about 10 miles north of Ballina and south in places along the coast to the Clarence, they find it in patches—all along the coast where the basalt happens to come subject to the action of the waves.

352. If the railway were constructed, would it afford greater facilities to people to get to the alluvial deposits? I think not.

353. You think that the construction of the railway would not tend to open up any alluvial or auriferous country? I think not. It would facilitate intercourse between the various mining districts, but if there is a chance of getting gold anywhere there, the roads are sufficiently opened for miners to go now.

354. *Mr. Cox.*] Do you think it would be wise to spend a very considerable sum in making a railway from Grafton to the Tweed through the comparatively poor country you have described? I think it depends to a very large extent on the opening up of the mouth of the Richmond and Byron Bay. When I was in the Richmond district, I asked the farmers if the port were opened, and they had a choice between the port and the railway, by which means they would send their produce, and they said in nearly every case that they would send it by water.

355. Do you think it would be inadvisable to make the coast compete with the railway between these two points? If you open these points you encourage coast traffic, and if you make a railway as proposed you discourage traffic, so that in the event of a railway being constructed it would be folly to open up the ports? I think the opening up of the ports would offer to farmers a regular exit for their produce, and with that advantage I am quite sure the district would rapidly become settled. In fact, I look upon Rous as likely to be one of the most populous districts in the whole of the Colony, for its agricultural capabilities. There will be a fair mining population too. When districts are settled in that way they require local markets for their produce, which would be found at Grafton and the Richmond.

356. Are not the products of the two rivers pretty well the same;—why should they grow anything at one place to send to the other? They are.

357. What will create a traffic then if they are? I think that a railway would afford the farmers in the intermediate country a means of getting to such centres of population as Grafton and Lismore. At the present time they cannot occupy country far away from water carriage.

358. Can you mention an instance of the wonderful fertility of this soil? One of the best instances I saw in the district was at a farm about 15 miles north of Lismore. A person had taken up 640 acres of brush land, but had cleared only 200 acres, which he worked with the assistance of his sons, not employing labour. He assured me that he netted £1,600 last year off those 200 acres. There was a most luxuriant growth of grass in small paddocks. He gave me the particulars of how he made up his profit—pigs, fowls, butter, calves, and various kinds of dairy produce. The soil is so rich that it requires constant attention, and a thorough farming system to keep it down, and if you neglect it it will grow rank weeds. The farms round his place were overgrown with weeds, but he worked his farm on a thorough European system of farming, and made it very profitable. In fact, one family can hardly work more than 200 acres.

359. Do you remember the man's name? I think his name was Johnston.

360. What means of communication had he between his farm and Lismore? A fair road partly metalled.

361. Did he complain of want of means of communication with the markets? Yes. He said he often lost his produce on the steamers. For instance he would send calves to Sydney, and the steamer might be wind-bound for a fortnight, and they would die. Other dairy produce was affected in the same way by the delay of steamers.

362. That was on account of the Richmond bar? Yes. The navigation of the river had been closed for about three weeks when I was there.

363. But with an open river this probably would not occur? No. I think they would have a regular service.

364. *Mr. Humphery.*] How many miles from the proposed railway is the coal seam of which you spoke? Twenty miles.

365. It would not be assisted by the construction of the line? No. It is almost entirely coal formation from Grafton to Lismore. The railway will run over coal formation at Grafton, where it is between 600 and 700 feet deep.

366. *Mr. Lee.*] Is it at Coledale? Yes, near that place and at Copmanhurst also.

367. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you any special information about the land in the locality of Byron Bay; have you visited it? I have been almost close to Byron Bay, and the head of the Brunswick. I have not been to the Bay itself, but I know the character of the country.

368. Do you think it is likely that men-of-war would run in there for coal; would they get coal anywhere near there? No.

369. What is the nearest point to Byron Bay, where coal has been discovered? About 30 miles from Byron Bay; but not in payable quantities so far.

370. You do not think it is likely that men-of-war will run in there for coaling purposes? I think not.

Stanley Alexander, Esq., District Engineer, and late Engineer-in-Charge of Trial Surveys, sworn, and examined:—

371. *Temporary Chairman.*] You are Engineer-in-Chief in charge of Trial Surveys? Not now. I am District Engineer now.

372. You have visited some portion of the route of the line under consideration? Yes; from Byron Bay to the Brunswick, a distance of 10 miles, and 10 miles north of the Brunswick.

373. What is the total length you have seen? 20 miles.

374. You do not know anything of any other portion of the country personally? No.

375. Are there any engineering difficulties in the line you traversed? There is the crossing of the Brunswick River.

376. By a very expensive bridge? No; by a timber bridge estimated to cost £9,000 odd.

377. Is that above ordinary navigation? No; the navigation extends some miles up the Brunswick.

378. If the bridge is placed there it will be a bar to navigation? I allow a headway of 20 feet.

379. Do coasting vessels go above the site of the bridge now? No.

C. S.
Wilkinson,
Esq.

13 Nov., 1889.

S. Alexander,
Esq.

13 Nov., 1889.

- S. Alexander, Esq.
13 Nov., 1889.
380. All the trade above that point is done by river punts or droghers? I do not think there is one there now, but they told me that droghers now working on the Tweed might be expected there, and provision should be made for them. I have made provision for them.
381. What is the grade on the portion of line which you visited? The grade has hardly been fixed yet, but it certainly will not be worse than 1 in 50.
382. Is it about the worst of the country, from an engineering point of view, you have to deal with between Grafton and the Tweed? No; the worst portion is between Lismore and Byron Bay.
383. What was the object of your visiting the locality? Surveyors were at work there, and there was a difficulty as to the proper route and the crossing of the Brunswick River, which I went to decide upon. It was a difficult part of the line altogether. The crossing of the river made a great engineering difficulty.
384. How did you reach Byron Bay? I went via Harwood Island to Woodburn, down to Ballina, and then across to Byron Bay.
385. You did not touch any point of the proposed route except what you have mentioned? No; but I have been at Lismore. On my way home I drove to Lismore and took steamer down the Richmond.
386. Anywhere near the route of the proposed line? Yes; it passes through Lismore.
387. Coming from Byron Bay and going home did you follow any portion of the route? No; I went by ordinary road.
388. You have a number of surveyors in the field there now? Three.
389. The line is permanently staked? It is being permanently staked.
390. I suppose the surveyors have instructions to make easier grades if possible? Yes.
391. They are allowed some latitude in the matter of deviations? Yes.
392. *Mr. Lee.*] Looking at the map on the easel, is the route of the railway as marked there tolerably accurate? I think the upper route is pretty nearly accurate.
393. As a matter of fact the line has been considerably improved since the tracing was made? Yes; it is permanently staked as far as 10 miles north of the Brunswick.
394. What was your object in getting down so close to Byron Bay? To get into the town, I presume.
395. Were there any engineering difficulties outside Byron? There are some bad swamps there.
396. I suppose the country all through has been tolerably well traversed and explored? I think it has.
397. That has been decided upon as the most practicable route? Yes.
398. Were you influenced by any other reason than that of obtaining the most direct and best line to the various centres? I cannot speak of anything this side of Byron Bay. I may mention that part of the line between Byron Bay to the Brunswick will be pointed out to the Sectional Committee.
399. Why? It seems as if the line had been purposely deviated inland to pass through the centre, and so it has. Tyagrass is a central point through which four lines of road have passed for a long time.
400. It is a centre of population? It will be a centre of population. It is a very important point.
401. The line was taken there designedly? Yes.
402. Have you any suggestions to offer? There was a line surveyed here [*pointing to the map*], and when the Sectional Committee goes up there, very possibly there will be pressure brought to bear on them by local people urging that line on their notice.
403. That is the outer line shown on the plan—the line which the Department have abandoned in favour of the route through Tyagrass? Yes.
404. Why was not that line adopted? Because of the expense. It is a very expensive line indeed. It is on broken ground the whole way. It has only one advantage. It does not pass over swamps; it avoids the swamps altogether.
405. After mature consideration, the Department adopted the other line as being the cheaper, shorter, and better? Yes.
406. Has the necessity of connecting this line with the rest of the railway system come under your knowledge professionally? No.
407. Have you had to inquire into the possibility or practicability of connecting that line with the table-land of New England? No.
408. Do you know anything of the surface beyond Casino towards the table-land? No.
409. As a scheme for that portion of the Colony only you know this railway, and not as a contemplated portion of the railway system generally? Yes.
410. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Why does the line you surveyed take such an extraordinary curve to the eastward after leaving the Brunswick? On account of the swamps.
411. It is all swampy country to the westward of it? All this is swampy.
412. The line curves towards the westward? It is all hilly ground.
413. The ground to the westward is all hilly country? Yes.
414. Is it settled? Yes, except the reserves.
415. Are you not going away from the population in coming out here? No, it is all swampy.
416. If it be all swampy to the eastward, and the settlement lies to the westward why is it that the line comes out towards the swamps, and neglects the settled country? We could not get in here.
417. Can you state how many times the proposed line will cross the Richmond River. It crosses one arm of the river at Casino, and another arm at Lismore.
418. Does it cross any other arm? No.
419. It goes straight down to Byron Bay? At Lismore the Richmond River is composed of Leicester Creek and Wilson's Creek, and after that it is called the Richmond River.
420. I suppose the reason why the line will be so costly, is because it runs through difficult country, and will have to cross several rivers or creeks? Yes.
421. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you give any information about the timber in that district? There is an immense quantity of timber there, but I believe it is not good for bridge purposes. It is quite a different class of timber from what we get here.
422. Could it not be made useful for railway purposes? It is too perishable.
423. You ascertained that when you were there? I was told there, and I have heard since that it is too perishable.
424. You anticipate that your timber will have to be brought some distance? Yes; from the Manning and the other rivers, where we now get our iron-bark timber.

THURSDAY, 14 NOVEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY,
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY,
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT,
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX,
JACOB GARRARD, Esq.,

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.,
WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.,
EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.,
JOHN HURLEY, Esq.,
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

George Neville Griffiths, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

425. Chairman.] What is your business? I don't know that I have any particular business, except in looking after my properties.
426. You have written a letter to the Committee in reference to this proposal;—will you kindly read it and give it in as your evidence? The Committee has not had the opportunity of reading it.

G. N. Griffiths, Esq.
14 Nov., 1889.

Witness read the following letter:—

Grafton to Tweed Railway.

SIR,—

569, George-street, Sydney, Nov. 13th, 1889.

As one well acquainted with the Richmond River district, and largely interested in its progress and development, I must in the public interest protest against the expenditure of public money in the construction of a Railway between the points—Grafton and Casino—on the proposed Railway,

None would be more advantaged by the proposed railway than the proprietors of Woorooloolgen Estate, which is under my management—for the proposed Railway, would run through part of the estate, and greatly enhance its value; but, notwithstanding this fact, I consider it would be criminal on my part to keep silence when your Honorable Committee has under consideration this large public work, for I know, from long personal acquaintanceship with the Richmond River district, that it would be a gross waste of public money to build a railway between Grafton and Casino.

Because:—

1. Starting from Grafton, the route of the proposed Railway, for the first 60 (of the 70 Grafton to Casino) miles, is through poor unproductive soil, unsuited for anything but grazing and timber-getting.
2. Even after fifty years of settlement the traffic between Grafton and Casino has never been able to support a public coach, and there is absolutely no goods traffic between these places.
3. Lawrence—and not Grafton—is the actual shipping place for goods and passengers from the Clarence end of the proposed Railway line.
4. There is but a sparse population engaged in grazing and timber-getting, and no agricultural settlement along the proposed Railway line—Grafton and Casino.
5. The Clarence and Richmond River districts being large producers of similar commodities,—viz., sugar, maize, timber, pastoral and dairy products, &c.,—there is no likelihood of any interchange of products or growth of business between Grafton and Casino.
6. As railway carriage can never compete in cheapness with water carriage, and as Grafton has the Clarence, and Casino the Richmond River, so there is no possibility of any remunerative goods traffic between Grafton and Casino. For it would be as ridiculous to suppose that a Casino producer would send his goods to ship at Grafton, as to suppose that a Grafton producer might send his to ship at Casino, when each has a navigable water-way at his own door.
7. The rivers Clarence and Richmond are both good waterways, and the natural outlets for their respective districts, and the traffic is carried on in distinct line of steamers and sailers. So there is no present necessity to expend a very large sum of public money in connecting these parallel water-ways.
8. The construction of the railway between the points—Grafton and Casino—would divert attention from the pressing and essential requirements of the Clarence and Richmond River districts.

These requirements are:—

- Improvement of the entrances from the sea to the rivers Clarence and Richmond, so as to make them navigable at all times, and by a larger and more powerful class of vessels and steamers.
- Dredging and clearing the channels of the rivers and their affluents, so as to enlarge the areas to which they act as feeders and distributors.

Immediate construction in the Richmond River district of railways, to tap the rich agricultural and dairy-lands (mostly fertile black soil—scrub land now lying idle) lying to the north of the Richmond River, on its tributaries, and on the rivers Brunswick and Tweed—such railways to bring the produce to the various points on the navigable waters of the Richmond at Lismore, Woodburn, and Ballina, &c.

For above reasons I unhesitatingly assert that the time is not yet come to warrant the expenditure of £700,000 to £800,000 in construction of a Railway between Grafton and Casino. I am confident the construction of a line between Grafton and Casino would entail an enormous annual loss in interest on the outlay, and in cost of working and maintenance, and even if such line were constructed it would be of but small public advantage, as the traffic between Grafton and Casino would be infinitesimal.

I may here point out that if ever a railway has to be constructed to connect the navigable waters of the Clarence and Richmond River districts, such railway should be:—

1. Between Lawrence and Casino.
2. Between Harwood Island and Woodburn.

I hope the Members of your Honourable Committee, or at least a Sub-Committee, will visit the Clarence and Richmond River districts and personally enquire into above statements, going over the proposed Railway line, and visiting the districts generally.

Such inspection will satisfy your members of the extreme urgency for commencing the Improvement works at the mouths of the Clarence and Richmond Rivers, and will demonstrate the necessity for the immediate construction of railways to draw the produce from the rich scrub lands of the Richmond, Brunswick, and Tweed to the port on the navigable waters of the Richmond River, or possibly to Byron Bay.

Your, &c.,
G. N. GRIFFITHS.

To the Honorable Chairman, Public Works Committee.

427. Your statements in that letter are correct? Yes; to the best of my knowledge and belief.
428. Have you known these districts for any length of time? I lived up there part of the year 1861, and the whole of 1862, and part of 1863; and subsequently I have, for the last few years, managed the Woorooloolgen Estate, and am constantly up there. I have been up there four times this year.
429. Have you ever, when in those districts, considered the most advisable way of getting a railway to the New England heights? I have not. I have never been over the different lines.
430. Do you know the lands along this proposed line of Railway—from the Tweed down to Byron Bay? I do not know the country well. When I lived up there, it was almost an uninhabited scrub. We used to have to go down to Ballina, and make our way along the coast to the Tweed.
431. You say the railway should not be taken beyond Casino. Why do you stop there? I have carefully guarded myself from pointing where the railway should go upon the Clarence and in the Richmond River

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River district. I have simply protested against the construction of the line between Grafton and Casino, 432. And you say there is no country there worth opening up? I have said the first 60 miles or so out of Grafton, excepting, of course, the river flats near Grafton, are poor country. You commence to get on the black soil for the last 9 or 10 miles before you reach Casino. That is beautiful country.

433. *Mr. Garrard.*] You think it desirable that the entrance to the Clarence and Richmond should be improved? Certainly.

434. Are you aware the Clarence has a fair entrance now, and the vessels trading there never miss a trip during the year? I have been across the Clarence bar twenty or thirty times,—never without fear and trembling.

435. Have you ever been delayed on the Clarence River for want of water and bad bar? For several hours at a time, but not for days.

436. If it is not desirable to bring the railway further south than the Richmond River, would it not be as desirable to stop at the Brunswick, coming south from Tweed. Is not the Brunswick a navigable river to some extent? There is no entrance.

437. Then the Richmond River, in your opinion, is the first good navigable water south from the Tweed? Certainly. My hope is to see the district advance, and to see the money expended in several lines of railway from the Richmond or from Byron Bay into the great scrub and dairy lands, back on the heads of the Tweed, the Brunswick, and the Richmond.

438. Do you know the proposed route of the Railway we are considering. Do you know the country between Casino and Grafton well? Yes.

439. That is the part you think would not be profitable, and which the Committee would not be justified in recommending to be made? At present.

440. But you are in favour of the railway from the Tweed as far as the Richmond? Most decidedly. Railways are bound to draw the produce from a part of the country which is almost inaccessible.

441. We understand you are in favour of a railway from the Tweed to the Richmond? Instead of building this railway, I would build three or four railways into the heart of this great scrub country.

442. Do we understand that you think it would be better to run two or three distinct lines of railway into the scrub country rather than have a trunk line, if I may so term it, from the Tweed down to the Richmond? Allow me to answer you in another way. As a practical man, I got a lot of machinery of a special kind a little time ago, which was manufactured for me in Melbourne. I paid 7s. 6d. a ton to get it from Melbourne to Sydney—600 miles water carriage. For the same machinery, to carry it 503 miles to Bourke, I had to pay between £7 and £8 a ton. Railway carriage can never compete with water carriage.

443. Do I understand you are in favour of the trunk line, or two or three lines branching out from the coast into the scrub country? I would think it would pay the inhabitants and the country much better if there were three or four small lines running away from the navigable rivers, to bring the produce of the back lands to the navigable river, than it would to construct one main trunk line.

444. Have you no knowledge of the country through which this line goes; you visited it during the time you had to traverse the coast to get to Brisbane? I go constantly about this district; I was at Lismore only quite recently, and I went down to Coraki.

445. Do you know anything of the country between Lismore and the Tweed? No; I have been there, and have seen its rich land generally, but I have no special knowledge of the locality.

446. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You seem to be of opinion that the land between Casino and Grafton is of an inferior character? Yes.

447. Is it not a fact that between Woodburn and the Clarence there is a thriving Italian settlement, called New Italy? Certainly, but that is not the same bit of country.

448. But you say the country is of the same character? No.

449. How far then is this Italian settlement from the proposed line of Railway? The Italian settlement is 4 or 5 miles from Woodburn. I have never been there since the Italians settled there.

450. Then the Italian settlement is near Woodburn, on the Richmond River,—therefore in better country than that which would be served by the Railway to Casino? This is a better country than that. On the 8-miles post from Casino, going towards Grafton, you leave the river flats and you rise into what we call very poor clay—spotted gum ridges—and that extends, with slight difference, in the shape of little flats and creeks, almost all the way down beyond the Traveller's Rest.

451. Is there any settlement there? There is the Wooroowoolgen run, where I live, right down to Codrington. We have now concentrated upon the northern portion of it. I have my big dairy at Montgogery.

452. Is that property freehold? Yes.

453. I suppose you are aware the Government has reserved a mile upon each side of the proposed Railway between Grafton and Casino? Yes.

454. What kind of country is that? As far as our boundary goes south it is frightfully poor. It is beautifully rich land 8 miles out from Casino.

455. As to the character of the country on the Grafton side, how far does the good land extend out from the line? I have never gone out from this railway line, but it does not extend beyond the river flats.

456. Is it your opinion that this land reserved by the Government would not be taken up even if a line ran through it? The answer to that is difficult to give. The Government offer very easy terms for settlement, and settlers may see means of earning a living by having houses on the line, and accommodation paddocks for people who come in from the outside and want to leave their horses or to bring goods. They may establish places of business for agricultural purposes. I should say the unfortunate man who attempted to grow cereals upon the clay land would make a mistake.

457. Then, in your opinion, these reserved lands might be taken up, though not for agricultural purposes? Yes.

458. I presume you are aware that almost every line of railway constructed in this country has to pass through a large area of poor country in order to reach good country? Of course—that is the great misfortune of New South Wales railways. They have to pass over large areas of barren lands.

459. Owing to the fact that there are alternate belts of good and bad country in New South Wales, the railways which serve the inland districts have to pass through bad to reach good country? Certainly.

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460. Is not this a case in point, where they would pass over a belt of poor country to reach the rich land near Casino and the Richmond River? I do not say they would not; but I say it would be a waste of public money to spend £700,000 in putting a railway between Grafton and Casino. The produce grown about Casino will go down the Richmond River, and the produce grown about Grafton, down the Clarence River. There is no business between the two places.

461. But may not a business be induced? No doubt, in the course of many years, when we are dead and buried.

462. Do you think that the State is likely to recoup the expense incurred in building a line across the poor country by the spoils from the richer country? I think not, in this case. Of course a railway running through the Wooroowoolgen estate, in which I am interested, would enormously enhance the value of it.

463. Of course I take your interest to be a disinterested one. You are aware that this is a portion of the north coast railway, proposed to be run from somewhere near Maitland up to the Tweed River? I have heard that.

464. And that line is looked upon as requisite for military as well as trading purposes? I hear so.

465. Are you not aware that one argument in favour of it is that it is to be a military line? Yes, I have heard that argument; but I never thought it would justify us in spending £5,000,000 on that line.

466. Do you think the State would be justified in constructing this line as a national work,—in constructing a line of railway along the coast to a certain point—say to near the Clarence—and then leaving a gap between there and the Richmond River? When I was a Member of the House I opposed it, because I thought it would be an unjustifiable expenditure of public money.

467. You suggest it would be better to spend the money on three or four lines which would pierce the scrub lands to the north of the Richmond;—are you aware that it is almost impossible to take a line any other way than the one proposed from the Richmond to the Tweed? I am not aware of that.

468. Did you see the diagram with the line sketched out upon it? Yes.

469. You see the line from Lismore to the Tweed runs almost like a triangle? Yes.

470. Does it not strike you that that would be an extraordinary route to take if they could go in a straighter direction? Of course, barring the scrub, you could get across the other country. I have been over the range many years ago. We used to go up the spurs of the range to Mount Warning. According to the ordinary system of railways, it may be almost impossible to construct it at present; but there are systems of railways by means of which these inclines can be overcome. For instance, we have the Swiss railways which go up very steep inclines. It is a very broken country, covered with scrub; but it is wonderfully rich volcanic red and black soil—nearly the whole of it.

471. We admit all that; but I want to get your reason for suggesting these three or four lines of railways into a country which the engineers apparently think is inaccessible. You will notice they build this railway to reach Murwillumbah from Lismore;—would they have constructed it in that shape if they could have got to Murwillumbah in a direct route? I am not an engineer.

472. Does not that suggest the idea that the country must be very difficult? It is most difficult. It is a very difficult thing to get the produce out of that portion of the country.

473. Then you think it likely that Parliament would endorse three or four other lines running into this inaccessible country? If you go into the whole system of railway construction you will find it a difficult matter to discuss without all the data before you. If I had known the Committee would ask such questions I would have devoted several days to going over the country with the people there, and seeing what they think about it, and what routes they can suggest. There are creeks running in that country, some of which run into the Brunswick, and some into the Richmond; and where there are creeks there is generally a means of access. There are also bridle tracks and roads up to the various selections all over the country. I am not prepared to say whether building railways through that country would be cheap or not; but I should think it would be advisable.

474. From your knowledge of the country, do you think Byron Bay is a proper place at which this line should junction? That I cannot say. It is, as it were, out of my particular district. My business keeps me south of Casino, and it is only on various occasions, when I have wanted to see the Richmond heads and matters of that kind, that I have been down the Richmond. Murwillumbah was not in existence when I was out there.

475. You are aware we are now considering a proposal to improve the Clarence and the Richmond? Certainly.

476. Is it your opinion that the money proposed to be devoted to clearing the Clarence River would be wisely expended? I would not like to give an opinion on Sir John Cooke's scheme; but it certainly seems, after what the engineers have done at Newcastle, that it may be possible to make a good entrance to the Richmond and Clarence.

477. You spoke in your evidence about the desirability of running a line from Harwood Island to Woodburn? I said in the future. It is the nearest route between the two rivers.

478. And you recommended Lawrence as a better place for the line to come to Casino than Grafton? I said that if the waterways of the Clarence and the Richmond eventually had to be connected, the nearest point would be Lawrence to Casino, and Harwood Island to Woodburn. They are geographically so.

479. But would the line from Casino to Lawrence not run through this poor country you speak of? Certainly it would. I am not advocating that line.

480. But you advocate it in preference to running a line between Grafton and Casino? Yes; if you want to connect the waterways, because you would have it shorter.

481. But still you say that would run through poor country? Yes. I may illustrate the matter in this way: Supposing we take the rich flats on the Clarence and Richmond for dairying and grazing purposes, and clear and ringbark them, we can run one head of cattle to 2 or 2½ acres; and taking the gross and large areas we can calculate upon running a piece of ringbarked country of 4 or 5 acres to the beast, or one beast to 4 or 5 acres. Our experience of the Wooroowoolgen estate, which has been owned by my father and his partners since it was first taken up in 1842, has been that we have carefully analysed the quantity of stock carried on the run, and we find, including the good country, that it has taken nearly 40 acres per beast all through. That is an illustration of what the value of land is. Of course, I don't say but what there are good little patches in amongst the poor country.

482. If you admit this is a poor country right through from Casino to the Clarence, what is your reason for

G. N. Griffiths, Esq. for preferring Lawrence to Grafton as the place at which the line should strike? I only said, if it were necessary to connect the waterways it would be more economical to do it from the places within the shortest distances from each other.

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483. Then it is merely an economical reason? Yes.

484. *Mr. Cox.*] Do you know anything of Trial Bay? No.

485. You know nothing about its harbour? I was sheltered there once from a southerly gale two or three years ago, coming down from the Clarence River.

486. You are aware that it is proposed to make Byron Bay a harbour for the traffic of the Tweed and Brunswick country, as well as a harbour of refuge for coasting steamers? I have heard it.

487. Would you advocate the expenditure of money in making this a harbour when a large sum of money is about to be expended on the entrance to the Richmond River;—do you think the two would be required? As the settlement of the population increases more harbours and facilities are required; that is the only answer I can give at present. I perhaps speak as a Richmond River man, and would like to see the Richmond River entrance improved first. If that were done, perhaps the construction of breakwaters at Byron Bay might be deferred for a time; but I have no experience about it, and do not wish to give an opinion about it.

488. You mentioned just now that land carriage can never compete with water carriage? For heavy goods, such as produce.

489. Consequently it would be very unjust to the residents of the Tweed and the Brunswick Rivers to bring their produce all the way down to the Richmond if they could get a nearer port? I admit it, as long as it could be done at a reasonable price.

490. Consequently, if Byron Bay can be made a port for the convenience of the Brunswick and Tweed River settlements, it is desirable, providing it does not cost an enormous outlay? Certainly.

491. The question was asked by Mr. O'Sullivan as to what was the reason, if you wanted to connect Murwillumbah and Casino, the railway must be taken in that circuitous route? This is the first time I have seen the surveys for these railways. I have never seen them before.

492. But the object of the Government is to give an opportunity to all the settlers in that country to bring their produce to market? Yes.

493. So that you would advocate in the future various lines of railway from this big scrub country between the Richmond and the Tweed Rivers, converging to a point either at Byron Bay or Ballina, or at the entrance of the Richmond River? Certainly.

494. Do you think that the railway projected between Casino and Byron Bay would be justified, inasmuch as we are about expending a large sum of money in the improvement of the Richmond River bar;—do you think that railway could be ever made to pay where you have got water carriage? I cannot conceive that the people would pay a much greater freight for their goods by rail than by water.

495. Therefore, you think that the expenditure for the railway between Casino and Byron Bay would not be wanted? Another question in regard to this matter is the one of celerity. The whole of the business of the Richmond River, in its various branches, is brought down the Richmond River mostly to Ballina, and there is a good deal of traffic going up and down there. There is a different traffic, as between various places such as Lismore and Ballina, to what there is between Lismore and Grafton. There is a large number of steam launches and a great traffic on the roadway.

496. And you think the length of time taken in running the traffic by water would compensate people who did not pay the extra price to send their perishable produce by train? No; I did not say that.

497. I gathered that from what you said? No; I say there is expedition as regards passengers. The passengers might use the railway.

498. We heard yesterday from a witness that he had sent calves down from the heads of the Clarence, and they were bar-bound at Ballina on board a steamer;—this would not have occurred if he had sent them down by train? I have known instances where they have been bar-bound. When I, as an agent, had to receive cattle, I have found them to be perfect wrecks after being a few days in the ship's holds at the Clarence and Richmond Rivers bars.

499. But that would not occur in the event of judicious expenditure on the Richmond River bar? It would not occur; but these have only been isolated instances, and not regular things. Now and again, for two or three months at a time, the Richmond bar was very bad; but there came a flood, and the entrance was swept a bit, and we have not had any trouble lately.

500. Knowing what the drift of my questions is, would you recommend the expenditure of a large sum of money in taking the railway from Casino to Byron Bay, when you have already got water carriage on the Richmond—taking into consideration the fact that a large sum is about to be spent at the mouth of the Richmond to make it a good harbour? I think it would be far more to the advantage of the country and the inhabitants of the district that the waterways, which are naturally placed there by Providence, should be improved and rendered feasible in all times and seasons. Of course, in the dim future, when there is a vast settlement there, it will be judicious to make the railway; but at present it is much more desirable to make the waterways efficient in every way.

501. *Mr. Tonkin.*] If the proposed trunk line were constructed, do you think it would serve the inhabitants of the country it goes through—I do not mean the inhabitants who are directly on the route—but those who are some distance away from it—say, those some 50 or 60 miles inland? That all depends on the rates of carriage. When a man gets down to Lismore with his produce he would rather put it on board the steamer, and let it go right away without further trouble, than send it to a place where he has to transship it when the steamer comes round. Consequently, if that line were constructed, the inhabitants about there would not use it, except for carrying goods to the nearest port. There might be occasions, when the Richmond River was blocked, and if there were good jetties, loading arrangements, and wharves at Byron Bay, they might send their goods down there.

502. Is there a large population in that part of the country which the line would run through? I speak with all deference; but statistics were published some time by Mr. Page in the *Richmond River Express*, and, as far as I recollect, he made out that the population of the Richmond and Clarence districts was increasing at the rate of about 10 per cent. per annum, and I think he made out a very large population in the Richmond and Clarence; but whether that was official or not I do not know.

503. Do you know whether there are any good agricultural lands, not already alienated, available between Grafton and Casino? The river flats and rich lands at the Clarence end of the line and the Richmond end

end of the line, are all alienated, except what are kept as population areas and reserves. It is all alienated with the exception of the reserves.

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504. You see by the map that the Government has reserved a mile on each side of the railway line;—was there any necessity to reserve that, the land being so poor as it is? I do not think it was reserved in the way you mean. We have always understood that that reservation was made, so that no person might acquire the right to the land the railway was to go through, and charge the Government a heavy amount for resumption.

505. On account of it being so poor there would be no fear of it being taken up for any other reason excepting for purposes of compensation from the Government? You misunderstand me. I do not say that the land has not been taken up, because I am told that there has been 18,000 acres of the resumed half of Woorwoolgen station selected this year. Where the Government offers land at 2s. an acre deposit on the conditional purchase, and only a bagatelle rental on the conditional lease, a number of people have taken up lands, but they are taking it up in areas of 1,280, and I cannot conceive that the settlement of a few families would justify the Government in making a railway for their advantage, at is an enormous expense.

506. Could these areas grow large quantities of wheat? There is no wheat grown on the Richmond and Clarence. It is maize and pumpkins. Within 30 miles of the coast where they are free from frosts, they grow sugar-cane.

507. Would that land be suitable for the purpose of growing these products? There are portions of them where you could grow maize—the small flats—but the land as a whole is poor.

508. Taking the work as a whole—I do not refer to that portion you object to—but taking the work as a whole, as placed before this Committee, do you think that the country or this Committee would be justified in recommending the construction of that line, which I suppose would cost £6,000,000? £6,000,000, I think is the whole from Maitland north. I have not been over it or considered the matter. I would not like to give a rash opinion on such a subject as that.

509. Then you only object to this one link of the chain because it is going over poor country? I do not object to it personally, because it would be an immense advantage to me, but I say it would be an immense waste of public money to erect that railway.

510. But would it not be a greater waste of public money if we constructed a piece of line from Grafton to Maitland, and then left a portion of the chain open, and then started from Casino again, and went to the Tweed? Some people would consider it so, but I think it would be a very unwise thing to expend six millions of money until we could see some necessity for it.

511. Do you think that if these different rivers and Byron Bay itself were made available, and vessels of sufficient tonnage at all times of the year could communicate with the inhabitants—that that would not be a sufficient means of taking their produce to market for some years to come? It would be a sufficient means for those who are within reach of the navigable waters; but the hope of the inhabitants—I speak from the many conversations with the people I have had up there—the hope of the inhabitants of the back lands is that your Committee will recommend the Government to construct the railways 15 and 20 miles back from the ports on the Richmond River. In the hope of that they are busy clearing the land, planting and arranging settlements, dairies, and factories. They are a go-ahead people.

512. But that of course would be quite independent of the proposal before us now. This trunk line would not have the effect which you are referring to now? No; because it does not go far enough back.

513. Then you believe, instead of the construction of this line at present, that if there are a few light lines running from the navigable portions inland in different directions, that would be a greater benefit to the inhabitants of the district than this line? Certainly; if the entrances to the Richmond and Clarence were kept clear so that the traffic could be continuous.

Joshua Bray, Esq., Police Magistrate at Tweed River, sworn, and examined:—

514. *Mr. Humphery.*] What is your position in the public service? Police Magistrate at the Tweed River. J. Bray, Esq.

515. Are you the Land Agent also? Yes.

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516. How long have you resided in the district? Ever since 1863.

517. Were you in the district previously to that? No.

518. Have you seen the proposed route of Railway from Grafton to the Tweed? I have seen that part of it from Brunswick to the Tweed, but not the other part.

[*By request of the Chairman witness examined the map of the proposed route, and it was explained to him by Mr. Lee.*]

519. You have noticed, have you not, that the line would be taken from Murwillumbah to Byron Bay, thence to Lismore, and then on to Casino? Yes.

520. From your knowledge of the district, can you say whether a line as proposed there would serve the settlers between the Richmond and the Tweed? Yes, it would. I think it would be as good a route as any that could be chosen.

521. You think that the proposed route is a good one in the interest of the settlers of the district? Yes.

522. Has the settlement there increased very rapidly during the time you have been resident there? At first it did not, but during the last seven or eight years it has increased very rapidly.

523. You know the character of the soil? Yes.

524. What is your opinion of the whole of that country between the Richmond and the Tweed? A great deal of it is rich scrub land. It is the richest land I have seen in any part of the country.

525. How do the settlers at the present time send their produce to market? There is a steamer running regularly between the Tweed and Sydney, and for the people near the Brunswick, a steamer calls at Byron Bay. She lately started a trade between Byron Bay and Sydney—since the jetty has been finished,—but before that the people could not send anything away, or very little. They are able to send something now away from near Byron Bay.

526. Is it your opinion that, in the event of that line being constructed, the settlers between Byron Bay and the Tweed River will send their produce by way of the Richmond River—use the railway and send their produce that way? Yes.

527.

J. Bray, Esq. 527. Instead of sending by steamer from the Tweed and from the Brunswick? Yes. The way it is now they would, because it is very uncertain for them to send anything away by the steamer—the trips are so uncertain.

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528. Do you know anything of the country between Lismore and Casino? Very little.

529. Or anything of the country between Casino and Grafton? Very little of that either. I have been along the road years ago, but it is ten or twelve years since I was along that way.

530. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you know the country between the Clarence and the Richmond Rivers? Yes. I have been through it two or three times.

531. From what point on the Richmond did you start to go to the Clarence? I went from Lawrence to Casino, and I have been from Casino to Grafton.

532. What is the character of the country between Lawrence and Casino? Well, it was rather poor land—swampy land, and in some places ti-tree scrub.

533. You think it is a wise proposal to construct a line of railway between Grafton and Casino through country like that? I do not think so.

534. You think it is allowable as part of a national line to serve the whole of the north coast? It might be advisable on that account, but not otherwise.

535. Do you know the country between Lismore and Murwillumbah? Yes.

536. What is the country like? That is quite different altogether.

537. I mean what is the contour of the country;—is it mountainous, hilly, or level? It has mountains and flats, hills and flats, valleys,—a great deal of flat agricultural land.

538. Is it a difficult country through which to construct a line of railway? Yes, much more difficult than between the Clarence and Casino.

539. Have you seen by that diagram that to reach Murwillumbah from Lismore, the engineers have been compelled to travel in a triangular direction; you notice that they have been compelled to take the line in a triangle? There are very high mountains all the way.

540. Is it possible to construct a line of railway across that country? I say it would be difficult and expensive, but I do not say impossible. It is very difficult to get a road for a horse there.

541. You think that the Department was justified in taking the line from Lismore to Byron Bay, or to Murwillumbah? I think so.

542. Would it be cheaper to construct the line along that route rather than along a direct route? Yes.

543. Which line would serve the greater population? The one proposed.

544. Do you think a line of railway running from Murwillumbah on the Tweed to the Richmond River heads would be a useful line for the population in the Richmond River district? Yes.

545. Supposing the proposed line between Grafton and Casino were not constructed, which do you think would be most to the advantage of the district;—to have a line running as proposed on that map, from Casino down to the coast, and from the coast to Murwillumbah, or to run a line from Murwillumbah to the Richmond River Heads—to give them access to a navigable river;—which would be the best line for the district? I think that would be the best, as it is there.

546. As it stands? Yes.

547. You can see that that does not serve the mouth of the Richmond River at all? Yes.

548. It does not come within miles of the mouth of the river—a line down to Byron Bay? Yes.

549. You think then that the Department are justified in not connecting the two rivers, and in running the line in that triangular fashion, to serve the district? I think so.

THURSDAY, 6 FEBRUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Dr. James Robert Miller Robertson, Mining Engineer, sworn, and examined:—

Dr. J. R. M. Robertson. 550. *Chairman.*] What are you? Mining engineer.

551. The Committee have been informed that you desire to give some evidence with regard to the coal-measures on the Clarence River? Yes, I have been requested to do so.

6 Feb., 1890. 552. Do you know Mr. Wilkinson was examined before this Committee on that matter? I was informed a few minutes ago that he was.

553. You have not seen his evidence? No, I have seen no evidence.

554. Will you tell the Committee whatever you can with regard to these coal-measures—where they exist, and the character of them? They exist under a range of mountains called the Coal Range, contiguous to a surveyed township called Coaldale, where I think there are one or two houses erected.

555. Is that up the river from Grafton? Yes, almost midway between Richmond and the Clarence river.

556. How far from Grafton? About 14 or 15 miles from the Clarence River, but by the road 28 miles from Grafton.

557. Is the river navigable up to that point? The river is perfectly navigable beyond the nearest point to Coaldale—Moleville, I think, is the name.

558. How far is that point from the coal? About 14 miles.

559. There would be 14 miles of land carriage then? To take it to the Clarence River there would be 14 miles or probably 15 miles of railway to make.

560. Have you seen coal anywhere else except there? No; I have not examined any other part of the district. Dr. J. R. M.
Robertson.
561. Have these mines been opened to any extent? Partially opened—the outcrops of three seams of bituminous coal and an inferior cannel coal. 6 Feb., 1890.
562. What are the depths of the sinking on it? They apparently crop out on the base of the spurs of the range.
563. Have they driven in any depth on them? They have driven in a few yards in two of the seams. The upper seam of all is a comparatively thick seam, probably 11 feet thick, of which there are 5 feet 6 inches or 5 feet 7 inches of coal without a band. That, I should say, would be the workable portion of that seam.
564. Have you had any tests made of that coal? I had no tests—simply physical appearances.
565. Only from appearances? Yes, only from appearances. I have asked the owner to have assays, and I think he told me that the Government had assayed one of the seams.
566. Is the coal apparently a good one? Yes, it is good bituminous coal. The upper seam would be a steam coal. It has more the physical properties and appearances of the upper seam in Illawarra.
567. Have you seen it tested at all for steam purposes? No, I have not seen it tested. I have seen it burning.
568. In steamers? No, in an open fire.
569. You could not form any opinion from that as to its quality for steam purposes? Of course people who handle a large quantity of coal can come approximately near its value and quality.
570. For steam purposes? Yes.
571. Then there is not much use in having coal analysed? Well, of course, you cannot tell the exact amount of ash, but a person that is skilled can come very near it approximately. I believe that the Government Assayer assayed a seam lower than the seam I referred to. The seam I have spoken of is the one last discovered—a seam only recently discovered.
572. Have you been up there recently? About the middle of December.
573. Was that the only time you were there? That is the only time I have been at Coaldale.
574. Did you visit the district at all to ascertain whether it was likely that the seams of coal would be of an extensive character? A few miles along the base of the range is the distance the coal-measures I examined extended.
575. How far from Grafton are the first indications of the coal-measures? They all occur within a short distance of Coaldale and close together. The Clarence flows over coal-measures for very many miles, but whether they contain workable seams of coal has yet to be proved. The coal-measures extend a good number of miles west also from the Coal Range. I examined that some years ago, as far as Yugalbar Station.
576. Is the quality of that coal such that it would compete with the Newcastle coal for export? Not for export. It would certainly cut out the Newcastle coal in the district, and in the surrounding districts, provided there was a railway.
577. Then its uses would be simply for local purposes? For local purposes. It would certainly take the whole of the local demand. There is a large area of coal measures there.
578. Do you think that the coal is sufficiently good to be used for railway locomotive purposes? Perfectly good. My impression is that the upper seam is better steam coal than Newcastle, in the same way that the Illawarra upper seam is better steam coal than Newcastle. It is not such a good coal for gas purposes.
579. That is the conclusion you have come to as an expert? Yes.
580. But not from any analysis? I have seen the Government analysis of a seam lower than the upper seam, and which, practically, is about equal to Newcastle Borehole seam;—not very much difference, only a decimal per cent. in the matter of ash.
581. Why would it not answer for export purposes? Because it is a rather more friable coal than Newcastle. It does not occur in such thick beds. The bands that intersect the coal occur at more frequent intervals than at Newcastle. A good export coal must bear the rolling and handling on board the ship.
582. Do you know anything else of other minerals in that district? It is entirely a coal district between the two rivers, as far back near the range as Yugalbar, and there the auriferous rocks take the place of the coal-measures.
583. You only came here to give evidence as to the coal-measures? Yes.
584. *Mr. Hurley.*] Are you interested in any of them? I am interested in no mine. I have never had a share or interest in any mine.

John See, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

585. *Dr. Garran.*] Are you connected in any way with this district? Yes. J. See, Esq.,
M.P.
586. In what way? I am interested in trading to the district and in the district. 6 Feb., 1890.
587. Have you resided in it? I have resided on the Clarence.
588. Do you know much about the Richmond? Not so much as about the Clarence. I have been to the Richmond.
589. Are you acquainted with the locality of the Big Scrub? I know something about the Big Scrub. I have been in part of it.
590. Can you roughly, on this map, sketch the outside boundary of that Big Scrub? I cannot.
591. Does it come right down to the coast? I think it does. I have not been very far north in the Big Scrub. It is about 24 miles from Lismore.
592. Have you been on the road from Lismore to Byron Bay? I have not.
593. Have you been from Byron Bay to Murwillumbah? I have not.
594. Have you been from Ballina up the Creek? I know a little about the country from Ballina to Lismore.
595. You know this is one of the richest districts, so far as the quality of the soil is concerned, in New South Wales? Yes.
596. And that the problem in making railways in that district is to give the cultivators access to a market? Yes.
597. The great object in making a railway would not be to connect one port with another, but the producers with the water? That would be one of the objects. 598.

J. See, Esq.,
M.P.
6 Feb., 1890.

598. Do you know enough of the physical geography of that district to say whether the line as laid out here is the best expenditure of money possible to give the largest number of producers access to a port? My idea is that the line would serve a larger number of persons, and to all intents and purposes be a better line, if it went more inland.

599. Are you at all acquainted with the engineering reasons that have caused the line to take its present route? I am not, except from what I have heard—that there are more engineering difficulties in going through the Big Scrub than round it; that it would be more expensive to go through the Big Scrub, as there are some mountains they would have to pass.

600. You have not been through the heart of the scrub? Not right through it. I have been 20 miles from Lismore, and am informed that nearly all the Big Scrub is of the same character, and after you leave the scrub and get on to the banks of the river, it is altogether different. I do not think that the alluvial on the Richmond River is a wash down from the Big Scrub, but from the mountains.

601. From the granite country? Yes; from the table-land.

602. Is it granite? Some of it is granite—mostly, I think.

603. You think that the alluvial on the banks of the Richmond is of the same quality as that on the banks of the Clarence? It is exactly the same. It is all made up of deposits by floods—the accumulation of centuries.

604. Is that river bank land as rich as the basaltic land further inland? I think it is much richer.

605. Of the two soils, the river bank soil is better than the Big Scrub soil? For agricultural purposes it is much better.

606. Is it better for dairying purposes? I cannot say from experience; but I know that sugar-cane and maize and products of that kind are much more profitable than that grown in the Big Scrub; but I am told that the grass in the Big Scrub—and I have seen it—is wonderful for grazing purposes.

607. Then for dairying purposes the basaltic soil might be the better of the two? I think it would be as good, if not better.

608. How far back do you find the settlers bring their produce to the river, to ship in your steamers, or any other steamers? Thirty or 40 miles.

609. Does it pay settlers to carry their produce 20 or 30 miles? It does not pay them as well as it would if they had better facilities; but they have taken up the land, which is wonderfully good, and are cultivating it in the hope that they will have better facilities for getting their produce to market. There are scores of farmers who have taken up land in some of these rich districts, not many miles from the Clarence, who have simply complied with the conditions under the Act, under which they have taken it up, but have not been able to utilize the land for want of an outlet. They expected that roads and wharves should be made, but that has not been the case. I refer to Coff's Harbour and Urara, to which the produce would come if they had a means of getting it away.

610. You mean that the greatest temptation to free selection is excellent land? That is the great temptation.

611. And the settler takes that up in the hope of having greater facilities for transit hereafter? Yes; that is the way in which the land has been taken up.

612. Leaving out exceptional cases, how far back from the river is the bulk of the tillage carried on? The principal portion of the sugar-cane and maize is grown on the banks of the Richmond or Clarence.

613. When you say "on the banks," do you mean within a mile? Yes; I should say within a mile. There are numerous creeks running into the various rivers. On the Clarence there are creeks and arms and branches of the river, and the land is just as valuable there as is the land on the main river; for instance, on the south arm back to Coldstream, and on the north arm, and various other places I might mention. They are all of the same character. The land on the creek banks is as rich as on the river banks, and of the same class. The land on the river banks is of a different character from that of the Big Scrub. There is some of the same kind, but the wood indigenous to the river banks is more marked in its character than that grown in the Big Scrub.

614. Sugar-cane is an article that will not bear long carriage—it deteriorates somewhat after it is cut? It would not bear very long carriage. Two or three days is the length of time it will remain good after being cut.

615. But there are other crops grown in that district that will bear long carriage far better than sugar-cane? I do not know what they grow besides sugar and maize. The principal crops on the rivers are maize and sugar-cane—chiefly maize.

616. I am asking you this question, as you say you do not think this line opens up the district as well as it should do, but looking at the area of the district, how near do you think we should bring the farmer within reach of transit facilities, either by water or by rail? There is very little farming, except on the banks of the river. There is a good deal of land fit for dairying, but there is not a great deal of land used for dairying yet. There are some steam-mills being put up for the purpose of crushing, which will give those who choose to grow maize means of getting their produce crushed and manufactured.

617. We want to open up this district so as to bring the produce to market. You think that a better line might be made than this one now proposed;—can you state any routes you know of that would bring more cultivators within reach of the coast than the line before the Committee would? If practicable it would be far better to take the line through the Big Scrub than around it. I look upon the Richmond River as the principal outlet for the southern part of the Big Scrub, and possibly the Tweed might be one outlet for the Big Scrub.

618. You do not view with favour this project of a line near the coast? I am only giving you my opinion that, if practicable, the line would be more serviceable if taken through the Big Scrub than run round it; but if that is not practicable, this would be an acceptable line.

619. A line running north towards Murwillumbah would be better than this line? I think so.

620. But you do not know whether, on engineering grounds, that would be practicable? I do not.

621. That would run through about the centre of the Big Scrub? Yes. The object is to open up the country, and give people facilities for bringing their produce to market. A railway going through the Big Scrub would serve the purposes of the settlers better than a line along the sea coast, because it would give the people settling in the Big Scrub facilities to get their stuff to a shipping port.

622. Do you know anything of the character of the country about Ballina on the way from Lismore to Byron Bay? No.

623. You have not been up Tintinbar? I have a general knowledge of the country. I know it is all scrub land, pretty much of the same kind.
624. As soon as you get out from Ballina, leave the coast and go inland, you get on to good land? Yes; a few miles from the coast you get on to good land. In some cases it runs almost to the coast. At Tintinbar, I believe, it does.
625. From Ballina up to Tintinbar Creek, would it be all good land? Yes; on the banks of the creeks it is good land.
626. A line by that route would approach this line marked on the map from Lismore to Byron Bay? Yes.
627. Suppose a railway started from Ballina and went up Tintinbar towards this line from Lismore to Byron Bay, and then on to Byron Bay, and then to Brunswick, would you not, from the very first, be bringing producers within reach of a shipping place? Of course, you would if you brought the railway to Ballina or to Lismore. Lismore is at the head of navigation on the north arm, and from there the greater portion of the produce of intermediate places is sent by steamers.
628. Some of the witnesses objected to Lismore on account of the delay incurred on the way which they thought would spoil the butter they wished to send to the Sydney market? That depends on the state of the bar. If the ship could get out I do not think the produce would be injured in any way, because it would only take four hours to run down the river.
629. Granting that Lismore is a point of shipment for that part of the country within a moderate distance of it, Ballina would be a better point of shipment, would it not, for those on a part of the line from Lismore to Byron Bay? Yes, if that line were constructed; but in the majority of cases the produce is not shipped at the entrance of the river—Ballina or Yamba—but from places all along up to the head of navigation. There are some towns and settlements, and there are wharves provided as depôts for the use of settlers.
630. That is because the river is your main road now? And so it would continue to be for the products of the local places.
631. If we start from Ballina we get into good country almost immediately, and if we get this line here proposed and follow it north towards Byron Bay, we shall be going through good rich scrub land the whole way? I think it is a debatable point whether the line should go to Byron Bay at all.
632. You observe on the map that the line is forced round here because the ranges approach the coast so closely? Yes.
633. If you look at the map you will see that the line is laid out up the water course, and the whole of the distance within a few miles of the coast? Yes.
634. We must assume that physical difficulties compelled the engineers to come closer to the coast than they otherwise would have done? I think it is perhaps a matter of economy in indicating the course the railway should take. The surveyors as a rule pick out the best possible grades, the least expensive routes for constructing a railway. I do not think that routes for railways are always picked out because they are the most suitable, or go through the best country, or serve the people the best. The first object, I think, that the surveyors have in view is to give an easy grade which would entail the least possible expense for construction.
635. You said you did not think there was any necessity to go to Byron Bay at all; do you look upon Lismore as the natural port for the Big Scrub? For the bulk of the Big Scrub. At present 9-10ths and more than that of the produce of the Richmond River including the Big Scrub is sent from the Richmond, although there is a jetty and means of getting produce to market from Byron Bay. The great bulk of the stuff sent from Byron Bay is timber, which would go whether there was a jetty or not.
636. As the problem presents itself to you the task of constructing a railway in the Big Scrub is the task of connecting it with Lismore? I repeat that I think the greater number of persons would be benefited through opening the Big Scrub—through taking the railway through it if practicable rather than along the route proposed; but, of course, there may be engineering difficulties that I do not know of. I do not pretend to know anything about that. I speak only from the general knowledge I have as to opening up the country. The Richmond River entrance is, I suppose, to be made a port, and that, I say, is the natural outlet for the greater portion of the country adjacent to it.
637. Still all this country from Lismore to Byron Bay is rich land? Yes.
638. And the line from one point to another will, from beginning to end, run through rich land? There seems to be a general opinion that it is more adapted to grazing purposes than cultivation. It grows an enormous crop of grass, but so far—whether it arises from the difficulty in getting the stuff to market or not—it has not been a success. Clearing the land is very expensive. I suppose it would cost at least £5 or £6 an acre to clear it.
639. Still it is rich enough to be worth that? Yes.
640. If it pays to clear the land at Kiama and Shoalhaven will it not pay to clear the land there? Three-fourths of the Big Scrub has been taken up by speculators.
641. When you say "speculators" I suppose you mean speculative selectors? No, I mean that a great number of Sydney folks have taken up the land.
642. As selectors? They found the money.
643. You mean they are in partnership; they have found the money necessary to enable the land to be utilized? Yes.
644. It is practically a partnership? Yes; on the banks of the river the means have been obtained from the outcome of the land itself, but in the Big Scrub, I think the greater portion of the money has been spent from outside sources rather than from the increment of the land itself.
645. Do you think it would be a remunerative national project to carry the railway through this Big Scrub? I am sure of it.
646. You think that the land is rich enough to give a traffic? I think the North Coast District, from Newcastle right away to the Queensland Border, is as rich as any other country in the world, and the Richmond District is as rich as any portion of it.
647. Then you think this district does deserve railways? Unquestionably.
648. Your only doubt is as to whether this line has been laid out to the greatest advantage? Yes; but I think that that should not be a bar to its construction.
649. You do not oppose the line as laid out? No.
650. You only think that it might be laid out better? It is only a suggestion of mine, to open up the centre of the Big Scrub.

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- J. See, Esq.,
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651. Contrasting Lismore and Ballina as ports, you think Lismore is equally good? Yes. Up to the present time there has been more water at Lismore than on the bar. A vessel has had no difficulty in getting up the river after crossing the bar. Lismore has really been the port of shipment from the Clarence.
652. But if the improvements designed by Sir John Coode are carried out, Ballina will be a better port than Lismore? Yes; of course it will probably be deeper water, although I think he says there will be 14 feet, and there are 14 feet at Lismore; but the produce that should go to Lismore from that locality would not be diverted from Lismore to Ballina. To my mind the head of navigation is Lismore on the north arm, and possibly Casino on the south, and the greater portion of produce will be shipped from those centres.
653. At the same time Ballina is the natural port for all of the district within 10 or 15 miles behind it? Ballina would be, because it is at the heads. It is maintained, I think, almost exclusively by the shipping that comes in and out of the Richmond, and not sustained by the inhabitants who are settled in and about the neighbourhood.
654. Still you say there is rich land in the rear all the way back to the proposed line? Unquestionably there is a great quantity. Tintinbar land and the land up this creek is very good.
655. So a line from Ballina would go through rich land all the way? Yes.
656. Is it a difficult route? No; I do not think there are any difficulties whatever.
657. Can you tell us anything about the land between Casino and Grafton? It is good grazing country, and there is some alluvial country. On the banks of the creeks there is good agricultural land.
658. Looking at the necessary limitations in our public expenditure from year to year, do you think a line from Casino to Grafton is a justifiable line at the present time? I think the original intention was that this line should be a national and not a local line. I am sure the intention of the projectors of this line was to make a costal line from the border of Queensland on the coast to Newcastle, and a line of railway over only a portion of this route would appear to me to be a line leading almost from nowhere to nowhere; because, unless you give the people a market in Brisbane, which I understand is not proposed to be done at present, what is the use of the railway, unless it be made a national line.
659. You said just now that the object was to bring producers within reach of a local market? That is part of it. That is one of the local intentions, but where is the market. If you bring it from the centre of the Big Scrub to the Richmond, you have not brought it to the market, and you must tranship it to a steamer which would take it to a market.
660. Where is the market at present? The principal market for the products of all the north coast districts is Sydney.
661. Do you think that that market has in itself sufficient expansiveness to take the additional produce that will be sent down to the coast when this railway has opened up this district? Yes; Brisbane could very often take a great deal from the table-land.
662. Could not your steamer which takes produce from Lismore to Sydney, also take it to Brisbane? There is not sufficient volume of trade at present.
663. If there is not trade enough at present in Brisbane to take the surplus products from Lismore, where would be the work for the railway? These districts are increasing enormously.
664. The more the producers grow, the more they want a market? Quite so.
665. You say you want a national line for the sake of sending the produce to the market? As I understand this project, it is that there is to be a line of railway from the Queensland border to connect with the northern railway near Maitland and intersecting the whole of the northern rivers.
666. It is not put before the Committee as part of a national line of railway at all, but as a railway to develop the resources of this district? Not alone that district; it is a line from Grafton to the Tweed, to open up communication.
667. Yes; but is there any particular traffic between Grafton and the Tweed? There is a good deal of traffic between the Richmond and the Clarence. The mails at present, I believe, go that way.
668. There is not much traffic in mails, is there? There are a great number of passengers.
669. The tendency of the evidence brought here by the Sectional Committee is that there is very little traffic between the rivers—that they produce so much the same thing that they do not trade with one another? They do not send maize from the Clarence to the Richmond or from the Richmond to the Clarence, but there is a good deal of communication by people going backwards and forwards.
670. You advocate the line from Casino to Grafton not so much on the ground of its local traffic as of its being part of a national line? Yes, I certainly do. My impression is that if this is to be the terminus we do not want a railway to Byron Bay, Richmond, and the Tweed.
671. You do not look upon this projected line as part of a national line? I do not say so, but it cannot be a national line if only a local line. If it is part of a national line, it speaks for itself.
672. If it is laid out in the first instance so as to give the greatest possible development to the adjoining districts, and is connected ultimately with the line to Sydney and Brisbane, it will be both local and national? Exactly so, but all the districts north an south must, I take it, be connected with the table-land by railway from the coast and joined on to the northern line, and it cannot be this way; it will be simply a local line from the Tweed to the Richmond or Casino. A tramway might answer the same purpose. If followed up by railway to the table-land, a great deal of produce would be taken to the table-land.
673. You understand we have not any proposal to go to the table-land? No; but I think they are almost inseparable. There has been communication from the Clarence to the table-land for years. A road has been constructed at a cost of £200,000 to and from Lawrence to Tenterfield at a cost of £120,000 odd pounds. A railway would give them facilities to get the market. There would be an interchange of trade resulting from the opportunities afforded by railway construction.
674. Do I understand you to say that we have spent £320,000 in connecting this coast with the table-land behind it? Yes.
675. Have we had trade corresponding with that expenditure? Yes; nearly all the trade went that way until the differential rates were imposed the other day by the Railway Commissioners. Even now, in spite of the differential rates, some of the goods go that way.
676. Could anything ever neutralize the value of the line through the Big Scrub? That is simply a local line; you would not give them facilities to go to the table-land, nor give people there facilities to go to the Big Scrub.
677. This line, if once made, will never become useless as long as the settlers are there? No, I do not think it would; but it would not serve the purposes for which it is intended.
- 678.

678. Which do you think is the biggest want for the settlers—a line to the table-land or to the sea? Both.

679. Which most? They have a road to the sea—a fairly good road through the Big Scrub.

680. How far back are the people of Lismore really using their ground now? I suppose 20 or 30 miles.

681. They are bringing produce from 30 miles back in the scrub to Lismore? Little, except butter, I think.

682. Looking at the products of the district, do you think that the people on the table-land could offer the same market for butter and cheese that the south does? No.

683. Do they make butter and cheese on the table-land to a large extent? To some extent they do. I think sugar, and maize, and tropical products will be more in keeping with the products of the Big Scrub than butter and cheese.

684. Do I understand you to mean that the proper destiny of the Big Scrub is to grow sugar for the table-land district? I think that is part of its destiny.

685. The great object should be to make a railway to the table-land and not connect with this port? I think they might be connected with the port and the table-land too. I think the northern district will grow sugar and other products, and that there will be an interchange of products between them and the table-land.

686. You spoke rather disparagingly of the quantity of butter made in this Big Scrub, but I see from Mr. Coghlan's book that more than 1,000,000 lb. came from the district last year, and that the number of cattle is very much larger? That means 10 tons of butter. More than that comes in one steamer from Wollongong.

687. Do not you think it is equally as good a dairying district as any part of the south coast? I think the feed is as good, but I do not think that they can make butter and cheese as well. I think the climate is against them—that is the only reason.

688. The ground is not so rich? Yes, richer. I think that if they get proper refrigerators and cool chambers to bring it to market they will be as successful as those on the south coast.

689. To sum up your evidence your only objection to this proposed line is that it does not go sufficiently through the heart of the scrub and is not connected with the table-land? That is not my objection to this line, but I think the destiny of this district is to be connected with the table-land. I am giving my reasons why I think it should be a national rather than a local line.

690. Still you want this line to be made? I have said so; but if only that part of the line is made it will be local and not national.

691. If only a local line—would you condemn it on that ground? It would not serve the purpose I think it is intended for—to give these people an outlet to other places besides the sea coast.

692. Would it not be worth making for that purpose? Possibly it would. But if the Richmond River entrance improvements, the Byron Bay works, and the Tweed railway are made this would not be much use as a local line.

693. *Chairman.*] Do you know anything of the Italian settlement; have you been there? Yes, I have been there, and can corroborate what Mr. Campbell says. Having been sent by the Government to report on lands suitable for a model farm he says:

THE Italian settlement called "New Italy," situated on this upland "poor" country between the Clarence and the Richmond Rivers, is a good illustration of the value of such land. For the last six years the remnant of the Marquis de Ray's emigrants has been settled here—thirty Italian and two French families. By dint of the very hard work of men, women, and children, these people have made themselves comfortable homes, fenced in their farms, made considerable clearings, planted small vineyards, which are just now coming into bearing, a few fruit trees, some olives and mulberries, and pretty little flower gardens around their homes, which, as a rule, appeared to be kept extremely clean and neat.

The land was heavily timbered with hardwood, ironbark, and gum when first occupied, and it was considered to be so inferior that the Italians were thought to be insane to attempt its cultivation; but I believe that they are very well satisfied with their prospects, and could not live again on the poor fare they were accustomed to at home in Italy after enjoying the abundance of good food they can now command.

That is a report from Mr. Campbell, who was sent by the Mines Department to get information in reference to this particular question. It is corroborated by the little book written by Mr. Clifford. I merely give that as evidence of how this land could be utilized, and in corroboration of my assertion that the land between Casino and Grafton is not poor wretched land as some persons would have us believe. I now hand in some statistics, prepared at my request by Mr. Coghlan. He says that in 1861 the population of Grafton was 1,441; in 1871, 2,526; in 1881, 7,744; and in 1889, it was estimated at 9,710. In 1861 the population of the Clarence was 1,865; in 1871, 6,364; in 1881, 6,752; and in 1889, 7,827. In 1861 the population of the Richmond was 1,835; in 1871, 4,870; in 1881, 9,266; and in 1889, 19,207, making a gross increase from 1861 to 1881 on the two rivers of 31,000. As regards the Clarence River trade last year, there were 301 departures of steamers from the Clarence, and 59 sailing vessels, conveying 8,109 passengers. The principal exports to Sydney were:—214,071 sacks maize, 1,038 bags oysters, 2,979 bags bones and horns, 22,976 bags and 32 tons sugar (exclusive of that shipped from the Colonial Sugar Company's Works), 6,400 cases meat, 6,480 cases eggs, 1,898 bales wool, 317 bundles skins, 106 horses, 1,239 cattle, 163 calves, 6,485 pigs, 1,864 coops poultry, 11,599 hides, 525 hogsheads tallow, 435 hogsheads molasses, 775 hogsheads rum, 496 casks beer, 9,680 bags potatoes, 1,979 cases fish, 1,241 sacks pumpkins, 3,092 bags mineral ores, 75,700 spokes, 908 logs cedar, 81,010 pieces sawn cedar, 292,457 feet hardwood, 101 bales hay, besides a large quantity of spirits from the distillery. I do not know if your attention has been directed to the proposed establishment of a direct line from London to Grafton, and perhaps I may be permitted to read the following newspaper paragraph:—

THE storekeepers of Grafton, Glen Innes, and Inverell are opening up a direct trade with London by sailing vessels from Grafton. Mr. C. B. Ridley, of Messrs. Robards & Co., has visited the districts and procured sufficient support to start the line. The new departure has, doubtless, been brought about by the success attending Messrs. J. and A. Brown's direct lines to Newcastle.

694. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you know the value of the lands in the Kiama and Shoalhaven districts—what they bring per acre? I think that good alluvial land at Shoalhaven would bring as much as on the Clarence—the values ranging from £20 to £50 per acre.

695. What population is there between Grafton and Casino? There is not a great deal; it is mostly a station country. There are a few houses, but not many.

696. Is the country likely to support a population if a line is constructed that way? I think there is a good deal of land that would be used for farming. It is well timbered. 697.

J. See, Esq.,
M.P.

6 Feb., 1890.

- J. See, Esq.,
M.P.
6 Feb., 1890.
697. If the national line were carried out as outlined on the map is it likely to have keen competition with steamers on the coast? No, I think it will produce a great deal of settlement, and not come into competition with steamers at all.
698. Will not the steamboat traffic come into competition with it? If it does, it will have to go down, but I do not apprehend that they will interfere with the railway, or that the railway will interfere with the steamers.
699. Do you think that it is likely to have the same effect on that district as the railway has had on the Kiama district? Yes.
700. Give a large impetus to trade? Yes. I think millions of people could be sustained by the north coast district.
701. Will this line be a shorter route to Brisbane than the northern line? From the river, certainly.
702. But I mean from Sydney to Brisbane? The proposed north coast railway would be nearer to Brisbane than the northern railway.
703. *Mr. Lee.*] In considering this surveyed line down the coast to join the main line about Newcastle, you look upon that as a national line? I do.
704. Do you think that if that line were constructed maize, and similar products of the Clarence and Richmond would not be sent by that line? Possibly not, but a good deal of produce would. Under our newly revised railway system we are taking goods cheaper than they are being taken from bar harbours.
705. What is about the average cost by steamer for the carriage of a bag of maize? About 1s. 6d. per bag.
706. Would the railway carry it for that? Yes, they are carrying it cheaper now. I will be glad to show you the rates charged, not only by our own company, but by other companies, and also show you the new schedule of rates authorized by the Railway Commissioners for the carriage of produce down from the interior. The statistics I have handed in contain full particulars of the land under cultivation, the area of land alienated, the area of land available for agricultural and pastoral purposes, and the number of cattle and other stock—in fact, all the information that I have been able to gather from Mr. Coghlan.
707. *Mr. Tonkin.*] I think that in answer to Dr. Garran you said that the greater part of the land in the Big Scrub had been taken up by Sydney speculators? That they were interested in it—yes.
708. I want to ask you whether you believe they took that land up in anticipation of its value being increased by the construction of this railway? Unquestionably they have done so. I know there has been a great deal of speculation going on in the Big Scrub.
709. *Chairman.*] With regard to the Big Scrub, it would be impossible for a poor man to use that land at all? Quite impossible.
710. He must have capital at his back? Yes, he must. The same applies to a great deal of the land on the northern rivers, and in other parts too.
711. You have told us that it costs £5 or £6 an acre to get that land prepared for use? Yes. I think, if the labour had to be paid for, it would cost £4 or £5. Of course, the farmers utilize the labour of their families. I was told, when I was on the river a few days ago, that the Clarence River bears a favorable comparison with any other district in the country with regard to the school-children. The arrears of fees are very small. There are forty-six public schools—ten provisional schools, and six half-time schools in operation. The pupils in the public schools number 3,367, in the provisional schools 178, and in the half-time schools 105—total 3,650, of which there are ninety free pupils in the public schools, four in the provisional schools, and four in the half-time schools. The arrears of school fees are as follows:—public schools £16 15s. 3d., provisional 4s. 3d., half-time £1 3s. 3d., making a total amount of arrears in sixty-two schools of £18 2s. 9d. The expenditure on new schools and repairs amounted to about £2,500.
712. I suppose the farmers on the Clarence are not in debt at all? The district is not in debt. The farmers, like very many others, are in debt. However, I am sure they could all pay their debts—there would be a large surplus in the aggregate if all the liabilities were discharged.
713. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do you think it is desirable to bring the railway from Lismore to Byron Bay—that is, from one shipping port to another shipping port? I have already said that I am not favourable to that section. I do not think it is necessary.
714. I have not heard you say what scheme you are favourable to? I am first of all favourable to the north coast railway, but also to the construction of a line of railway from Grafton to the Queensland border, and I would certainly go to Casino and Lismore, but I think that a better route, serving a larger number of persons, could be taken through the Big Scrub on to Murwillumbah or the Tweed River, instead of going to Byron Bay and along the coast as it is proposed to do.
715. *Chairman.*] Have you been up in that country at all? Not beyond Ballina.
716. Have you been to Byron Bay? No, never.
717. Then you had better go and see if the railway could be taken along that range of mountains? I do not say that it could, but only that if it could it would be better.
718. *Mr. Dowell.*] Do you think it desirable that the starting point of the railway should be opposite to Murwillumbah? I could not say, but I should say that that would be a good centre—it is the head of navigation.
719. Do you think it absolutely necessary and desirable that the railway should be constructed from Grafton to Casino? Yes, I do.
720. What point of the northern line do you think the most desirable to connect at Grafton? I am not able to give an opinion. I have taken a great interest in connection with the two schemes, but only one has been recommended, and I supported that—a line from Glen Innes to Grafton.
721. *Chairman.*] I suppose you are indifferent as to where the connection is, so long as it is made fairly for the New England people? So long as it serves the greatest number of persons. But I think it inevitable that there will be a connecting system between the coast and the table-land, instead of having to go to Newcastle or Sydney as now, when any one wants to send any produce to the table-land.

Charles O. Burge, Esq., District Engineer, Railway Department, sworn, and further examined:—

722. *Dr. Garran.*] What position do you hold in the Civil Service? I am a district engineer. I am also a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. C. O. Burge,
Esq.
6 Feb., 1890.
723. What portion of the line now before the Committee have you personally examined? I have closely examined the line from Grafton to Byron Bay, and in a more fragmentary way from the Brunswick to Murwillumbah, and also the connection between the Tweed and the Queensland railways.
724. Taking that part between Lismore and Byron Bay—you are intimately acquainted with that? As far as the line goes—yes.
725. Leaving Lismore, you follow mainly the line of a water-course? Yes, Wilson's Creek.
726. And then how far off the coast? We go straight up to Byron Bay.
727. Where is the Dividing Range? Close to Byron Bay.
728. How far off? About 5 miles.
729. You are ascending all the way from Lismore to within 5 miles of the coast? More or less.
730. And then you make a rapid descent to the coast? Yes.
731. What is the maximum elevation that you reach? I do not remember the exact elevation, but it is marked on the plans before the Committee.
732. Is the descent very steep? It was originally 1 in 40, but I have made some alterations so as to involve only 1 in 50. I reduced all the maximum grades from Grafton to Byron Bay to 1 in 50.
733. When you once get into the bed of that water-course, are you pinned in there? Pretty well.
734. You cannot get out and cross the range without making that maximum elevation? No; unless there was a very considerable deviation altogether.
735. You know no better route between Lismore and Byron Bay than following up that river? No.
736. Does that involve very much curvature in the line? Yes.
737. Many crossings of the river? Not so very many. We follow the valley, but do not cross it very often.
738. You keep winding round the edge of the spurs all the way? Yes.
739. So the distance between the two points has increased how much over the straight line? I cannot tell you that.
740. Is it 25 per cent.? I daresay it would be.
741. Do you know the physical geography of the Big Scrub generally? I have been through it on the railway, but not away from the line, except so far as to examine possible deviations in the neighbourhood.
742. Are you able to give us any information as to Mr. See's remark that a line pretty well north from Lismore to Murwillumbah would be an improvement on the present line? That I cannot say. I think from appearance that it would be very rough.
743. Have you been north from Lismore at all? No.
744. While engaged between Lismore and Byron Bay did you have any occasion to go from any point of that line towards Ballina? No.
745. You know nothing of the country between those two points? No.
746. You do not know what elevation you reach half way between Lismore and your summit? I cannot say right off, but it is all shown on the section. It is rising all the way from Lismore to the Dividing Range.
747. You are compelled to go round that point at the coast;—you could not avoid hitting the coast at Byron Bay? If we went more inland we would get rougher country.
748. *Chairman.*] If you went more inland to avoid Byron Bay you would have to go nearer the coast to go across the Brunswick would you not? I do not know.
749. You do not know that country? I did not examine from Byron Bay to about 2 miles north of the Brunswick. That was examined by Mr. Alexander.
750. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you know the country from the Brunswick to Murwillumbah? From there I had a slight examination.
751. Does that go round spurs or over a ridge? It goes over a ridge.
752. It crosses one main ridge? Yes, between the Brunswick and Murwillumbah.
753. Does it ascend any valley? Yes.
754. And goes down the valley on the other side? Yes.
755. In each case you keep to the water-course? Yes.
756. That is the best route you can take? Yes.
757. Do you remember the maximum elevation there? No, I was not concerned with the elevation. It is more the gradients one keeps in one's mind.
758. Can you tell us whether there is easy lateral access to each side of your railway? I think it is very difficult in most of the country between Lismore and the Tweed—very bad and hilly roads.
759. You see this line is to open up all the country to facilities of transit;—I want to know whether by taking a line up a valley like this you have made it easy for producers 8 or 10 miles away to get to your line, or will it be difficult? I do not think there will be any difference from any other route. There will be difficulty in any case, because of the badness of the roads.
760. I mean as far as the line is concerned? No.
761. You think lateral access would be difficult in any case? Yes.
762. You are of opinion that lateral roads are essential to make this railway a success? Yes.
763. Without them it will be of little value? Comparatively so.
764. Good local roads are an absolutely necessary adjunct to this scheme? That is what struck me on this portion.
765. Did you go far from the line? No.
766. But you heard of the country? Yes.
767. And what you had seen led you to form that impression? Yes.
768. But the railway must be backed up by good local roads or it will be of little use? Certainly.
769. You saw no reason to alter the main line of the route? I have altered it in many instances.
770. But only in details? Yes.
771. On the plan behind you you see two lines between Lismore and Byron Bay—one being apparently an alternative survey;—do you know anything of that survey? No. I examined the one to the right—the more northerly one.
772. You know nothing of the other route? No. 773.

- C. O. Burge, Esq., 773. Did you go off the line from Murwillumbah to the Tweed at all on the other side? I examined thoroughly all the country between Murwillumbah and Macpherson Range with reference to a connection with Queensland.
- 6 Feb., 1890. 774. So far as you saw there was no desirable deviation on either side from the Brunswick to Murwillumbah? No. I examined also the coast line—that would be considered the alternative.
775. You do not consider that a better line between Brunswick and Murwillumbah could be laid out practically now? No, except in detail.
776. Between Byron Bay and Murwillumbah is the railway forced on to the coast at the Brunswick? I did not examine that portion. Mr. Alexander went over that.
777. Because the line crosses the Brunswick near the mouth apparently? Yes.
778. You could not go round the Heads at the Brunswick? I think not, but I have not examined that.
779. Taking the line between Lismore and Casino, is that a line that has any elevations to conquer? Not very much; there will be a tunnel.
780. Is that up and down, crossing creeks and ridges? No, it is an easy country except the Dividing Range, between the two arms of the river, and there there will be a tunnel.
781. Do you go up a valley to get to that range? No, not specially one valley. It is only a very small stream, and we cross the range at the lowest point.
782. Is there a good road between Lismore and Casino? Yes.
783. Is the land settled? I think pretty fairly.
784. Did you see people taking their produce to the market? Yes.
785. Was the road a fair one for the country? It was very good between those two points.
786. Would the railway run very much on the line of the road? Not far off.
787. It will duplicate the existing means of communication? Yes; they are both pretty direct between those places.
788. Did you examine the line from Grafton to Casino? Yes.
789. Is that an easy line? Very easy.
790. No great or expensive works on that line? No, not at all. There are some large creeks to cross, but taking it as a whole, it would be counted as an easy line.
791. You examined the line from Murwillumbah to the mouth of the Tweed? Yes.
792. Is that a difficult piece? No.
793. If we wished to connect with Queensland it would be an easy line? I would call it an easy line—not specially easy, but not difficult.
794. It runs near the river all the way? Yes, as far as what they call the junction of the north arm, and then it follows the course of the back waters, and goes up to the Tweed Heads.
795. Have you any great range to cross? No.
796. Only minor difficulties? Yes.
797. So the connection with Queensland would not be very difficult? No.
798. To make that, should we go up there or across the range? It would be practically impossible to cross the range. The Queensland Government are proposing to carry their line to the Tweed Heads.
799. That is close to the boundary? Yes.
800. Is there a mile between the outlet at the mouth of the Tweed and the boundary? No, it is almost co-incident. The boundary passes through Point Danger, which is practically one head of the Tweed River, and the mouth is close to that, and the Queensland Government line runs close up under Point Danger.
801. You do not know if any trial surveys have been made north of Lismore by any surveyors? I do not.
802. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Was the route *via* Murwillumbah chosen in preference to that by Cudgen on account of there being only one crossing of the river instead of two? It does not involve that. In any case there would be only one crossing of the Tweed River.
803. Is it practicable for the Queensland Government to meet you directly north of Murwillumbah? I think it is impossible, on account of the engineering difficulties.

WEDNESDAY, 12 FEBRUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHEBY.	WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JACOB GARRARD, Esq.	CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

John M'Farlane, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

- J. M'Farlane, Esq., M.P., 804. *Mr. Lee.*] You are a Member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of the Clarence? Yes.
- 12 Feb., 1890. 805. Do you reside in the Clarence district? No; in Sydney.
806. Have you at any time resided in the Clarence district? Yes; about twenty-four years.
807. Up to about what date? Till 1884.
808. You expressed a desire to give evidence on the question of the construction of a line of railway from Grafton to the Tweed? I was desired to give evidence by the Member for Grafton.
809. The Committee will be very glad to have any information you can place before them now with respect to that proposed line? I do not think I can say very much fresh on the subject. As far as I can learn a great deal of evidence has been given.
810. Do you happen to know the route proposed? I know it fairly well. I cannot say that I know the surveyed line—the exact line where the railway is proposed to go, but I know the locality very well.

811. Have you been in the Tweed River district? No; but I have been on the Richmond River.
812. Have you been in the Brunswick district? No.
813. In the neighbourhood of Byron Bay? No.
814. Have you been in the neighbourhood of Lismore? Yes; I have been in Lismore.
815. And Casino? Not Casino. I have been very close to it, but not in the town.
816. Do you know the country between Casino and Lismore? Not very well.
817. Do you know the country between Casino and Grafton? Yes.
818. Along the proposed line of railway? As I stated before, not exactly along the surveyed line, but I know the locality generally.
819. You have a general knowledge? Yes.
820. What is the character of the country between Casino and Grafton? Fairly good. It is good grazing country, and portions of it could be placed under cultivation. There are a number of portions that could be placed under orchards, or anything of that description. I do not say it is the very richest quality of land, taking it all through, because it is not, but it is good grazing land, so far as my judgment will serve.
821. In what portion of the Clarence did you reside? In Grafton and Ulmarra.
822. How long were you residing there? Twelve months in Grafton and twenty-three years in Ulmarra.
823. Did you ever reside at Lawrence? Never.
824. During your term of residence there was it the custom at any time for the Richmond River people to send produce across to the Clarence for shipment to Sydney? I never heard of it.
825. Were the Clarence people in the habit of sending produce across to the Richmond? Certainly not.
826. Was there any interchange of products between the two rivers? In agricultural products certainly not worth mentioning. There might be a very small exchange, but not worth mentioning.
827. Do you think that if a line of railway were constructed from Casino to Grafton there would be an interchange of products between the Richmond and the Clarence Rivers? I think so.
828. Having in view that they produce the same kind of products and both have ports, do you think they would be likely to use the railway in order to send from one river to the other? Only at certain seasons; no doubt if there were a railway constructed there would be an interchange at various seasons of the year. When a product was out of season in one district it might not be out of season in another.
829. That would be occasionally and according to circumstances? Exactly.
830. Not regularly? Not in agricultural produce, unless in potatoes. I do not think the Richmond produces potatoes in sufficient quantities for their own requirements, but the Clarence does, and there would be, I daresay, a fair trade in potatoes.
831. Could the proposed railway be made to touch any other portion of the Clarence except Grafton? Yes; it could be made to touch almost any other portion.
832. But having in view deep water and the probable traffic? Yes.
833. At what point? I believe Lawrence is the nearest point. I may say that this is my opinion that if it were simply a railway to be constructed between the Clarence and the Richmond Rivers, certainly Grafton would be the wrong place to have it and so also would Casino. A much nearer route could be got to connect the two rivers in less than half the distance, and at less than half the cost by connecting them lower down where the distance between them is only 24 miles.
834. Where from? From Woodburn to Iluka is only 23 miles.
835. Iluka is at the entrance to the Clarence River? Yes; on the north side.
836. That would be of very little benefit to the Upper Clarence? I do not see that that would be much benefit at all to the Upper Clarence.
837. Is that the point you favour as a terminal point for any proposed railway between the two rivers? I cannot say that it is, because in my opinion a railway simply made to connect the two rivers I do not think would pay, but I look upon the railway from the Grafton to the Tweed River as simply a section of the north coast line, and I think that that was the intention when the scheme was first proposed.
838. Where would you propose to have the terminal point on the Clarence? If not at Grafton at least close to it. I think above the navigation of the ocean boats would be the proper place to cross the river, and I think that that is the only practicable place to cross. I do not think that the river could be crossed lower down.
839. You think that if there were a terminal point it should be at or above Grafton and not lower down the river? Yes; I am speaking of crossing the river.
840. Supposing it were made a portion of the north coast railway, what traffic could be brought across from the Tweed, through the Richmond to the Clarence, and thence by the north coast railway? The passenger traffic would be very considerable. There is a large passenger traffic at present between the Clarence and the Richmond. I think there are five lines of coaches running daily between different parts of the Clarence and the Richmond, and they seem to be doing a fair trade—to be paying. They have been continued for a large number of years, and that is one evidence that they are not losing money.
841. They carry mails, do they not? Yes; mails and passengers and parcels.
842. Do you think that the residents in the Tweed River district would be likely to use that line if it were constructed? For passenger traffic they certainly would.
843. From the Tweed by the coast to Sydney? I think they would use it this way: Take the train to Grafton, and the steamer there.
844. Do you think they would go past the steamers on the Richmond to go to the Clarence and take the steamer? I think so. Under ordinary circumstances they would, because of the state of the Richmond bar. It has been uncertain up to the present time, although it is very good now. I do not suppose that at the present time they would go past Lismore, only that they have a better class of steamers running to the Clarence for carrying passengers.
845. Having in view the improvements already sanctioned for the Richmond River heads, and the extreme probability of providing a safe entrance there, do you think that if a safe entrance were made there the passengers would pass the Richmond River? Certainly not. If the other requirements kept pace with the improvements made to the Richmond—that is, if the bar or harbour was made equally as good as the Clarence bar or harbour.
846. Nor would the Casino people, I presume, go across to the Clarence for that purpose if the Richmond River entrance were made good? I think that it would not make very much difference to the Casino people.

- J. M. Farlane, Esq., M.P.
12 Feb., 1890.
- people. They cannot go by ocean steamers from Casino. They must go to Lismore or down the river to pick up the ocean boats, so that if the accommodation were not exactly as good in the Richmond River boats, it is probable that they would go to Grafton. At the present time some of the residents in the Tweed go to Brisbane. In some instances I know they have gone to Brisbane in order to go to Sydney, and in some cases they go the Clarence in order to go to Sydney.
847. You think that that line would be very likely used as a passenger line more than for produce? For a passenger line it would be used more than for the purpose of interchange of produce. No doubt if the line were constructed it is bound to open up a large area of country along the line which would, of course, increase the traffic upon the line.
848. What is the freight per bag on maize from the Clarence to Sydney? 1s. 3d.
849. If the improvements to the Clarence River Heads and the Richmond River Heads are carried out, is that rate of freight likely to be reduced? I think so.
850. To about what? I should think to about 10d. a bag. I myself have known a time when the freight was 6d.; but that only lasted for a short time, and was caused by excessive competition.
851. That being the case, do you think that the railway could possibly carry the produce at 10d. per bag to Sydney and compete with the steamers? Certainly not. I do not think the railway would compete—at least they would have to make a special concession for that particular line. There would have to be a differential rate.
852. Then about the inward freight—goods shipped from Sydney and other places to the Clarence and Richmond River districts—would they, in your opinion, be shipped by steamer to those rivers, or sent up by this proposed coastal railway? Heavy goods would, I believe, be shipped by steamer, but perhaps drapery and the like would be shipped by rail.
853. Would not the freight be an important factor in the carriage of the goods? In drapery it would not amount to a very great deal.
854. What is the ordinary freight on drapery, which I presume is by measurement? 15s. to 20s. by steamer per ton measurement.
855. Do you think that the railway could possibly compete with the steamers under those conditions? I admit that the freight by train would be dearer than by a steamer, but in the case of drapery I think it would go by rail.
856. That being the case, if it went by steamer it would go to the respective ports of the Richmond, the Tweed, and the Clarence? Yes.
857. Therefore there would be no necessity to send the goods across from the Clarence to the Richmond by rail? Not if they went to the Richmond River certainly.
858. So far as you can say that line would answer the purposes of a passenger line? Yes.
859. And occasionally perhaps for an interchange of produce? I think it would be more than occasionally. I do not think that there would be a heavy interchange, but I think it would be pretty constant.
860. Have you anything further to say? With regard to the continuation of the railway to the south after crossing the river at Grafton, I think that the railway must be constructed farther south than Grafton, to give accommodation to the numerous settlers now settling down on the country at the head of the Urara River, some 50 miles from Grafton, where there is a large area of the richest land. I think it is a certainty that the railway must be constructed at an early date from this rich country to Grafton, as they really have no port—Grafton being the nearest one.
861. *Mr. Garrard.*] Not necessarily to go to Sydney, but to go to Grafton as the nearest port? Grafton would certainly be the nearest port.
862. *Mr. Lee.*] For transshipment by steamer? Yes. In fact it is my opinion that the construction of the north coast line would save the country the expense of making harbours for small rivers. It would be better if instead of attempting to make those harbours, railways were constructed to the different rich localities in the neighbourhood where there is already a fairly good harbour or a prospect of making one; it would answer the requirements of the settlers far better than would tinkering with harbours that never would be safe.
863. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you think it would be a sound national policy to make the Clarence the port for the Richmond? Not if there were a reasonable probability of making the Richmond a safe port by the expenditure provided.
864. If there is that probability, you think that the Richmond should have its own port and the Clarence its own? I do, most certainly.
865. *Chairman.*] For the first 60 miles from Grafton on this line, we have been told that the country is very poor unproductive soil—is that so? It is not unproductive.
866. Is there any settlement on it apart from pastoral occupation? Not large. There are small patches of cultivation. I have not seen it for some years.
867. On the creeks? Yes.
868. It is principally used for grazing and timber-getting, is it not? Yes.
869. There is no communication between Grafton and Casino by coaches? Not at the present time, I think.
870. There never has been, has there? Yes, there has.
871. From Grafton to Casino? Yes. I am not exactly certain whether the coach is discontinued now.
872. We have been told that, after fifty years of settlement, the traffic between Grafton and Casino has never been able to support a public coach, and that there is absolutely no goods traffic between those two places? At one time, to my knowledge, there was a coach.
873. Lawrence is the point of departure and arrival between the Richmond and the Clarence Rivers? One of the points—the other is lower down—from Chatsworth to Woodburn. The principal passenger traffic comes from the north arm of the Clarence River to Woodburn. I think there are three or four lines of coaches.
874. In the Clarence and Richmond districts there is a similarity of produce—that is, sugar, maize, timber, and pastoral and dairy produce, are what each of them produces? Yes.
875. So there would be no interchange of commodities between these two places? Except at certain periods, when one of the products is out of season on one river, and not out of season on the other—for instance in the case of maize. Recently I have sent maize to the Richmond while there was plenty on the Clarence.
876. Then you think that the extension of the line to Grafton would be justified only by carrying it farther

- farther south? Of course I cannot say whether it would be justifiable to carry it, unless there was a prospect of continuing it farther south, but I think that that is the intention—to carry it farther south.
877. You know that, at the present time, the Richmond River is just as navigable as the Clarence, and higher up, is it not? I do not think it is navigable higher up, although ocean boats do go higher up on the Richmond than on the Clarence. They could go up higher than Grafton, but they do not do it.
878. The entrance at the bar is as good in the Richmond as in the Clarence at the present time, is it not? I think it is nearly as good.
879. Then if there is to be no interchange of commodities between those two points, what would be the justification for the construction of a line of railway from Lismore to the Clarence? There would be a large passenger traffic between the two places.
880. Why? They have got equally good boats on the Richmond and the Clarence, have they not? I suppose there would be a good deal of local traffic between the Clarence and the Richmond, as there is at the present time—I mean residents on one of the rivers going to the other.
881. Knowing it as you do, and describing it as grazing land, do you think that there would be sufficient passenger traffic from that land to justify the construction of a railway? No. I do not.
882. Even prospectively—certainly it would not now? No, it would not now.
883. A justification of a line to Grafton would be an extension to take in the rich lands you describe? That is a strong argument, I see, in favour of it.
884. But the great argument used by people in that district in connection with New England, is it not? That is what they are all looking and hoping for—to get some connection with the table-lands in New England from Grafton? They are agitating for that, but do not use that argument in connection with this proposed line. That is a separate matter.
885. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Supposing the line is constructed from Casino down to the coast, and then on to Murwillumbah, do you think that the trade of that large district is likely to gravitate towards Brisbane? I think so.
886. I mean if the line between those two points is constructed and the north coast line is not carried out as proposed? I think so. I think that the principal part of the Richmond River trade will, as regards maize, go to Brisbane. Through the whole of this year I have shipped maize in large quantities from Sydney to Brisbane and Northern Queensland—maize, and potatoes, and other agricultural produce, and if there is a railway constructed to the Queensland border, I have not the slightest doubt that the bulk of this produce will not be sent to the Sydney market at all, but go to Brisbane.
887. If that be so, is there a likelihood of Brisbane supplying that district with stores? Very probably.
888. Do you think that it is essential to securing this trade that the line should be constructed between Casino and the Hunter River—that is, the original North Coast line? What I stated before about that was, that the railway rates would have to be greatly reduced before they could compete with the water-carriage.
889. You think that if the north coast line were carried out in its entirety, it would not be able to compete with the steamers? Not from the northern rivers—that is, provided that harbours are made as good as we were led to believe they would be, by carrying out Sir John Coode's recommendations.
890. Is not the line to Kiama successfully competing with steamers on the south coast? I believe so.
891. Is not the same result likely to accrue if a line be constructed to the Hunter River from Casino? Well, the distance is greater. I should guess that it would be nearly 400 miles of railway from Sydney to Grafton by the north coast line, and that is a little longer than by sea, and the sea-carriage must necessarily be at a less rate.
892. But, though the distance is greater, the line would go through very productive districts? Yes.
893. And these districts at the present time have no safe harbours? No. Some of them, you might say, have no harbours at all. I know selectors who have been six or seven years on some of the best land in the country, but have had no market. Some of them have not had 6d. from the produce grown at different times during that period.
894. If the line were carried as far as Grafton from the Hunter River they would produce profitably? Yes. I think the country it would open up would pay for its construction.
895. Do you think it would be desirable on the part of the State to build a non-productive line from Grafton to Casino in order to prevent trade going to Brisbane? If there were any danger of the trade going to Brisbane, I think it would be good policy.
896. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you know anything of the country between our border and Brisbane? No.
897. You have already said that you know nothing of the country between Lismore and the Tweed? I do not know anything of the country farther north than Lismore.
898. You do not know any difficulties then that would intervene to prevent our trade going to Brisbane? No; I am not acquainted with the country.
899. *Mr. Copeland.*] From Lismore to Ballina, at the mouth of the river, the river is navigable all the way? Yes, all the way from Lismore to Ballina.
900. Can you give the Committee any reason why there should be a railway constructed from Lismore—where there is navigable water—to take the traffic away from that navigable water to Byron Bay? No, I do not see any reason to justify it, unless for the opening up of the country between Lismore and Byron Bay, about which I know nothing, but which I believe to be good country.
901. Supposing we were to build a railway from Murwillumbah, say to Ballina, would not that open up the country? I think it would.
902. Would it not give people between these two places access to navigation? Yes. But if it were a railway merely between the rivers, I consider that either Casino or Grafton would be the wrong place to have it, and the same argument applies to Lismore.
903. Supposing a railway were constructed from Murwillumbah to Ballina, you would not want to construct a railway from Lismore to any other navigable place, would you? Not in order to get the produce from the Tweed River to navigable water.
904. Is not the river navigable at Casino, or within 2 or 3 miles of it? It is navigable for small vessels, but not for ocean-going boats. Some passenger steamers run up from Coraki to within, I think, 2 miles of Casina. They are not very small boats; they are river steamers.
905. Have you any knowledge of the Richmond River at all? I have a fair knowledge of the district.

J. M. Farlane,
Esq., M.P.

12 Feb., 1890.

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906. Do you know for what periods the Richmond River has been closed for navigation through steamers not being able to go either in or out? I think eight weeks is the longest period I have known that to occur.
907. Is it not a common occurrence for the river to be closed for three or four weeks? A few years ago it was a very common occurrence, but within the last few years we have had occasional floods, which have had the effect of clearing the sand bar away, and it has not been so frequent. Of course the steamers are detained sometimes for a few days at a time—a week, or something like that.
908. Supposing any of the farmers had their crops ready, say at Casino or at Lismore, and there was a railway from there to the Clarence River, do you think they would be likely to make use of that railway, supposing the Richmond were closed at the bar, to get their produce away? Oh, yes.
909. For anything like bananas and perishable cargo of that kind, would they not be likely to make use of the railway in order to have a certain get-away rather than send it to the Richmond if there was the slightest chance of its being blocked at the bar? Yes, certainly.
910. Which has the safest entrance, the Richmond or the Clarence? There is no comparison between them, as far as my judgment goes—the Clarence is by far the safest. It is very rare indeed that there is a boat bar-bound, beyond a few hours.
911. *Chairman.*] There is no necessity, then, for any great expenditure there? For the present line of steamers, which are not large enough for the trade.
912. *Mr. Copeland.*] You represent the Clarence district, do you not? Yes.
913. You do not represent the country between Lismore and Byron Bay—that is not in your electorate? No.
914. Still, as a man representing a neighbouring electorate, you have no hesitation in saying that a railway from Lismore to Byron Bay is not required, seeing that Lismore is already situated on navigable waters? Not for the produce that is grown near Lismore. It certainly, in my opinion, would never go to Byron Bay.
915. Would it not be a feasible proposal to have a railway from Murwillumbah past Byron Bay down to Ballina—would not that give the whole of the people north of the Richmond access to a navigable harbour? Not the whole of the people north of the Richmond. Of course there are some living near the Big Scrub, which goes some distance back from the sea. It would, however, give the residents on the Tweed River access to a part of the Richmond.
916. Do you think it would be a feasible proposal to build a railway from Murwillumbah to Lismore in a direct line through the Big Scrub—would it be possible to take a railway that way? I do not know the nature of the country, but from what I do know of it I think it would. I do not know the nature of the country from personal observation, I mean, but from knowledge I have gained from others, and from doing business with the people there, I think it would.
917. You have fair grounds for believing that the country is of such a character that a railway could be constructed between Murwillumbah and Lismore? Yes.
918. Do you think that the railway surveyed from Murwillumbah past Byron Bay, and so on, could be extended to Ballina? As far as I know the country, but I do not know much about the country except from hearsay, I do not think there will be any great difficulty.
919. Because if it could be done that would be connecting the whole of the Tweed River people with the navigable waters of the Richmond River at Ballina? Yes; it would answer the purpose of the Tweed River residents.
920. You do not know anything of the country in a direct line from Murwillumbah through here to Lismore;—you do not know whether the railway could be taken there? No, I have no personal knowledge at all.
921. If this railway is stopped at Casino would there be a feasible plan of getting connected with the table lands of New England from Casino? I do not know the country at all.
922. You do not know that the only possible route would be from Casino to Tenterfield, I suppose? I am not aware of that.
923. *Mr. Humphery.*] Would a railway from Murwillumbah to Byron Bay serve the district at all unless a breakwater were constructed at Byron Bay? At the present time it would not.
924. Would it not be necessary, in order to give settlers facilities for the conveyance of their produce, to construct a railway from the Tweed River to Lismore? At the present time of course it is wanted.
925. That is the nearest point of the Tweed River? I cannot say it is the nearest point.
926. According to the surveyed route? Well, according to that, it is very crooked.
927. In the absence of a breakwater at Byron Bay, would it not be in the interests of the whole district that the railway should be constructed as far as Lismore, instead of stopping at Byron Bay? Yes, that is what I always thought with regard to connecting the Tweed with the Richmond—to have a direct line from Lismore to (say) Murwillumbah. It would be much shorter than going *via* Byron Bay.
928. *Chairman.*] How far north of the Richmond have you ever been? I have not been north of the valley of the Richmond.
929. Then you have not been into the big scrub at all? No.
930. Then you know nothing of the country between the Richmond and the Tweed River? No.
931. You know nothing of the difficulties of connection between Southport and the Tweed River? Nothing whatever from personal knowledge.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Grafton to The Tweed.

APPENDIX.

A.

PRECIS OF PROCEEDINGS RELATING TO THE PROPOSED RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO THE TWEED.

22/10/84.—A sum of £1,980,000 for a line of railway from Grafton to the Tweed, *via* Casino, Lismore, and the Brunswick, was voted by Parliament in the Session of 1884. A trial survey of the proposed route, which had been some time in hand, was completed about the same time, but the permanent survey does not appear to have been commenced until early in 1886.

Aug., 1886.—The plan, section, and book of reference of the first section of the line were laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly (15/9/86) and were unanimously approved.

In the Legislative Council the proposal, by seventeen votes to seven, was referred to a Select Committee.

With a view to being prepared with evidence for the Select Committee Inspector Robinson was deputed to visit the district and collect information (Jan., 1887). The following particulars are extracted from the Inspector's report:—

Population of Grafton	5,100
Ditto located between Grafton and Casino, exclusive of the two towns	6,850

Electorate of Clarence and Grafton.

Area cultivated	35,531 acres.	Produce—continued:—	
Produce:—		Molasses	2,805 hogsheads.
Maize.....	787,532 bushels.	Live Stock:—	
Barley and oats	3,020 „	Horses	12,016
Hay	140 tons.	Cattle	46,317
Sugar	3,610 „	Sheep	3,318

Between Grafton and Casino (65 miles) the country was found to consist of box-tree ridges, fit, for the most part, for grazing only.

The exports from the Clarence River in 1886 were as under:—

Maize	431,680 bushels.	Figs	2,844
Sugar	3,610 tons.	Potatoes	17,327 sacks.
Molasses.....	2,695 hogsheads.	Pine timber	1,596,975 feet.
Preserved meats	20,048 cases.	Cedar	3,465 „
Cattle	5,870	Hardwood	47,865 „

After passing Casino there were 6,200 acres of first-class land, fit for cereals, &c., but owing to the absence of the means of transport very little of it was taken up and settlement was limited. Casino is 2½ miles from the wharf, but the river not being navigable to the town the goods have to be hauled thither at a cost of 2s. 6d. Goods for Casino have to be transhipped at Coraki and brought to the wharf in droghers. It was stated that if there was a railway from Grafton that mode of conveyance would be adopted. The population of Casino was 1,500, and of the country thence to Lismore 1,060. Land under cultivation between the two places only 1,020 acres. Lismore had water communication, navigable by small sea-going steamers. Population of town, 1,962; of district, between that town and Brunswick village, 519. Land under cultivation, 1,080 acres.

Exports from Richmond River as under:—

Maize	295,200 bushels.	Timber of all kinds	12,086,331 feet.
Sugar	3,800 tons.	Cattle	892
Molasses	3,128 hogsheads.		

Total area under cultivation in Richmond Electorate..... 38,026 acres.

Produce:—		Live Stock:—	
Cereals—chiefly maize ...	287,620 bushels.	Horses	11,010
Sugar	3,850 tons.	Cattle	138,438
Molasses	2,806 hogsheads.	Sheep	1,500

The country between Lismore and the Brunswick River was good scrub land thickly covered with valuable timber.

Brunswick River to Tweed River.

Population—Brunswick River	100
Ditto District	480

The land between the two places was good scrub land heavily covered with valuable timber, but the timber trade was almost at a standstill for want of the means of conveyance to the water, there being no roads, and the timber being cleared away to within 9 miles of the water.

Nearly the whole of the area under cultivation was confined to the banks of the rivers and creeks, and the only means of transit to a port of shipment was by the road. It was not to be expected that a railway would secure any of this river traffic, and there could never be much interchange of commodities between the Clarence and Richmond districts, because the products of the two districts were of a similar character. The proposed line would doubtless tend to open up this country and induce settlement, but for a long period the traffic would be very small. Judging by the coaches which run from Grafton to Casino and Lismore, the passenger traffic would be very light. It was not probable that there would be a traffic in live stock, inasmuch as a very small number were shipped by seagoing steamers, people preferring to take the animals by road to Newcastle and Sydney. One mixed train a day each way would fully meet all the requirements of the traffic for a long time to come—giving, the Inspector says, a daily mileage of 330 miles.

In a minute commenting upon the above report, the policy of leaving out that portion of the line which passes through country already served by water carriage was mooted. It was not likely that the Casino people would pay the charges by railway from Grafton (65 miles) while they had water carriage available at their own doors. The question, the writer says, might be considered of leaving out the portion of the proposed line between Grafton and Lismore and constructing the line only from Lismore to the Tweed. It would pass through what is known as the "Big Scrub," some of the most fertile land in the Colony, while between Casino and Lismore the land was only fit for pastoral purposes. The minute admits that, judged by existing population and cultivation, the line from Lismore to the Tweed would not pay working expenses, but a large traffic in agricultural produce would be developed and a very extensive trade in timber, and the ultimate prospects of the limited line suggested were equal to those of any line in the Colony.

4/3/89.—A letter of this date, addressed by Mr. Surveyor Sharkey to Inspector Robinson, draws a very unfavourable picture of the line, and must not be passed over here. Mr. Sharkey states that the traffic on the Main Road, Grafton, to 23-m. 51-ch. is very small—little wheel traffic, and no heavy or goods traffic of any kind. From 23-m. 51-ch. to Casino the traffic is, he says, "much greater," but adds, "one train per week might pass, but not more," and I can only explain the apparent inconsistency by the not very satisfactory suggestion that Mr. Sharkey intended to say "not much greater." From 31-m. 20-ch. to Casino there is no heavy or goods traffic of any kind, and the coach from Lawrence to Lismore, *via* Casino, is more frequently empty than not, and without the postal subsidy the traffic would not pay for two coaches a week. From Casino to Lismore the passenger traffic by horses and by buggy only is much greater, but, owing to the facilities afforded by the river, no goods of any kind are carried. Mr. Sharkey had no knowledge of the country beyond this point. He states

further that from 6-m. to Casino there is very little settlement, and no cultivation except at Deep Creek, and there limited. From 6-m. to 55-m. there are, he says, only seven resident settlers within 3 miles of the surveyed line, and one only of them depends on the land for a livelihood. Over the whole of this distance there is no land which is fit for anything but grazing purposes. On the rich lands of the Clarence River maize, sugar, and pumpkins are grown. Casino, Lismore, and the Brunswick and Tweed produce the same articles. Throughout, the production was in excess of local consumption, and the surplus was sent by water to Sydney, Newcastle, and Brisbane. Mr. Sharkey therefore fails to see how any approach to payable traffic can be hoped for, as there can be no interchange of commodities between the districts to create a local traffic, and, for the conveyance of produce to Sydney and Newcastle, the railway could never compete with the steamers and other vessels. All this, Mr. Sharkey says, was freely acknowledged by the residents, who only wanted a railway to the interior to give a new market to themselves and access to a port to the population inland.

21/3/89.—The Clarence River Railway and Harbour Improvement League forwarded to the Railway Commissioners a printed statement of reasons why lines of railway should be constructed from Grafton to the Tweed, from Inverell to Glen Innes, and from Glen Innes to Grafton, with replies to objections. The statistics given in this document will be found elsewhere. The arguments, so far as they refer to the proposed line from Grafton to the Tweed, are—

- (1.) That a heavy debt has been incurred for railway construction, and that the people of the districts referred to have not participated in the benefits of that expenditure, while they share the responsibility of the debt and contribute their quota of the interest thereon; and
- (2.) That the population, and productions and capacity for the increased settlement and development entitled them to the construction of the line already sanctioned by Parliament; and
- (3.) Because it is essential to keep our trade within our own border, and if this line be not constructed the trade of the northern part of New South Wales will go to Queensland.

Mr. T. Showeller forwarded to the Railway Commissioners a memo. professing to set forth the conclusions of the Prospecting Board on a recent visit to the Clarence District. The capabilities of the district are stated on this document in glowing terms, gold, silver, antimony, copper, and zinc being found in payable quantities, and though last not least, coal of fair quality.

The Lismore Railway Committee also forwarded a statement to the Commissioners in advocacy of the portion this line extending from the Richmond to the Tweed. From the document the following particulars are extracted.

District of Casino-Lismore and the Tweed.

Area of land	3,000,000 acres
Area of freehold land	250,000 „
Area of conditional purchase land.....	600,000 „
Area still available	2,150,000 „
Increase of population in 10 years.....	20,000
Produce in 1887 :—	
Sugar	8,947 tons
Maize	234,000 bushel
Probably doubled for 1888.	
Butter	259,422 lb.
Cheese.....	88,431 lb.
Both of which industries are in their infancy,	
Live stock :—	
Horses.....	15,268
Cattle.....	137,098
Sheep.....	1,251
Pigs.....	11,734
The departure of vessels from Richmond (no returns from Tweed) are :—	
Steamers.....	203
Sailing vessels.....	137

For the purpose of illustrating the progress of the District the Committee direct attention to the fact that Lismore which in 1879 was an insignificant village, is now a Municipality with 3,000 inhabitants, possessing a system of water supply and sewerage and gas works, and that town land, which was considered dear at £2 a foot in 1879, is now worth £30. Casino and Ballina, with 2,000 and 1,000 souls respectively, are also Municipalities, while there are twelve important townships and numerous villages all directly or indirectly concerned in the matter of Railway communication. The surveyed line from Lismore to the Tweed would pass for 60 miles through land, the richness of which could not be overestimated, and almost every inch of this (not reserved) had been taken up. The products of the district are stated by the Committee to be sugar, maize, barley, oats, rye, potatoes, lucerne, linseed, jute, tea, coffee, cotton, rice, tapioca, arrowroot, ginger, yams, pumpkins, squashes, melons, grammas, and tobacco, vegetables of all kinds, and (marvellous to relate) the fruits of temperate, sub-tropical and tropical climates. The extensive forests of the district contain cedar, pine, cudgaree, long jack, rosewood, sycamore, beech, teak, white myrtle blue fig, silky oak, sassafras, ironbark, gum, peppermint, turpentine, blackbutt, tallow-wood, blood-wood, box, mahogany, &c., &c., and millions of feet of these valuable woods were in the process of clearing, destroyed because the difficulty and cost of carriage were so great. The timber trade of the district was important, and with railway facilities would be enormously increased. Among the minerals of the locality was coal, of which numerous outcrops were known to exist. All they asked was the means of turning the resources to practical account. Under fairly liberal treatment their district would provide homes for half a million of people. Nature had lavished her best gifts upon them in soil, climate, timber, and rainfall, and if the Government did its duty by them and the country, then would reap the full benefit of their "splendid inheritance."

23/2/89.—Mr. Whitton submitted plan, section, and book of reference, with estimates as under :—

Grafton to Byron Bay.
Byron Bay to Murwillumbah.
(Alternative) Byron Bay to Chinderah.

4/3/89.—The Cabinet approved of the submission of the proposals for the consideration and report of the Railway Commissioners.

April 27 and 30.—The Clarence Railway and Harbour Improvement Committee forwarded to the Commissioners several statements of statistics, viz. :—Exports from the Clarence, population returns, municipal returns, postal returns, school returns, maize returns, sugar, area of land, average holding, conditional purchases, &c., but of the several items of information, some have little, if any bearing, on the matter at issue, and others are stated in a not very intelligible shape. The population of the electorates of Grafton and the Clarence is said to have increased from 14,496 in 1881, to 18,725 in 1889; and of the borough of Grafton from 3,891 in 1881, to 5,000 in 1889.

The Railway Commissioners submitted their report, and that document is now before the Committee.

C. A. B., 19/10/89.

A 1.

PROPOSED DEVIATION, VIA MULLUMBIMBY, OF RAILWAY GRAFTON TO THE TWEED.

20/1/85.—Shortly after a trial survey of a line from Grafton to the Tweed, *via* Brunswick, had been completed, Mr. Neil Campbell addressed the Minister in opposition to the surveyed line across the Brunswick, which he represented to be too low down, unnecessarily expensive, and not convenient for the population, and recommending a trial survey of a deviation from Tragara, *via* Mullumbimby, to the head navigation middle arm for 3 or 4 miles, then over to the north, and to strike the original line there. A railway station would be wanted on or about Reserve 108A.

Mr. Whitton promised that on the return of the surveyor to Sydney the plan should be examined with a view to determine whether this trial survey should be made.

14/3/85.—Mr. John McGregor addressed the Minister, urging the same point, and stating that by far the larger area of rich agricultural land lay considerably inland, and for several miles along both banks of the river, where also the great body

body of the settlers were located. The general opinion was that there should be a station at the Mullumbimby Township Reserve to accommodate the surrounding residents, and that the line, therefore, should be taken through Mullumbimby. The surveyed line crossed the river about a mile from the ocean, and had only sand and ti-tree swamps on one side and barren ridge on the other. The railway surveyor was of opinion that the line should be taken through Mullumbimby, but the way seemed barred by a range of hills. A practicable route, however, had since been found by a resident, who was prepared to point it out to any authorized person. The river being much narrower at the proposed deviation than near the coast the cost of bridging would be greatly reduced.

The Minister (Mr. Wright) called for a report on the subject.

July, 1886.—The Brunswick River Association presented a petition to the Minister stating the same facts, and urging a survey of the Mullumbimby deviation.

Mr. Secretary Lyne, then Minister, also called for a report.

25/8/86.—Mr. Neil Campbell again addressed the Minister, pointing out that the line as surveyed at the Brunswick River did not, and would not at any future time, meet the wants of the residents, and urging that a trial survey might be made from near Byron Bay, running inland, and crossing the river at Town Reserve 108A (Mullumbimby) at the head of the navigable waters of the Brunswick River, and thence to join Mr. Surveyor Gibbs' line.

This letter also was forwarded for report.

Sept., 1886.—Mr. Ewing, M.P., presented a petition to the Minister from residents on the Brunswick River, setting forth the disadvantages of the surveyed route, and praying earnestly for the adoption of the Mullumbimby deviation.

This petition was sent to Mr. Palmer for report, but the papers do not disclose any action.

1/6/87.—Another petition from residents was presented to the Minister by Mr. Ewing, praying that a survey might be made of a deviation *via* Mullumbimby (the same already referred to). The petitioners stated that the surveyed line in this part was too near the coast to be of service, and passed through very poor land; that the line they proposed would tap a large area of rich and productive land; that it would greatly diminish the cost of bridging; and that three of their number were prepared to point out the route to any officer of the Government.

Action now was taken. Mr. Surveyor Wilkins was deputed to examine the country, and he reported that, accompanied by three of the residents, he went over the suggested route; that for the first six miles (to Mullumbimby) it presented no unusual difficulty, but from that point the country was so rough and broken that usual gradients could not be obtained without exceptionally heavy earthworks. Two spurs of the mountain would have to be tunnelled, and very heavy cuttings would be necessary. This adverse report was fatal, and Mr. Ewing was informed accordingly.

2/1/88.—After the lapse of some months, Mr. Neil Campbell again took up the case. He wrote to the Minister, stating that, after long and diligent search, they had discovered a practicable route on which the range could be pierced by a very short tunnel, and requesting that a trial survey might be made. He pointed out that the line, as surveyed, would be of no use to the people, inasmuch as if they had to cart their produce to near Brunswick Heads (where the station would be), they might just as well ship at Brunswick Heads, or cart to Byron Bay—in either case avoiding the railway. Again, the bridge required for the surveyed line would block the navigation. A railway as surveyed would, in fact, be a curse, and not a benefit to this district.

The papers do not disclose any action upon this letter.

1890.—The project has now once more been brought on the tapis by a memorial to the Engineer-in-Chief, and a letter to the local officer. They repeat the intimation made by Mr. Neil Campbell in his last communication, that a really practicable route has been discovered; and they proceed to represent the advantages of the deviation, but, as these have already been stated in this paper, they need not be given here.

31/1/90.—The question was again referred to Mr. Surveyor Wilkins, who reported that the proposed route as far as Mullumbimby was the same as that which he reported upon in 1887. Thence it traversed a somewhat rugged country, on the east of Mount Chincogan, the principal spurs of which would be the only obstacle to easy construction. One of these spurs would require a tunnel of 150 yards long, but the others could be graded at 1 in 50 by open cuttings. The deviation would increase the distance by about a mile. Petitioners had stated their case very clearly. Along the proposed deviation were rich volcanic land and alluvial flats, far beyond anything to be found on the original line. The earthworks on the deviation were heavier, but this would be compensated for by the saving in bridges. He must recommend a trial survey.

Mr. Firth is of opinion that a trial survey ought to be made.

Mr. Deane minutes that the line is already permanently staked passing through Brunswick; and that, to survey this deviation, whatever its merits may be, will cause delay. It is, moreover, a serious departure, Mr. Deane points out, from the line submitted to the Public Works Committee. At an earlier stage he would have had no hesitation in sanctioning a survey; but, under existing conditions, he would prefer to have Ministerial authority if that step is to be taken.

C. A. B.

7/3/90.

Submitted.—J.B., 11/3/90. Let the survey be made by all means, and at once, and inform Committee.—B.S., 11/3/90. Letter sent to Committee.—J.B., 11/3/90. Mr. Deane, B.C.—J.B., 11/3/90. Very urgent. Mr. Firth to instruct Mr. Wilkins to make the survey.—H.D., 12/3/90. Mr. Firth. Instructions sent in letter 90/97 to Mr. Wilkins to commence a trial survey of the proposed route at once.—T.R.F. *per* G.J.B., 13/3/90. Engineer-in-Chief, 14/3/90.

A 2.

LETTER FROM THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS ON THE PROPOSED DEVIATION VIA MULLUMBIMBY.

Sir,

Department of Public Works, Sydney, 11 March, 1890.

Referring to the question of the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed, which is now under the notice of your Committee, I am directed by the Secretary for Public Works to inform you that an application has been received for the survey of a short deviation from the original line *via* Mullumbimby.

The proposed new route has been examined by the resident officer, and he reports that the earthworks will be heavier and more costly than on the original line, and one mile longer; but these considerations, he is satisfied, will be fully compensated for by the diminished outlay for bridges. The advantages of the proposed deviation are that it will serve a considerable population of farmers, and that it runs through a tract consisting of fine volcanic soil and alluvial flat. The original line at this part, on the other hand, is said to have only a barren ridge on one side, and sand and swamp on the other.

The object of the Committee and of the Department being to secure the best line, the Minister has considered it his duty to state these facts for the consideration of the Committee, and has given instructions for a survey to be made at once, so that no time may be lost in the progress of the Committee's investigation.

I have, &c.,

J. BARRLING,

Under Secretary.

The Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

B.

MINUTE PAPER.

Subject :—Grafton to the Tweed Railway.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Sydney, 14 November, 1889.

IN my evidence last evening I am afraid I scarcely made myself clear as to the structure and objects of the Grafton to the Tweed line.

This railway is of importance as forming part of the proposed North Coast Railway which, starting from Maitland or Morpeth, and continuing northward, more or less parallel with the coast terminates near to the northern boundary of the Colony.

The completion of this railway is looked upon as a necessity of the future—the only serious interruption along the whole line being the Clarence River at Grafton, the bridging of which would be very costly undertaking, but some other means of getting the traffic across this barrier could probably be devised.

Apart from its value as a section of the said North Coast Railway, the line under consideration has merits of its own, and serves a special purpose in the district through which it runs. Its immediate object is to bring the produce of the district to the local ports, from whence it can be shipped to Sydney. The produce of the southern portion of this district would thus be conveyed to Grafton; that of the central and northern parts to Lismore; and, in the event of the construction of the break-water at Byron Bay, to the harbour thus formed.

The South Grafton to Glen Innes railway, to which reference was made yesterday, would not be of any use in connection with the line under consideration; but it might become of importance when the North Coast line, as a whole, is taken into account, *i.e.*, if it proved to be the only practicable route between the table-land and the coast.

A vote for this line was passed in 1834 at the same time as that for the Grafton to the Tweed railway, and the centre line has been permanently staked, but it would be a most undesirable railway to construct: firstly, on account of the great cost, which may largely exceed the vote (no reliable estimate having at that time been made, as pointed out by the Engineer-in-Chief); and secondly, on account of the difficulty of working, there being numerous 8-chain curves and long lengths of 1 in 33 grades along the line.

Should it be considered necessary to connect the North Coast railway with the New England railway for military or other reasons, the best routes to adopt would probably be south of the Clarence, South Grafton to Guyra; and north of the Clarence, Casino to Tenterfield. The former route is now being surveyed.

Between Casino and Tenterfield several trial surveys were run some years ago, but the plans of these lines were lost in the Garden Palace fire. The results of the surveys were not very satisfactory, but further exploration of the country might prove more successful.

H. DEANE,
Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

To the Chairman and Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

C.

LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS TO SURVEYORS.
Grafton to Tweed River.

Memo. Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch,
Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Sydney, 6 December, 1889.
I FORWARD herewith, for the information of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, a copy of a letter of instructions, dated 28th February, 1888, signed by Mr. Whitton, and addressed to Messrs. Geisow, Lloyd, and Thornbury, surveyors,
H. DEANE.
The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

[Enclosure.]

Railway, Grafton to Tweed River.

Memo. Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch,
Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Sydney, 28 February, 1888.
WITH the view of carrying out the determination of the Government that future railways are to be constructed as economically as possible, I wish Messrs. Geisow, Lloyd, and Thornbury to meet and arrange to examine the country at the places named below (dividing into sections as convenient), in order to obtain, if possible, a cheaper line. Rough tracings of plan and section, at undermentioned places, will be sent.

Can lower ground be obtained at about—

	m. ch.	m. ch.	m. ch.	m. ch.
	4	35	21	0 to 22 50
	8	0 to 8 25	23	0 to 24 50
	8	50 to 10 40	24	50 to 27 40
	11	0 to 12 60	39	40 to 40 50
	18	0 to creek at 20 miles 50 chains.		

And can line be raised at 27 miles 65 chains.

Can any improvement be made at 31 miles 50 chains, and from 43 miles to 47 miles 40 chains, and tunnel avoided; and at 63 miles to 66 miles 40 chains, 67 miles 40 chains to 68 miles 40 chains, 70 miles 20 chains to 70 miles 40 chains, new section.

The level of rails in all cases to be above highest known flood level.

Please also report generally if improvements can be effected in any other portion of the line.

JOHN WHITTON,

Messrs. Geisow, Lord, and Thornbury.

[To Evidence of C. J. Saunders, Esq.]

D.

SCHEDULE of lots sold in the village of Cavvanba (at Byron Bay):—Total number of allotments, 66; area, 30 acres 3 roods 4½ perches; price realised, £2,072 5s.; average price per acre, £67 7s. 9d.

Sale at Lismore, 28 July, 1886.

Section.	Allotment.	Area.	Upset price.	Price realised.	Section.	Allotment.	Area.	Upset price.	Price realised.
		a. r. p.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			a. r. p.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
44	1	0 2 0	15 0 0	33 0 0	47	1	0 2 0	15 0 0	26 10 0
"	2	0 2 0	15 0 0	21 0 0	"	2	0 2 0	15 0 0	16 0 0
"	3	0 2 0	15 0 0	15 0 0	"	3	0 2 0	15 0 0	16 0 0
"	4	0 2 0	15 0 0	15 0 0	"	4	0 2 0	15 0 0	15 0 0
"	5	0 2 0	15 0 0	21 0 0	"	5	0 2 0	15 0 0	25 0 0
"	6	0 2 0	15 0 0	16 0 0	"	6	0 2 0	15 0 0	20 0 0
"	7	0 2 0	15 0 0	15 10 0	"	7	0 2 0	15 0 0	16 5 0
"	8	0 2 0	15 0 0	16 0 0	"	8	0 2 0	15 0 0	16 10 0
"	9	0 2 0	15 0 0	20 10 0	"	9	0 2 0	15 0 0	22 0 0
"	10	0 2 0	15 0 0	31 10 0	"	10	0 2 0	15 0 0	46 5 0
		5 0 0	150 0 0	204 10 0			5 0 0	150 0 0	219 10 0
46	1	0 2 0	15 0 0	36 0 0	49	1	0 2 0	15 0 0	60 0 0
"	2	0 2 0	15 0 0	20 0 0	"	2	0 2 0	15 0 0	31 0 0
"	3	0 2 0	15 0 0	17 0 0	"	3	0 2 0	15 0 0	15 0 0
"	4	0 2 0	15 0 0	16 0 0	"	4	0 2 0	15 0 0	18 10 0
"	5	0 2 0	15 0 0	23 0 0	"	5	0 2 0	15 0 0	30 10 0
"	6	0 2 0	15 0 0	22 0 0	"	6	0 2 0	15 0 0	33 0 0
"	7	0 2 0	15 0 0	16 0 0	"	7	0 2 0	15 0 0	23 0 0
"	8	0 2 0	15 0 0	16 0 0	"	8	0 2 0	15 0 0	23 10 0
"	9	0 2 0	15 0 0	16 10 0	"	9	0 2 0	15 0 0	23 5 0
"	10	0 2 0	15 0 0	25 10 0	"	10	0 2 0	15 0 0	52 0 0
		5 0 0	150 0 0	208 0 0			5 0 0	150 0 0	309 15 0

Average price per acre realized at above sale, £47 1s. 9d.

Sale at Lismore, 25 May, 1887.

Section.	Allotment.	Area.	Upset price.	Price realised.	Section.	Allotment.	Area.	Upset price.	Price realised.
15	1	a. r. p. 0 2 0	£ s. d. 10 0 0	£ s. d. 12 0 0	16	1	a. r. p. 0 1 14	£ s. d. 10 0 0	£ s. d. 40 0 0
"	3	0 2 0	10 0 0	10 0 0	"	2	0 1 20	10 0 0	40 0 0
"	5	0 2 0	10 0 0	10 0 0	"	3	0 2 0	10 0 0	31 10 0
"	6	0 2 0	10 0 0	18 10 0	"	4	0 2 0	10 0 0	16 0 0
					"	5	0 2 0	10 0 0	20 0 0
					"	6	0 2 0	10 0 0	10 0 0
					"	7	0 1 20	10 0 0	10 0 0
					"	8	0 0 30½	10 0 0	10 10 0
		2 0 0	40 0 0	50 10 0			3 1 4½	80 0 0	178 0 0

Average price per acre realized at above sale, £43 6s. 4d.

Sale at Lismore, 14 October, 1887.

Section.	Allotment.	Area.	Upset price.	Price realised.	Section.	Allotment.	Area.	Upset price.	Price realised.
8	1	a. r. p. 0 1 0	£ s. d. 12 10 0	£ s. d. 212 10 0	18	1	a. r. p. 0 2 0	£ s. d. 25 0 0	£ s. d. 50 0 0
"	2	0 1 0	12 10 0	160 10 0	"	2	0 2 0	25 0 0	36 0 0
"	3	0 1 0	12 10 0	55 0 0	"	3	0 2 0	25 0 0	32 0 0
"	4	0 1 0	12 10 0	40 0 0	"	4	0 2 0	25 0 0	36 0 0
"	5	0 1 0	12 10 0	65 0 0	"	5	0 2 0	25 0 0	52 0 0
"	6	0 1 0	12 10 0	66 0 0	"	6	0 2 0	25 0 0	40 0 0
					"	7	0 2 0	25 0 0	25 0 0
					"	10	0 2 0	25 0 0	32 0 0
		1 2 0	75 0 0	599 0 0			4 0 0	200 0 0	303 0 0

Average price per acre realized at above sale, £164.

SUMMARY of details shown on enclosed Schedules.

In the village of Cavvanba, notified 19th December, 1885 :—

Area already sold.....	a. r. p. 30 3 0
Area reserved	50 2 38
Area still in the hands of the Crown and available for future sale	154 2 34
Balance, comprising roads, railway, and foreshore of village	263 3 8
Total area of village.....	500 0 0

Suburban lands of Cavvanba, notified 19th December, 1885 :—

Area reserved	246 0 0
Balance	1,954 0 0
Total area of suburban lands	2,200 0 0

Parish of Byron, not including the village or suburban lands of Cavvanba :—

Land reserved from sale	6,091 3 0
Unalienated land, not reserved.....	340 0 0
Total country lands in hands of the Crown	6,431 3 0

Parish of Brunswick, not including the villages of Brunswick and Mullimbimby :—

Land reserved from sale	14,068 2 29
Unalienated land	2,049 0 0
Total country lands in hands of the Crown	16,117 2 29

Reserves from sale in the Parish of Brunswick :—

No.	Area.	Notified.	Purpose, &c.
2	a. r. p. 235 0 0	24 Dec., 1861.....	Village.
8	1 0 15	23 Jan., 1886.....	Police station.
68	28 0 0	1 May, 1886.....	Police paddock.
532	240 0 0	13 Oct., 1879.....	Camping.
777	140 0 0	3 Aug., 1881.....	Camping and water.
777	80 0 0	7 Nov., 1884.....	" "
Exten. } 796	60 0 0	31 Oct., 1881.....	Water.
866	3 0 0	18 Sept., 1882.....	Public buildings.
867	5 0 0	18 " "	" "
868	5 1 8	18 " "	" "
869	26 0 0	18 " "	Public recreation.
870	1 0 0	18 " "	" "
872	23 0 0	18 " "	Public purposes.
873	2 0 0	18 " "	Public pound.
893	120 0 0	13 Nov., 1882.....	
893	75 0 0	3 Mar., 1884.....	} Access to tidal waters.
Exten. } 893	8 0 0	22 Dec., 1884.....	
S. exten. }			

Reserves from sale in the parish of Brunswick—*continued.*

No.	Area.	Notified.	Purpose, &c.
	a. r. p.		
899a	17 2 0	27 Oct., 1884.....	Ferry purposes.
909	80 0 0	8 Jan., 1883.....	Camping.
955	20 0 0	2 April, 1883.....	Quarry.
1,082	200 0 0	21 Jan., 1884.....	Roadway purposes (5 chains along shore.)
1,083	2 1 24	21 " ".....	Public purposes.
1,228a	152 0 0	27 Aug., 1884.....	Water, &c.
1,232	3 0 0	17 Nov., 1884.....	Camping.
1,251	155 0 0	10 Dec., 1884.....	Railway and other public purposes.
1,252	11,500 0 0	10 " ".....	Railway purposes.
3,957	4 0 38	20 Aug., 1887.....	Court-house and police.
4,975	0 1 18	4 Feb., 1888.....	Public buildings.
4,976	1 0 0	4 " ".....	" "
4,977	2 1 24	4 " ".....	" "
4,978	3 1 30	4 " ".....	" "
4,979	3 0 32	4 " ".....	Public recreation.
4,980	8 3 0	4 " ".....	" "
7,792	145 0 0	Proclaimed, 8 Dec., 1888	Railway purposes.
7,793	175 0 0	" " ".....	" "
9,039	70 3 0	1 June, 1889.....	Camping. "
9,040	100 0 0	1 " ".....	" "
9,140	0 1 0	15 " ".....	School of Arts.
9,286	272 0 0	13 July, 1889.....	Railway purposes.
Dedication	100 0 0	20 Dec., 1887.....	Recreation.
14,068 2 29 Total area of reserves in the parish.			
Schedule of unalienated land, not reserved, in the parish of Brunswick:—			
	a. r. p.		
7,028	80 0 0	Proclaimed 18 Aug., 1888	Special area, 7,028, 30s. per acre.
7,035	100 0 0	" " ".....	" 7,035, 30s. "
7,789	126 3 0	Proclaimed 8 Dec., 1888	" 7,789, 40s. "
.....	345 0 0	}	Unmeasured Crown land.
.....	663 0 0		
.....	479 0 0		
Por. 149	40 0 0			Void C.P.
" 130	46 0 0	.....	Disallowed C.P.
" 203	122 2 0	.....	Measured for special area.
" 204	46 3 0	.....	" "
2,049 0 0 Total area of unalienated land outside reserves.			
Reserves from sale in the parish of Byron.			
	a. r. p.		
71	6 0 0	17 April, 1886.....	Public school.
258	1,460 0 0	29 " 1872.....	Forest.
808	61 3 0	9 Jan., 1882.....	Public school.
1,053	384 0 0	10 Dec., 1883.....	} Pending selection of site for village.
1,053 } S. exten. }	580 0 0	28 May, 1884.....	
1,082	180 0 0	21 Jan., 1884.....	Roadway purposes (5 chains along shore).
1,198	3,100 0 0	25 June, 1884.....	Forest and water.
6,929	80 0 0	4 Aug., 1888.....	" "
8,307	40 0 0	9 Feb., 1889.....	For aboriginals.
8,624	80 0 0	6 " ".....	Access.
9,038	10 0 0	1 June, 1889.....	Camping.
9,041	110 0 0	1 " ".....	Village.
6,091 3 0 Total area of reserves in parish.			
Reserves in village of Cavvanba.			
	a. r. p.		
49	5 2 0	19 Dec., 1885.....	Public buildings.
50	4 0 0	19 " ".....	Recreation.
51	4 0 0	19 " ".....	" "
54	5 2 0	19 " ".....	" "
55	5 2 0	19 " ".....	" "
56	5 2 0	19 " ".....	Public school.
57	5 2 0	19 " ".....	Public buildings.
58	5 2 0	19 " ".....	" "
59	5 2 0	19 " ".....	" "
3,957	4 0 38	20 Aug., 1887.....	Court-house and police purposes.
50 2 38 Total area of reserves in village.			
Reserves in suburban lands of Cavvanba.			
	a. r. p.		
52	6 0 0	19 Dec., 1885.....	Hospital.
53	240 0 0	19 " ".....	Recreation, defence purposes, &c.
246 0 0 Total area of reserves in suburbs.			
Schedule of unalienated land, not reserved, in the parish of Byron.			
	a. r. p.		
7,613	43 0 0	Proclaimed 10 Nov., 1888	} Parts of special area 7,613, 40s. per acre.
7,613	129 0 0	" " ".....	
7,338	68 0 0	Proclaimed 22 Sept., 1888	Special area, 7,338, 30s. per acre.
Por. 110	100 0 0	.....	Forfeited C.P.
340 0 0 Total area of unalienated land outside reserves.			

[To Evidence of John See, Esq., M.P.]

E.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION.

ELECTORATES, NORTH COAST, N.S.W.

POPULATION.

	Census, 1861.	Census, 1871.	Census, 1881.	Estimated, June, 1889.
Grafton	1,441	2,526	7,744	9,710
The Clarence	1,865	6,864	6,752	7,827
The Richmond	1,835	4,870	9,266	19,207
	5,141	13,760	23,762	36,744

*CULTIVATION.

	31 March, 1861.	31 March, 1871.	31 March, 1881.	31 March, 1889.
	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.
Grafton	3,454	21,163	{ 10,317 } 28,470	{ 13,392 } 37,379
The Clarence	92	7,727	{ 18,153 } 13,792	{ 23,987 } 47,061
The Richmond				
	3,546	28,890	42,262	84,440

LIVE STOCK.

	31 March, 1861.				31 March, 1871.			
	Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.	Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.
Grafton	3,483	62,999	50,135	3,294	9,534	81,973	25,253	5,335
The Clarence	1,542	97,596	14,121	474	4,602	100,075	1,377	2,730
The Richmond								
	5,025	160,595	64,256	3,768	14,136	182,048	26,630	8,065

	31 March, 1881.				31 March, 1889.			
	Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.	Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.
Grafton	6,534	58,208	1,585	3,949	6,624	30,182	2,361	4,721
The Clarence	4,971	22,708	186	3,230	6,442	14,146	1,032	3,571
The Richmond	9,080	142,101	1,308	4,808	13,309	131,341	1,777	1,199
	20,585	223,017	3,079	11,987	26,375	175,669	5,170	9,491

* AREA ENCLOSED, INCLUDING LAND IN CULTIVATION.

	31 March, 1861.	31 March, 1871.	31 March, 1881.	31 March, 1889.
	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.
Grafton	65,429	61,457	{ 93,571 }	153,737
The Clarence			{ 72,857 }	105,503
The Richmond	27,689	25,925	190,569	438,798
	93,118	87,382	356,997	698,038

POPULATION.

	Census, 1881.	Estimated June, 1889.
Glen Innes	6,900	10,624
Inverell	7,186	9,344
	14,086	19,968

CULTIVATION.

	31 March, 1881.	31 March, 1889.
	acres.	acres.
Glen Innes	5,804	8,829
Inverell	8,531	12,819
	14,335	21,648

LIVE STOCK.

	31 March, 1881.				31 March, 1889.			
	Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.	Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.
Glen Innes	6,141	91,596	290,685	2,938	4,370	37,711	237,408	2,095
Inverell	5,671	36,817	345,034	2,916	5,068	22,335	235,226	2,439
	11,812	128,413	635,719	5,854	9,438	60,046	472,634	4,534

AREA ENCLOSED, INCLUDING LAND IN CULTIVATION.

	31 March, 1881.	31 March, 1889.
	acres.	acres.
Glen Innes	96,249	263,136
Inverell	219,791	299,421
	316,040	562,557

E 1.

[To Evidence of John See, Esq., M.P.]

Electorate of	Area.		Population.	Live Stock.			
	Square Miles.	Acres.		Horses.	Horned Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.
Grafton	2,165 $\frac{2}{3}$	1,386,086	8,169	7,674	29,898	1,867	4,468
The Clarence	839 $\frac{3}{4}$	537,395	7,425	5,934	12,637	322	3,521
The Richmond	4,480	2,867,200	20,880	12,945	119,841	1,224	11,734
Tenterfield	3,082 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,972,634	8,906	3,323	45,416	80,018	1,519
Inverell	2,977 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,905,459	8,357	5,184	36,117	346,613	3,104
Glen Innes	3,801 $\frac{1}{2}$	2,433,024	11,670	5,310	46,600	184,100	2,270

Electorate of	Land (Freehold).				Cultivation.										
	Number of Holdings of more than 1 acre.	Area enclosed.	Area un-enclosed.	Total area of Holdings.	Wheat.		Maize.		Sugar Cane.		Hay Crops.		Potatoes.	Other Crops.	
					Area.	Produce.	Area.	Produce.	Area.	Produce.	Area.	Produce.			
Grafton	855	133,419	30,768	164,187	14,675	7	70	13,069	588,105	280	3,283	261	510	482	576
The Clarence...	859	103,276	5,255	108,531	21,728	9	240	14,866	668,970	5,326	86,911	105	267	314	1,108
The Richmond	2,022	475,009	240,689	715,698	42,846	.....	.....	9,829	233,996	9,475	178,938	298	612	188	23,056
Tenterfield.....	451	92,914	66,419	159,333	4,812	1,976	36,180	1,509	34,456	.....	.....	690	1,173	301	336
Inverell	515	331,484	50,458	381,942	14,710	5,640	100,639	3,705	93,540	.....	.....	2,876	3,703	220	2,269
Glen Innes.....	470	198,449	81,646	280,095	10,446	2,785	48,121	1,749	33,357	.....	.....	2,679	4,879	790	2,443

F.

[To Evidence of John See, Esq., M.P.]

STATEMENT COMPARING CARRIAGE BY RAIL WITH FREIGHT CHARGED BY STEAMERS FROM NORTHERN RIVERS.

Dear Sir, Sydney, 10 February, 1890.
As promised, I send you herewith a comparison of freights charged from the northern rivers to Sydney on maize, and the railway rates on grain in trucks of 6 tons. The stations selected are about the same distance from Sydney as the different rivers. In every case you will notice the cost by rail is less per ton than by water.

J. Garrard, Esq., M.P., Public Works Committee.

Yours, &c.,
JOHN SEE, per A.V.

Miles from Sydney.	Northern Rivers.	Rates.		Miles from Sydney.	Railway Towns.	Rates.		Difference Rail lower than Steam.	
		Per bushel.	Per ton.			Per bushel.	Per ton.	Per bushel.	Per ton.
141	Manning	d. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	s. d. 15 0	140	Raglan	d. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	s. d. 9 10	d. 1 $\frac{3}{10}$	s. d. 5 2
172	Hastings	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	17 6	172	Blayney	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	11 0	1 $\frac{3}{10}$	6 6
212	Macleay	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	15 0	210	Kerr's Creek.....	4	12 8	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 4
219	Nambucca	6	20 0	217	Warne	4	12 10	2	7 2
228	Bellinger	6	20 0	227	Ironbarks	4 $\frac{1}{4}$	13 2	1 $\frac{1}{8}$	6 10
294	Clarence.....	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	15 0	300	Narromine	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	14 6	.....	0 6
328	Richmond	6	20 0	320	Trangie	4 $\frac{3}{8}$	14 10	1 $\frac{3}{8}$	5 2
361	Tweed	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	25 0	361	Mullengudgery.....	5	15 7	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 5
351	Brunswick.....	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	25 0	341	Nevertire	5	15 4	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 8

Rail Rates, based upon truck rates, 6 tons, lowest rate from February to August :—

Wheat, 37 $\frac{3}{4}$ bushels to ton, by rail.

Maize, 40 " " by sea.

Sydney, February, 1890.

[Published

APPENDIX.

9

[Published in Government Gazette No. 658, 13th December, 1889.]

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

By-law No. 37.

THE Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, in pursuance of the powers conferred by the Government Railways Act of 1888, do hereby make the following By-law; and all previous rates and regulations conflicting therewith are hereby repealed:—

Rates for Grain, Flour, Bran, Pollard, Beet-root, Millet Seed, Meal, and Potatoes, on the Up Journey.

Mileage	From 1st September to 31st January.		From 1st February to 31st August.	Mileage.	From 1st September to 31st January.		From 1st February to 31st August.
	At per Ton.	At per Ton, in 6-ton Truck Loads.	At per Ton, in 6-ton Lots.		At per Ton.	At per Ton, in 6-ton Truck Loads.	At per Ton, in 6-ton Lots.
Up to 10 miles	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	205 to 210 miles.....	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
10 to 15 "	1 6	1 6	1 6	210 to 215 "	15 0	13 10	12 6
15 to 20 "	1 6	1 6	1 6	215 to 220 "	15 3	14 0	12 8
20 to 25 "	2 1	2 1	2 7	220 to 225 "	15 6	14 2	12 10
25 to 30 "	2 7	2 7	2 1	225 to 230 "	15 9	14 4	13 0
30 to 35 "	3 1	3 1	3 1	230 to 235 "	16 0	14 6	13 2
35 to 40 "	3 6	3 7	3 7	235 to 240 "	16 3	14 8	13 4
40 to 45 "	4 0	4 0	4 0	240 to 245 "	16 6	14 10	13 6
45 to 50 "	4 5	4 5	4 5	245 to 250 "	16 9	15 0	13 7
50 to 55 "	4 10	4 10	4 10	250 to 255 "	17 0	15 2	13 8
55 to 60 "	5 4	5 3	5 3	255 to 260 "	17 3	15 4	13 9
60 to 65 "	5 10	5 8	5 8	260 to 265 "	17 6	15 6	13 10
65 to 70 "	6 4	6 1	6 1	265 to 270 "	17 9	15 8	13 11
70 to 75 "	6 9	6 6	6 6	270 to 275 "	18 0	15 10	14 0
75 to 80 "	7 2	6 11	6 11	275 to 280 "	18 2	16 0	14 1
80 to 85 "	7 7	7 4	7 4	280 to 285 "	18 4	16 2	14 2
85 to 90 "	8 0	7 8	7 8	285 to 290 "	18 6	16 4	14 3
90 to 95 "	8 4	8 0	8 0	290 to 295 "	18 8	16 6	14 4
95 to 100 "	8 8	8 4	8 4	295 to 300 "	18 10	17 1	14 5
100 to 105 "	9 0	8 8	8 6	300 to 305 "	19 0	17 2	14 6
105 to 110 "	9 4	9 0	8 8	305 to 310 "	19 1	17 3	14 7
110 to 115 "	9 8	9 4	8 10	310 to 315 "	19 2	17 4	14 8
115 to 120 "	10 0	9 8	9 0	315 to 320 "	19 3	17 5	14 9
120 to 125 "	10 4	10 0	9 2	320 to 325 "	19 4	17 6	14 10
125 to 130 "	10 8	10 3	9 4	325 to 330 "	19 5	17 7	14 11
130 to 135 "	11 0	10 6	9 6	330 to 335 "	19 6	17 8	15 0
135 to 140 "	11 3	10 9	9 8	335 to 340 "	19 7	17 9	15 1
140 to 145 "	11 6	10 9	9 10	340 to 345 "	19 8	17 10	15 2
145 to 150 "	11 9	11 0	9 10	345 to 350 "	19 9	17 11	15 3
150 to 155 "	12 0	11 0	10 0	350 to 355 "	19 10	18 0	15 4
155 to 160 "	12 3	11 3	10 2	355 to 360 "	19 11	18 1	15 5
160 to 165 "	12 6	11 6	10 4	360 to 365 "	20 0	18 2	15 6
165 to 170 "	12 9	11 9	10 6	365 to 370 "	20 1	18 3	15 7
170 to 175 "	13 0	12 0	10 8	370 to 375 "	20 2	18 4	15 8
175 to 180 "	13 3	12 3	11 0	375 to 380 "	20 3	18 5	15 9
180 to 185 "	13 6	12 6	11 3	380 to 385 "	20 4	18 6	15 10
185 to 190 "	13 9	12 9	11 6	385 to 390 "	20 5	18 7	15 11
190 to 195 "	14 0	13 0	11 9	390 to 395 "	20 6	18 8	16 0
195 to 200 "	14 3	13 3	12 0	395 to 400 "	20 7	18 9	16 1
200 to 205 "	14 6	13 6	12 2		20 8	18 10	16 2
	14 9	13 8	12 4				

(L.S.) E. M. G. EDDY, Chief Commissioner.
W. M. FEHON, Commissioner.
CHARLES N. J. OLIVER, Commissioner.

The Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereunto affixed, this 2nd day of December, in the year of our Lord 1889, in the presence of,—

HUGH M'LACHLAN,

Confirmed by the Governor-in-Council on the 10th day of December, 1889,—

ALEX. C. BUDGE, Clerk of the Executive Council,

G.

RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO THE TWEED.

Book of Reference to Parliamentary Plan.

No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers
PART I.					
Parish of Great Marlow.					
1	Mary-street .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
2	Allotment .....	.....	P. Donaldson .....	.....	P. Donaldson.
3	House and allotment .....	.....	W. Frazer .....	.....	Wm. Frazer.
4	Allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
5	House and allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	Elizabeth McDougall.
6	Allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
7	House and allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
8	Victoria-street .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
9	House and allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
10	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
11	" .....	.....	Samuel See .....	.....	Samuel See.
12	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
13	" .....	.....	M. Tierney .....	.....	"
14	Allotment .....	.....	E. M. Ryan .....	.....	"
15	" .....	.....	P. R. Donaldson .....	.....	"
16	House and allotment .....	.....	J. Meillon .....	.....	Wm. Carson.
17	Allotment .....	.....	J. Carson .....	.....	J. Carson.
18	House and allotment .....	.....	Wm. Kinnear .....	.....	Wm. Kinnear.
19	Alice-street .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
20	House and allotment .....	.....	Wm. Kinnear .....	.....	Wm. Kinnear.
21	" .....	.....	J. Meillon .....	.....	J. Meillon.
22	Alumny Creeek .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
23	Allotment .....	.....	C. Duggan .....	.....	C. Duggan.
24	" .....	.....	S. McNaughton .....	.....	S. McNaughton.
25	Fitzroy-street .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
26	Allotment .....	.....	S. McNaughton .....	.....	S. McNaughton.
27	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
28	Turf-street .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
29	House and allotment .....	.....	P. L. Frazer .....	.....	P. L. Frazer.
30	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
31	" .....	.....	J. McAlpin .....	.....	Mackie & Donaldson.
32	Allotment .....	.....	P. L. Frazer .....	.....	F. Lawrence.
33	" .....	.....	— Mackenzie .....	.....	A. Murray.
34	House and allotment .....	.....	A. Murray .....	.....	.....
35	" .....	.....	Samuel Avery .....	.....	Samuel Avery.
36	Maud street .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
37	Allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
38	Irene-street .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
39	House and allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
40	Allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
41	House and allotment .....	.....	Samuel Avery .....	.....	Samuel Avery.
42	Allotment .....	.....	Archd. Murray .....	.....	Archd. Murray.
43	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
44	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
45	" .....	.....	Harry Smith .....	.....	Harry Smith.
46	" .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
47	Pound-street .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
48	Bruce-street .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
49	Allotment .....	.....	J. McFadden .....	.....	J. McFadden.
50	House and allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
51	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
52	" .....	.....	Mrs M. Seabright .....	.....	Mrs. M. Seabright.
53	Allotment .....	.....	Wm. James .....	.....	Wm. James.
54	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
55	" .....	.....	J. Mosely .....	.....	On Sing.
56	Cranworth-street .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
57	Allotment .....	.....	Chas. Page .....	.....	H. Fisher.
58	House and allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
59	Allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
60	House and allotment .....	.....	Jacob Bateman .....	.....	Jacob Bateman.
61	Bacon street .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
62	House and allotment .....	.....	Wm. James .....	.....	Wm. James.
63	" .....	.....	Rosina Kriegar .....	.....	Rosina Kriegar.
64	Milton-street .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
65	Allotment .....	.....	Wm. James .....	.....	Wm James.
66	House and allotment .....	.....	Johanna Fink .....	.....	Johanna Fink.
67	Allotment .....	.....	Jacob Bollard .....	.....	Jacob Bollard.
68	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
69	" .....	.....	L Jacobs .....	.....	"
70	House and allotment .....	.....	John Bollard .....	.....	John Bollard.
71	Allotment .....	.....	John Smidt .....	.....	John Geary.
72	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
73	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	John Smidt.
74	House and allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
75	Oliver-street .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
76	House and allotment .....	.....	C. Jackson .....	.....	Wm. Crouch.
77	Allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
78	House and allotment .....	.....	" .....	.....	"
79	Howe street .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
80	Allotment .....	.....	L McIntyre	J. Starkey.	J. Starkey.
81	House and allotment .....	.....	Joseph Barnier .....	.....	Joseph Barnier.
82	" .....	.....	Alfred Barnier .....	.....	Alfred Barnier.

No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
Parish of Great Marlow— <i>continued.</i>					
83	Fry-street		Crown		
84	House and allotment		Jacob Kemprich		Jacob Kemprich.
85	Orara-street		Crown		
85	Allotment		Jane Barnier		Jane Barnier.
87	House and allotment		George Crispin		Geo. Crispin.
88	Dobie-street		Crown		
89	House and allotment		John McDonald		John McDonald.
90	"		"		"
91	"		"		"
92	North-street		Crown		
93	Block		Wm. McKenzie	Allan McLean	Allan McLean.
94	"		"	"	"
95	"		"	"	"
96	Carr-street		Crown		
97	House and land		Wm. McKenzie	Allan McLean	Allan McLean.
98	"		"	"	"
99	Crass-street		Crown		
100	Grazing land		J. W. McKenzie	Con. Duggan	Con. Duggan.
101	Sale-street		Crown		
102	Grazing land and house		H. Barnes	Geo. Deitz	Geo. Deitz.
103	Block		Nicholas Barnier		Nicholas Barnier
104	Barker-street		Crown		
105	House and land		Wm. Bullitude		Wm. Bullitude.
106	"		"		"
107	Drake-street		Crown		
108	Grazing land		H. Dickson	John Taylor	John Taylor.
109	Broad-street		Crown		
110	Grazing land		P. Sheehan		P. Sheehan.
111	House and land		James Pair		Donald Preadable.
112	Pine-street		Crown		
113	Cultivation paddock		N. Barnier		N. Barnier.
114	"		Fallon		Fallon.
115	Grazing land		Walker		Hy. Barnier.
116	House and land		John Pearse		Robt. Sanderson.
117	Cultivation paddock		"		"
118	House and land		"		John Bailey.
119	Paddock		"		Robert Fuller.
120	"		"		"
121	Farm		"		Samuel Crowther.
122	Grazing land		"		Thos. Hadfield.
123	Paddock		"		"
124	Block		Geo. Foote		Geo. Foote.
125	"		"		"
126	"		Fred. Doberer		Fred. Doberer.
127	Solferino Road		Crown		
128	Paddock		Louis Stuhlert		Louis Stuhlert.
129	"		"		"
130	"		"		"
131	"		Jas. O'Keefe		James O'Keefe.
132	Road		Crown		
133	Paddock		H. T. Smith		Henry Smith.
134	"		"		"
135	Allotment		"		"
136	"		"		"
137	"		"		"
138	Road		"		"
139	Allotment		"		"
140	"		"		"
141	"		"		"
142	Road		"		"
143	Allotment		"		"
144	"		"		"
145	"		"		"
146	"		"		"
147	"		"		"
148	"		"		"
149	"		"		"
150	"		"		"
151	Road		"		"
152	Allotment		"		"
153	"		"		"
154	"		"		"
155	"		"		"
156	"		"		"
157	"		"		"
158	"		"		"
159	"		"		"
160	Road		"		"
161	Allotment		H. Maurice		Hy. Maurice.
162	"		Louis Claus		Louis Claus.
163	"		"		"
164	"		"		"
165	Road		Crown		
166	Block		A. J. R. Noud		A. J. R. Noud.
167	Water reserve No. 404		Crown		

No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
Parish of Clifden.					
168	Road to Richmond		Crown		
169	Farm		Chas. Munt		Chas. Munt.
170	Grazing land		F. M'Fadden		F. M'Fadden.
171	"		H. J. Gerrard		Hy. Gerrard.
172	Farm		Duncan Anderson		Duncan Anderson.
173	Creek				
174	Farm		Duncan Anderson		Duncan Anderson.
175	"				
176	"		M. J. Rodenback		M. J. Rodenback.
177	"				
178	Road		Crown		
179	Farm		C. Duggan		C. Duggan.
180	Grazing land				
181	Bush land		Crown		
182	Forest reserve, 353		"		
183	Bush land		"		
184	Four-post Creek		"		
185	Bush land		"		
Parish of Stewart.					
186	Bush land		W. A. Zuill		W. A. Zuill.
187	"		"		"
188	Four-post Creek		Crown		
189	Bush land		W. A. Zuill		W. A. Zuill.
190	"		Crown		
191	"		"		
192	"		"		
193	"		"		
194	Farm		J. Zuill		J. Zuill.
PART No. 2.					
Parish of Banyalba.					
1	Bush land		Crown		
2	Casino Road		"		
3	Soudan Creek		"		
4	Bush land		"		
5	Casino Road		"		
6	Bush land		"		
7	Road		"		
8	Bush land		"		
9	Portion		"		
10	Casino Road		"		
11	Bush land		"		
12	Casino Road		"		
13	Bush land		"		
Parish of Myall.					
14	Casino Road		Crown		
15	Bush land		"		
Parish of Camira.					
16	Freehold	Pasture.....	E. Vickery		E Vickery.
17	Casino Road		Crown		
18	Freehold	Pasture.....	A. Oliver		A. Oliver.
19	Road		Crown		
20	Freehold	Pasture.....	Geo. Olive		Geo. Olive.
21	"	"	J. Olive		J. Olive.
22	"	"	"		"
23	Water Reserve 1062.....		Crown		
24	Creek		"		
25	Freehold		Geo. Olive		Geo. Olive.
26	Village Reserve		Crown		
27	Freehold		Geo. Olive		Geo. Olive.
28	"		"		"
Parish of Whipore.					
29	Bush land		Crown		
30	Casino Road		"		
31	Bush land		"		
32	Casino Road		"		
33	Bush land		"		
34	Camping Reserve 460		"		
35	Freehold	Pasture.....	E. Vickery		E. Vickery.
36	Bush land		Crown		
PART No. 3.					
1	Bush land		Crown		
2	Casino Road		"		
3	Bush land		"		
4	Casino Road		"		
5	Bush land		"		

No. on Plan	Description of Property.	State of cultivation.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
Parish of Myrtle.					
6	Creek .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
7	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
8	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
9	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
10	Casino Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
11	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
12	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
13	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
14	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
15	Village Reserve 74a. ....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
16	Myrtle Creek .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
17	Village Reserve 74a. ....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
Parish of Mandabah.					
18	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
19	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
20	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
21	Sandy Creek .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
Parish of Coombell.					
22	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
23	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
24	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
25	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
26	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
27	Casino Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
Parish of Richmond.					
28	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
29	" .....	.....	W. F. Fanning .....	.....	.....
30	Camping Reserve 264 .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
31	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
32	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
33	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
34	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
35	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
36	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
37	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
38	Camping Reserve 459 .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
39	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
40	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
41	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
42	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
43	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
44	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
45	" .....	.....	W. Weary .....	.....	W. Weary.
46	Deep Creek .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....
47	Bush land .....	.....	W. & F. Fanning .....	.....	W. & F. Fanning.
48	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....
49	Bush land .....	.....	W. & F. Fanning .....	.....	W. & F. Fanning.
50	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....
51	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	" .....
52	Bush land .....	.....	W. & F. Fanning .....	.....	W. & F. Fanning.
53	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	" .....
54	Reserve 688 .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....
55	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....
56	Suburban allotments .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....
57	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....
58	Suburban allotments .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....
59	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....
60	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....
South Casino.					
61	Suburban allotment .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
62	" .....	.....	John Grey .....	.....	John Grey.
63	Richmond River .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
64	Police Paddock .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
PART No. 4.					
County of Richmond, parish of South Casino.					
1	Suburban allotment .....	.....	John Grey .....	.....	.....
2	Richmond River .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
County of Rous, parish of North Casino.					
3	Police Paddock .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
4	Swamp-street .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
5	Suburban allotment .....	.....	J. L. Vesper .....	.....	.....
6	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
7	Suburban allotment .....	.....	Daniel Kissane .....	.....	.....
8	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
9	Suburban allotment .....	.....	Daniel Kissane .....	.....	.....
10	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
11	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
12	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....

No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of cultivation.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
County of Rous, parish of North Casino— <i>continued.</i>					
13	Water Reserve 2,685 .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
14	Reserve 2,684 .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
15	Bush land .....	.....	George Pratt .....	.....	.....
16	" .....	.....	Martin Roach .....	.....	.....
17	" .....	.....	John Cummings .....	.....	.....
18	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
19	Bush land .....	.....	M. M. Campbell .....	.....	.....
20	" .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
County of Rous, parish of Tomki.					
21	Bush land .....	.....	Peter Cosgriff .....	.....	.....
22	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
23	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
24	Lismore Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
County of Rous, parish of North Casino.					
25	Bush land .....	.....	Peter Cosgriff .....	.....	.....
26	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
27	Forest Reserve 255 .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
28	Lismore Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
29	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
30	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
County of Rous, parish of Tomki.					
31	Bush land .....	.....	R. B. Dawson .....	.....	.....
32	" .....	.....	R. L. Dawson .....	.....	.....
33	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
County of Rous, parish of North Casino.					
34	Bush land .....	.....	R. B. Dawson .....	.....	.....
County of Rous, parish of Tomki.					
35	Bush land .....	.....	R. L. Dawson .....	.....	.....
36	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
37	Bush land .....	.....	R. B. Dawson .....	.....	.....
38	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
39	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
40	" .....	.....	A. D. Dawson .....	.....	.....
41	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
42	Cultivation .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
43	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
44	Bush land .....	.....	A. Armstrong, jun. ...	.....	.....
45	Reserve No. 60 .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
46	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
47	Bush land .....	.....	T. Armstrong .....	.....	.....
48	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
49	Bungabbee Creek .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
County of Rous, parish of Bungabbee.					
50	Bush land .....	.....	Thomas Armstrong ...	.....	.....
51	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
52	Lismore Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
53	Bush land .....	.....	T. C. West .....	.....	.....
54	Creek .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
55	Bush land .....	.....	T. C. West .....	.....	.....
56	" .....	.....	W. Armstrong .....	.....	.....
57	Water Reserve 199 .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
58	Bush land .....	.....	Emily Atkinson .....	.....	.....
59	Casino Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
60	Bush land .....	.....	Emily Atkinson .....	.....	.....
61	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
62	Bush land .....	.....	Emily Atkinson .....	.....	.....
63	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
63a	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
64	Bush land .....	.....	Atkinson & McKellar ..	.....	.....
65	Cultivation .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
66	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
67	Bush land .....	.....	James McDevitt .....	.....	.....
68	Road to Lismore .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
69	Bush land .....	.....	Emily Atkinson .....	.....	.....
70	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
71	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
72	Bush land .....	.....	Emily Atkinson .....	.....	.....
73	Cultivation .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
74	Creek .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
County of Rous, parish of South Lismore.					
75	Bush land .....	.....	Sarah Campbell .....	.....	.....
76	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
77	Bush land .....	.....	Sarah Campbell .....	.....	.....
78	Reserve No. 470 .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
79	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
80	Bush land .....	.....	Sarah Campbell .....	.....	.....
81	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
82	Bush land .....	.....	Sarah Campbell .....	.....	.....
83	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....

No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
County of Rous, Parish of South Lismore—continued.					
84	Water Reserve No. 113		Crown		
85	Bush land		William Webster		
86	"		"		
87	Road		Crown		
88	Bush land		W. Webster		
89	"		"		
90	Road to Lismore		Crown		
91	Bush land		William Webster		
92	"		"		
93	Road		Crown		
94	Bush land		Frederick Schroder		
95	"		"		
96	Road		Crown		
97	Paddock		Margaret Curtain		
98	House and Paddock		"		
99	Bush land		"		
100	"		"		
101	Road		Crown		
102	Lismore Road		"		
103	Bush land		Sebastian Garrard		
104	"		"		
105	"		"		
106	"		"		
107	"		"		
108	Road		Crown		
109	Bush land		Henry Tozer		
110	"		"		
111	"		Charles White, jun.		
112	"		"		
113	Road		Crown		
114	Bush land		Charles White, sen.		
115	House and Paddock		"		
116	Leycester Creek		Crown		
117	Paddock		Carter		T. Golding.
118	"		"		— Griffiths.
119	"		"		"
120	"		"		Thomas Golding.
121	Vacant land		Crown		
122	Road		"		
123	Suburban block		"		
124	Lane		"		
125	Suburban block and buildings		"		
126	Road		Crown		
127	Suburban block		A. McKellar		
128	"		John Peake		
129	Road		Crown		

PART No. 5.

County of Rous, parish of North Lismore.

15	Bush land		A. McKellar		Daniel Duffey.
15a	Road		Crown		
15b	Vacant land		John Anschau		
16	Road		Crown		
16a	Suburban land		William Strong		
17	Paddock		Jacob Flick		
17a	Suburban allotment		William Strong		
18	Road		Crown		
19	Bush land		John McKenzie		
20	House and paddock		Robert McKenzie		
21	Bush land		A. Curry		
22	"		John Cusack		
23	Road		Crown		
23a	Bush land		John Cusack		
24	"		James McKenzie		
25	"		Owen Bowlin		
26	"		Edward Murphy		
26a	Road		Crown		
27	Bush land		James Greenhalgh		
28	House and paddock		"		
29	Road		Crown		
30	Bush land		James Geraghty		
30a	Road		Crown		
31	Bush land		M. A. Walpole		
32	"		James Beale		
33	Road		Crown		
34	Bush land		William Cewley		
34a	"		"		
35	"		Peter English		
36	"		John Taylor		
37	Road		Crown		
38	"		"		
39	Paddock		G. Clansey		
40	Road		Crown		
40a	Bush land		G. Clansey		
41	"		T. English		

No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
County of Rous, parish of Bexhill.					
42	Road		Crown		
42a	Bush land		"		
43	Cooper's Creek		"		
44	Suburban lots		"		
45	Road		"		
45a	Suburban block		"		
46	"		"		
47	Road		"		
48	Suburban block		"		
49	Road		"		
50	Suburban block		"		
51	Road		"		
52	Suburban block		"		
53	Road		"		
53a	Town lot		R. M. Clunes		John Withers.
54	"		"		"
54a	Lane		Crown		
55	Road		"		
56	Town lots		"		
56a	Street		"		
57	Street		"		
57a	Town lot		"		
58	"		"		
58a	Street		"		
County of Rous, parish of Lismore.					
59	Town lot		Crown		
60	Street		"		
60a	Police paddock		"		
61	Bush land		John Withers		
61a	"		"		
61b	Road to Cooper's Creek		Crown		
62	Bush land		John Withers		
63	Brunswick Road		Crown		
63a	Bush land		J. Withers		
64	Road		Crown		
65	Bush land		George Winsor		
66	Road		Crown		
67	Bush land		Malcolm McKinnon		
68	"		Crown		
69	"		William Walmsley		
70	Road		Crown		
70a	Bush land		W. Walmsley		
71	Road		Crown		
71a	Bush land		W. Walmsley		
71b	Road		Crown		
71c	Bush land		W. Walmsley		
71d	Road		Crown		
71e	Bush land		W. Walmsley		
County of Rous, parish of Bexhill.					
72	Wilson's Creek		Crown		
County of Rous, parish of Lismore.					
73	Bush land		William Grey		
73a	"		"		
74	Road		Crown		
75	Bush land		Christopher Hetherington.		
76	Road		Crown		
77	Bush land		Richard Dawes		
78	"		David Pain		
79	"		"		
79a	"		"		
80	"		Samuel Trimble		
81	Road		Crown		
82	Bush land		Samuel Trimble		
83	Pearce's Creek		Crown		
County of Rous, parish of Teven.					
84	Reserve 676		Crown		
85	Bush land		Paul Regan		
86	"		"		
87	"		"		
88	Road		Crown		
89	Bush land		Paul Regan		
90	Road		Crown		
91	Bush land		James Johnston		
91a	"		"		
92	Road		Crown		
93	Bush land		James Johnston		
93a	"		"		
94	Road		Crown		
95	Bush land		James Johnston		
96	Road		Crown		
97	Bush land		Timothy Ryan		
98	Road		Crown		
99	Bush land		Timothy Ryan		

No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
County of Rous, parish of Byron.					
100	Byron Creek .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
101	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
102	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
103	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
104	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
105	Bush land .....	.....	Thomas Leahy .....	.....	.....
106	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
107	Bush land .....	.....	Thomas Leahy .....	.....	.....
108	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
109	Bush land .....	.....	Thomas Leahy .....	.....	.....
110	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
111	Bush land .....	.....	Thomas Robinson .....	.....	.....
112	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
113	Bush land .....	.....	Thomas Robinson .....	.....	.....
114	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
115	Bush land .....	.....	Thomas Robinson .....	.....	.....
116	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
117	Bush land .....	.....	Robert Campbell .....	.....	.....
118	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
119	Paddock .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
120	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
121	Paddock and homestead .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
122	Creek .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
123	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
124	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
125	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
126	Road .....	.....	Robert Campbell .....	.....	.....
127	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
128	Creek (Tinber-box Creek) .....	.....	James Beveridge .....	.....	.....
129	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
130	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
131	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
132	Road .....	.....	James Beveridge .....	.....	.....
133	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
134	Road .....	.....	Benjamin Broadhead .....	.....	.....
135	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
136	Road .....	.....	James Glisson .....	.....	.....
137	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
138	Road .....	.....	James Glisson .....	.....	.....
139	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
140	" .....	.....	O. B. Wareham .....	.....	.....
141	" .....	.....	F. V. Wareham .....	.....	.....
142	Village Reserve, "Cavvanba" .....	.....	William Graham .....	.....	.....
143	Railway reserve .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
144	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
145	Railway reserve .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
146	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
147	Railway reserve .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
148	Road .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
149	Byron Bay Jetty .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
PART No. 6. Parish of Byron Bay.					
1	Railway Reserve .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
2	Buttler-street .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
3	Town Lot .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
4	Byron-street .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
5	Town Lot .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
6	Shirley-street .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
7	Town Lot .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
8	Wordsworth-street .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
9	Town Lot .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
10	Lane .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
11	Town Lot .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
12	Bay-street .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
13	Town Lot .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
14	Milton-street .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
15	Town Lot .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
16	Dryden-street .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
17	Town Lot .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
18	Kendall-street .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
19	Suburban Block .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
20	Road .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
21	" .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
22	Suburban Block .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
23	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
24	Suburban Block .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
25	Road .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
26	Suburban Block .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
27	Belongil Creek .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
28	Bush land .....	.....	N. J. Simmons .....	.....	.....
29	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
30	Reserve 1,053 .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
31	Forest and Water Reserve 1,198 .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
32	Bush land .....	.....	Angus M'Swan .....	.....	.....
33	Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
34	Bush land .....	.....	.....	.....	.....

No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
Parish of Brunswick.					
35	Bush land		Angus M'Swan		
36	Road		Crown		
37	Bush land		"		
38	Tyagra Grass Reserve 532		"		
39	Bush land		A. M'Innes		
40	Road		Crown		
41	Railway Reserve 1,252		"		
42	Bush land		Peter Nelson		
43	"		"		
44	"		"		
45	"		"		
46	"		Crown		
47	"		F. R. Allen		
48	"		Crown		
49	Road		"		
50	Water Reserve 1,228		"		
51	Targarah-street		"		
52	Town Lot				
53	"				
54	"				
55	Minyon-street				
56	Town Lot				
57	Lane				
58	Town Lot				
59	Teven-street				
60	Reserve for Public Recreation		Crown		
61	Nana-street				
62	Town Lot				
63	"				
64	Lane		Crown		
65	Town Lot				
66	"				
67	Booyun-street		Crown		
68	Town Lot				
69	"				
70	Lane		Crown		
71	Town Lot				
72	Tingal-street		Crown		
73	Temporary Common		"		
Parish of Billinudgel.					
74	Brunswick River		Crown		
75	Village Reserve 2		"		
76	Bush land		John Martin		
77	Road		Crown		
78	Bush land		John Martin		
79	"		Crown		
80	North arm of Richmond River		"		
81	Bush land		"		
82	Camping and Water Reserve 794		"		
83	Bush land		"		
84	"		"		
85	"		Crown		
86	Reserve		"		
Parish of Moball.					
87	Crabbe's Creek		Crown		
88	Bush land		Robt. Campbell Ewing		
89	Reserve 812		Crown		
90	Road		"		
91	Bush land		R. Campbell Ewing.		
92	"		B. R. Nelson		
93	Road		Crown		
94	Bush land		B. R. Nelson		
95	Burringbar Creek		Crown		
96	Bush land				
97	Road				
98	Bush		Crown		
99	Bush land				
100	Road				
101	Bush land		John Ewing		
102	"		William Robinson		
103	Reserve 62		Crown		
Parish of Mullum.					
104	Bush land				
105	"				
106	Forest Reserve 250		Crown		
Parish of Moball.					
107	Bush land		James W. Bowen		

No on Plan	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees	Occupier.
Parish of Dunbible.					
108	Bush land	..	Michael Dunn	..	..
109	"	..	Wm. Kelleher	..	..
110	Road	..	Crown	..	..
111	Bush land	..	Wm. Kelleher	..	..
112	"	..	Joseph Stoker	..	..
113	Road	..	Crown	..	..
114	Bush land	..	Charles Cox	..	..
115	Road	..	Crown	..	..
116	Bush land	..	Frank Nixon	..	..
117	"	..	Wm. Richards	..	..
118	Dunbible Creek	..	Crown	..	..
119	Bush land	..	John Richards	..	..
120	Road	..	Crown	..	..
121	Bush land	..	John Richards	..	..
122	"	..	"	..	..
123	"	..	"	..	..
124	"	..	"	..	..
Parish of Condong.					
125	Bush land	..	Eli Richards	..	..
126	"	..	"	..	..
127	"	..	"	..	..
128	"	..	A. C. Dunbar	..	..
129	"	..	R. C. R. Bray	..	..
130	Road	..	Crown	..	..
131	Bush land	..	R. C. R. Bray	..	..
132	"	..	"	..	..
133	"	..	"	..	..
134	"	..	James Bray	..	..
135	"	..	D. McMillan	..	..
136	"	..	"	..	..
137	Road	..	Crown	..	..
138	Bush land	..	William Fox	..	..
139	Road	..	Crown	..	..
140	Bush land	..	W. A. Black	..	..
141	"	..	"	..	..
142	"	..	"	..	..
143	Road	..	Crown	..	..
144	"	..	"	..	..
145	Bush land	..	G. Evans	..	..
146	"	..	"	..	..
147	Paddock	..	Doughty	..	..
148	"	..	"	..	..
149	Bush land	..	A. S. Mayers	..	..
150	Paddock	..	"	..	..
151	Road	..	Crown	..	..
152	Bush land	..	James Ford	..	..

H. DEANE.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO THE TWEED.

REPORT.

1. The Sectional Committee appointed on the 14th November, 1889, to inspect and take evidence in reference to the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed, left Sydney on Monday, 18 November, and proceeded to Brisbane, where they commenced their duties by waiting upon the Railway Commissioners of Queensland, and obtaining from them as much information as was available of their intentions with regard to the extension of their railway system to the New South Wales border, with a view to securing trade for Brisbane from the north coast districts of New South Wales. The Committee left Brisbane the day after reaching there, and proceeded to the Tweed River Heads, where steps were at once taken for the examination of witnesses, the first meeting of the Committee being held at the Tweed Heads in the evening of the day of their arrival, Thursday, 21 November. At that meeting they examined five witnesses, including the local pilot (Mr. William Macgregor) and the Sub-Collector of Customs (Mr. Edward Osler). On the 22nd eighteen witnesses were examined at Murwillumbah, among whom were Mr. C. O. Burge (District Railway Engineer), Mr. O. G. Morton (Road Superintendent), Mr. E. A. Barrington (Acting Clerk of Petty Sessions and Land Agent), and a bank manager, storekeepers, farmers, journalists, and others resident in that district.

2. On Saturday, November 23, while *en route* to Byron Bay, Mr. G. Wilkins, railway surveyor, was examined at Burringbar; and the evidence of three witnesses, including Mr. James Anderson, a licensed surveyor, was taken at the Brunswick. At Byron Bay eight witnesses, all farmers or selectors resident in the vicinity, were examined. The Sectional Committee, on Monday, 25 November, proceeded to Lismore, passing through Eureka and Clunes, and taking evidence from local residents at each place. Lismore was reached in the evening, and one witness, Mr. Alexander Meston, sugar planter and manufacturer, was examined. On the following day eighteen witnesses were examined, among whom were Mr. C. H. Gale, Land Agent; Mr. W. G. Walker, District Surveyor; Mr. G. W. West, Inspector of Conditional Purchases; Mr. E. M'C. Allman, Road Superintendent; the Very Rev. J. J. Doyle, D.D., Roman Catholic Bishop of Grafton; Mr. T. C. Lodge, bank manager; and storekeepers, farmers, and selectors in the surrounding district. On Wednesday, the 27th November, your Committee proceeded down the Richmond River to Ballina, and returned to Lismore *via* Alstonville. On the 28th your Committee proceeded to Casino where eleven witnesses were examined, among whom were Mr. Richard Barling, licensed surveyor; and storekeepers, farmers, journalists, and other business men of the locality. At Myrtle Creek, on November 28, evidence was taken from three witnesses, and on the following day two witnesses were examined at Lawrence. The Sectional Committee arrived at Grafton on Saturday, November 30, at which place they examined twelve witnesses, among whom were Mr. P. R. Donaldson, District Surveyor; Mr. G. H. Gibson, Land Agent; Mr. John Cumming, railway engineer; Mr. Samuel See, Mayor of Grafton; Mr. H. V. Haynes, licensed surveyor; and local farmers, selectors, and tradespeople.

3. At the Tweed River Heads Mr. William Macgregor, pilot, was examined, and was of opinion that the entrance to the river might be improved, but at certain phases of the weather vessels would still be unable to cross the bar. The produce of the district, as a rule, found its way to Sydney. Mr. E. Osler, Sub-Collector of Customs, gave particulars of the quantity of produce sent away from the Tweed River. The exports in 1887 amounted to the value of £74,153; in 1889 the exports for ten months amounted to £50,632. Vessels were frequently bar-bound there—sometimes for four or five weeks. Mr. William Charles, a selector at Terranora, who had formerly lived in Illawarra, described the land on the Tweed as much superior to that of Illawarra, and the district would support a far larger population. He could not grow corn profitably, because it could not be got away to market with the present condition of the bar. He stated that it was a fact that people had actually been starved out of the district through the want of means of communication, although the land was so rich that 40 acres would support a family. If a railway were made, settlement would follow along the line of route, and the river and creeks would act as feeders to the railway. What the farmers wanted was a sure and certain means of access to market. Mr. Henry Eden, a selector near Murwillumbah, thought improvements to the river would be preferable to a railway, because the bulk of the settlement was located near to navigable water. Mr. John Marks, grazier, about 15 miles above Murwillumbah, was also of opinion that the district would be better served by a satisfactory improvement of the river than by a railway; at the same time he admitted that certain parts of the district would be benefited by the railway. He thought the route, as surveyed, would tap as large an area of good land as it was possible to obtain. The evidence of Mr. C. O. Burge, District Engineer, was of a technical nature. He thought the ruling gradient of the proposed coast line, Cudgen, would be 1 in 60, but that was only an estimate. The grade on the inland or Murwillumbah line, he anticipated, would be more severe, and would be more expensive. Mr. O. G. Morton, Road Superintendent, stated that he knew both the routes proposed. The land was better on the inland than on the coast line. The people in that district had little or no means of getting their produce to market at a profit, and there was no encouragement for them to develop the land. Mr. E. A. Barrington, Acting Clerk of Petty Sessions and Land Agent, stated that up to the 14th November, 1889, there were ninety-eight conditional purchases taken up in the district, as against eighty-three in 1888, and forty-six in 1887. Mr. F. A. Halliday, Manager of the A.J.S. Bank, Murwillumbah, said the land on the Tweed River was as good as that on the Clarence, and it had struck him as wonderful that there was so little cultivation on the river. Upon making inquiries he found it was due to the fact that the people had no facilities for getting their produce away. Mr. A. Easthauffe, storekeeper at Murwillumbah, also stated that the reason why maize was not grown in the district was the difficulty of getting it to market. Maize would be the staple product of the district, after which came sugar, and after that they would go in for dairying. The soil would grow anything they put into it. He was of opinion that the proposed railway would be the best and most certain means of opening up the district, especially if Byron Bay were made a suitable and safe harbour. The evidence of Mr. J. Buchanan, farmer, in South Murwillumbah, was to the same effect. He considered the land on the Tweed to be capable of growing anything. He believed that the proposed railway would give the people the necessary relief, and if they were able to ship their produce at Byron Bay it would be the making of the district. Mr. E. H. Johnston, licensed surveyor, stated that he has a selection of 560 acres about 4 miles from Murwillumbah, but only grew sufficient maize and fruit for his own requirements. He believed he could get his surplus produce to market if the railway were constructed. Mr. W. R. Baker, proprietor of the *Tweed and Brunswick Advocate*, said that when he came to the district he was “dumbfounded” at the want of facilities for getting produce away. On account of the expense, he had discarded the idea of keeping the river open as the highway for the district, but a railway either to Byron Bay or to the Richmond would best serve the district. Within his knowledge farmers had given up cultivating the land simply because they had no market for their produce. The statement of Mr. Gavin Pettigrew, a farmer between Tumbulgum and Cudgen, was to the effect that he was in a worse position for getting bananas to market than they were in Fiji. Mr. Charles Anthony Brady, a settler on the Tweed for about sixteen years, had known people there for seven months at a time to be without communi-

cation

cation with the outside world. He had cultivated silk, coffee, and tobacco, and the district was eminently suited for the growth of grapes and oranges. Mr. William Kelly, hotelkeeper at Murwillumbah, stated that he was growing maize for three or four years, until he was completely ruined from want of a market. He thought the district was decidedly entitled to the railway. Mr. Richard Dodd, butcher, Cudgen, advocated the coast line on account of its being cheaper. Mr. Henry Clarke, selector, thought the market for the district was Brisbane, and that it would be foolish to make the railway. Mr. J. M' Connor, overseer of a sugar-plantation, and Mr. W. R. Isaacs, manager of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, gave evidence with respect to the production of sugar on the Tweed. Mr. Isaacs was in favour of the line *viâ* Murwillumbah. Mr. W. Wardrop and Mr. J. Black, both expressed themselves in favour of opening up the river, so that it would be a feeder to the railway. Technical evidence respecting the surveys was given by Mr. C. H. Caswell and Mr. G. Wilkins, railway surveyors.

4. At the Brunswick River, Mr. J. M'Gregor, farmer, expressed his opinion that the future development of the district would warrant the proposed expenditure on the railway. Mr. J. Anderson, licensed surveyor, spoke of the good quality of the land through which the line passes. He thought the most available route had been adopted. He believed that if the country were properly developed, even an entrance to the Brunswick River would not be sufficient to take away half the produce of that district. Mr. F. V. Wareham, farmer, near Byron Bay, spoke of the difficulty of developing the land through the want of a market. He had been there six years and had made nothing off the land yet. Ten acres under fruits would yield a handsome income, if facilities were granted for cheap and quick communication with a market. The route proposed for the railway would go through the heart of the country. Mr. T. Temperley, a selector and Inspector of Northern Fisheries, residing near Ballina, alluded to the superior quality of the land near Byron Bay. The Government could get £15 an acre for a large portion of the land, if it had railway communication. Mr. E. S. Atkins, sugar planter and manufacturer, Byron Bay, declared that the land there would produce sugarcane equal or superior to the cane grown on the Clarence. Within a short radius of Byron Bay there was more land suitable for cane than there was on the Clarence River. Mr. Robert Campbell, dairy-farmer, Byron Creek, said he found it of no use growing maize because he had no access to market. If the railway were constructed, he would grow maize, potatoes, and other crops. The land in that district was as good as that at Narrowgut, on the Hunter, which had been sold at £100 per acre. Mr. E. Williams, storekeeper and selector at Coorabell Creek, had put down his land in grass, because, although he could grow anything he pleased, he was obliged to be content with butter and grass-seed, which he could carry away easily. Mr. O. B. Wareham, farmer, about 3 miles from Byron Bay, produced grass, bananas, pine-apples, and maize; he also shipped timber off the land. He considered the district entitled to the proposed expenditure of public money for the railway and the breakwater, as the block of land dependent on Byron Bay was the largest and richest in Australia. Mr. E. Boyle, a dairy-farmer, of Byron Bay, corroborated the evidence previously given. At Eureka, Mr. A. Johnston and Mr. M. King, both engaged in dairying pursuits, gave evidence in favour of the construction of the railway. Very similar evidence was given at Clunes by Mr. G. T. Hindmarsh, Mr. J. Gibson, and Mr. T. Moses.

5. At Lismore, Mr. A. Meston, sugar-manufacturer, considered that a railway to the Tweed was absolutely necessary. If it were constructed, the land that now kept cows would keep a large number of human beings. He could not suggest a better route for the line than the one that had been proposed. Mr. C. H. Gale, Land Agent, gave particulars as to the sale of Crown Lands at Byron Bay. Mr. G. W. West, Inspector of Conditional Purchases, thought the railway line as laid out was the best that could be got. He looked upon the breakwater at Byron Bay and the railway as one matter. Mr. E. M. Allman, Road Inspector for the Lismore District, believed that the country was sufficiently rich to warrant the construction of a railway, because the population would enormously increase. The Very Rev. J. J. Doyle, D.D., Roman Catholic Bishop of Grafton, stated that he thought the line was being taken along the most practicable route to get to the population at the principal centres. He considered the railway, on the whole, would pay very well.

well. Mr. T. C. Lodge, Manager of the A.J.S. Bank, Lismore, believed the Government would be justified in the expenditure for the railway and the breakwater at Byron Bay, in view of the increased value of the unsold land. Water communication had not developed the district, hence a railway was necessary. Mr. L. Armbruster, sugar-planter, Mr. T. Osborne, farmer, and Mr. S. G. Woodrow, selector, all supported the construction of the railway. Mr. James Barrie, store-keeper, Lismore, gave a history of the agitation for a railway from the year 1881. He approved of the route now proposed, and thought the unoccupied land was sufficient to justify the outlay. Mr. F. O'Flynn, Mayor of Lismore, Mr. W. Barnes, selector, and Mr. F. Tonkin spoke in favour of the construction of the line. Mr. W. Walmesley, dairy-farmer, said he would be producing a great many more things if he could get them away at a reasonable rate. Mr. J. Stocks, farmer and dairyman, found it did not pay to cultivate for the market, unless they had better communication. He had advocated the construction of a railway for the last twenty years. Mr. H. B. Chisholm, farmer, thought the railway would fairly serve the present and future settlement. Mr. O. Lloyd, railway surveyor, gave technical evidence.

6. Mr. Richard Barling gave evidence at Casino with reference to the quality and the value of the land. He did not think the line from Casino to Grafton would pay, except as part of a national coast line. Mr. F. B. Gulley, storekeeper, of Casino, spoke of having suffered loss through the detention of goods in and out, through the bad state of the Richmond River Bar. If they had the railway, the produce of Casino and 30 miles to the south would go to Lismore. He believed that within a reasonable time the line would pay. Mr. F. G. Crouch, storekeeper, of Casino, said the capabilities of the district were immense, and it had progressed by leaps and bounds since he had known it. A railway between Casino and Lismore would pay in a very few years. He thought the Government would be justified in expending the amount required for the railway and the breakwater at Byron Bay. Mr. J. C. Irving, pastoralist, said the increased value that would be given to the land if the railway and breakwater were carried out would assist in paying for the works. Mr. R. Pyers, timber merchant, stated that a large amount of timber would be sent by the railway if it were constructed. Mr. D. Campbell, pastoralist, and Mr. T. Carlill, senr., supported the construction of the railway. Mr. Robert Page, journalist, gave particulars respecting the production of the district. Mr. A. C. Simpson, timber merchant, also stated that timber would be largely sent by the railway. Mr. W. J. Fanning, pastoralist and manager of a cheese factory, thought the line would be a very desirable one. Mr. T. G. Hewitt, proprietor of the *Northern Star*, confirmed the evidence that had been given with regard to the carriage of timber by the railway. He believed every acre of land between Grafton and Casino would be taken up if the railway were made.

7. At Myrtle Creek, Mr. W. Morrison, farmer, said he had selected in the hope that the railway would be constructed. Mr. T. A. Small, selector, said he would send his produce by the railway. Mr. J. Wells, farmer, considered that the construction of the railway would lead to a great increase of the land under cultivation in the district.

8. Two witnesses at Lawrence, Mr. W. Olive, innkeeper, and Mr. E. Shields, both expressed their opinion that the line should be taken to Lawrence instead of Grafton.

9. At Grafton, Mr. P. R. Donaldson, District Surveyor, stated that the whole of the country between Grafton and Casino was well adapted for grazing and dairy-farming, and a great deal of it, in proximity to the watercourses, for agriculture; but settlement on that part of the district was retarded for the want of better means of communication than the ordinary roads. His impression was that the sale of the land on this section would certainly recoup the expenditure on the line, and the land on the other section would go a long way towards doing so. Mr. G. H. Gibson, Land Agent, gave information respecting the number of conditional purchases in each year since 1881. Mr. John Cummins, railway engineer, gave technical evidence, chiefly with respect to the grades on the proposed line. Mr. W. Goodger, a retired farmer, believed the railway between Grafton and Casino would pay in ten or fifteen years, but if they waited that time for the railway it would retard settlement. Mr. C. Duggan, butcher and grazier, said the country between Grafton and Casino was for grazing purposes from fair to good, and some very good,

good, and portions of it were fit for agriculture. The country would produce maize, oats, or oaten hay, timber and fruit, for the railway to carry. Mr. Samuel See, Mayor of Grafton, believed the line would pay from the moment it was constructed from Grafton to Casino. Grafton would get the benefit of the trade from Myrtle Creek—42 miles; the rest of the traffic would probably go to Casino. He believed a sufficient quantity of produce would be grown between Grafton and Casino to warrant the expenditure of the large sum of money that it would take to construct a railway, together with the increased passenger traffic; and the timber trade would develop to a great extent. More timber had been burnt on the Clarence than had been sold, simply because they had no means of getting it away. Mr. H. Fisher, licensed surveyor, also declared that all the land between Grafton and Casino was suitable for settlement, and he believed every inch of it would be bought at once if the railway were constructed. Mr. J. B. Carlton, gave evidence as to the great benefit that would be derived from the construction of a line from the Tweed to Grafton, to form part of the Coast Railway at some future date. Mr. T. Bawden, formerly Mayor of Grafton and its late representative in the Legislative Assembly, produced statistics showing the amount of wheat, maize, oats, sugar-cane, and potatoes grown in the district, and the acreage under crop. He was strongly in favour of a connection with the tableland of New England. Mr. H. V. Haynes, licensed surveyor, thought the residents of that part of the Colony had a right to a railway. Mr. J. H. Munro, stock and station agent, confirmed the evidence of previous witnesses. He was of opinion that there would be a population between Grafton and Casino, within 5 or 10 miles of the railway line, of 5,000 people, and as it is calculated that each person averages £3 profit to the revenue, there would be £15,000 annually, a great proportion of which could be applied to the reduction of the annual cost of the railway. Mr. Samuel See, on being recalled, stated that there was a coal seam within 22 miles of Grafton 46 feet from the surface. There was an 8-foot, a 4-foot, a 4 ft. 6 in., and a 3 ft. 6 in. seam.

10. The evidence obtained at the various centres of population visited by the Sectional Committee will be found to deal very fully with the question under consideration. To some extent it is associated with evidence on the proposed break-water at Byron Bay and the improvements to the entrance of the Clarence River, but this the Committee found it impossible to avoid, the three subjects being very closely connected with one another. As far as could be done, the evidence on each of the three proposals inquired into by the Committee was kept separate; and where a witness was questioned or made a statement upon more than one of the proposed works it will be observed that the reference to the matter not at the time immediately before the Committee is in direct connection with the subject upon which the witness was called for examination, and therefore not superfluous or out of place.

11. The Committee have had no sections of the proposed railway before them, and have through this circumstance been placed somewhat at a disadvantage; but the omission does not appear to have been due to any fault on the part of the Department of Public Works. The plans of the railway are not ready because every effort is being made to secure the best route and the easiest grades, and the country through which the proposed line would go is of a very difficult nature. Owing to the density of the scrub through which the surveyors have to cut their way, the work of finding an easy and good route is a matter of very great labour.

12. After a due consideration of the evidence given before them, and of the information obtained by personally visiting the districts in which the proposed works will, if approved by Parliament, be constructed, and by inspecting Byron Bay, the entrance of the Clarence River, and, as far as possible, the route of the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed, the Sectional Committee desire to report that they are favourable to the construction of the proposed railway from the Tweed River to Casino, on the Richmond River. The Committee are of opinion that the line should be constructed from the point proposed opposite to Murwillumbah, and continued, as recommended by the Department, to Byron Bay, and thence to Casino. The railway so constructed would, the Committee consider, be a feeder to the port at Byron Bay and to the Richmond River. The Tweed River is so shallow, the entrance so bad, and the probable cost of works that would permanently remedy this

state of things so enormous, that the Committee doubt whether it would be desirable to attempt, at any great expense, to improve either the one or the other. Even if the river were made navigable, and the entrance safe, it could only serve farmers within a distance of 14 or 15 miles on each side of the stream; and the same may be stated with regard to the Richmond. In this case the intervening country would be absolutely without the means to enable farmers to get their produce to port. Although a great deal of the land through which the proposed railway would pass is at the present time held in large areas, the Committee feel sure that the owners of this land would, in their own interests, at no distant date, lease or alienate it, so that farmers might be induced to settle in the district by reason of the facilities afforded them to reach a market. The greater part of the land between the Tweed and the Richmond Rivers is of an exceptionally rich character, but travelling south from the Richmond the land gradually becomes inferior, until a point is reached a few miles south of Casino where the land is of the very poorest character except in small areas on the banks of the creek, and it continues so until within a short distance of the Clarence River. Although the Sectional Committee received evidence from people between Casino and the Clarence as to the capabilities of the land in that locality, they could not obtain any evidence showing that up to the present time this land had been utilized for any purpose other than grazing, except in small flats along the banks of creeks. The greater part of the land between Casino and Grafton, until the alluvial land of the Clarence is reached, is of very poor quality, and the Sectional Committee are thoroughly satisfied that a railway between the Richmond and the Clarence, at Grafton, would not carry the produce from one district to the other. Nor would there be any great passenger traffic, as the Committee feel sure that, when the proposed improvements at the entrance to the Richmond River are carried out, the facilities for reaching the Richmond by steamer will be quite as good as those now available in connection with the Clarence, and passengers will therefore travel direct to the Richmond instead of to the Clarence, as is the practice at present, owing to the uncertainty of the bar at the entrance to the Richmond River. Believing that no produce will pass between Grafton, on the Clarence, and Casino, on the Richmond, the Sectional Committee can see no reason for constructing the portion of the proposed railway which would connect those two places, unless it were constructed as a part of what is known as the North Coast Railway. If it were determined to construct a line of railway, as has been suggested, from the Hunter River District along the coast northwards, then the proposed line between Casino and Grafton could form part of the greater scheme of the North Coast Line. Or, on the other hand, if it were feasible to connect Grafton with the tableland of New England, at Glen Innes, or elsewhere in that neighbourhood, there might be some justification for the construction of the line to Grafton, as being a centre or point of very great importance; but the Sectional Committee do not deem it part of their duty to offer any suggestion as to the construction of a line to Glen Innes from Grafton, or as to the North Coast Line. At the conclusion of their labours the Sectional Committee returned to Sydney by way of Glen Innes, making such arrangements as enabled them to travel over the country between Grafton and Glen Innes during the daytime, and to see for themselves the nature of the country in and about those localities.

J. P. ABBOTT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 28th January, 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO THE TWEED.

[TAKEN BEFORE THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.]

THURSDAY, 21 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at the "Commercial Hotel," Tweed Heads, at 8:30 p.m.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Grafton to The Tweed.

Mr. William Macgregor, J.P., Pilot, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] You are the pilot stationed at the Tweed River Heads? Yes.
2. How long have you been here? Over nineteen years.
3. *Mr. Garrard.*] Have you been a pilot all that time? Yes.
4. You are familiar with the trade of the port during that nineteen years? Yes.
5. Has it increased much of late years? Yes.
6. How many vessels entered inward and outward in a month when you first entered upon your duties as pilot? Possibly six.
7. And how many now? That I could not tell you.
8. Roughly? I could not answer the question.
9. *Chairman.*] Have you no record? I have; but I was not prepared for this examination.
10. *Mr. Garrard.*] Would there be twenty, inward and outward? About twenty. I do not say that that is correct.
11. Are the vessels trading to the port now of larger tonnage than those which used to come here nineteen years ago? They are.
12. Very much larger? Half as large again.
13. What is the principal produce outwards? Sugar.
14. Any timber? There is timber. Timber and sugar are exported in equal quantities.
15. I suppose that timber was the only export nineteen years ago? That was all.
16. Has that trade fallen off? It has been better lately.
17. Is the quantity of timber in the neighbourhood of the river decreasing? There seems to be more now—wherever they are getting it from—than there was then.
18. Was any timber cut close to the Heads nineteen years ago? No.
19. It was brought from some distance? Yes.
20. It is brought from a still further distance now? It must be.
21. There is no planting out going on in the district at all? No.
22. What kinds of timber are exported? Cedar, pine, and beech.
23. How would you arrange the outward shipments—half sugar and half timber; those are the only two products? Yes.
24. Is any maize produced? Very little.
25. You think that there is as much sugar as timber exported? I think so.
26. What is the nature of the inward cargoes? Coal and general goods.
27. Coal for the sugar-mills? Yes.
28. And general cargo? For the population on the river.
29. Has the population increased? I could not say much.
30. You are seldom up the river? Yes, very seldom.
31. Your duties compel you to remain at the entrance? Yes.
32. Do you know whether much land has been taken up and utilized during the last nineteen years? Most of it has been taken up within the last nineteen years.
33. Have you any knowledge of the land that has been taken up or that is available? None whatever.
34. Do you think that if the entrance to the river were improved, and the impediments to navigation within the river removed, it would provide a sufficient outlet for the produce of the district without railway communication? I could not say about that. The improvement of the navigation would be sufficient for the river, but leave the river, and I cannot say anything about it.
35. But water transit is the cheapest mode of conveyance? It is.
36. Therefore, if the entrance and the river itself were fairly navigable, would there not be a fair outlet for the produce of the district? For the land on the river it would. I do not know anything about the land away from the river.

Mr. W.
Macgregor,
J.P.
21 Nov., 1889.

- Mr. W. Macgregor, J.P.
21 Nov., 1889.
37. Do you think it desirable that a railway should be constructed from Murwillumbah to Lismore, Casino, and Grafton? I would not like to pass an opinion. I do not reckon that I am in a position to pass an opinion.
38. From your local knowledge, do you think that it would be possible, at a reasonable cost, to improve the entrance and navigation of the river? I believe that it would not take a great deal to improve it.
39. Do you know if anything has been done in the way of improvement? Nothing whatever.
40. Do you know if it is contemplated to do anything? I have heard a rumour for the last eighteen years that something was to be done.
41. Is it not a fact that engineers from the Harbours and Rivers Department have been or are here now? They have been here two or three times; but I cannot see that anything has actually been done.
42. Do you know that it is proposed to spend £8,000 or £10,000 on the entrance? I have heard that they are trying to get it; but I am not aware that it has been granted.
43. Are you not aware that there is an officer of the Department now taking borings? Yes.
44. That looks like business? I have seen a good deal before from which nothing has resulted.
45. Do you know anything of the work which they propose to do—have you seen the plans, or had you any conversation with the engineers? I have had conversation with them, and have an idea of what is likely to be done.
46. Do you think that the plan is a common-sense one? I do.
47. You believe, from your knowledge of the entrance, that the project is a feasible and a common-sense one? I do.
48. Nothing less expensive would be of any avail? I do not think it would.
49. It would not be well to go in for a more expensive plan? I cannot think that anything better could be done than what they suggest.
50. If the work is done, what depth of water do you think you will get on the bar? I should think that if it were done—having seen it run through the sand where they now propose to make the dyke—we should have 12 feet.
51. Are there any great difficulties higher up the river than what the Harbours and Rivers Department propose to deal with now? There are only the flats, and they could be dredged with a proper dredge.
52. Those are only sand flats? Yes.
53. If they were removed, would a vessel drawing 12 feet be able to get up to Murwillumbah? There would be a few other obstructions.
54. What are they? Two or three little shoals that would require dredging.
55. No rocky bars? Not that I am aware of.
56. If you had a depth of 12 feet up to Murwillumbah, do you not think that the river would give a fair outlet for the produce of the district? I do not know. I only know about the banks of the river.
57. Do you think that any trade naturally draining to the banks of the river would go that way? Yes.
58. *Mr. Lee.*] Supposing the contemplated works at the heads were carried out, would there be sufficient depth of water for the class of craft now trading here to enter in all weathers? Clear of a gale of wind—yes.
59. But in all weathers? There are times when none of the harbour bars could be taken.
60. You say that if the works were carried out there would be 12 feet of water under the ship's bottom—would that not be sufficient for ships trading here to enter in all weathers? No.
61. Supposing they were loaded and ready for sea, would they be able to go out in heavy weather? No.
62. So that practically they would be as much dependent on the winds then as they are now? No. We could go out in ordinary bad weather; but there is weather when a vessel cannot go in or out in better harbours than this.
63. Have many vessels been lost at the entrance during your period of office? Four or five.
64. Steamers or sailing vessels? There was one steamer; the rest were sailing vessels.
65. Admitting that the entrance were made tolerably safe for the ordinary craft trading here, how many vessels would you be able to accommodate in your anchorage inside the Heads? If it were improved in the way suggested there would be no anchorage required; the ships would be able to go all the way up the river.
66. I am speaking of the river just inside? At the most nine at present.
67. What is the tonnage of the steamers trading here? 120 tons.
68. And of the sailing vessels? 104 tons register, carrying nearly double that.
69. What is the average depth of water? At the present time there is 10 feet. I have known it less than 6 feet at high water.
70. Is 10 feet sufficient for the vessels you have mentioned? Yes.
71. What is the least depth required to bring them over with safety? 7 feet.
72. With that depth you can enter inwards and outwards with safety? Yes.
73. At the present time how is the produce of the river brought down to the ocean boats? By steam droghers and punts, and transhipped into the larger boats.
74. You have no knowledge of the country lying back from the river? None whatever.
75. And a very limited knowledge of the river itself? I have not a great deal of knowledge of it beyond the flats.
76. Would a depth of water of 12 feet at the heads be sufficient to admit steamers and sailing vessels of a larger draft than are now trading here? Yes.
77. Up to how many tons? 300 to 400.
78. Is there any foreign trade from this port—that is, to the other Colonies? A little for Brisbane at times, but not at present.
79. Is there any to Melbourne? No.
80. The produce of the district then as a rule finds its way to Sydney? Yes.
81. Are the present means of conveyance by water the only means the people have of getting produce to market? Yes.
82. Is there any overland traffic between the upper river and Queensland? Not that I am aware of.
83. You do not know anything about that? No.
84. So far as your knowledge goes you are of opinion that a depth of water of 12 feet up to Murwillumbah would carry vessels of sufficient tonnage to convey the produce of the river? I believe so. 85.

85. Is there a tug service here now? There is.
 86. Is it a Government Service? It is subsidised by Government.
 87. And by the ship-owners? Yes; they pay so much.
 88. Are the port dues levied here? Yes.
 89. The same as at any other port? The same as at any other port.
 90. Have you any additional evidence to give. Do you know whether a cheaper service could be established by water than by rail? None whatever. I would not like to speak about it.

Mr. W.
 Macgregor,
 J.P.
 21 Nov., 1889.

Edward Osler, Esq., Sub-Collector of Customs, sworn, and examined:—

91. *Chairman.*] What is your position in the Government Service? Sub-Collector of Customs for the Tweed River District. E. Osler, Esq.
21 Nov., 1889.
92. How long have you occupied that position? Since 1st June, 1886. I was acting here a fortnight before that.
93. Has there been an increase in the trade of the district—in the number of vessels in and out, since then? There has been a little increase since 1886, but not so much as in former years.
94. Can you furnish the Committee with the number of vessels for each year since you came here? I have here the total tonnage. In 1880, 5,062 tons. During that year a few vessels went out in ballast; but those were the trips of the "Terranora," a large steamer belonging to the Sugar Company, going to Brisbane and bringing machinery back. In 1881, 5,434 tons. Very little ballast went out that time. Nearly all the vessels were loaded. In 1882, 6,042 tons; no vessels in ballast. In 1883, 6,500 tons. There was a little of that tonnage in ballast, but not much. It was principally taken by the same steamer. In 1884, 7,873 tons. There were then two trips of the "Terranora" in ballast, to the Clarence River only. In 1885, 10,841 tons. During that time I find one small steamer, 49 tons, in ballast, and two or three trips of the "Terranora," which was 199 tons, back to the Clarence in ballast. In 1886, 12,668 tons. The trips made during that year in ballast were principally to the Clarence and to the Richmond, this steamer going back. In 1887, 12,354 tons; 1888, 7,751 tons; 1889, 6,953 tons for ten months only. The decrease in the tonnage for 1888 and 1889 is partly accounted for by the fact that the steamer "Karuah," which is now running here, is about half the registered tonnage of the "Tweed."
95. What we want to know is, what goods are taken in and out—not the tonnage of the ships? I have a return of the goods taken out. We take no account of the goods that come in coastwise. In 1880, outwards, 382 tons of sugar, which I put down at £20 a ton; 89 tons of molasses, at £10 a ton; 891,000 feet of timber, calculated at 10s. per 100 ft., which, I believe, is a fair average price; 880 bushels of maize, calculated at 2s. 6d.; 264 hides, at 10s. each; 9 casks of tallow, which I reckon equal to 3 tons, at £15 a ton, at a low estimate; and 13 cases of sundries, £1—a total of £13,285.
96. Give us the totals of the others. I suppose each year there was a similar cargo? I do not know except from my official records. You would want each year separate. I have here, 1880, 1887, and 1889, to show the increase. In 1887, which was a very good year on the river for sugar, 2,716 tons were sent away; 389 tons of molasses; 2,924,000 feet of timber; 1,152 hides; 25 casks of tallow; 612 packages of sundries,—which, on the same basis as before, I reckon were worth £74,153. In 1889, which is the next year I have, the total exports for ten months I reckon at £50,632.
97. Is there no export of maize from this district? During this year more maize has been exported than in previous years—8,434 bushels, taking 4 bushels to the bag. The quantity of timber has not been so great this year; neither has the quantity of sugar.
98. Do you know any of the back districts here at all? I have never been back from the banks of the river. I have been on the Tallabudgery Road, and I have been up the north arm as far as Dungey Creek.
99. Do you think that if the entrance to the harbour were improved that would help to develop the resources of the district more largely? Yes, if there were better facilities for getting the stuff away, and the vessels could be depended upon in getting out, I think it would be an inducement for people to settle on the soil and cultivate it.
100. That improvement would accommodate the people on the river within a reasonable distance of this place? I should think so.
101. You do not know enough about the district to say anything about the trade? I have never been further up than Murwillumbah; my duties do not take me that way; they take me more to the north. The head of Dungey Creek, where I went on official business, is near the Queensland border, say about 3 miles.
102. I suppose they do not use any stills here? I am not aware of any.
103. *Mr. Garrard.*] Is there any cargo going to Brisbane from here? Yes. My return includes the cargo to Brisbane in the total exports from the river.
104. Can you tell us whether there is an increase in the quantity going to Brisbane, or a decrease? A decided decrease. There is no timber going to Brisbane now; but they had a vessel running there constantly.
105. What is the reason of that? When the Queensland Government increased the duty on timber the people who had purchased timber here said that it did not pay them to take it away, and in all probability there was also a depreciation in the value of timber in Brisbane.
106. Then for the ten months of 1889 we understand that the outward tonnage has been 6,353 tons, and in 1880 it was 5,000 tons, showing a small increase? Yes. In 1880 the "Terranora" made seventeen trips outward, and she is only 1 ton less than 200 tons; therefore, in round numbers, she is more than double the size of the other vessels.
107. Was it in 1880 that the Sugar Company first used their mills on the Tweed? I am not positive.
108. I understood you to say that the "Terranora" was bringing machinery from Brisbane? Yes, and sometimes coal. At one time they had a great traffic between here and Brisbane, and kept the "Terranora" constantly running.
109. If the tonnage in 1880 was 5,062 tons, and in 1889, 6,353 tons, there has not been a very large increase? No; but, as I said before, the "Karuah" is only the half the size of the "Tweed."
110. Then if the "Great Eastern" had been enabled to come in here with cargo you would have put down her registered tonnage if she only brought 10 tons of cargo. The small vessel does all the trade that the bigger one did before? She does the trade to a certain extent. 111.

- E. Osler, Esq. 111. You must see that the tonnage of a vessel is not a guarantee of a cargo carried, because the "Tweed" only went out with half cargoes? She was scarcely ever 'full, except perhaps of timber. The only way we have of getting statistics is by taking the registered tonnage. The registered tonnage of one vessel is 66 tons, and she goes out with 90 if full. It is a very hard case if a vessel does not go out with her registered tonnage on board. When the bar was bad most of them went out with their registered tonnage.
- 21 Nov., 1889. 112. Do you know whether vessels have been bar-bound here for any length of time. The first three months that I was here the steamer was bar-bound for twenty-eight days in three trips.
113. And produce lying in her hold all that time? Yes. The other vessels were also bar-bound.
114. Do you know the rate of freight from here to Sydney compared with that charged from the Clarence or from the Richmond? I think the freight of the steamers is 30s. or 35s.
115. You do not know what it is from the Richmond or from the Clarence? I have no idea.
116. It is rather higher here? I think so, because of the insurance premium being high.
117. And liability to detention? Yes.
118. How often have you known vessels to be bar-bound here? I could not say exactly.
119. Roughly—twice in a year—once in a year? I suppose two or three times in a year. There are certain times in the year when they are bar-bound; during the equinoctial gales, for instance.
120. What would be the longest detention? As well as I can recollect from memory—I could tell you exactly if I had my journal here—four or five weeks.
121. Is that a sailing vessel or a steamer? Sailing vessels and steamers as well. The bar was impassable because of the bad weather and the shallowness of the water.
122. As a resident, and one who has watched the trade of this place, do you think that if greater facilities were given for the conveyance of produce, either by improvements to the entrance, or a railway, it would lead to a greater development of the district than now exists? That seems to be the opinion of people in the district with whom I have spoken.
123. You have not formed an opinion of your own? I should think that if there were better facilities for the conveyance of produce there would be more inducement to people to settle on the river and grow produce.
124. Which do you think would serve the people of the district best—water carriage or railway carriage—improved water carriage, with a depth of 12 feet on the bar, or a railway 60 or 70 miles in length, giving communication with the deep waters of the Richmond or the Clarence at Grafton? You would have to take into consideration the state of the Richmond and the Clarence. Of course, if harbour improvements were carried out in those places, and this place were allowed to remain as it is, a railway from here to carry produce to either of the other rivers would be a convenience to the people; but it would not be as cheap as water carriage. Water carriage must be the cheapest, because there are no roads to keep in repair, and the wear and tear of ships is very little compared with the wear and tear of railway engines and roads.
125. Do you think the difficulty of getting to market has been the chief bar to the more rapid progress of the district? I should imagine that it has, looking at the statistics; but I can only speak for the time that I have been here.
126. *Mr. Lee.*] During your time have any vessels with cargoes been lost going out of the river? The "Kalara," a steamer belonging to Brisbane, was lost since I came here. She foundered about a mile from the bar.
127. Can you give us any evidence as to whether the shippers insure from here? I know nothing of my own knowledge. I know nothing except what I have been told by the owners.
128. Does the question of freights come within your knowledge? No.
129. Does the question of port dues? Harbour and light and pilotage dues only.
130. Are the usual charges made here? Yes; the usual charges—4d. per ton if it becomes due.
131. There is no extra charge made? No extra charge. The harbour and light dues are only paid when they fall due. They are paid six-monthly. Where there is no Sub-Collector, even if the pilot is acting as such, the Act of Parliament does not say that the pilotage must be paid there, but they can pay it at Sydney.
132. But still it is a liability incurred in this port? It is a liability incurred in this port for harbour and light dues, provided the six months is up before the vessel leaves the port.
133. I want you to clear up the question of tonnage. The "Terranora" is the largest vessel that is trading to this port? Yes.
134. Could she leave the port with 200 tons of cargo on board? I could not say from having seen the ship leave the port, but I should think from the build of the vessel that she could leave with 200 tons.
135. With the depth of water that you have seen on the bar? Yes; I do not think that the "Terranora" would draw much over 6 feet. If she drew over 6 feet she would go. The bottom of the "Terranora" is flat.
136. I notice that in your returns no dairy produce, such as butter, bacon, or cheese, is mentioned? During the last year a ton of butter has gone away from the river, principally to Brisbane.
137. You look upon that as a perishable article? Yes.
138. If that were in a ship's hold, and she were bar-bound, it would deteriorate in value? It would become almost useless, except for cart-grease.
139. Would any other cargo such as sugar, hides, or tallow deteriorate if kept in the hold? No; not the kind of sugar sent from the river.
140. Could you give the Committee any information as to the population of the Tweed River District? I have not the slightest idea what it is.
141. That does not come within your province? I do not know it officially. There is a large nomadic population—people coming to and from the sugar mills in the crushing season.
142. The alienation of land does not come within your province? No.
143. Have you ever kept a record of the rainfall about here? No.
144. Have you any idea what it is? I have no record and no means of making one.
145. Could you tell me what is about the rainfall? From general observation I should think there is more rainfall in this district than there is in most parts of the Colony where I have been.

Mr. William Charles, selector, sworn, and examined:—

146. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Terranora.
147. How far from here? About $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles in a straight line.
148. What are you? A farmer or grazier.
149. A selector? A selector.
150. Will you give the Committee what information you have;—how long have you been here? Six years.
151. Where did you come from? I came from the Namoi.
152. What part of it? Bullerawa; but I came originally from Illawarra.
153. Do you know this district well? Yes; I think I know it very well.
154. Up and down the river? Not so much on the river as back.
155. How far back? I think I know the district as well as anyone on the river.
156. Up to the Dividing Ranges? Yes.
157. What is the character of the soil? It is a beautiful rich red and dark soil—volcanic soil.
158. Is that on the hills as well as on the flats? Yes.
159. Could the hills about the district generally be cultivated? Yes. The scrub hills would grow almost anything.
160. And the flats, I suppose, are exceedingly rich? Yes. The hills are really good too.
161. Is the land about here superior to that about Illawarra, do you think? Yes; much superior.
162. Have you studied the rainfall here at all? Yes. The rainfall is much greater here than it is at Illawarra.
163. And the vegetation much more rapid in growth because of the district being further north? Yes. The country will carry more stock than that about Illawarra will.
164. In its natural state? No; but after it has been felled and cleared. There is very little natural grass; it is all dense scrub.
165. Is it a district which you think would develop into a second Illawarra if there were markets for the produce? Yes; it would.
166. It would sustain a large population? Yes; a much larger population than the Illawarra district would maintain.
167. It is more extensive than Illawarra? Yes. There is a greater quantity of good land here than there is in Illawarra. In fact, all the land here is much better than that in Illawarra.
168. You get better returns from it? Yes.
169. What do you do—raise stock? Yes.
170. Have you tried to grow any grain? Yes; I have grown corn.
171. Was it profitable? No; because we could not get the maize away with the present condition of the bar.
172. I suppose what you want in this district is to be able, with a certainty, to get your maize away to catch particular markets. Then it would pay well. What we want is a railway.
173. Do you think that if the facilities were great and certain, a great deal more land would be cultivated here than there is now? Yes.
174. And the population would become more dense? Yes.
175. Is it a fact that people have left here after trying hard to farm their land? Yes. They have actually been starved out.
176. Do you know of any people here who have taken up land and complied with the conditions, but who have had to give it up because they were unable to obtain a market? I know of several, close to my own place, who took up land and worked it for three or four years, and then had to give it up.
177. I suppose 640 acres would sustain many families? Yes; 40 acres of land here would sustain any family.
178. If a railway were constructed from the Tweed southwards to the Richmond River, or to the first certain port, do you think settlement would follow on the line of route;—is the country good? It is very good.
179. Do you know it? I know it very well between Richmond and here. Of course, most of it along the coast is not so good, but after you get inland it is splendid.
180. Supposing the railway were complete, and the entrance made just as it is, do you think the river and creeks here would become feeders to the railway to any large extent? Yes; they would be feeders to the railway.
181. The same as the Hunter is? Yes.
182. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you think that if the railway were constructed to Murwillumbah for the terminal point the people in the district would avail themselves of it? Yes.
183. How would they get to it? I think it would be continued to the border.
184. But if the terminal point were Murwillumbah—you are going on the supposition that it would be extended—would the people avail themselves of it? Yes.
185. How far are you from that place? 7 miles, in a direct line, from the Junction by road.
186. And how near are you to the north arm? The junction of the north and south arms?
187. How far are you from there? 7 miles by road.
188. How far are you from Murwillumbah? That would be 6 miles further on.
189. Is it at all likely that people in your district would pass by a waterway, and go 6 miles further on to put their produce into a train and carry it 60 or 70 miles? Certainly; because their goods would be perishable. They would send them either to the Heads, and then up by launch to Murwillumbah, and from there by rail, or from our district to Tumbulghum (or Junction), and by river to Murwillumbah.
190. We have it in evidence that there is 10 feet of water on the bar, and that at present there are seven vessels here drawing from 7 to 9 feet of water;—do you say that the people of your district would send their stuff down the river as far as the Heads, and up the river again to Murwillumbah, in order that they might go by train, when they would pass all those vessels? Yes; and I think they could do that more cheaply than they can take their goods by the present system. They never know now when the vessels are going to get out.
191. How often have the ships been bar-bound during the last twelve months? I could not say.
192. You do not know that they have been subject to this disadvantage? Yes. I do, from my own knowledge.

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193. Would you send your stuff down to the Tweed Heads, pass by vessels there, take it 20 miles to Murwillumbah, tranship into the train, and then carry it 60 or 70 miles to put it into a vessel for Sydney—would it pay you to do that? Yes, because I should not run the risk of having my goods detained at the Heads for a week, or perhaps three weeks.
194. Have any goods been detained here during the last twelve months for a week? Yes, hides of my own.
195. They are not perishable articles? Yes, they are. They are left in the sun, and dogs and everything destroy them.
196. Do you advocate this railway, the terminal point of which is to be at Murwillumbah, in the hope that it will be extended to the Queensland border, near Terranora? Yes, that is one reason.
197. If you had no hopes of its being extended you would not be anxious about it? I would be just as anxious.
198. Do you know the route of the line between Murwillumbah and Lismore? Yes.
199. Does it pass through fairly good country all the way? It passes through the best lands of the district.
200. Nearly all of it is alienated? No. There are some reserves along the line containing very good country.
201. Do you not think that if the river entrance and the river itself were made better, it would be cheaper for the people to send their produce that way? Even if they made this river equal to the Richmond, I should not say that we should derive the same advantage from it as from a railway.
202. Do you think that this district would be served better by railway communication with Brisbane than with the Richmond River? I do not know. Of course, what stops our communication with Queensland is their policy of protection. Unless we got federation the railway would not help us.
203. Their duties are against you? Yes. If they were removed Brisbane would be our market.
204. If there was intercolonial freetrade you think it would serve you better to be connected with Brisbane than with the Richmond River? Yes, I do. It would serve my part of the district better.
205. *Mr. Lee.*] Are you personally interested in any land through which the proposed railway will pass? No.
206. Are any of your relations? No; none that I am aware of.
207. You are not advocating the construction of this line from any self-interested motive? No.
208. You are not advocating it for the purpose of increasing the value of land which you hold on the route? No.
209. As to the question of sending away your produce. The line we are considering is one from the Tweed to Grafton, supposing Grafton were made a port available for large ships, to which they could come in in all weathers; do you think it at all likely that the produce of the Tweed would be sent to the Clarence for shipment? No. I think our only hope is Byron Bay.
210. On account of the distance? Yes.
211. It would prohibit from sending your produce there? Yes.
212. If that project were carried out the railway would be utterly useless to you? Yes.
213. Supposing Lismore were made the port of shipment for the Tweed, would you be able to send your produce across there? Lismore is a bad harbour, as ours is. If larger boats could come up the Richmond, then I think we could send our produce there.
214. Supposing there were any other place where a safe harbour could be constructed, and where you could get certain despatch and delivery, would that answer your requirements? Yes.
215. Do I understand that what you mean by an outlet is a port by which you would always be able to get your goods to market under any circumstances? Yes, that is what we require.
216. I suppose the fact of your produce being bar-bound, no matter what it is, means keeping you out of your money for so many weeks? Yes; and it also deteriorates in value. Our maize is destroyed by weevils.
217. As the port is at the present time, and I take it that this is your only outlet? Yes.
218. You are unable to take advantage of any rise in price which may occur in any market in the Colony? We cannot do it, because after we get word it is three weeks before we can get our goods there, and by that time the market has gone down; whereas, if we had a railway, it would be different.
219. Will maize suffer if kept under hatches for a short time? Yes; it will be destroyed.
220. By weevils? By weevils and damp.
221. Would the settlers in your locality be able to pay the railway freight to Byron Bay or Lismore, and then tranship to Sydney in competition with the river steamers which take the stuff direct? Yes, I think they could. I am sure they could.
222. Do you insure your goods when you send them down by steamer? Yes.
223. Is it a high rate? The insurance is very high.
224. What I gather from your evidence is this; you want a sure and certain means of access to market? Yes; that is what we want.
225. Are you in a position to give any information as to the increase of population in the Tweed River district? Since I have been here?
226. Yes? It has increased.
227. Supposing this railway were built, and the steam companies were to reduce their freights one-half, which way would you send your produce? Still by rail.
228. Why? Because I would have direct communication, and it would pay me better.
229. Although the freight by rail would be somewhat more? I do not think it would be possible for the steamers to reduce it one-half.
230. Supposing it were reduced? I would sooner send produce by rail. I would sooner pay £1 a ton more to send some goods by rail than send them by river. It is impossible to send live stock by river. I remember that one time I had a lot of calves, which were then selling at good prices in Sydney, and I thought I would ship them from here; but when I came to make inquiries I found that the Tweed was bar-bound, and that the bar was very bad, so that I would have to send them to Brisbane, and ship from there.
231. The same would apply to pigs? Yes.
232. Do you send large stock, such as cattle, to market by steamer? If Byron Bay were made a port we should be able to slaughter and send the carcasses to market, because just over the border there is one of the best districts in Queensland for cattle—the Logan district. We get most of our cattle from there, and they were sent from there to Grafton, and then killed and sent to Sydney.
233. Is the stock traffic in the district likely to increase? Yes.

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234. I notice by the returns given that there is a very small quantity of maize raised? Yes. There is not a great quantity raised, because they cannot get it away. Even now, though you may arrange to have your maize taken by the steamer, they may say, "Well, we will take it the trip after next." When the boat comes back they will tell you, "Oh, we have two more loads of timber, and you will have to wait until we take them away."
235. In the meantime the price of the article may increase or decrease? Yes, and the weevils are eating your corn.
236. At all events you are debarred from a ready and sure market? Yes.
237. Even if you had to pay more freight you would be satisfied to do so if you had the means of getting your produce away at all times? Yes.
238. Whether the railway is constructed or not, I presume that there will always be a certain amount of river trade for the steamers? Yes.
239. You know the route of the proposed line? Yes, well.
240. Does that line serve a portion of the country which the river does not serve? Yes. It serves all the country back from the river.
241. Is that back country equal to the country along the banks of the river? Yes; part of it is.
242. Is the country lying between Murwillumbah and the Brunswick of equal quality? Yes.
243. To which river would that traffic flow—to the Tweed, the Brunswick, or the Richmond. It must go by rail.
244. Is there not some communication with the Brunswick by ship? Yes, there is; but the vessel trading there is very small.
245. It is still more uncertain than the Tweed? Still more uncertain.
246. Your remarks with reference to the Tweed apply still more strongly to the Brunswick? Yes.
247. As you are so well acquainted with the proposed route, will you tell us whether you think the proposed line could be improved upon—that is to say, by being made straighter or taken through better country? No, I do not think it could.
248. Have you been over the actual survey? No, but I have crossed it in several places.
249. Have you found that the surveyors have gone out of their way to climb over a mountain? Yes.
250. You think these mountains could be avoided? I think they have taken the best route.
251. I suppose you would not care if they went over the moon so long as they gave you a railway. The desire of the people is so great that they would not care if the railway were shorter or longer? Yes.
252. That arises from the fact that they are living in a good district, and are unable to get their produce to market? Yes. There are numbers actually starving.
253. On good land? Yes.
254. For what reason? Because they cannot get their goods to market.
255. Are there no local buyers? No. Between the Brunswick and here they would have to cart their produce so far that it would not pay them to grow it. They would have to carry it 20 miles and get half-a-crown a bushel for their maize.
256. You know the Byron Bay country? Yes.
257. You know some distance back from it where the range comes in? Yes.
258. On the plan it appears to be a very much shorter track from Lismore to Murwillumbah by the foot of that range? It is shorter.
259. Can you give the Committee any idea as to why the line was made to approach the coast at Byron Bay instead of going in a more westerly direction? There is a range to the westward of the surveyed line.
260. What is the nature of the country between the range and the coast? Very good.
261. Is there any swampy country? There is, nearer the coast. Back from the coast the land is first-class.
262. How far back from the coast? It is half a mile in places before you get on to the good country, and even less.
263. Will the line as surveyed serve the greater number of the people in your district? Certainly, because Byron Bay must be our port. If it can be made a port it will be where we shall send our goods to market.
264. But supposing Byron Bay is not made, where will your port be? I could not say. We would perhaps have to send to the Richmond. I do not know whether that would pay. I think our only hope is that Byron Bay will be made a port.
265. From Murwillumbah to Byron Bay is shown on the railway plan as 30 miles—could you afford to send your produce that distance, provided there was a certainty of getting it away? Yes.
266. *Mr. Garrard.*] All the answers you gave to me about taking your produce south were on the supposition that you would have a port at Byron Bay, and not be compelled to go to the Richmond? Yes.
267. It is a matter of serious doubt to your mind whether the railway would be any good to you if you had to go to the Richmond? Yes, unless larger ships could be got to the Richmond.
268. You are aware that improvements are being carried out at the entrance to the Richmond to make it equal to the Clarence? Yes.
269. Suppose it is made equal to the Clarence, do you think it would pay you to go there? My reason for saying that it would not pay us is that we could run to Brisbane. Queensland is running her line to the Tweed.
270. Who told you that? Mr. Stephens, the Member for The Logan.
271. Where do you think the Queensland junction would take place? At a place called The Gap; it is on the range between Murwillumbah and the Crumbden Creek.
272. Is that on the coach-road from Nerang to Murwillumbah? Yes. They would only have to tunnel a short distance through The Gap.
273. How far would that be from Murwillumbah? About 6 miles, I suppose. I do not know the actual distance.
274. Then, as I understand you, you doubt whether it would be to your interest to have a railway at all? Certainly it would be to our interest.
275. Not if you were going to Queensland? It would give every one a chance of sending his produce away.
276. A railway would do very little good to the district unless there were a port at Byron Bay? It would do a great deal more to the district if we had a port at Byron Bay.

- Mr. W. Charles.
21 Nov., 1889.
277. Would it not be a great deal more benefit to the district to have a fair bar and a good river than to have railways or anything of that sort? No.
278. How far do people bring their produce at present from the river bank to the Tweed on each side? 10 or 15 miles. I think only a very few bring it that distance.
279. They bring it 10 or 15 miles to the river with the present bad flats and entrance? Yes.
280. Do you not, therefore, think that if a fair improvement of the navigation were made people would bring their produce 16 or 17 miles? They would; but even if the river were improved it would not have a depth of 10 feet.
281. Do you know that it is estimated that there will be a depth of 12 feet? That is on the bar. I am talking of inside the bar.
282. Why could they not make it 12 feet inside;—do you know of any rocky obstructions? I do not know of any, but I think there is gravel or rock above the Colonial Sugar Company's mill. I do not know actually much about the river itself, because I am more inland.

Mr. Henry Eden, selector, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. H. Eden.
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283. *Chairman.*] Where are you living? I am living here at the present. I have a selection 6 miles from Murwillumbah.
284. Where were you living before you got the selection? On various parts of the river. Twenty years ago I had a vessel running here.
285. Where from? From Brisbane.
286. Your business relations have always been with Brisbane? No, with Sydney.
287. Are you not a large property-holder in Brisbane? I have some little property there—not of any great extent.
288. What do you want to tell the Committee? I am thoroughly acquainted with the river and its tributaries and with the trade done here for twenty years past. I have been a large buyer of cedar and maize, and have chartered vessels to take cargo from here to Sydney. I know the produce obtained here.
289. How much do they produce? The principal things shipped from here are cedar, beech, and pine, and sugar. There are very few perishable goods sent from here. Occasionally a small quantity of butter goes down, but it has not paid hitherto.
290. How long have you been a landowner in the district? Eight or nine years.
291. What quantity of land have you got? About 600 acres.
292. Did you take it up as a conditional purchase? Yes.
293. What have you done with it since? I am still improving it.
294. In what way? By planting fruit-trees.
295. How many acres have you got under fruit? 2 or 3 acres.
296. Is that all you have done with this in ten years? I have 70 acres of scrub felled.
297. Under cultivation? Under artificial grasses.
298. I suppose 70 acres is all that you can bring into use? Probably 100 altogether. The ground is very broken, although the soil is very rich. It is a very expensive place to work.
299. Where is it—on the Tweed? Between the Tweed and Tallbudgery, near the Gap referred to by a previous witness.
300. Will the construction of this railway to Lismore or Grafton be of any benefit to you or to the selectors there? It would be of no benefit to me or to the selectors there.
301. You look to Brisbane for your market? No, to Sydney.
302. The last witness said that Brisbane would be the market if there was intercolonial free-trade? Brisbane is only a limited market; it is not as good as Sydney.
303. When did you know the river first? In 1868. I was trading for two years on it.
304. Has there been much improvement since then? Very much.
305. Before you can get returns for the land such as you describe is it expensive? Yes.
306. You want considerable capital then to take up a selection? That is my experience,—that is if you go into the mountain country.
307. Which do you think would be the most beneficial to this district, improvements to the entrance of the river, which would give 13 feet of water, or a railway, as proposed, to Grafton and the Richmond, via Byron Bay? I think the improvements to the river for the bulk of the produce of the river, because the bulk of the settlement is located near navigable water.
308. Do you think that Murwillumbah would be the proper terminal point if it were determined to construct such a railway? I think so.
309. But if the river were improved, that would be a greater benefit to the district than the construction of the line? It would give a benefit to a larger number.
310. How many miles on each side of the river do you think the river would serve? Excepting on the principal part of the river and near here there is not much settlement away from the water, except above the North Arm.
311. How far do you think the people would take it to the river to send it away? It think all those above Deepwater would be benefited by the railway.
312. How far back? For some distance back.
313. Would people for 10 miles back come to the river? Not 5 miles.
314. How would the people further back be served? All those further back would be benefited by a railway, but not those on navigable waters, who are the bulk of the settlement.
315. Have you an intimate knowledge of the country between Grafton and the Tweed? No.
316. Between the Richmond and the Tweed? Of a portion of that country. I have travelled it several times.
317. Do you think that an expenditure of £20,000 or £25,000 upon the improvement of the river or the harbour would be of more benefit to the whole of the district than the expenditure of £100,000 on the construction of the railway from the Richmond to the Tweed? I do not see that a railway would take the bulk of the cargo that goes from the district. We could not send timber away by railway.
318. Is not the timber exhausted now? No; but because of the high freights we cannot send it away.

319. Do you think that if facilities were given by a railway for getting to a better harbour, or shipping port, the timber, instead of being sent away in bulk, would be sawn? It could go more cheaply by water. As far as perishable articles are concerned, they would go better by railway. Mr. H. Eden.
21 Nov., 1889.

320. There is not much at present? No.

321. Is it likely to increase sufficiently to pay interest on £100,000? That is an open question. There is no doubt that it would stimulate enterprise.

322. Do you think that the people of this district, supposing it is not possible to construct the railway unless extra charges are made, would be prepared to pay heavier freights than usual for the carriage of their produce? It would only pay when the cargo was of a perishable character.

Mr. John Marks, grazier, sworn, and examined:—

323. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Terragon, about 15 miles above Murwillumbah.

324. Will you tell the Committee what you have to say? The difference in freight between this river and the Richmond River is something like 2s. per 100 feet on log timber, and a proportionate freight on sawn timber—that is almost entirely owing to the bad bar and the bad water communication in years gone by. I have known hundreds of bags of maize to be rotting in the barns, because there were no means of getting it to a good market, or to any market. The insurance rates are considerably higher here than on any other river in the Colony. I understand that that is owing to the bad bar. For a short time after the wreck of the "Tweed," a steamer which lately traded here, the insurance societies would not effect any new policies at any price. I owned a part share in conjunction with Mr. G. W. Nicoll of Sydney, in a saw-mill in this district. We found that the high rate of freight consequent on the bad state of the river and bar was one of the greatest drawbacks with which we had to contend. There is a tremendous amount of good land in the district which is entirely lying idle, owing to the want of good means of communication. Mr. J. Marks.
21 Nov., 1889.

325. It must pretty well all be taken up if it is lying idle? No; I do not think that more than about one half is taken up.

326. Where are you speaking of? The district in general—the police district.

327. How far south does that extend? I think to the Brunswick River, and it takes in some of the Brunswick. This land I believe would all be cultivated, if the river were improved, or if we had a railway. If the people of the district were given their choice, I think they would almost unanimously say that a good bar and a satisfactory improvement of the river would be of more benefit to the district—this particular district—than railway communication.

328. *Mr. Garrard.*] What do you mean by "satisfactory"? To give a depth of 12 feet at all times.

329. *Chairman.*] Up the river? Yes, and on the bar. That would enable vessels of at least 700 or 800 tons, built on a moderately light draft, to trade to the district, and would be quite sufficient for all our requirements I think. Individually I should prefer that the river and the bar were improved to having a railway. I believe it would do more good.

330. Where is your land;—on the river? Some of it—900 acres. I have land within 3 miles of Murwillumbah going up the river, in the parish of Dumbible, and also in the parish of Kunghur, 15 miles up. I have 1,600 acres there of leasehold and conditionally purchased land. I have 2,500 acres altogether.

331. What are you doing with it? Grazing principally.

332. Cattle? Cattle and horse stock. We did cultivate some considerable area of cane and corn; but we found that owing to the bad communication with Sydney and Brisbane by the Tweed, we could not possibly make it pay.

333. But that would not affect the cane? No; but owing to our having to employ high-priced labour, we found that that also did not pay. We consequently gave up both cane and corn, and are now going in for grazing entirely. In the event of more satisfactory communication being provided, we would cultivate again, but not until there is better communication.

334. *Mr. Lee.*] You say that there will not be any increased cultivation until there is better communication? Very little more.

335. So far as you are concerned, you are of opinion that the improvements to the bar and to the river would suit you best? Yes, they would suit me best, and would suit the general public best.

336. The general public on the Tweed? Yes.

337. In your locality? And the whole district.

338. Would it suit the people on the Brunswick? The bar improvements and river improvements here would be of no benefit whatever to the Brunswick.

339. Then you think that the Brunswick would require railway communication to give it an outlet. Yes. It wants some better communication than it has now.

340. Do you think that railway communication would offer an outlet from it? Yes.

341. In your opinion, it would be desirable not to include the Tweed in the railway scheme; to start the railway from the Brunswick? It would do us good, undoubtedly.

342. But in your opinion, the Tweed River district does not require railway communication? It is dependent upon the river improvements. If they are carried out, we shall not require a railway as much as under the present circumstances.

343. But you would like to have both? It would not do us very much harm. Of the two, I think the harbour improvements would do the district most good. I have lived here for eighteen years, and am thoroughly acquainted with the requirements of the district. I have been engaged in all kinds of occupations.

344. The river must serve the district? Yes, and some distance back.

345. Do you know the proposed railway route? Yes, I am thoroughly acquainted with the locality. I have been on both sides of the line.

346. Does not the line pass through a large area of land that will never be benefited by the Tweed River? Yes.

347. Consequently, it would benefit a certain portion of the district? Certainly.

348. And would open out a portion of the district at present sealed up? Yes.

349. In that way it would be an advantage? Yes.

350. And would lead to increased cultivation? A hundred-fold.

351. And thereby be getting traffic for itself? Yes.

- Mr. J. Marks. 352. So, after all, you would not like to see the Tweed River left out of a railway scheme, for the simple reason that a railway would open up the country? Yes, for some considerable distance from the river, to which the river would hardly give communication.
353. Personally, it would not be quite so much benefit? I do not think so.
354. It would benefit a large portion of the country practically closed up at the present time? Yes.
355. *Mr. Garrard.*] In your opinion for what distance on either side of the river would the land be benefited by improvements made on the river? With good roads people would bring their produce 10, 15 and 20 miles.
356. All your interest is above Murwillumbah? My personal interest is. Our family own property all over the district.
357. Is the river as navigable to your place as to Murwillumbah? Yes. I may say that I am largely interested in the timber industry, and when bringing rafts down you have an excellent opportunity for finding out the shoals. A raft will come from 3 miles above my property to the heads as well as from any part of the river. There are two or three narrow bars across the river of gravel and sand.
358. They can be removed? They can be removed by dredging. The Company had a small dredge some years ago and improved the worst of them.
359. Supposing the river were not improved, and the railway were constructed, would the timber be sent by it? No. I think the timber would always go by water.
360. Notwithstanding the flats and the bad entrance? Yes. I do not think a railway could possibly carry timber to another part and allow us to pay freight from there to Sydney or to Melbourne. We could not do it as cheaply as we can ship timber from the Tweed.
361. So that in computing the trade of the district if we take timber as one-third we can wipe that off because none of it would go by the railway? I do not think so.
362. Do you think that the railway would be used down to the Richmond for other produce, or only to a port at Byron Bay? A good port at Byron Bay would do good.
363. Suppose there were no port at Byron Bay? Then we should have to fall back on our present means of communication.
364. So if there were no port at Byron Bay the railway would not be used? I think so. I think the additional freight would be quite as much as we pay under the present circumstances.
365. Your evidence tends to show that this railway is likely to be a white elephant? Only as far as this district is concerned. There are larger areas further back from the banks which would be largely benefited by the construction of the railway.
366. Your argument would be to improve the river, making Murwillumbah the metropolis, and running the line out 30 miles to bring produce into the river? No. What I mean is that the water communication will be sufficient.
367. For the district tapped by the Tweed River, 15 miles on either side? Yes, only for the Tweed River.
368. Supposing the river were improved would people 30 miles south come to the Tweed rather than go to the Richmond? No, because the Richmond would be always better than the Tweed.
369. Would it not be cheaper to take produce 20 miles than 60 miles? It is not 60 miles. 50 miles will take you to any port on the Richmond from the Upper Tweed.
370. You know the surveyed route? I think so—pretty well.
371. You think it the best route that could be obtained? I think that it would tap as large an area of good country as it is possible to obtain.
372. Do you think that the divergence to the coast at Byron Bay was only for the purpose of reaching Byron Bay, or was it to avoid some range? I think it was for the purpose of touching Byron Bay.
373. Only for that? I think so.
374. Is there any difficulty as far as you can see in taking a more direct course to Lismore? There is a difficulty if you keep too far from the coast. Keeping too far in you will strike the high range.
375. If the people 30 miles south of the Tweed had railway communication to its navigable waters, would it not pay them better to take their produce 30 miles than 40 miles to Lismore by this route? The difference for 10 miles would be more than made up by the difference of freight if improvements were made to each river. The Richmond would always be better than ours.

FRIDAY, 22 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Murwillumbah, at 3 p.m.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

JACOB GARRARD, Esq. | CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

C. O. Burge, Esq., District Engineer, Railway Department, sworn, and examined:—

- C. O. Burge, Esq. 376. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your position in the Public Service? District engineer in the Railway Department.
- 22 Nov., 1889. 377. Have you been in charge of the survey of the proposed line from Grafton to the Tweed? No; but I have been sent to revise it. I have travelled over the whole portion from Grafton to Byron Bay, and have spent 2½ months upon it.
378. Have you made any alterations in the survey? Several.
379. Are there any surveyors in the field now who are commissioned to lay out the line? Yes.
380. Where? Mr. Lloyd at the Brunswick, Mr. Caswell, on the alternative coast line, and Mr. Wilkins between this and the Brunswick.
381. Do I understand you that there is still a surveyor on what is called the alternative coast line? Yes.
382. I thought that that line had been discarded altogether? I do not know.
383. On what portion of the alternative line is a surveyor engaged? I could point it out on the plan. It is a little south-west of Norrey's Head, about 1½ miles.
384. Where are the other surveyors engaged? One is engaged at Burringbar, and another, Mr. Lloyd, is close to the Brunswick.
- 385.

C. O. Burge,
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385. On what route? On the inland route.
386. On what we may take as the permanently surveyed route? From the Brunswick to the Tweed. Neither routes are permanently surveyed.
387. He is on the route from Murwillumbah to Byron Bay, and thence to the Richmond? Yes; Mr. Wilkins, Mr. Caswell, and Mr. Lloyd are on that.
388. You have only gone over that portion of the line between Grafton and Byron Bay? Yes; I have been along the coast line.
389. You have not been on the route we are now considering—from Byron Bay to Murwillumbah? No, though I have passed along the road.
390. You can give us no information about it? I am not prepared to do so, because I have not had time.
391. Are there any surveyors in the field who could give us information about it? I do not think more than I could.
392. But someone must have been over it? As far as the line goes they could give you information.
393. Who? Mr. Wilkins, on the inland line.
394. Either of the gentlemen on the inland line can give information about the road between Murwillumbah and Byron Bay? Yes.
395. You personally know nothing of the line between Byron Bay and Murwillumbah? Yes.
396. Not of the inland line? No.
397. Do you know the coast line? Yes.
398. Is the surveyor on that line continuing his work? Yes.
399. With what object? I cannot say: I am not instructing him. I have only been over it to see if it can be improved.
400. Have you conferred with the Queensland authorities as to the terminal point on their border? Yes.
401. Have they decided upon it? They only pointed out to me the position of their projected line; that was to the Tweed Heads.
402. That is the only one they have at present in mind? That is all.
403. They have no idea of reaching the border nearly due north of Murwillumbah? No.
404. Do you know anything of the country between Murwillumbah and the Gap? No. I was going to examine it, but I have not had time.
405. How did you come here? From Nerang, by coach.
406. Does the coach go over the Gap—the lowest portion of the range? I do not know. I have only been twice over there, and have not examined the country.
407. Have you had any conversation with the Queensland surveyors as to the probable point of piercing that range? No; because the Queensland surveyors are now waiting at the Tweed Heads for the purpose of examining the range.
408. You purpose going along the range for some distance? Yes.
409. What is the ruling gradient along the coast line? I think 1 in 60. It is hardly in a sufficient state of advancement to decide on these matters, because the section has not been taken. We can only estimate.
410. What is the nature of the country through which it passes? It is marshy.
411. Have you passed over the country between Coolangatta and Southport? No.
412. Have you any knowledge of the country between Byron Bay and Murwillumbah on what you call the inland line? No; except what I gathered from going along the road.
413. Can you give us any idea of the country? It appeared to me to be very rough.
414. Rougher than the coast line? Far rougher.
415. Is it better land? It appears to me that there is a good deal of land to be drained between the two lines. It is very rough on the road.
416. You anticipate a severer grade on the inland line than on the coast line? Yes.
417. And it will be much more expensive in construction? Yes. I should say that only from looking at it—very much more.
418. Have you any men on your staff here? No; I have none here. The material for my evidence is scarcely ready; it is hardly in a sufficiently advanced state.
419. *Chairman.*] You have no plans or sections? No. They are not out of the surveyors hands yet.
420. *Mr. Garrard.*] You have seen the tracings of the proposed line—the inland line? Yes.
421. You have not followed that route right down to Byron Bay? Only a short piece down near the Brunswick; this side of the Brunswick.
422. You are only familiar with the coast line from Brunswick Bay? That is all. I have been commissioned to go over it; but I have not had time. It was understood when I left Sydney that you were coming from the other end. If you had done that I should have had time to prepare all this information before you arrived here.
423. *Chairman.*] How long will it be before you get it? A fortnight.
424. *Mr. Garrard.*] You made no alterations in Mr. Caswell's survey? No.
425. What is he doing;—permanently staking? The only alteration I should make would be at the Tweed River; but it is a mere trifle.
426. Where does it join the Tweed? At Cudgen.
427. The country between Cudgen and the Brunswick is swampy? I cannot speak as to its quality, because I am not a sufficiently good judge. Mr. Caswell tells me that he has taken frequent levels there in connection with the line, and that most of it is easily drained and perfectly level.

Oswald Gordon Morton, Esq., Road Superintendent, sworn, and examined:—

428. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your position in the Government Service? Road Superintendent.
429. How long have you been in the district? Two and a half years.
430. Where were you before you came here? At Mudgee.
431. Your knowledge of the district is confined to the last two and a half years? Yes.
432. How far does your district extend? Southwards to Byron Bay, and thence along the land district boundary to a point about 15 miles due west from the Brunswick.

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- O. G. Morton, Esq.
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433. To the Queensland border? North to the Queensland border, and thence to the Tweed Heads along that border.
434. Do you know anything of the proposed line of railway between Grafton and the Tweed—that portion of it within your district? Yes; I have seen two marked lines.
435. Will you give me some information as to the road expenditure on that portion of the country and in your district per annum? Starting from Byron Bay as far as my district goes there is an expenditure towards the Brunswick of £50 a mile for 9 miles of road—that is along the main road to Lismore. To join that road from Byron Bay there is a road strikes from the bay in a line about due west, on which there is an expenditure of £50 a mile for 5 miles.
436. Will you give me the total amount spent per annum on the roads within your district? The amount per annum spent on scheduled roads is £7,540.
437. *Chairman.*] Is your road district the same as the police district? Very nearly the same. The amount I have mentioned is confined to the district of which I have charge, including special votes for special circumstances the amount reaches £12,170. On the main road, keeping along the proposed railway line, the expenditure is above £1,500 a year.
438. How many miles? Twenty-five—a little over.
439. And special votes for the bridges? Yes. The special votes for the bridges in this district this year will be about £500 along that road.
440. *Mr. Lee.*] I want information respecting the whole of your district? Yes.
441. Will the roads you have mentioned act as feeders to the proposed railway if it is constructed? Yes; very much so for the settlement about the Brunswick and along the main road. The branch roads leading from the settlement on the various creeks will tap this land.
442. In your opinion will it be necessary to increase the number of roads in this district if some other means of communication are not provided? Decidedly so.
443. On what do you base that opinion? From the amount of settlement, and the very indifferent means for getting to market, or to the various shipping ports, through dense scrubs, which in wet weather become almost impassable. The roads must be pushed out as settlement advances, and it has been doing that very rapidly since I have been here.
444. Had you to construct roads to any particular part? Yes. Up to the head of this river, and to the head of the Brunswick, and several branch roads striking off from the main road from here to the Brunswick in a westerly direction along the creeks.
445. What is the state of your roads in wet weather? Bad.
446. Notwithstanding that there is £50 a mile spent on them? It does not keep them in order for heavy traffic.
447. What does the traffic consist of? Principally timber drawing. Lately they have been carrying maize and produce to and from the selections.
448. From what you can see in your travels about the country, are you impressed with the idea that the settlement is of a *bona fide* character? Decidedly.
449. Not of a speculative character? No.
450. The men who come in to take up the land do so for the purpose of making *bona fide* homes? Yes; carrying out good improvements and spending money.
451. Holding that opinion you feel justified in asking the Commissioner for Roads to authorize the expenditure of large sums in the district? Yes.
452. Do you know anything of the proposed terminal site at Murwillumbah? I do.
453. Can you give the Committee any information as to whether it is sufficiently central to suit the majority of people in the locality—is the site a good one? Yes, I think it is.
454. You have been over the ground? I have.
455. So far as you know, the site selected by the railway surveyors is a suitable one? Yes.
456. Do you know of any local objection to it? I have heard of none.
457. Have you spent much money on your roads between here and the Queensland border? Yes, we spend about £500 annually.
458. Is there much traffic between here and Queensland? Not of a heavy description. It is passenger traffic principally in coaches.
459. What about the produce of the district? It does not go to Queensland.
460. What is the principal outlet for the people of the district? At present it is by the river; but that is so bad that it is hardly an outlet at all.
461. The only outlet is the river? Yes.
462. Your duties take you very much through the district? Yes.
463. That gives you a good opportunity of seeing the land all through the district? Yes.
464. What is it generally;—is it all good land? The greater part of it is really good rich scrub land. There are barren ranges, but they are not very extensive.
465. To occupy and bring under cultivation the lands in this district requires, I suppose, some amount of capital? It does.
466. *Chairman.*] Do you know the lands near Mudgee or Maitland? Yes.
467. Is the land here as good as that or better? It is as good, and, for the greater part, better.
468. Are the river and creek flats as good as, or better than, the Hunter River flats? I should say that they were about as good, as far as I could judge.
469. Is there a very large extent of this good land;—is the larger portion of the land in the district good? Yes.
470. You know the line from here to Byron Bay? Yes.
471. Is there good land on that route—I mean the coast route? No, not to as great an extent as on the other line.
472. Does the line from here, past the Brunswick to Byron Bay, go through generally good country? Yes.
473. Most of it alienated? Yes.
474. Have the people on that line any means of getting their produce to market so as to give them a profit on it? I should say little or none.
475. There is no encouragement to the bulk of those settlers to go on developing the land themselves, or to let it to other people in the district? No. I should think very little of it would let on anything like reasonable terms.
476. For want of a market? Yes.

Edward Acres Barrington, Esq., Acting Clerk of Petty Sessions, sworn, and examined :—

- 476½. *Chairman.*] What are you? Acting Clerk of Petty Sessions and Land Agent.
 477. How long have you been here? About ten months.
 477½. Were you here before you entered upon your duties? Never.
 478. Are you pretty well acquainted with the land district? No, I know very little about it, except what knowledge I get from the performance of my duties.
 479. Has much conditional purchase been going on since you came here? Since I have been here more conditional purchases have been taken up than in any previous year under the Act of 1884. You could soon see by looking at the register.
 480. You have been here all this year? I came here on the 19th March. Up to the 14th November there were ninety-eight conditional purchases taken up in the district, as against seventy-three in 1888 and forty in 1887.
 481. Could you from memory say whether the conditional purchases taken up in 1889 were small or large? I could not say; they would vary considerably. I should say there were about an equal number of original conditional purchases and additional conditional purchases. They would average about 200 acres, I should say.
 482. Can you say from memory whether much of this land has been transferred from the holders to other people? I have the book here.
 483. They start in 1886 with fifty-six transfers, and they run from that up to 621 on the 22nd November this year. Although so many transfers appear to have been made, the land may have only passed to and from? Yes.
 484. From one man to another, just for temporary accommodation, and back again—this is no true indication of the traffic in land? The register is the only thing that I have to go by.
 485. Is it no indication that the land has been parted with by the original owners? There is no guarantee of that, unless it is transferred as an absolute sale.
 486. That does not appear in the transfers? The stamp duty is the only indication I have of it.
 487. You can say generally that the people in the district are not transferring their land—selling it absolutely? I should say not.

Mr. E. A.
Barrington.
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Francis Asbury Halliday, Esq., Manager A.J.S. Bank, Murwillumbah; sworn, and examined :—

488. *Chairman.*] What are you? Manager of the A.J.S. Bank.
 489. Have you been here long? Nearly twenty months.
 490. Have you seen much of the Tweed River land district? In and about the neighbourhood of Murwillumbah, and up the various arms and creek I have seen a bit.
 491. What have you to tell the Committee? When I came here from the Clarence it struck me as wonderful that there was such a small amount of cultivation on the river. Upon making inquiries I found that that was due to the fact that the people had no facilities for getting their produce away. The land here is equally adapted for growing maize and other products.
 492. Is it as good as that on the Clarence? As far as I could judge.
 493. How long were you on the Clarence? About nine years.
 494. You say that the lands here are as good as those on the Clarence for growing maize? I believe so.
 495. Seeing so little produced you began to ask the reason for it? Yes.
 496. What did you generally hear? That the producers could not get their stuff away. I know that when we opened our branch and I was sent over here not a steamer came in for six weeks. On the Clarence River the farmers can make it pay better than they can here by taking advantage of a sudden rise in the market. The agents would telegraph up that there was a rising market, and as many as 1,000 bags would go down and catch the market at 4s. a bushel. Here it might be a month or six weeks before they could get their maize away. As for sending pigs, calves, eggs, or anything of that sort, it is an impossibility. All these things are sent from the Clarence River, and swell the profits of the farmers.
 497. Do you think that if a railway were constructed from here to the Richmond it would be used by the farmers in that district, assuming that the Richmond River always has a good entrance? I believe we would send it to the Richmond if our own river was not opened; but it is not to the Richmond that we are looking.
 498. You are looking to a port at Byron Bay—but suppose you do not get it? Then we will go for an entrance to our own river. There is a certain amount of jealousy between the rivers.
 499. What I want to know from you is whether, if a breakwater is not constructed at Byron Bay, this railway, if taken to the Richmond or Clarence, will be used by the farmers? Provided our bar is as it is now we should be bound to use it.
 500. You would only use it when you were forced to do so? We should use which ever was the most rapid.
 501. Even if your bar were a good bar, do you not think that if the railway were constructed to a certain port on the Richmond River the settlers would use it to take advantage of rising markets, as they do on the Clarence? Between here and the Richmond the railway is bound to open up the country, and the people will have to use it.
 502. Do you know the country at all? I have simply been through it, that is all.
 503. Is it good country? As far as I can judge, a great part of it is good.
 504. If a breakwater were constructed at Byron Bay, do you think that the traffic of the whole district—you would not get it from the Tweed River Heads, of course—would be sent to Byron Bay? Anything you wanted to send away speedily—any perishable article, I believe, would go that way. A good deal depends on the freights.
 505. The freights would depend, I suppose, a good deal on the cost of construction—do you know whether the district has been developing at all largely since you have been here, or is it at a standstill? It has not done so as much as it should, and so long as we are as we are I do not see how it can make rapid strides. From the Clarence River they only pay 1s. 3d. a bag for corn.
 506. Four bushels? Yes. Here we have to pay 2s. 6d.
 507. That is the transit to Sydney? Yes.
 508. They have a certain outlet at 1s. 3d., while you have no certain outlet? Yes. That is not the only thing. They can take advantage of the accessories to farming—eggs, fowls, pigs, and calves, and those sorts of things. They would constitute about one-third of the income of a farmer on the Clarence River.
 509. I suppose to get a farm under cultivation would be pretty expensive? I cannot say from personal experience; but I think it would cost £10 an acre to clear it and get it under cultivation.

F. A.
Halliday, Esq.
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Mr.

Mr. Alexander Easthauffe, storekeeper, Murwillumbah, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. A. Easthauffe.
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510. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your occupation? Storekeeper at present.
511. In Murwillumbah? Yes.
512. How long have you resided there? About four years.
513. Have you been longer in the district than that? No.
514. Where were you residing prior to coming here? In Queensland.
515. Have you an intimate knowledge of the district? Yes; I have been over a good portion of it.
516. How far south? To the Richmond and Clarence.
517. And of course up to the Border? Yes.
518. Do you know the route of the proposed railway line between here and Byron Bay and the Richmond? Not exactly along the surveyed line; but I know the country.
519. Do you know the alternative route on the coast? No.
520. Do you know anything at all of the coast land? Only at the Tweed heads.
521. You have no knowledge of the character of the country between the Tweed Heads and Byron Bay? No.
522. You have a fair knowledge of the country between Murwillumbah and Byron Bay? Yes.
523. Is it good country? Yes.
524. Equal to that which we see here? Yes. A great deal of it is scrub-land—what we term first-class scrub-land.
525. This was scrub-land about here? Yes.
526. The character of the country there is similar? It is very similar.
527. Where do you get your stores from now? From Sydney.
528. Via the Tweed? Yes.
529. Is that the only way in which you can get them? Yes.
530. What does it cost to bring a ton here? The freight, with the exception of flour, 20s., ranges from 25s. to 55s. per ton.
531. From Sydney delivered at the wharf here? Yes. Then there is the additional expense for insurance.
532. What does that come to—it is very small on a ton of goods, I suppose? It is reckoned on the money value.
533. Do you know what it costs the Lismore people? I could not say positively; but I have been told that it is about 15s.
534. As against your 40s.? I have paid up to 55s. for carriage
535. Would you take an average of 35s.? From 35s. to 40s.
536. And the average on the Richmond would be about 15s.? I could not say positively; but I believe so.
537. If it costs you 15s. a ton to take your goods to Lismore you would be in the same position as you are in now? About the same. There is a great difficulty in getting goods from Sydney. It sometimes takes fourteen days or three weeks. If we do not happen to get the order in just as the steamer is leaving it may mean several weeks.
538. Then it would be profitable to you to pay an increased freight if you could get your goods regularly? Yes.
539. I suppose the delay in receiving goods necessitates your keeping a larger stock? Yes.
540. Consequently money is lying idle? Yes, and very often through running out we may miss a sale.
541. What is the longest time after ordering goods in Sydney that you have been before receiving them? I could not speak positively, but about five weeks.
542. What is the ordinary time? From ten days to a fortnight from ordering until the receipt comes.
543. If a railway was constructed between this and the deeper waters south of Byron Bay or the Richmond, how long do you estimate it would take you to get your goods in, supposing Lismore were your port? About four days.
544. It would pay you to get them from there because you would have to keep less stock? It would be profitable even if you had to pay more freight.
545. From how far down the river do you think the people would use the railway? With the present state of the navigation of the river, no doubt they would avail themselves of the rail-carriage and water-carriage all the way down; but if the river were improved a great many would still send their produce by it.
546. Do you not think that there are sufficient facilities for water carriage now to supply the wants of people 15 miles up? I think that, because of the uncertain state of the river navigation now, a great deal of land that could be cultivated is lying idle.
547. Which do you think would be better for the district—improved water-carriage, or a railway to the Richmond? Improved water-carriage would no doubt assist the residents on the banks, or close to the banks, but a great deal of country between here and the Richmond would be certain to use the railway.
548. Suppose you had 10 feet of water on the bar and on the river flats, how far do you suppose the people in a southerly direction would make use of the river—10, 15, or 20 miles? I think only 2, 3, or 4 miles.
549. You do not think that an improvement of the river would open up the country more than 3 or 4 miles from its banks? With good roads they might come in a greater distance.
550. There would be a considerable amount of land between here and the Brunswick which the improvement to the river would not affect? Yes, a great deal.
551. And which would only be served by the railway? I think so.
552. Do you get any goods from Queensland? No.
553. Do you know if any of the goods brought to this river come from Queensland? I have known small quantities of goods to be brought from Queensland.
554. Is there not a vessel regularly trading between Brisbane and the river? No. There was a steamer in the timber trade.
555. For exports, not imports? Yes.
556. The export of timber is a considerable item in the produce of the district? Yes.
557. Do you think it at all likely that any of the timber would go by railway? I think that very little log timber, if any, would go from here by railway. It is possible that with the establishment of mills sawn timber would go that way.
- 558.

Mr.
A. Easthauffe.
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558. The log timber would still be floated down the river? Yes.
559. It does not matter to a man on a raft whether he is a week or two getting down? They seem to be satisfied with that progress.
560. Do you know whether the timber in the district is giving out? The distance which they have to draw it is becoming greater, but I think that there is a considerable quantity of timber in the district still.
561. Do you think, if the Richmond were your port, that any sawn timber would go by railway? I think so.
562. Instead of its going by log, much of it would be sent down in that way? In supplying orders time is a great object, and no doubt much of it would go that way.
563. Can you give us the tonnage of general merchandise that comes to this township from outside ports—Sydney, for instance—in a year? No. The "Karuah" is the principal boat that brings supplies—in fact, she is the only regular trader with merchandise. Her tonnage is about eighty. She makes a trip every ten days or a fortnight. Sometimes, when the bar is silted up, she is longer. Just now the bar is good, and she is making trips about every ten days.
564. Does she come full every time? I could not say.
565. Then the railway, if constructed, would have to depend upon 80 tons of goods this way in a fortnight? I think that if a railway were constructed a great deal more land would be put under crop.
566. But if the railway were constructed now all it would have to bring would be 80 tons in a fortnight? People cannot grow produce now.
567. But, supposing the railway were running now, all the traffic it would have would be 80 tons a fortnight? I suppose so. In addition to that there is sugar; but the principal part of it goes by sailing boats.
568. Of the inward goods the railway would have to bring only 80 tons in a fortnight? That is merchandise.
569. The cost of this line will be £198,000;—80 tons a fortnight would not pay interest on that? With the construction of a line the increase would be tenfold in our immediate neighbourhood.
570. You think that if the railway is to pay there will be more obtained from the exports of the district than from the imports? The increased population necessary to cultivate the land would require a considerable amount more merchandise.
571. Is not the best land in the district alienated? No; there is a considerable quantity unalienated.
572. Is it a fact that individuals hold very large areas,—1,000 or 1,200 acres each. There are cases of that kind.
573. Do you not think that that is a very large area for people to own? I think it is too large.
574. If you had the power, would you burst some of them up? I think that such an area is too large for a man to hold.
575. What do you think would be sufficient to make a living out of? For cultivating, I think 40 acres would be plenty.
576. *Chairman.*] I suppose that is as much as most men can afford to bring into cultivation? A great deal is put under grass because we are not able to get produce away.
577. You are clearly of opinion that if railway facilities were given it would add very much to the increase of population in this district? I quite believe that.
578. Do you think that the people would take their goods to the Richmond if there were no port at Byron Bay? I do not think that the bulk of the goods would go that way. I think we look to Byron Bay a good deal as our outlet, together with the construction of this line.
579. We are to consider then that, unless the Byron Bay breakwater is constructed, it is of no use to construct the railway? That would be just for our neighbourhood.
580. For every place north of the Brunswick it would be the same? The distance becomes shorter as you go south. They have no other outlet, and would have to avail themselves of the railway, while we have the river.
581. It is about 30 miles from here to Byron Bay? About 30,—a little over.
582. And about double that distance to Lismore? It is not that by the road; that is by the railway.
583. What is the distance by road? You can get to Lismore under 50 miles.
584. By buggy? No; the buggy road would be longer than that.
585. By way of Byron Bay? By that way it would not be less than 60 miles.
586. The road you speak of takes a more direct course—is there a steeper grade? Yes.
587. Is it good land through which it passes? Yes, all round the ranges.
588. Are you engineer enough to say whether the line could be taken that way? No.
589. You know the line which comes down to Byron Bay? Yes.
590. Do you think that the reason for taking it so near the coast was to avoid any natural difficulty, or merely to bring it within touch of Byron Bay? I think a good deal to avoid the ranges to the westward. It would be necessary to come down there to avoid the ranges.
591. And there was a secondary consideration—the probability of getting stuff away by Byron Bay? That is my opinion.
592. *Mr. Lee.*] Are the Committee to understand that 80 tons of goods a week supply the large population of this district? The steamer is 80 tons register; but no doubt she often brings more than that.
593. Are there not sailing vessels trading here? Yes.
594. Do they bring merchandise? Not a great deal. The principal part comes by the steamer.
595. What is the population of the Tweed District? I really could not say.
596. There is almost a complete absence of maize in this district—is the land unsuitable for the cultivation of maize? No; it will grow.
597. Why is it not cultivated, then? There is a difficulty about getting it to market. Last year the farmers were arranging to charter a boat and take it to Brisbane themselves, so as to be able to send it away when they wanted.
598. The alternative crop would be sugar? Yes.
599. If the land were not good enough for sugar, what would they do? They could put it under grass and use it for dairying.
600. I am speaking of crops? I could hardly tell you what crop they would put in.

- Mr. A. Easthauffe.
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601. Maize is the staple product, and then comes sugar; after that they go in for dairying? I think the soil would grow anything that you put into it.
602. I want to ascertain how it is that they cannot grow maize on the river? There is the difficulty of getting it to market.
603. You say that in consequence of the difficulty of despatching maize to market the farmers have given up growing it as a bad job? Yes, several of them have.
604. Is there much land cultivated away from the river banks? Not a very great quantity. The principal cultivation is around the river banks and near the creeks.
605. Is there much land suitable for cultivation? A considerable quantity not alienated yet.
606. Why is the land not cultivated? There is the difficulty of getting the produce away. There is the road traffic, and then the uncertainty of getting the produce away by river.
607. Is there much cultivation between here and the Brunswick? At present there is not. They are putting down grass, that is what the land is principally used for between here and the Brunswick, after you leave the rivers.
608. They do not cultivate maize or sugar, because they could not get it to market? They only cultivate sugar where they can get the river-carriage.
609. The river is very little use to the settlers for getting their produce to market? With the exception of those just on the banks, and they grow sugar principally.
610. We can see that the river banks are cultivated, and we can see that the river is the nearest and easiest way to market for the people living near it, but you have told us of rich lands at the back;—does the river offer a medium for getting produce away from those lands? Certainly not.
611. Consequently they are not tilled? Yes.
612. Would the railway benefit those people? Yes.
613. Would they be able to pay the ordinary railway freights, and still send produce to market? I think so. Having a port, large steamers could take the produce, so that the freights by them would be less, and the expense of railway carriage would not be anything like that which we have to bear now, while there would be no uncertainty about getting the produce away.
614. You wish to impress upon the Committee that some more regular and more secure means of outlet is required for the district than you already have? Decidedly.
615. Which would you suggest. As a resident, which do you consider is the best outlet? Interests are so divided. Those on the banks would say the river.
616. You must take a wider view. I am speaking of the whole district? I think the railway would be serviceable to a great number.
617. It would serve the greater number of people? Taking into consideration the certainty of getting produce away, no doubt the railway would serve the greater number.
618. You are of opinion that the railway would be the best and most certain means of opening up the district? Yes.
619. The next is, what about a port. If Byron Bay were made a suitable and safe harbour, capable of berthing vessels of large tonnage, would it serve the requirements of the district? Together with the railway.
620. I am speaking of a railway in conjunction with it? Certainly.
621. If the port were constructed, would it answer the requirements of the people living between this and the Brunswick? Yes.
622. Would the people residing at the head of the river be likely to use that line instead of the casual river traffic? I think so, largely.
623. Is dairy-farming increasing in the district? Yes; but it is in its infancy. It has hardly started yet.
624. To dairy on a large scale I presume a quick market must be found for the produce? Yes. I have brought down butter and dairy produce, and have had to throw it away, because I could not get it to market at a price that would pay me.
- 625-6. You would hardly like to put 2 or 3 tons into the steamer and let it lie inside the bar for a week? No.
627. If dairying is to be carried on in the district there must be a quick market? Yes.
628. The river will never give you an outlet? I do not think so.
629. Would the railway? I think so. No doubt there would be many coasting-boats that would take away the produce.
630. Byron Bay, although 30 miles from Murwillumbah, is as close as the Tweed Heads? Yes, it is almost.
631. And you would be within an hour and a half of that port? Yes.
632. Would you be likely to get your goods up that way? Yes, to a great extent—almost all of them, I think.
633. You, like most business men, find that the great delay in obtaining goods leads to loss of business? Yes.
634. And in consequence of the uncertainty of the steamer you do not enter into speculations in the district—to buy grain or other things, which you would otherwise be likely to do? It is not possible as things are at present.
635. You know a good many of the farmers and settlers about here;—are their holdings of a *bonâ fide* character, or are they dummies? I do not know of any individual cases of dummies down here. We hear of selections being transferred occasionally.
636. Is the settlement *bonâ fide*? It is undoubtedly *bonâ fide* settlement, taken as a whole.
637. The land has been taken up by men who have improved it, and desire to make a living for themselves and a home for their children after them? Yes.
638. Do you know the site chosen for the terminal point of the line? Yes.
639. Is it a suitable one? Yes.
640. Is it accessible to the people of the district? I think so.
641. Have any meetings been held in the town about it? No.
642. Has there been any agitation at any time? No.
643. The people are satisfied that it will be within easy range, and suitable for all requirements? Yes.
644. Do you own any land on the route? I am sorry to say that I do not.

- 644 $\frac{1}{2}$. *Chairman.*] Do you think it likely that the settlers through whose land the railway will pass will be willing to give the land required by the Government free of charge? I could hardly answer that question now.
645. I understand that you are one of the Committee formed in the district for the purpose of putting evidence before this Committee. Do you not think that it would be a very potent argument in favour of the line that the people were willing to give up the necessary land; they would benefit more by the railway than any one else? Yes; I think the settlers in the majority of cases would only be too glad to give up the land.
646. What about the sympathy of this district—is it generally with Brisbane or with Sydney. Do you think the people would sooner go to Sydney than to Brisbane? That would depend to a great extent upon the price obtained for produce.
647. Out in the west people never think of Sydney as the capital of New South Wales—does that feeling pervade this part of the Colony? I do not think so. There is nothing done with Brisbane of any account.
648. Do you think it would be possible to open up markets in the New England district from here? I am not acquainted with the New England district. I should not like to say.

Mr.
A. Easthauffe.
22 Nov., 1889.

Mr. James Buchanan, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

649. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? In South Murwillumbah.
650. What is your occupation? I am a farmer.
651. What is the extent of your holding? A little over 1,000 acres.
652. Do you desire to give evidence before this Committee? Yes.
653. What is it? All I have to say is, that I believe that a railway from here to the Richmond would be of great benefit to the district—more so if Byron Bay were made a port. I believe the land in the Tweed district is capable of growing anything—crops, fruit, and grass. I think that no district in New South Wales will, in proportion, carry a larger population than this will, and I know a little of New South Wales.
654. Where were you residing before you came here—in what portion of the Colony? I have resided in different parts. I have resided on the Clarence, in New England, in parts of Queensland, parts of Victoria, and parts of New Zealand.
655. How long have you been living in this district? About fourteen years.
656. Consequently you are in a position to speak as to the general progress of the district? Yes.
657. Has the population increased very much during that period? Yes; I suppose more than three or four fold since I have been here.
658. What is the nature of the settlement? It is *bonâ-fide* settlement.
659. Of a permanent character? Yes. I do not think there is any in New South Wales more so.
660. You, in common with other settlers in the district, are anxious to have some outlet for your produce? Yes.
661. You think that the proposed railway would give you the necessary relief? I think so.
662. You think that if you were able to ship your produce at Byron Bay that would be a still greater advantage? I think it would be the making of the district.
663. Supposing the Clarence were converted into a good and safe port at all times, would you be able to send your produce there for shipment—a distance of 140 miles? It would only be a very small quantity of goods. Some perishable goods might go that way, but not the bulk of the produce.
664. Would you be able to send grain that distance? I think not, unless the railway freight were very cheap.
665. You do not look upon the extension of the railway to Grafton as being of much advantage to you, or consider Grafton is your port? No; I do not look on Grafton as our port.
666. You look for a port nearer home? We look for a port at Byron Bay. There would be a great amount of perishable goods—butter, fowls, eggs, and pigs sent to the Richmond if a port were not made at Byron Bay; but we should prefer a nearer port.
667. Would Byron Bay serve all the upper portions of the Tweed? I think it would.
668. The distance is about 32 miles? Yes.
669. Do you produce any maize? Yes.
670. Much of it? In some seasons. I have lost a great deal by it.
671. In what way? I have shipped it at the wharf, but the vessel has had to lie inside the Tweed Heads, and by the time the maize has reached the market it has been damaged. That used to be more often the case when we sent it to Brisbane. I have had a telegram from Brisbane that maize was 4s. 9d. per bushel, and have shipped it within four days of the receipt of the telegram, but it has lain three weeks at the Tweed Heads, and my return when it reached Brisbane has been 6d. per bushel.
672. Just describe the process of getting away 100 bags of maize. How far do you live from the Tweed? About $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from Murwillumbah, and my property fronts the river.
673. How do you get to market? We bring the produce to the wharf on the river bank, and put it on board a drogher, which goes to the Heads. It is then transhipped to the steamer, and sent to Sydney. The freight is 2s. 6d. a bag.
674. With all those risks and uncertainties it is more than probable that you could send the same produce by rail from here to Byron Bay—32 miles—for less money, and with considerably less trouble? Yes. There would not be the same risk attached to it.
675. I suppose the return from your produce is a matter of moment to you? Yes.
676. And the sooner you get to market the sooner you get a return? I sent produce to Sydney something like two months ago, and I have had no return from it yet.
677. Is that in consequence of the delay in transit? Partly, and partly because of the dull market.
678. Have you any suggestions to make as to an improvement in the route between this and the Richmond? No, not that I am aware of, between Murwillumbah and the Richmond.
679. As a *bonâ-fide* settler of fourteen years standing, and holding 1,000 acres of land, you are strongly of opinion that the railway is the proper means of opening up this district? Yes.
680. *Chairman.*] What is the value of your land per acre? That I could not say. There is some of it of great value, and some of it of but little value.
681. If you had to sell it, what would you ask for it, at the present time, all round? All round it would be difficult to say. I think about £4 an acre. Some of it I spent a deal of money on.
682. All round you would want £4 an acre for the 1,000 acres? Yes.

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683. How much of that is cleared and fit for cultivation at the present time? Between 500 and 600 acres. It is not altogether fit for the plough, but the timber has been felled for a number of years, and fires have been over it. There may be some stumps on it, and some logs.

684. All round what has it cost you an acre to clear. I suppose yours is fair average farming land? Yes. I could not say exactly what it cost, but I have done a great deal with my own labour.

685. Your own labour is worth money. If you had not been able to do it yourself you would have had to pay someone else to do it for you. What do you think it has cost you all round per acre to bring your land into the state in which it is at present? I think from £6 to £8 an acre. That is what what is felled has cost me.

686. Then you value the 1,000 acres at what it has cost you for the improvements—you expect to get £4 an acre all round, and £6 an acre for 500 acres would be £3,000? I do not know what I would get for it, but I am certain I would not get the same amount of improving for £6 an acre.

687. These lands are worth £4,000, and you have no market for what you produce from them? Comparatively none.

688. If you were to cultivate the whole 1,000 acres you could not find a market for your produce? I could not cultivate it to pay.

689. Then you could not find a market for your produce? No.

690. If a railway were made here, and you could get your stuff away quickly—dairying produce and cereals—what do you think the land would be worth per acre? I think it would be worth very nearly double what it is now.

691. £8 an acre? Yes; and I am certain that where I cultivate 1 acre now I could cultivate a great deal more then.

692. Do you not think that, in the interest of the general public, you hold too much of the good land of the district? No; I do not. I think that if every man in the district had improved his land as I have improved mine, the district would be in a very much more advanced state.

693. We have been told by some of the witnesses who have been examined before us that 40 acres is plenty of land for a man to occupy. A man about Maitland gets a fortune from about 10 acres? That may be, but he would not employ much hired labour on it.

694. Does this railway go through your land? It does not touch any of my land, but it is near enough to satisfy me.

695. Would you be satisfied to give the Government the land that the railway would go through? I should be very satisfied.

696. *Mr. Garrard.*] What have you got on the 500 acres that are fit for cultivation? I have 30 or 40 acres under cultivation, and the rest under grass.

697. What is the nature of the cultivation? Sugar cane, maize, and potatoes, and a little oats and hay.

698. Who takes your sugar? The Colonial Sugar Co.

699. The maize you send direct to Sydney? I sell some of it on the river. I have sent maize to Brisbane, but none to Sydney.

700. What about potatoes? I can sell them on the river. I have grown as much as 10 tons of potatoes to the acre—two crops.

701. What do they charge a ton to take the potatoes to Sydney? I have never sent them, but they would be charged 2s. 6d. a bag.

702. Do you know the nature of the country through which the proposed line passes? I know the greater part of it.

703. Is it good, bad, or indifferent? I should say that the bulk of it was good.

704. Do you know the alternative line on the coast, running to Cudgen? I know very little of it. I know from the Cudgen wharf to the settlement, but I was never along the coast side of the range.

705. What do you call the settlement—where the mill is? Yes.

706. You do not know anything of the country between there and the Brunswick? No.

707. Do you think that the proposed line—the inner line—would serve a larger number of people or a larger area of land than the coast line would serve? Yes.

708. I suppose that if the coast line were constructed it would be of very little use to you? No; I have land within 1½ mile of it, if it is continued to the Tweed Heads.

709. It would be a benefit to that land; but it would be of no benefit to your holding up here? No.

710. If the terminus were at the south head of the Tweed, would it not pay to punt your produce down? I could much more easily take it to the terminus here.

711. Supposing the coast line were adopted, and the terminus were at the south head of the Tweed, would you send your produce down the river in order that it might go by railway—would it pay you to do that? I do not see how there could be a terminus at the south head of the Tweed.

712. There is a line having its terminal point at Murwillumbah, and another having its terminal point at the south head of the Tweed; if it were decided to construct the latter, would you send your produce there in order to get it taken south? It will all depend upon which was the cheapest.

713. Do you think that if you had to send your stuff down to the Heads, you would rather put it into a vessel than send it down by the railway? It would be a question of cheapness.

714. You know Terranora? Yes.

715. Do you think it at all likely that the people there would send their stuff down to the Tweed Heads, and up again to Murwillumbah, if this were the terminus of the railway—would you do it? Yes, with some class of goods.

716. What class? Butter, cheese, and perishable goods that I wished to send away quickly.

717. You would go down the river and up again 20 miles? There are parts of Terranora that could come to the main river with going down the Tweed. There is a road from Tumbulgum to Chindera.

718. Do you know anything about the terminal point at the other side of the river? Yes.

719. Do you think that it is a suitable place? I do.

720. How would the people on this side get to it—by having a bridge constructed over the river? At the present time we use a punt.

721. Where is your land—on the other side? Yes.

722. Is there more trade on the other side than there is on this? There is more cultivation at the present time on the other side. I do not know what it could be.

723. Is the country between here and the border—the Macpherson range—good country? Yes; some of it is very good.

Edwin

Edwin Hill Johnson, Esq., licensed surveyor, sworn, and examined :—

724. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your occupation? I am a licensed surveyor.
725. Residing at Murwillumbah? Within 4 miles of Murwillumbah.
726. In private practice? I do Government work. I am in charge of the Government district on fees.
727. Is Murwillumbah your head quarters? Yes. I live within 4 miles of here.
728. How long have you resided here? Eight years.
729. Where have you resided before? At Goulburn, and at Sydney.
730. Have you a selection of you own here? Yes.
731. What is the area of it? 560 acres.
732. In what direction is it? Nearly north.
733. Near to the dividing range? Yes; within a mile of the dividing range.
734. Is the country in your part of the world nearly as good as that round the river banks, which we can see from here? Yes. This is most alluvial; there is a great deal of rich scrub land there too.
735. Have any cultivation? Yes.
736. What are you growing? I have fruit trees and maize.
737. How do you get your maize to market? I grow it for myself only.
738. Is it the same with the other products? I have not had any quantity of fruit.
739. You have not sent any to market; you have only grown enough for your own requirements? That is all.
740. I suppose you anticipate a time when you will have enough to send to market? Yes.
741. How would you get your surplus products to market? I believe I could get them to market if the railway were constructed.
742. Without the railway is it likely that you would put more land under cultivation? Not under cultivation; I will put it under grass.
743. Are you familiar with the whole of the country between here and the Richmond? No. As far as my district goes I am familiar with it.
744. How far is that? It goes to Crabb's Creek, nearly to the Brunswick—from here 15 to 20 miles in places.
745. Are you familiar with the route of the proposed line? I do not know the route itself, though I have crossed it in places. I know the character of the land through which it goes.
746. Could you tell us by looking at the plan whether the country through which it passes between Murwillumbah and the Brunswick is good land or not? The Brunswick itself is good land. From about 5 miles north of the Brunswick it is swampy land; after that it goes through scrub land nearly the whole way.
747. The remainder of it is good land? Yes.
748. Is it taken up; is much of it under cultivation? It is taken up, but it is not under cultivation; it is under grass in places.
749. Do you know anything of the character of the country between the Brunswick and the south head of the Tweed—the coast line? Yes.
750. Do you know that surveyed line? Yes; I know the coast line.
751. What is the nature of the country through which it passes? Very poor; except at Cudgen, there is no good country on the line. There is swamp, and heath, and a little poor forest country.
752. Does not the line go through Cudgen? I said that the land was poor, with the exception of that at Cudgen.
753. There is very little good land other than that at Cudgen? Very little.
754. I suppose the settlement there is very slight? It is very slight. The land has only been taken up lately.
755. You think the inland line would serve the larger number of people and also the larger area of country? I am certain of that—much the larger.
756. Do you know the proposed terminal point at Murwillumbah? Yes.
757. Do you think it convenient? I think it would be more convenient to have it on this side.
758. That would mean a bridge? Yes.
759. Would it not be very costly? Not if they went farther up where the line comes in to the river. The country is nearly as good there, and the bridge would not be an expensive undertaking.
760. Have you any knowledge of the cost of the construction of bridges? No, not professionally.
761. Do you think that if the line were constructed the people would send their produce to the Richmond for shipment? With the exception of timber, I am certain that they would, as the river is now.
762. You do not think that any timber would go by the railway? I fancy not. They are not in a hurry with it, and could get it out by the river.
763. So we are to exclude all export of timber in considering the traffic of the railway? Unless the sawn timber.
764. Do you think that it is likely that if railway communication were given, instead of the timber being sent down in logs, it would be sawn here? I think so.
765. Then some of it might go by the railway? Yes.
766. Do you think the agitation for the railway has been made in the hope that Byron Bay will be made a harbour? I believe that they thought that that would be a port.
767. If there were no hope of a port there, do you think the people would be as anxious as they are now? Not so anxious. They would be anxious for it.
768. They would use it? They would have to use it at present, as they have no way of getting out.
769. They have the river? They cannot send a great deal of produce that way. None of a certain class of produce goes by the river.
770. Has much land been taken up in this district? Within the year there has been a large quantity of settlement.
771. What is your opinion as to the quantity of land from which a man could make a living in the scrub country? There are very few who cultivate 40 acres, I think.
772. Do you think that a man could make a good living out of 40 acres? Yes, they do.
773. Where does the scrub country begin—at the Brunswick? There is a large quantity of scrub country up the Brunswick; but along the coast the country is poor.
774. Do you know the nature of the land in the reserves shown on the map—is it good, bad, or indifferent? I know most of it.

E. H.
Johnson,
Esq.
22 Nov., 1889.

- E. H. Johnson, Esq.
22 Nov., 1889.
775. I suppose the alienated land is much better than the unalienated land. People take up the good land first? Yes, that is so, with the exception of the reserves.
776. You think there is still good country in the unalienated portion? Yes.
777. I suppose you come into contact with the landowners very frequently? Yes.
778. I suppose they would be glad to give the necessary land for the construction of a railway rather than lose the railway? I believe they would be only too glad to give it. I have had a look at the country, and I believe that you could easily make a connection from Murwillumbah to the Queensland border.
779. *Chairman.*] Where at? To go through the Macpherson Range.
780. *Mr. Garrard.* At what point? It is about 6 miles from Murwillumbah, where they would have to tunnel through the range.
781. Close to the road? About three-quarters of a mile from the road.
782. At a place called the Gap? It is not what is locally known as the Gap. Where the road crosses is what they call the Gap; but this place is more of a gap than where the road crosses.
783. Is it east or west of the road? West of the road.
784. Do you think that a line could be constructed there very easily? Yes.
785. Does it come down near your place? Through my place. I knew it at the time I took the land up.
786. Is there good land between that and Nerang, on the other side—have you any knowledge of it? Yes, it is fair country. It goes all through the Currumbin Creek country.
787. Does it compare favourably with the land on this side of the range? There is good scrub land.
788. Not as good as the land on this side? I think so; but they have not the same rainfall. I consider the rainfall and the heat the best features of this district.
789. If the line were constructed through there do you think the produce of the district would go to Brisbane rather than south? Not with the present duties. I do not think it would. I think the Sydney market is a better market than the Brisbane market.
790. There was a time when a large amount of the produce of this district went to Brisbane—before they were protected? I think some did, but it was before my time.
791. You always considered Sydney to be the market of the district? I know that it is a better market. I have studied it myself.

Mr. William Robert Baker, newspaper proprietor, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. W. R. Baker.
22 Nov., 1889.
792. *Chairman.*] You are the proprietor of the local newspaper? Yes.
793. What is it called? The *Tweed and Brunswick Advocate*.
794. How long have you been here? Thirteen months.
795. Did you reside in these coast districts before you came here? I resided on the Clarence, somewhere about thirty years.
796. What part of the Clarence? In Grafton and at Maclean. I was running a newspaper at Maclean for eleven years.
797. Did you come here from Grafton? I came from Maclean.
798. Have you any property in Maclean? I have two or three town allotments.
799. Any in Grafton? None.
800. Have you any land here? None in the Tweed district. I have some in the Brunswick district.
801. Farming land? A conditional purchase.
802. Will you be good enough to give the Committee any evidence that you can with reference to this proposal? Yes. When I came here I was so struck with the richness and fertility of the district that I was fairly dumbfounded at the want of facilities for getting produce away. I really could not understand how the people were living at all. I found that they were existing rather than living. I think that some communication is really necessary. If you travel through the district and see how the people have had to exist in the past you will be with me in that.
803. Have the people since you have been here tried to stick to their land? Yes.
804. Under the greatest difficulties? Under the greatest difficulties imaginable.
805. Those difficulties drew your attention to their position? Yes.
806. What do you think would be a remedy for those difficulties? I came to the conclusion that a remedy they must have of some sort. Then came the question which would be the best remedy. There is not the slightest doubt, to my mind, that if the river were navigable with a depth say of 12 feet of water from here to the Heads it would serve a very large number of people; but I doubt the possibility of making it navigable with that depth.
807. What is the distance from here to the Heads? I think 22 miles. My reason for thinking that it is impossible to keep it a depth of 12 feet is that, although our rainfall is very great, the quantity of country draining into the river is small, and even in flood the Tweed, compared with the other northern rivers, is only a rivulet. In ordinary weather the little steam launches bump on the flats. I do not think it could be kept open to a depth of 12 feet by continual dredging, which would be expensive.
808. And the construction of a channel in the first instance would be enormous? Yes. There are a great number of little flats, and I do not think there would be a sufficient force of water to keep a channel open when it was once made.
809. On account of the expense you have discarded the notion of keeping the river open as the highway for the district? Yes.
810. What do you think would best serve the district. I suppose whatever would serve the district and enable the settlers to find markets for their produce would induce other settlers to come here, and largely benefit the district? Yes.
811. What would do that? A railway.
812. Where to? The nearest point from which we could ship. We do not care if the railway runs from here to the Brunswick if you construct a good port there. If you made it to Byron Bay it would be acceptable; but if not it should be made to the Richmond. I am not speaking from a selfish point of view. I think the people along that route are as much entitled to consideration as the people on the banks of the Tweed. I have been over the country a good deal since I have been here—in fact I have been looking for a place, and I am sure that you do not get a fair idea of what the country is like by travelling along the road.

813. You say that you have been through the district a good deal looking for land. You know the Clarence well; is this district equal to the Clarence in richness and fertility? This district for its area is capable of carrying as large a population as the Clarence is.
814. But is not the Tweed land district as large as the Clarence? Not nearly so large.
815. Do not the rich lands extend further back from the river here than from the Clarence? Yes; it is nearly all gone between here and the Clarence. The Clarence land is river-bank land, and if you get a river-bank farm there I do not think there is anything on the Tweed or on the Richmond equal to it; and besides, they have means of access to market.
816. The difference between the Tweed and the Clarence is that the lands generally in the Tweed are superior to the lands generally on the Clarence, except those on the banks of the Clarence? Yes.
817. And you say that they are capable of sustaining a larger population, acre for acre? Yes. The back lands here are very rich scrub lands, and even where they are too stony to be cultivated, they make really magnificent grazing lands—the very best of dairying land.
818. Have you any statistics for the Committee? Yes; in the Tweed land district.
819. The boundaries of that district have not been changed? Yes. In 1884, and previously, 9,874 acres were taken up. During 1885, 7,362 acres were taken up; during 1886, 10,909 acres; during 1887, 4,257 acres; during 1888, 8,884 acres; during 1889, 88,917 acres—that is taking in conditional leases.
820. Which carry with them a right of purchase? Yes. The whole acreage of this district is 400,000 acres. The total amount of land alienated is 230,968 acres. These figures were not run up by myself. Mr. Easthauffe now says that the area for 1889 should be 13,000 acres.
821. I have taken out the conditional purchases from the land book, and they come to 7,928 acres, and the conditional leases to 2,480 acres, making altogether 10,408 acres, so that even your amended figures are a great deal out when compared with the book? I got my figures from the book; they should tally.
822. Who took them out? Mr. Easthauffe and I took them out, and Mr. Easthauffe ran them up.
823. What other figures have you? The number of reserves; but I think that the parish maps would give you a better idea of the settlement.
824. What other figures have you;—perhaps you had better leave the land alone. Is there any information you can give us about the products of the district? I know there is very little produce grown in the district, because people cannot get it away.
825. Do you know of any farmers who have tried to cultivate but who have had to give it up? Yes.
826. Many? I know of several.
827. What have they cultivated? Maize; and they have had it rotting in their barns.
828. Do you know that of your own knowledge? Yes.
829. Did it not suggest itself to the farmers that they could give it to the pigs? Pigs cost money, and the farmers are not in a position to get them.
830. Do you know that in America it is not uncommon to turn the pigs into the maize? Yes; but you must have the pigs to start with.
831. Do you know that the farmers have given up cultivating the land simply because they have no market for their produce? Yes.
832. We have heard that it is very expensive to bring the land under cultivation—more expensive here than in most parts of the colony? Very much more so. It costs nearly double here what it would to bring the Clarence land under cultivation.
833. At any rate a great deal more? Yes.
834. Have you been along the line from here to Byron Bay? No, I have not. I have been along the road.
835. To Brunswick? I have been up the Brunswick river, and to Byron Bay, but not along the railway line.
836. Have you been back from the range that runs along towards Byron Bay? No; I know nothing of the country beyond the Brunswick, towards Byron Bay, except from travelling along the main road to the Richmond.
837. What is the character of the country between here and the Brunswick;—is it like what we have seen? No.
838. Is it good? Yes. It is different land altogether. The land up to the Brunswick and towards the Pocket is heavily covered with scrub timber. Some of it is red soil, and some of it is black soil.
839. Is it as good as the general run of the land here on the river? Yes. I think it is better.
840. Is there anything else that you would like to tell the Committee? No; I do not know that there is anything else.

Mr. Gavin Pettigrew, farmer, made an affirmation, and was examined:—

841. *Chairman.*] What are you? A farmer.
842. Where do you reside? At Broadwater.
843. How far is that from here? Between Tumbulgun and Cudgen—10 or 11 miles.
844. Will you give the Committee whatever information you have that has not been given by somebody else? There is one point which I want to impress upon the Committee, which has not been mentioned before; that is the natural capability of the district for raising products that cannot be raised at the present time because of the want of certain and speedy communication. Certain and speedy communication is a necessity in fruit growing, and in semi-tropical fruits we can grow nearly anything. I have experimented to a considerable extent with these products, and I have found that they could be grown very extensively, especially on land not available for other crops, that is on the hill sides. In the rich scrub lands bananas and pine-apples could be grown, and a good deal of money obtained from them, if we had the right to our own market in Sydney. I sent a sample of coffee to an exhibition in Sydney on one occasion, and it was pronounced by experts to be very fair marketable coffee. These things have not been attempted because there is no certain communication with the market, and the capability of the district in this direction should be taken into consideration by the Committee. At one time I intended to cultivate bananas extensively. We were taunted in the agricultural columns of newspapers because we did not produce these tropical fruits when we had the climate and soil to do so, but it was patent to everyone who knew anything about the matter that they could not be grown profitably with the communication which we had. The only communication we had was across the bar. The roads have been of very little service to us for carrying produce, so that the cultivation must necessarily be confined to the banks of the river.
845. Then you are in a worse position here for getting bananas to the market than they are in Fiji? We are. I have had maize lying behind the bar for five weeks, and the price has come down from 4s. 6d. to 2s. 6d., while there has been a depreciation in the value of the grain caused by the weevils.

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846. That uncertainty discourages the farmers? Yes. We have lands here which, if they were cleared and drained, and so forth, would produce hundreds of thousands of bushels of maize. It is splendid land for maize. I have done a certain amount towards reclaiming swamp land in this district, and I say that there is no better land anywhere for growing corn and potatoes. The capabilities of the district are enormous, but there is no inducement to develop them. I have been acquainted with the district for over twenty years, and we have been fighting against difficulties all the time. I was one of a deputation which went to Sydney to press on the Government the necessity of doing something for the navigation of the river. I think Mr. Garrard was Minister for Works at the time. Now and again we have made spasmodic efforts to get something done, but we have been too far from Sydney. If we had been connected with Brisbane it would have been different.

847. You think so? We have the assertion of a Minister of the Crown in Queensland to the effect that if we separated—

848. Whatever they said was gospel truth? Well, it is what they said. The Hon. Mr. Macrossan, when Minister for Works, told us that if we liked to separate and come to Queensland they would make a railway straight away—that it would be to their interest to do it.

849. I suppose they would do it if they were allowed to do it? Yes.

850. You think that if you had means of getting to the southern markets where there are hundreds of acres under cultivation now, there would be thousands of acres under cultivation? The great thing is to have reasonable facilities for getting to market. That would be a great incentive to production. Another thing I might mention, although you may say that it is politics, is that we want the right to our own market first.

851. If you had your own market secured to you,—if you had facilities for getting to your natural markets in this colony, you believe that there would be a larger quantity of land cultivated than there is at the present time? I am certain of it.

852. You believe that there would be a great increase in the settlement of the district? Decidedly.

853. Do you not think that it would be a bar to the increase of settlement in the district, enormous areas being held by individuals;—do you not think that that would limit settlement in the district? It would limit it to a certain extent for a time; but of course people who hold land are not going to hold it for nothing for ever, and if they can turn it to account by leasing it to people who will cultivate it, they will do so.

854. Mr. Garrard.] How many acres of land have you? I have several selections. I have brought my total up to about 260 acres altogether.

855. How much have you cultivated? I suppose about 150 acres.

856. Maize or sugar? Sugar mostly. Of course some of the land is natural grass land.

857. If the line were constructed do you think it would be made use of by the people here in order to get to their markets? Certainly.

858. Even if they had to go to the Richmond? Yes; if there were a certainty of communication with the Richmond. Sometimes we are blocked altogether for weeks and weeks.

859. You are aware that the entrance to the Richmond is being improved to a great extent, and that in all probability there will be a good port there? If there is a good port there, there is no doubt that it will be availed of.

860. Do you think the inland line will be a greater benefit to the people of the district than what is known as the alternative line—the coast line? That is a moot point, and people are a little divided on the subject. For myself I favour the coast line.

861. Do you know the country along the coast line? Yes; to a certain extent.

862. Is it good country? Fairly. It is not so rich.

863. Not so rich as on the inland line? No.

864. Of course, being on the sea coast, there would not be as large an extent of country on either side as on the inland line? There are certain advantages and disadvantages on either line. I will give you an illustration in point. In Queensland they projected a north coast line from Brisbane to Gympie, and there was rich scrub land between the Brisbane and the Mary, which was on the alternative line. The coast line went through land similar to that which this coast line would go through. It touched several places—Caboolture, Mooloolah, and Maroochie, where there were patches of good land on the banks of the rivers, but otherwise it went through poor country. The Queensland Government before constructing the line took the opinion of a competent surveyor, who went over each route and set forth its merits and demerits. That inland line had the advantage of going through better country, but it was longer and would have been more expensive in construction, while the coast line was shorter but went through poorer country. The inland line would have cost about £770,000 while the coast line would have cost about £450,000. They finally decided that it would be better to construct the coast line, and to construct branch lines into the rich country to feed the coast line, thus taking advantage of the shorter route and the easier gradients, and giving quicker communication between the two centres. They are constructing that line now. Our case is very similar. This coast line is some 4 or 5 miles shorter than the inland line, and it goes through level country, and it probably will only cost half the money to construct: I mean from where it diverges at the Brunswick.

865. Would the coast line be of any advantage to the district immediately about Murwillumbah? No line can be constructed that will serve every one equally well; we can take that for granted. The coast line would serve people further down the river better than the people up here, but it would make very little difference where there is navigable water. It is only in shipping the stuff into the droghers that expense is incurred. It is just as cheap to send it by water 12 or 15 miles as 5 miles.

866. Do you think it would be to the advantage of the district if the money were laid out on the improvement of the river instead of on the railway? It would be very desirable to have the river improved, and we have been trying for a great number of years to get that done. When Minister for Works you told me straight that I had made out a good case, but that you were not in a position to help me. The river navigation is right enough in itself; but it will not serve the purposes of a railway. We owe no thanks to the New South Wales Government for improvements to the river. The Government never spent a 6d. on the river until they commenced dredging lately, although it is the highway of the district.

867. Are you familiar with the works that have been done by the dredge? I have my business to attend to, and I am not hovering about to see what is being done.

868. You do not know what has been done? I have it on good authority that a great deal has been done that is useless.

869. Is it a fact that what has been done is absolutely useless? I am not a professional engineer, but I have an opinion of my own, and from the reports I hear I believe that what is being done is of no use.
870. You send your produce down the river? I have done so.
871. Do you do so now? I have not sent much lately.
872. You know that there are certain flats which it is difficult to get through? Yes.
873. Are they less of an annoyance now than they were before the dredging began? No. The dredge is working outside the channel.
874. Do you know that she has been working for some time, and that what she has been doing is useless? I do not know it—she has not been working in the channel.
875. You have taken a great interest in the concerns of the district;—you have made representations to urge that improvements should be made here, in your own interest, and in that of the inhabitants? Yes.
876. Was it to improve the district, or to get money spent here, that so many agitations have taken place? Getting money spent was of no benefit to me whatever. I am not a business man; I am not running a public house; I am a producer; and money spent in the district is of no value to me, unless it effects some improvement.
877. Do you not think that if a man in the community knows of a waste of public money it is his duty to try and stop it? Certainly.
878. You acknowledge that this dredging has been a waste of money; but you have taken no steps to stop it? I do not know it of my own knowledge. I have heard reports that it is of no value.

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Charles Henry Caswell, Esq., Surveyor, Railway Department, sworn, and examined:—

879. *Mr. Garrard.*] You are a surveyor in the Railway Department? Yes.
880. Have you been engaged upon the survey of the line between here and Byron Bay? Yes.
881. On what portion of the line? From about 5 miles below Brunswick to here, and also on the Cudgen route in various lengths.
882. What are you engaged on now? On the Cudgen permanent survey.
883. That is the coast line? Yes.
884. What were the last instructions you received about that line; what is the date of them? Nothing further in connection with the work upon it. The last I heard from the office was a few days ago that I was to meet the engineer.
885. No instructions have been given about discontinuing the survey of that line or further work upon it? None whatever.
886. What is the distance from the Brunswick River to Cudgen? To Chindera it is about 22 miles.
887. And it is about how many miles from the Brunswick to Murwillumbah? About a similar distance; I do not know exactly.
888. What is the nature of the country between the two places? One is generally flat and the other generally mountainous.
889. I mean the capabilities of the country for production? The upper line runs through the richer country.
890. But it is more difficult for railway construction? Considerably more.
891. Would it be half as expensive again? I do not know exactly; I have never taken the estimate of it.
892. Roughly? About two to one.
893. Is there as much population on the coast line as upon the inland line? No, not so much, naturally.
894. And the line would certainly not serve so large an area of country? I suppose not.
895. In moving about the district you have heard the opinions of people about these routes; which do they favour most? I think most people favour the inland route, because most people have to deal with it.
896. Which do you think is likely to pay best? That is a question I cannot answer; it all depends upon future extension. It is a more comprehensive question than merely the railway from Grafton to the Tweed.
- 897-8. We are not dealing with the whole line from Grafton to the Tweed, but from Byron Bay to the Tweed; surely you can give us an idea which would be better—the line from Byron Bay to Murwillumbah, or from Cudgen to Byron Bay? The coast line, I should say, because if that should be constructed the traffic would go that way, and the interest on the cost of construction would be much less, and the working expenses would not be so heavy.
899. What would be the ruling gradient on the coast line? It would be nearly level, but there would be one or two grades in it.
900. When I say "ruling gradient" I mean what is the steepest pinch? I suppose the most difficult would be 1 in 60;—that would be the ruling gradient.
901. Could that be reduced? It would all depend upon how much money you would care to put into the cuttings.
902. What do you expect the ruling grade will be on the inland line? I am not prepared to say—about 1 in 50, I suppose. But I think there will be one grade of 1 in 40 approaching a tunnel.
903. A short tunnel? Yes.
904. That could be eased down with a little expenditure? I cannot say, as I did not prepare the sections.
905. Do you know where the line terminates opposite Murwillumbah? Yes.
906. Do you think that that is a good position? It is the best I should say.
907. With a view to actually crossing the river? I do not think that the terminus has been decided upon, except that it is to be on the other side.
908. You had no instructions when surveying near the terminal point as to the necessity of crossing the river? No.
909. You have had nothing to do with the idea of taking it further north to the Dividing Range? No. I looked at it on my own account; but I had no instruction.
910. Where do you think would be a good place to take it to the border to meet the Queensland line? I never examined it in such a critical way as to give a definite opinion.
911. It would be rather difficult to extend it if we took the line to Cudgen? Yes, there would be two expensive bridges.
912. If the railway is to be extended to the border the upper line would be preferable, because there would be less bridge work upon it? Yes, there would be less bridge work.
913. Is the only good land between Brunswick and Cudgen the 2,000 or 3,000 acres near the sugar-mill? No.

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- C. H. Caswell, 914. Are there many swamps further south? It is all swamp.
 Esq. 915. All swamp? Well, about one fourth of it.
 22 Nov., 1889. 916. Have you been over the country between Coolangatta and Southport? No. I have been from Murwillumbah; but not along the coast.
 917. There is a good deal of swamp on the Cudgen line? Yes.
 918. Will not that necessitate long viaducts? No, the swamps will be easily drained, and they have good sound bottoins.
 919. The expense will be nothing in proportion to the cost of the cuttings and tunnels on the upper line? No.
 920. Do you know where the surveyors on the inland line are? Yes. One is half way between here and the Brunswick, about 12 miles from here, and the other is at the Brunswick.
 921. What is the first one doing—permanently surveying? Yes; continuing the survey. He is doing as I am doing on the coast.
 922. Has he been through the whole line? No; only as far as the camp.
 923. Have you been on the line between Byron Bay and Lismore? I have been on part of it, about 10 miles this side of Lismore. I was out preparing it for permanent staking.
 924. You think that you have taken the best route that could be found? I think so.
 925. Is there any necessity for taking a railway so near the coast as Byron Bay, excepting to escape the ranges? I do not know that it is possible to get a grade off the range from the back of Byron Bay.
 926. To escape the range you must come near the coast at Byron Bay? I would not say must. There must be a big tunnel there, or a gradient down to Byron Bay.
 927. *Mr. Lee.*] Were you employed on the inner line at Byron Bay—the line from Murwillumbah? They are identical to the Brunswick.
 928. In the neighbourhood of Byron Bay? For 3 miles north of Byron Bay I had the staking of the lines.
 929. Have you received any recent instructions to endeavour to improve the lines at that locality? No; but some of the other surveyors may have done so.
 930. Then between Brunswick and Cudgen there is very little good land? Yes; there is very good land between the two lines; they border on similar country. There is only 4 miles distance between the lines at Burringbar.
 931. Is there any country along that line equal to that held by the Cudgen Sugar Company? Not of the same character, not the red soil.
 932. I suppose there can be no doubt about the superiority of the land between this and Byron Bay over that on the Cudgen route? No doubt.
 933. And in course of time it is likely to yield a larger traffic? I should think so.
 934. Have you succeeded in reducing any grades or curves on the proposed line? There is nothing on my part of the line to reduce.
 935. How will the line cross the Brunswick? In what way?
 936. The line crosses the Brunswick—what kind of bridges have you provided for? Two lines have been laid out—one for a high level, and the other for a low level bridge.
 937. Which has been adopted by the department? They will not adopt anything until the line is decided upon, I suppose.
 938. Is the river navigable there? Not beyond the entrance.
 939. What is the depth of water there? About 8 feet at high water.
 940. Have you taken any soundings or borings? No.
 941. That is not in your department? It belongs to the department, but comes after our work.
 942. *Mr. Garrard.*] How far from the coast does the coast line run? An average distance of about half a mile.
 943. It would not have much available country to draw on on the east? No.

Mr. Charles Anthony Brady, silk-grower, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. 944. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At a place called Anthony, near Tumbulgum.
 C. A. Brady. 945. How far from here? 6 or 7 miles—8 miles it may be.
 22 Nov., 1889. 946. How long have you lived in the district? Sixteen years.
 947. In what occupation have you been engaged during that time? What originally brought me here was silk culture, but besides that I have been engaged in a number of other occupations.
 948. Will you be good enough to tell the Committee what you have to say in regard to this proposal? In regard to the disadvantages of a railway I think we may dispose of them in a word; I know of none; but the advantages I may state, as, perhaps, one of the originators of the idea to construct a railway from Brisbane to the Tweed, and from the Tweed southward to Byron Bay. The reason of that project being mooted was the difficulty of getting produce to market after it was grown. The river navigation when I first came here was far better than it is now. Ocean going steamers came up many miles above the place where we are now, to a place called Byangum. Byangum is properly the head of navigation, and if there is any question where the chief settlement of the river should be, it is the place. It opens up a large extent of back country and is admirably situated because of its supply of fresh water, and its many other local advantages. Failure to get produce away and supplies brought here was for many years a cause of very severe practical suffering to the early pioneers of the district. For as many as seven months at a time I have known people to be without any communication with the outside world. This state of things continued until it became pretty near unendurable, and a number of the best settlers had to cave in and leave the district.
 949. We have heard a good deal about the settlers in the district having very large areas of land, and I would like to know whether that has been brought about by reason of other people having to sell out and go elsewhere? I am able to say from my own knowledge that that has been the case.
 950. That is how these big properties have been put together? They have been built up by devouring the weak and helpless.
 951. The weak had to go? Yes.
 952. And other people bought out their selections? It was a mere nominal thing; they were dummied or bought out, because the poor creatures could not hold on any longer.
 953. You think that if there had been fair communication with the outer world instead of these big properties there would be a number of smaller ones now? That is precisely it. 954.

954. Do you think that if the district is fairly opened up, either by water or by railway, smaller men will be able to settle on smaller estates? Yes. It will bring families to the district rather than farmers.

955. They are men who came to speculate and clear out? Yes, and to take high wages and are no more seen. The Colonial Sugar Company have certainly given a value to a great deal of land here that was valueless before; but at the same time the same amount of land would be capable of supporting a very much larger population, and a very much more profitable one, in a national sense. People have bought the land for speculative purposes, to sell again, so that the actually industrious man is handicapped by having to pay an enormous price, without anything having been done to improve the land. Some of the settlers who sold out had made a little improvement; but that made it the worse for those who bought after them.

956. But if the first settlers had not sold out could they have held on? No; because they could not have got their produce to market.

957. If they had not sold out they would have lost their selections, and it was better to sell out and get something than to get nothing for them? They did not sell out. They were indebted for a few pounds to the stores, and were allowed to go—that is the English of it. With regard to the character of the country, I may as well direct your attention to the peculiarities of the climate, which is something remarkable. I was not aware that I would be likely to give any evidence to-day, because, although I heard of your coming, I did not know that you had arrived, until late this afternoon. I have prepared a rough memorandum of the rainfall. If it will be agreeable to you I will read it. It shows the quantity of rain which fell monthly for nine years, commencing with the year 1881. I find that the average fall of rain in January for the nine years was 7.18 inches on sixteen days, in February 8.32 inches on sixteen days, in March 9.09 inches on nineteen days, in April 6.64 inches on nineteen days, in May 5.14 inches on fourteen days, in June 3.64 inches on nine days, in July 6.01 inches on eleven days, in August 4.33 inches on ten days, in September 2.89 inches on twelve days, in October 4.32 inches on thirteen days. Then for the months of November and December which are incomplete, the amount was 6 inches and 6.2 inches respectively. The average for the whole period of nine years, including 1889, as far as November, is about 70 inches. There is a remarkable thing to which I would like to call your attention. No month during the nine years has been entirely without rain. The least rain on any one month was 0.43 points; that is something short of half an inch. The greatest fall was 33.38 inches. The driest month on the average during the nine years was September with 2.89 points on twelve days, in the driest year that we had. The wettest month on the average during the nine years was March, with 9.09 inches on nineteen days, so that there were twelve dry days, and the rest of the month wet. The greatest number of wet days in any one month was 28, and the least number of days when rain fell in any month was 4. The driest year was 1885 with 39.22 inches on 157 days, so that our driest year by authentic records had a rainfall of close upon 40 inches, which is a much greater rainfall than many parts of the Colony ever had. The wettest year was 1887, and then we had 114.51 inches on 202 days. This is what accounts for the extraordinary growth that is to be seen in this part of the world. I would also beg to call your attention to the character of the flood here. The highest measured flood at Anthony was at the landing place, and it only came 6 feet 7 or 8 inches above high water mark at spring tides. This is owing to the small gathering ground.

958. You mean the small water-shed? Yes. The small gathering ground draining to the Tweed, and the short distance that the river has to travel to the sea. It is about 30 miles from the head of navigation to the sea. There is also a large extent of swamp land back from the river, and a rise of the flood waters beyond, about $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet requires a very heavy and continuous downfall. In common with most of these rivers that are subject to flood, the river banks on each side are higher than the land at the back, consequently when the water rises very nearly to a level with the bank, the creeks and open water-courses take it, and it comes in at the back. I have never known a flood to go over the banks. Of course in the upper parts, what you may call the gorges, which are the feeders to the river, the rise is more, but generally two or three hours will carry off the water. But floods do very little real harm, beyond causing inconvenience to settlers on low land, and obliging them to shift. On the contrary, they are generally of material benefit, the silt, and rich vegetable and animal matter, of which a large quantity is brought down and deposited, supplying fertility to the soil exhausted by the greed and ignorance of the farmers, whose limited intelligence and lack of spirit demand from their lands a continuous yield of crops, while they seldom or never attempt to restore the mineral and other constituents carried off by the crop. They do not manure here, and consequently sugar is to a large extent dying out. The farmers have hitherto relied upon the extraordinary climate to fertilize the soil. They omit a very essential duty—the supply of mineral elements. A very small quantity of manure, perhaps 2 or 3 per cent., would restore the elements of fertility; but that is now neglected. While speaking of floods, I should mention that it is the low ground that is the most valuable, not only in this immediate neighbourhood, but in the whole district. The swamps in reality are worth more money—are more intrinsically rich than the uplands. They are capable of producing far more largely, and are far more worthy of attention than the land on the ridges, which produce such a luxuriant growth. I can say that of my own knowledge. I can give you an instance. A good deal of this land, that has been cultivated for only a few years, is so impoverished that it is ruining the farmers; whereas, the land that is subject to flood gives, not only a large growth of cane, but also a large quantity of sugar in the cane, and that is greatly to be considered. All the years that I have been here we have not had a hot wind, and there has never, during the whole of that time, been a single instance of what they call “southerly busters,” which are characteristic of New South Wales and Victoria. They never reach up to this district. Cool and even cold sea breezes are not uncommon, though they are seldom severe. What is called a “black north-easter” down south has never been felt in this district, so that the climate is an exceedingly equable one. There are frosts, and it is a remarkable thing that these frosts are often quite as strong on the sea beach as they are a good distance inland. This is a very singular thing that I do not know how to account for, but it has happened on a number of occasions. There has been ice on the sea beach when there has been a perfectly calm pleasant night at Tumbulgum. The fertility of the climate is attributable, in my opinion, not merely to the amount of rain that falls, but also to its remarkably even distribution throughout the year. The uniform but not excessive warmth adds to the luxuriance of the vegetation. The high temperature and the moisture together produce a very heavy growth of timber. This timber re-acts upon the climate very largely, and assists very largely to keep it in its moist state. It would be a very serious thing to cut down the timber, and in all probability would materially alter the climate.

959. There are men who have kept records for sixty and seventy years, who say otherwise. Dr. Draper of America says otherwise? That is in a different part of the world.

- Mr. C. A. Brady. 960. But it is timber just the same? You were good enough to ask me what I was particularly engaged in. I came here with the idea of raising silkworms. They certainly did thrive in a way that I have never known to be equalled in any other part of the world. They became healthy, and have been healthy ever since, and are so now, while the disease among them still continues in Europe, and especially in Asia Minor, which is a very large silk-producing country. The misfortune about silk-culture is that it is an entirely new thing to English-speaking people. In no part of the world where the English are settled is there one individual to my knowledge, except myself, who makes a special effort to grow silk. I did this experimentally at first, with the object of gaining for this country a stock with which to supply other countries, availing myself of the advantages of our climate, and so on, to get rid of the disease; but my fellow-countrymen, not knowing the value of this industry, have hesitated to take advantage of it. But not so the foreigner. He has obtained our grain from Australia, and is working on that grain, and rearing his stock from what was produced in Australia, and with his cheap labour and knowledge of the subject I cannot compete with him, and am beaten out of my own market.
961. I suppose you have no colonial market for it? No colonial market.
962. But if the grain is so valuable have you not a market for it? I used to sell grain for £3 5s. or a shilling more per ounce, but now I can only get 5s. or 6s. and I have to wait one or two years for that.
963. How do you account for that? Simply because it takes very little labour and expense to grow the grain, and cheap labour and very expert people who devote themselves to the work are employed.
964. Was not that the case when you were paid £3 5s. per ounce? No. There was the labour, but they had to get our grain to work upon. They have reduced the thing to a system, and boys and girls with very good eyes examine every egg with a microscope. They become very expert at this, especially the girls—girls from 10 to 13. As each egg is passed through it is either saved or rejected.
965. Is there no market for the raw silk? Yes, to any extent.
966. How are you beaten out of the market with that? It requires a larger number of people to grow silk. I have offered to teach the process and give the material, but nobody responds. It is like taking horses to the water; you can take them there but you cannot make them drink.
967. I suppose the bulk of the people look upon you as a fanatic? They say, and I believe that they are right, that I am a fool. There is no bigger fool in the country than I am. I ought to have left the country, and I deserve my punishment for living here.
968. Can you give us any other information? Amongst other things that can be produced here is coffee. Coffee thrives here admirably, and there is a very large extent of country adapted to its cultivation. It is a permanent and paying crop, and does not require much labour. The few coffee plants that I had came into bearing in the third year, but that was very early. The fourth year is the earliest that you can reckon for, and then the trees go on bearing for twenty or thirty years.
969. Have you grown tobacco here? Yes, and it thrives capitally. The tobacco plant is perennial, and it will grow as high as you like, up to 10 feet. I grew some Havana tobacco, which is esteemed greatly for wrappers—the outside leaves of a cigar—and it had as fine a leaf as I ever saw in Europe, and I had great experience in my younger days in tobacco. The curing of tobacco requires a considerable amount of skill, although to grow it is easy. It requires a considerable amount of judgment to know how to make use of the leaf when you have grown it. This country is essentially fitted for dairying. There is an amazing amount of food absolutely wasted every month throughout the year for want of intelligence to make it into ensilage. There is a great poverty of ideas among the settlers here. There are a very few who have any knowledge whatever of farming. We want a schoolmaster here very badly—the agricultural schoolmaster. It would add very much to the development of the country if the farmers were to bring something like scientific knowledge and common sense to bear upon their agriculture.
970. I suppose there are not many farmers here who could tell you the quantity of nitrogen, lime, potash, phosphoric acid, sulphuric acid, magnesia, &c., drawn from the soil by a crop? I do not suppose that there are three persons in the district who could do that, and not one in 100 would know what you are talking about. With regard to the direction that the railway should take, I would like to say that it is open to opinion. People in the very large majority of instances want it to come where the population is, or where the settlers are supposed to be, and they take it for granted that because one man has squatted down entirely haphazard in a place the railway should come near him. I take it that the direction of the railway should be decided upon by skilled engineers, without reference to the population, only taking into consideration the lay of the country and its productiveness. In the early days the survey was brought in through Dunbible. I happened to see it, and I thought it was a rather extravagant idea. It would come through rugged and broken country;—fine country of itself, but by no means suitable for a railway, and I took it upon myself one day, when I was in Sydney, to call the attention of the authorities there to the fact that if they looked in a certain direction they would find a far cheaper and a superior route. I got, as you may suppose, pretty well snubbed for my interference; but I gave them the information, and I told them that if they liked to make use of it they could. To my great surprise a second route was surveyed, and that is the route now before the Committee; but it is not precisely the one I indicated. I think that if a party were sent out they would find a better route than either of those that are now surveyed, and I believe it would avoid a great deal of expense, though I am only speaking from guess. The cost of the line from Byron Bay to here will be at least £200,000, and probably not much short of a quarter of a million, and I think it right to call your attention to that. Before going into a large expenditure like this we should not consider what would please A, B, C, or D, but what would be a benefit to the whole district, and as this is a national work, it should be considered in the national interest, even more than in the local interest. The railway, I understand, will be used for military purposes. That would indicate that it should be carried out to serve national purposes more than local purposes. It is not my province to indicate anything more; but I respectfully suggest to you that it would be worth while to inquire a little further as to where would be the proper route. I may as well say that I have no interest in one class more than in another. I am absolutely free from bias. There are many industries which are capable of very large development here, and amongst others I should say that of grape-growing and wine-making. In my experience there is no place where the grape thrives so well as it does here. The soil and the climate are peculiarly suited to it, and there is a vast extent of land adapted to its cultivation. The oranges produced in this part of the district are singularly luscious. The tree comes into bearing early, and the crop is very paying, provided that there are means of getting it away. As it is, numbers of my neighbours, as well as myself, grow fruit merely to see it rot on the ground. I have lost tons of fruit merely because I had no means of turning it to account.

Mr,

Mr. William Kelly, hotelkeeper, sworn, and examined :—

Mr.
W. Kelly.
22 Nov., 1889.

971. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you reside at Murwillumbah? Yes.
972. What is your occupation? That of a hotelkeeper.
973. How long have you resided in the neighbourhood? Twenty years.
974. Have you been engaged in the same occupation all the time? No.
975. In what other occupation have you been engaged? Twenty years ago, when I came here first, I took up some land and started as a farmer. I continued growing maize for three or four years, until I was completely ruined, and could not do it any longer, for want of a market.
976. Because you could not get to market? Yes. Since then I have followed other occupations, and have pulled myself together again; but up to the present time I have seen no possible chance for a farmer to grow maize and make a success of it, for want of facilities to get to market.
977. I suppose you believe in the productiveness of the district in which you are living? Yes.
978. And if means were given for getting to market there would be a large increase in the population? Yes.
979. You know the route of the proposed railway from Byron Bay to the Richmond? Yes.
980. Do you know the country? Between here and Byron Bay—not well.
981. Do you know it between the Brunswick and the south head of the Tweed—along the coast? I do not know that line.
982. What is the nature of the country between here and the Brunswick? A rich class of country.
983. Is it taken up? It is nearly all taken up.
984. But it is not much utilised? No.
985. For the reasons to which you refer? They have no encouragement to go ahead for want of a market.
986. Have you known the river to be in a better state than it is in now? In what regard?
987. In regard to the depth of water? I have known it to be better.
988. Has it been in the same condition as it is in now for a number of years? For the last twenty years it has been similar.
989. All the produce has to be punted down to the Tweed Heads? Yes.
990. Do you think that if the railway were constructed the people would send their produce away by it, say to the Richmond? Under the present circumstances they would send the greater part of it to the Richmond.
991. Do you think that if the railway were constructed to Grafton they would send it to the Clarence? Only a small quantity of it.
992. If the railway were constructed to the Richmond, would they send it there? Some of it—not all.
993. Are the people of this district urging the construction of the line as far as Byron Bay only with the hope that that will be their port? That is their idea.
994. But if they could not get Byron Bay as a port they would go as far as the Richmond? They would go as far as that with perishable goods.
995. I suppose timber forms a large item of export? Yes.
996. Would it be taken by rail? A great quantity would—not from the immediate vicinity of the Tweed, but between here and the Brunswick.
997. That is sawn timber, of course? All kinds of timber. The timber actually on the Tweed is pretty nearly exhausted. I think there would be a large quantity of timber coming in between here and Byron Bay, or Lismore.
998. I suppose you do not think that there is sufficient at the present time to pay a railway. A railway would only pay, because if it were constructed it would lead to larger settlement? Yes. It would cause the population to flow in and make trade greater.
999. If the construction of a railway from Murwillumbah to Byron Bay, and the making of Byron Bay a harbour for shipment, would cost somewhere between £300,000 and £400,000, do you think that the country would be justified in going to that expense? I think so. I think the district is decidedly entitled to it. It is large and the land is very rich.
1000. Do you think that this district, even if brought to the highest pitch of perfection in the way of production, could pay interest and working expenses on a railway costing £100,000, and harbour improvements costing £300,000? Looking at it from different lights, I think it would. It would be a national benefit, as well as a benefit to the settlers round about the district.
1001. In what way would it be a national benefit? Byron Bay would be a place of refuge in rough weather, and would give us a port from which we could ship to any part of the world. I think we are just as much entitled to have that amount of money spent here as other parts of the country were entitled to have money spent there.
1002. The national benefit would be the benefit of the people of this district—what benefit would these works be to the people of the Colony? I cannot say; I have not gone into it in that light.
1003. You are clearly of opinion that if it were found to be impracticable to make a harbour at Byron Bay, and the line were extended to the Richmond, it would be a benefit to the people? It would be a benefit to us.
1004. Do you think that the line along the coast would be of as much benefit as the line from Murwillumbah? It would be a benefit, but it would not be of as much benefit as this line. The country through which it would pass would not be so extensive. In the first place there would be land on only one side of it.
1005. How far is it from here to the Border? I am not positive—somewhere between 6 and 9 miles.
1006. If the Queensland Government extended their railway to the Border, do you think that the people of this district would take their produce there, and send it north? The distance to the Brisbane market is shorter, but the market is much more easily glutted. Sydney is our main market.
1007. If the line were constructed here, and the Queensland Government made their line to the Border, would you send it there? We would send it wherever we could get most money for it.
1008. You would not look at it from a national point of view then? No.
1009. Do you think that the people of the district would prefer to have the water communication improved, or to have railway communication? I should not be satisfied with either the river or railway. I think we require both. What the railway would do the river cannot do; and what the river will do the railway would not do.
1010. Then I understand that you want a railway from Murwillumbah to Byron Bay, and a harbour at Byron Bay, at a cost of £300,000, and an equal amount spent on the improvement of the navigation and entrance to the Tweed? Yes.

Mr.

Mr. Richard Dodd, butcher, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. R. Dodd. 1011. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At Cudgen.
 1012. What is your occupation? I am a butcher at the present time.
 22 Nov., 1889. 1013. How long have you been residing in this or in the neighbouring districts? Close on eighteen years.
 1014. The greater part of that time you have been at Cudgen? Nearly the whole of that time at Cudgen.
 1015. You are pretty well acquainted with that portion of the river? Yes; I was cedar-getting there for a good number of years.
 1016. You know the Tweed District as a whole pretty well? Fairly well.
 1017. Do you know anything of the country beyond the Tweed towards the Brunswick? Yes, I may say that I do.
 1018. As far as Byron Bay? Yes.
 1019. Beyond that again to Lismore? As far as Ballina. I have been through the scrub once, that is all.
 1020. What is the nature of the evidence which you wish to give to the Committee? I am ready to answer any questions which they may ask me in regard to the railway.
 1021. Have you any special evidence to give in regard to the route? I do not know whether it is special, but I think that the beach route would be the best—first, because it would be cheap, and, secondly, because of the immense quantity of land that would be thrown open by it, not in hundreds but in thousands of acres.
 1022. Land that is now available for selection? Yes, and a good deal of it is selected; but a great portion of it is locked up in reserves.
 1023. What is the character of the land? Scrub, and in some parts of it swamp, but they seem to say that the swamps are better than the scrubs; they are draining them extensively at the present time. The swamps are 25 feet above the level of the sea.
 1024. In your opinion the coastal route, by way of Cudgen, would be of the most benefit to the residents at that end of the river? Not expressly at that end of the river, but to all the people in the place. I take it that the object of the railway is to get produce away from the farmers who grow it, and along the coast there are thousands of acres of good land that the railway would tap after it crosses at Chindera. Chindera is across the river from Cudgen. There is a forest reserve called the Chindera Forest Reserve, containing 640 acres of good land, equal to that which you have seen to-day round the mill of Cudgen.
 1025. Are there as many residents on that part of the river as on the other portion of it? There are more selections—more people taking the land up there, and the land is of better quality. I do not believe that they are residing on it now. Some of the people who have taken it up reside in New England. One gentleman who has taken up a lot of land there resides in New England.
 1026. Would a railway along the coast to Cudgen benefit as many of the residents as if it were made to Murwillumbah? There is no doubt that at Cudgen and Denanbar there are 6,000 or 7,000 acres fit for growing maize. Robb & Co. have 1,000 acres there.
 1027. Your evidence tends to show that if the railway were constructed by the coast it would be of more benefit to the Cudgen people, but I gather that it would not be of the same benefit to the people in the neighbourhood of Murwillumbah as to those lower down the river? It would not only be a benefit to Cudgen, but if it went in the way proposed none of the places down there would be benefited at all. The coast line will be a deal cheaper than the other—some thousands of pounds a mile cheaper.
 1028. How do you arrive at that? A gentleman who understands figures pretty well told me so.
 1029. The engineers do not know it? This gentleman was qualified to tell the price—he had been connected with railway engineering.

Mr. Henry Clarke, selector, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. H. Clarke. 1030. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a selector. In reference to the two routes, I think the lower one goes through or close to the best land. The upper one goes through very broken country; the lower one runs close to the beach, and although it does not go over much good land, it goes close to it—within a mile or a mile and a half of it.
 22 Nov., 1889. 1031. Is the land as good as that between the Tweed Heads and Southport? It is as good as any land on the Tweed. I can show you land within a mile of the railway as good as any on the Tweed River. The worst of it is better than that between Southport and the Tweed Heads. To the west of the upper route it is rough broken country, as bad as that near Bulli. The only good land on the upper route is between the two lines.
 1032. How far is it from the upper route to the lower route? In some places 4 miles, and in some places 10; it widens as the coast falls away.
 1033. Do you not think that a district is pretty well served if it gets a railway within 10 miles of it? I believe so; but I believe that we should make a railway as cheaply as possible. We shall be taxed to pay for it, and I do not think that it should be made except in the cheapest way.
 1034. You are only giving it as a matter of opinion that the route which you suggest is the best? I believe it to be the cheapest.
 1035. You believe that it would serve the people, the bulk of the settlers, just as well as the upper one would? It does not matter where the railway goes, some one will be out in the cold. They cannot all be suited. If it goes that way there will be no occasion to cross the flats, and produce can be taken down the river. I think our market is Brisbane, and that if the line is constructed the best of our produce will go to Queensland.
 1036. Then we had better not construct it if Queensland is going to make a railway for you? I think it would be foolish to make an expensive line when a cheaper route is available.
 1037. Did you come here to tell us that you do not want a railway? Not if we are to be heavily taxed in freight to pay for an expensive line.
 1038. Near the river you will go to Brisbane? Well, we went to Brisbane before. At the start Brisbane was our market, and all our produce went there. We had steamers trading there.
 1039. The country is too good to leave to Brisbane;—have you anything else to say? Nothing, except that I hope you will take notice of the country to-morrow.
 1040. If the coast line is connected with the Brisbane line, you will want a bridge like that over the Hawkesbury at Cudgen? We could have a steam-ferry until a bridge could be built.

Mr.

Mr. John M'Collum, overseer of a sugar plantation, sworn, and examined:—

1041. *Chairman.*] What are you? Overseer of the Cudgen Sugar Plantation.
 1042. How long have you been living in the district? Three and a half years.
 1043. Have you lived in the coast district for any length of time beyond that? Almost five years.
 1044. At Cudgen there is a sugar plantation owned by Robb & Co.? Yes.
 1045. We are told that the area of that is 2,876 acres? Yes. That is as near an estimate as I can give you.
 1046. And the 2,000 acres are first-class agricultural land, highly improved, and under cultivation? There are about 1,000 acres under cane.
 1047. Two thousand acres are first-class land, highly improved, and under cultivation? That is the estimate. Some of it is under grass.
 1048. That has been put under grass? Some of it has; some of it was naturally grassed.
 1049. What number of men are generally employed there all the year round? About 180. At present there are about 300.
 1050. You say that there are 180 men employed on the farm during the whole year? In farming and in connection with the mills.
 1051. Is it proposed by the Company to make further improvements there? So I understand.
 1052. A tramway? Yes.
 1053. Have you any idea what the cost of machinery was? Only from the estimate that I have heard, and from the books—from £50,000 to £55,000.
 1054. The land that the Company has is the pick of the district; there are not many more thousand acres like that? There is more land in that block which the Company does not own.
 1055. As good as it? Yes, as good as the Company's land.
 1056. Have you anything else to tell us,—do you know the land from Cudgen along the coast to the Brunswick? Some of that land I know. I am not intimately acquainted with it.
 1057. You do not know the railway line surveyed there? Part of it, not all of it.
 1058. Does it go through as good land as that at Cudgen? I have only been on the border of the line. I have not been back far. People say that there is good scrub country, but I have not seen it myself.

Mr. J.
M'Collum.
22 Nov., 1889.

Mr. William Rodgers Isaacs, manager of a sugar-mill, sworn, and examined:—

1059. *Chairman.*] You are manager of the Colonial Sugar Refinery Co.'s mill on the Tweed? Yes.
 1060. Where is it situated? At Condong.
 1061. Can you tell us the average yield of sugar cane per acre in the district? It varies very much; I should think it would average from 30 to 35 tons an acre.
 1062. How many cuttings do they get from one crop? To advantage, I think they could take three.
 1063. How long does it take the first crop to mature? That very much depends upon the description of the cane. There are some kinds that mature in from eighteen to twenty-two months. There are other kinds that may be cut when they are from 12 to 15 months old.
 1064. Will each kind yield about 35 tons to the acre? No. The cane that yields that quantity is that which is 18 or 20 months old. I should think that the other on good land would give from 28 to 30 tons.
 1065. What kind is grown most in this district? At the present time a cane that may be cut when it is 18 or 22 months old.
 1066. Have these canes distinctive names? Yes.
 1067. What are they? The Rappo and the Singapore.
 1068. The Singapore takes twenty months to mature? It may be cut when it is 15 or 18 months old.
 1069. What does the Company pay for the cane per ton? The stipulated price is 10s. a ton, but of course that is regulated in some cases by the value of the cane, which is arrived at by analysis. Some canes of course may not be worth 10s. a ton. By the Company's agreement, 10s. a ton is paid for sound ripe cane. There may be cane not quite so good for manufacturing sugar as other cane, and consequently not worth 10s. a ton.
 1070. Who determines whether the cane is sound and ripe? We keep a chemist, and determine that by analysis.
 1071. And the farmers are satisfied? Yes, I think so; but it is only reasonable to suppose that a man does not like his price cut down.
 1072. Can you give us any idea of what it costs per acre to cultivate the cane? Well; I should think from £3 to £5 an acre.
 1073. Do you cut it? We cut it, and we give 1s. for drawing it to the river banks, and provide the drays.
 1074. I suppose the construction of a railway, or the improvements of the river, would not very much increase the production of sugar? I think the construction of a railway would materially increase it, for, from what I know of the country some little distance off the river, I am of opinion that there are many spots in which cane could be cultivated with advantage if there were means of getting it to a mill.
 1075. That is on the upper line? Yes.
 1076. Do you know that country fairly well? I know it very well.
 1077. What is the character of the country on the two lines? I cannot say that I know the character of the country on the lower line, I know it on the other line.
 1078. What is the character of it on the upper line? It is a succession of open ridges, with scrub in places; but off the road there are very large areas of good country, which you do not see at all by travelling it—rich scrub land, totally different from that which you see along the road.
 1079. You think the railway would assist people to develop the land by growing sugar on it? Certainly.
 1080. *Mr. Garrard.*] Supposing this land were cultivated half a dozen miles along the line, the producers would have to load it on to the railway, bring it to the river, tranship it into punts, and punt it to the mill—would not that add to the cost and diminish the profits of the producer? No, because I think that if cane were brought into the river in that way, the Company would construct a line of their own, so that the trucks could be shunted on to it. It is not absolutely necessary for our purpose to have the cane on the river in punts; we can put it on to our cane carrier from the bank.
 1081. The railway would have to be carried to your works, or legislative power given you to construct a branch line to that? Yes.
 1082. Have you tramways running over the line now? We have a tramway which we run up and down the bank.
 1083. Only on your own land? Yes.

Mr. W. R.
Isaacs.
22 Nov., 1889.

- Mr. W. R. Isaacs.
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1084. You have no legislative power to go over other peoples land? None at all.
1085. Do you think that if a railway were constructed, you would send your produce—your sugar by it to Sydney? I cannot say. It does not come within my province; that would rest wholly and solely with the authorities in Sydney.
1086. At present you suffer some disabilities in sending your sugar down? We suffer very great disabilities.
1087. You have to punt it down to the Tweed Heads, and tranship it into a vessel there? Yes.
1088. Which may or may not be bar-bound? Yes.
1089. That does not matter very much to you—sugar is not a perishable article? It is a perishable commodity in one way—it might happen that we wanted the sugar.
1090. Under these circumstances, do you not think it reasonable to suppose that your company would avail themselves of the railway to take the sugar to a port which would be always open—either Byron Bay or the Richmond? I cannot say definitely that they would use the railway; but it is possible. If they thought it to their advantage they would do so.
1091. The chief productions of the district are sugar and timber? There is maize.
1092. Not much? Because there is no means of getting it away.
1093. Do you think that there would be a large development with the railway? Unquestionably.
1094. Therefore, the Committee in considering the outward freight of the railway, cannot look upon sugar as an important part of it. We have it in evidence that we must not expect much from timber; so that the traffic will come from the future development of maize growing? Dairying is another industry.
1095. The development of maize growing and dairying must take place in the future? I suppose it will be in the future.
1096. Knowing the district fairly well, you consider that the proposed line to Murwillumbah would give the greatest amount of benefit to the largest number? Yes.
1097. *Chairman.*] I suppose sugar cane would stand the cost of haulage as well as coal would? I should think so.
1098. *Mr. Lee.*] Would you have any objection to tell the Committee the number of tons of sugar, you send from your mill to Sydney per annum? I could not tell you that from memory, because I am not prepared with the figures.
1099. Have you any idea of the number of tons of coal that you receive in a year? That very much depends. The largest amount we ever received was 1,800 tons—sometimes it is 500, 600, or 700 tons, according to our requirements.
1100. I want to ask you a few questions about Byron Bay. The distance from Murwillumbah to Byron Bay is 32 miles. Supposing a harbour were made at Byron Bay, which would give a perfect shelter to vessels in all weathers, so that they could load and unload, do you think it at all likely that your company would send their sugar from there to Sydney, and receive their coals back that way? Of course I could not answer for what they would do.
1101. Would the fact that a secure harbour means reduced insurance, and low freight be a consideration? Yes; that would be a consideration.
1102. At the present time, may I ask, do your company take the sole risk, or do they insure? They insure. I do not think it is customary for them to insure coal; but they insure sugar.
1103. Could you tell me the rate of insurance which they usually pay? I do not know what it is.
1104. Have you any objection to say what the freight per ton is from Newcastle to the mill? I think the contract this year is either 13s. or 15s.; I am not sure which.
1105. Is that the freight? For a cargo of coals up, and sugar back.
1106. That is the freight alone? Yes.
1107. If Byron Bay were made a harbour, what ought to be the freight, considering that it would be so much closer and a safe port? I do not know. Judging from the freights that are charged to Brisbane, I think they ought to bring it to Byron Bay for about 8s.
1108. The distance from Byron Bay to Murwillumbah being 32 miles, and the specified rate for coal as set down in the railway rates, 1d. at ton,—you could bring it up for 10s. 8d., instead of 15s. as you pay now. If that were the case would you be likely to use the Byron Bay route? I think it likely that if the freight were reduced to that extent, the company would use the railway.
1109. Your company is not wedded to any particular route? Not that I am aware of.
1110. Are they likely to make use of the cheaper route? I think it likely that they would make use of the cheaper route.
1111. And the safer? Yes; and the safer.
1112. If Byron Bay breakwater were constructed, and proper facilities given for loading and unloading, and it were cheaper, you would probably use the railway? I should say that the company would take it into consideration, but I am not prepared to say what they would do.

Mr. William Wardrop, storekeeper, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. W. Wardrop.
22 Nov., 1889.
1113. *Chairman.*] You are a storekeeper in this town? Yes.
1114. How long have you been there? A little over eleven years.
1115. Will you tell the Committee anything that suggests itself to you? I would rather the Committee would ask me questions.
1116. You are in the habit of getting goods from Sydney? Yes.
1117. Which way do you get them? By steamer and by sailing vessels.
1118. That is to the Tweed River Heads? They are delivered at the wharf by drogher.
1119. What does it cost you a ton to get the goods delivered at the wharf here? On the average 30s. a ton. There are three rates—for dead weight, measurement, and parcels. Of course they very often charge by the parcel, as that is the best paying rate. They charge up to £8 a ton by the parcel.
- 1119½. If you send down fifty packages, and they put them as parcels, you have to pay the rate? Yes.
1120. Have you to keep larger stocks in your store by reason of the uncertainty of communication than you would otherwise have to do? Certainly.
1121. That is a source of loss to you and an additional cost to the people who deal with you? Yes; before the steamers started to trade here we generally kept three months' stock in hand; now we can afford to do with about one month's.
1122. Do you ever run short now? Occasionally we run short, of course.
1123. That might place one storekeeper at a disadvantage? We are all on the same footing.
- 1124.

1124. If the railway were constructed, say to Byron Bay, and a port made there, do you think that the produce from this district—from the greater part of the district, both that settled now, and that which will be settled in the future—would go by it? Not unless the freights were cheaper than steamer or sailing vessel rates.

Mr. W. J. Wardrop.
22 Nov., 1889.

1125. Do you know the present railway freights? I heard it stated just now what they are for coal.

1126. I suppose you do not know anything about the general railway freight? I have had nothing to do with them; but I observe that there are great complaints in other parts of the Colony about the charges. The rates of insurance, I might mention, are 25s. per £100 by steamer and 40s. by sailing vessel.

1127. Can you tell us the cost of freight to the Richmond River? From 17s. 6d. to 22s. 6d.

1128. What is it to the Clarence? From 15s. to £1 dead weight and measurement.

1129. So that you are paying from 7s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. a ton more than the Richmond River people? Just so.

1130. Do you think that the people would get their goods from and send their produce to the Richmond River in the event of this railway being constructed? Not if the river were open.

1131. Then to make the railway pay it would be better to put a log of wood across the entrance to the river? I do not say that. I reckon that the railway would act as a feeder to the river if it were open.

1132. Do you think that if the river were open there would be sufficient trade along the line to make it pay? I do not think that it would pay for some years.

1133. How many years do you think it would be before it would pay? I do not think that it would pay for the next decade.

1134. Do you think the Parliament of this country would be justified in recommending a railway that is not to pay for a decade? Not for this particular part of the district.

1135. Do you mean for the township of Murwillumbah? No. That is but a small portion of the district.

1136. All the country between here and the Brunswick or Byron Bay? That is only a small portion.

1137. Is that the portion you refer to? I say that I do not think the people would send the bulk of their goods that way if the river were open, unless the rates were much cheaper than those of the sailing vessels or steamers.

1138. The fact of getting more rapid and regular communication would have nothing to do with it? If the river were open we should get just as good communication by it as by Byron Bay.

1139. Is the river open now? No; it has not been open for some years.

1140. What is your definition of an open river? When a steamer can come up.

1141. Have you had an open river? Yes; the "Arracocon," a steamer from Brisbane, delivered goods here when I first came up. She carried about 70 tons, and her register was about 36 or 40 tons.

1142. How far did she go? I have seen her 2 miles above where we are.

1143. Has the river been silting up since then? I believe the flats have been getting worse. In fact, the channel I came up first was where the dredge has been working.

1144. You do not think that there is a likelihood of a railway paying for many years if it is constructed, and that if the river is open it certainly should not be constructed? I do not say that it should not be constructed.

1145. As a member of the community, you do not want to see the people's money thrown away—you do not think the railway would pay? I do not think it would pay for some years.

1146. Surely you would not, just for the sake of seeing a locomotive running here, advocate the expenditure of this money? No.

1147. Do you know anything of the route between the Brunswick and the Tweed River Heads? The coast line?

1148. Yes? No.

1149. You are familiar with the country on the route which we are considering? I know it by travelling along the road.

1150. Is it good country? Fairly good.

1151. Is it as good as we see about here? Some quite as good.

1152. Do you think that if this line were constructed it would serve the greatest number of people? Certainly.

1153. It would serve the greatest area of land? The most of the land is about the north, south, and middle arms of the river.

1154. If the railway is to be used this would be the best place to bring it to? Either here or a little bit higher up.

1155. Do you think that if the Queensland authorities construct a railway to the border the people will avail themselves of it? I suppose people will deal in the cheapest market. This will be a great dairying district, and no doubt if they find the market better at Brisbane the people will send their produce there.

1156. What is the reason that the Brisbane boat left off running here? The ship they ran here was lost. First they had the "Arracocon," and then they had the "Kalara," but she was a failure in delivering goods up the river, and went down a mile outside the heads.

Mr. James Black, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

1157. *Chairman.*] What are you? A farmer.

1158. Living where? About a mile from Murwillumbah, three quarters of a mile on the south side of the ferry.

1159. How long have you been living here? Over twenty-two years.

1160. Have you made your fortune? Not yet.

1161. How much land have you got? 280 acres where I am living.

1162. What have you to tell the Committee;—what do you principally cultivate? My principal crop of late years has been sugar-cane, with maize and potatoes when the season is favourable.

1163. Is this a good season for growing potatoes? Very good. I have raised very good crops of potatoes.

1164. What do you call a good crop? I consider them a payable crop. I never actually weighed a quantity per acre. I have grown them and sold them in the district.

1165. Do you know what the yield of potatoes is;—We were told that 5 tons or 6 tons per acre had been got? I do not doubt it. I believe that that quantity could be got in favourable seasons. A wet season is detrimental to the crop. With our dry land they can be grown in any season.

1166.

Mr. J. Black,
22 Nov., 1889.

- Mr. J. Black.** 1166. How many bushels of maize can you grow to the acre—what is the highest quantity that you have known? I have grown over 60 bushels to the acre on the farm on which I am living. Of course it was virgin soil at the time, and that makes a vast difference.
1167. Have you continued growing maize? Occasionally; not where I have been living of late years. Of course I may mention that I am indirectly interested in this line. My son has another selection near the proposed coast route, and we have grown maize on that, but with not such good results. The soil is of volcanic formation—red soil, the same as at Cudgen, and I have found from experience that that is not as good for maize growing as the alluvial land on the banks of the river.
1168. Do you know the country between here and the Brunswick on the two lines? Yes; I have been over a good part of it.
1169. Which line do you think would serve the district best? The upper line most decidedly. There is no doubt in my own mind about the quantity of country that would be opened up.
1170. Are you interested in land on the lower line? On both lines.
1171. You have a good knowledge of the country? I have. I may state that I have been over the whole of the Tweed district. I have traversed it in many different parts. I went through the country where the proposed railway will go years before there was any settlement there. I have started from the coast and run the country up, and come out at the head of the south arm of the Tweed.
1172. So you have a good knowledge of it, and with that knowledge you say that the upper route would be of most advantage to the people? Most certainly. There is no question about the extent of country on the two routes.
1173. Would there be more country available for settlement on the upper route than on the lower? By far.
1174. Is there anything else you would like to tell the Committee? I have been an advocate for the opening up of the river. I believe that the river should be opened up, and I believe that the improvement of navigation would be a means of feeding the railway if constructed, and would cause it to be a better paying line than it otherwise would be. I do not mean to say one word against the Byron Bay scheme, but I treat it as premature. I think that if a railway were constructed between the deep-waters of the Richmond and the navigable waters of the Tweed, and a little improvement were made in the Tweed, all requirements for the next half century would be answered. I do not say but what Byron Bay will become necessary when there is a large trade, and the country is densely populated; but at the present time I do not think it is required. If we had a line of railway to open up the country between the two rivers, and an outlet at each end, so that the settlers could send their produce away by it, all requirements would be met, and the expensive works of Byron Bay would not be necessary.
1175. You think a line of railway ought to be constructed between the two rivers—the Tweed and the Richmond? To my mind it is simply a question whether the Government is going to leave the best portion of their territory locked up or open it by a railway, because, without a railway, it is impossible for the country to be settled, or the settlers to make a living.
1176. You think that a railway running between the two rivers would induce settlement? I do.
1177. What chance do you think there is of the railway paying interest and working expenses? I do not say that it would pay from the start, because it will take a certain amount of time to develop industries. The settlers up to the present time have only been making the improvements that the Act requires—it is all that they have been able to do, so that of necessity it will be several years before the land can be properly brought into use. If the railway were a certainty, no doubt the settlers would start at once and improve their holdings. I do not think it could be expected that the line would pay from the commencement.
1178. Do you think there is a fair chance of such a line ultimately paying £6,000 or £7,000 a year? That depends very much upon the prosperity of the country. If the country is prosperous I am under the impression that there is not a line in the Colony which will pay better, because of the fertility of the soil here and the extent of good land.
1179. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you know anything of the country between Casino and Grafton? I know it well.
1180. Do you think it is desirable to construct a line between these two points? I do not know. It will depend very much upon where the line will terminate at Grafton.
1181. At Grafton itself, in the city. The project before us is a line from Grafton to the Tweed. If any portion of that line were a dead horse, the rest of the line would have to carry the loss;—do you think that the southern terminal point of the line should be at Grafton or at the Richmond? I am not in a position to answer that question. I believe it could not be so densely settled as the land between the Richmond and the Tweed could be. The land is not of the same quality, although there is good land there. The good land does not exist to the same extent as between the Richmond and the Tweed.
1182. I suppose there is very little prospect of anything going past the Richmond to Grafton? I think so. There might be a market at Grafton, but I do not think that if there were means of shipment at the Richmond it would be likely that anything would pass that river.

SATURDAY, 23 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at Burringbar, en route to the Brunswick River.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Grafton to The Tweed.

George Wilkins, Esq., railway surveyor, sworn, and examined:—

G. Wilkins, Esq. 1183. *Mr. Garrard.*] You are a surveyor in the Railway Construction Department? Yes.

1184. How long have you occupied that position? Nearly nine years.

1185. How long have you been in this district? Three years.

1186.

G. Wilkins,
Esq.

23 Nov., 1889.

1186. Engaged in the survey of this line all the time? Yes.
1187. Are you familiar with the country between Byron Bay and Murwillumbah? No; but between Byron Bay and Burringbar.
1188. Not further north? No. I have been over it, but I do not know it in detail.
1189. The more difficult portion of the line is north of this? It is all difficult from Brunswick to the Tweed.
1190. Do you know anything of the alternative or coast line? Yes; I surveyed the trial line there.
1191. What do you think would be the ruling grade upon that coast line? There is no question of grade there. It is all easy country.
1192. What do you think will be the best grades on this line;—have you any idea? The steepest grade?
1193. Yes? It would be 1 in 40 unless our present attempts to reduce it to 1 in 50 are successful.
1194. You cannot get anything less? There will perhaps be one or two short places of 1 in 40, but in general it will be better than that of course.
1195. Do you think that this inland line serves the more people and better country of the two? Yes. It goes through a better class of country than the coast line.
1196. There will be a great deal of difference in the cost of construction? Yes, there will be a large difference.
1197. But there can be no comparison between the quantity and quality of good land? No. This is the better in every respect.
1198. Are you engaged upon any deviations? This is the permanent survey. I am making a few alterations as I go on.
1199. Are you going right through to Murwillumbah? Yes.
1200. There is no one on the route now? Mr. Lloyd is following me with the levels.
1201. Where is he? At the Brunswick.
1202. You have finished, then, from Byron Bay to the Brunswick? We have finished from Byron Bay to the Brunswick.
1203. And from Byron Bay to Lismore? It is finished.
1204. Did you do that line? I did a part of it.
1205. Who did the rest? Mr. Lloyd did part of it.
1206. All the way to Casino? Mr. Lloyd began at Grafton. We did it in alternative pieces with other surveyors to Byron Bay.
1207. Mr. Lloyd is the only surveyor in the district who knows anything about that? About the far end.
1208. You only know it from Byron Bay to this place? From near Lismore to this place.
1209. Do you think that the best route has been secured along there? Yes, certainly I do.
1210. The line goes right down to Byron Bay;—is that necessary to avoid ranges, or only to touch the bay? I cannot say whether an alternative line could be obtained to avoid touching Byron Bay, because no trial surveys have been made.
1211. How long do you estimate that it will be before you finish your work through to Murwillumbah? Four or five months.
1212. *Mr. Lee.*] This coast line starts west of Byron Bay, at a point marked 105 miles? Do you mean the deviation?
1213. Yes? The junction is at the Brunswick.
1214. At 120 miles? At 120 miles.
1215. The surveyed line from the 120-mile peg to Cudgen runs parallel with the coast the whole way, and but a short distance from it? Not more than half a mile from it.
1216. Consequently, it is a considerable distance away from the bulk of the rich land and the settlement? Yes.
1217. Do you know anything of the line from peg 110 into Murwillumbah? Yes.
1218. Have you been engaged on it recently? Yes.
1219. Have you succeeded in altering the original survey? Yes.
1220. By reducing the grade in any way? Yes.
1221. And straightening the line? Yes.
1222. To any considerable extent? Yes; there is a saving of nearly 4 miles, between Byron Bay and the Brunswick, on the original line. It went along the base of the main coast range all the way.
1223. The line has been reduced by at least 4 miles? Yes.
1224. Have you succeeded in reducing the grades? There was no question of grade there; it was all easy country.
1225. Between there and Murwillumbah? Between Brunswick and Byron Bay.
1226. What about the piece between Brunswick and Murwillumbah? There are several bad grades.
1227. Would you look upon that as the most difficult portion of the line? Yes.
1228. The most costly to construct? Yes.
1229. Having gone over both lines—from Byron Bay to Murwillumbah, and from the Brunswick to Cudgen—you have no hesitation in telling the Committee that the route to Murwillumbah passes through the best land? Yes; I certainly think so.
1230. Do you think that that route would serve the greater number of settlers? Yes.
1231. Do you wish to make any suggestions to the Committee while they are on the spot as to either route? No. I do not think there is anything that occurs to me.
1232. *Chairman.*] Do you think it will be possible to reduce these grades to 1 in 50 at anything like a reasonable expense? Yes; we are now engaged in trying to do that.
1233. And you hope to get that grade? Yes.
1234. You have been in many other parts of the Colony engaged on surveys? Yes.
1235. Have you ever seen superior land to that through which the proposed line passes? Never.
1236. And I suppose the worst of the land here is better than the bulk of the land in the Colony? I could not say that. Of course there are bad patches in this country as well as anywhere else.
1237. What would you call the land we have come through to-day? That is fairly good. It is not so good as you will find further on.
1238. Apart from the lands on this river, the whole of the land through which the line goes is good? Yes.
1239. What surveys have you been on? Goulburn to Cooma, Goulburn to Crookwell, Robertson to Moss Vale, St. Peters to Liverpool, and Grafton to the Tweed.

- G. Wilkins, Esq. 1240. Are the bad lands here as good as the generality of the lands there? Yes.
 1241. What are called bad lands here are as good as the average lands between Goulburn and Crookwell?
 Yes.
 23 Nov., 1889. 1242. And the good land in this district is superior to any land in the districts which you have mentioned?
 No. There are very fertile patches in the neighbourhood of Crookwell, perhaps equal to almost the best land in this district.
 1243. Not of the same extent? Not of the same extent. They are only small patches.
 1244. This district per acre would sustain a very much larger population than the other districts which you have mentioned? I certainly think so.

SATURDAY, 23 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Brunswick River, at 3 p.m.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.,

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Mr. John M'Gregor, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. M'Gregor. 1245. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer.
 23 Nov., 1889. 1246. How far do you live from here? Seven miles.
 1247. How long have you resided in the district? Eight years.
 1248. What area of land have you? Four hundred acres.
 1249. How much of it is under cultivation? One hundred and twenty acres of it are cleared and under artificial grasses.
 1250. Is any under corn, or anything of that kind? There will be some shortly.
 1251. What you have cleared is principally under grass? Artificial grass.
 1252. What is the principal product of the district? At present we are engaged in dairying pursuits, but the district is eminently suited for the growth of sugar-cane, and that industry would have been established had it not been for the difficulty of access. We had a letter from the Colonial Sugar Company to that effect.
 1253. Where do you send your produce—to the Richmond, the Tweed, or the Brunswick? Some of it goes to the Richmond. This entrance is so uncertain that the dairy produce deteriorates in quality before it reaches the metropolis.
 1254. How far is it from here to Ballina? Thirty miles.
 1255. How far to Murwillumbah? Twenty-five miles.
 1256. Some of your produce goes to the Richmond—to Ballina? Some of it goes to Ballina.
 1257. You know the proposal to construct a railway from Grafton, *via* Casino, Lismore, Byron Bay, and Brunswick, to Murwillumbah? I understand that.
 1258. Do you know anything about the route it takes? I know a little about the route. I have been over some of it.
 1259. Do you know anything of the country which the line would serve;—is it good, bad, or indifferent? All the country within 2 miles of the coast is of the very best description, in my opinion.
 1260. Between Byron Bay and the Brunswick a line runs within three-quarters of a mile of the coast—would that serve the people, or would it be better if it were taken further inland? Settlers would derive more benefit by having the line further inland.
 1261. Do you know anything about the country between Brunswick and Murwillumbah? I have travelled through it frequently.
 1262. Is it good land? I consider it some of the very best land.
 1263. Do you know anything about the alternative route leaving the Brunswick and running to the south head of the Tweed. I know very little about that.
 1264. Do you know anything about the country at all? Only along the coast.
 1265. Is it any good? It is not so good along the coast. There is a strip of barren country along the coast.
 1266. Would a line further inland serve the people better than the coast line? Yes, I believe so.
 1267. Supposing the line were constructed, where would be the market for the Brunswick people? The nearest shipping-port that would offer the greatest facilities.
 1268. Either Byron Bay or the Richmond? Either Byron Bay or the Richmond.
 1269. I suppose you look upon Byron Bay as being the best place for a port? In my opinion it will serve the people of the district.
 1270. I suppose you do not see much prospect of the Brunswick being made of much account? We feel very confident that it is necessary to improve the Brunswick, because there is sufficient cedar and other timber to keep vessels going here for a number of years.
 1271. Supposing there were no harbour at Byron Bay, and your nearest deep-water port were Lismore, do you think the products of the district would go there—would a railway there increase the products? Yes. Unless there was a regular and quick communication between here and the metropolis, it would pay better to send it to Lismore.
 1272. As a matter of fact, there is not that communication now? No.
 1273. Nor likely to be? No. Of course, when the bar is improved I cannot say what it will be.
 1274. Do you think the people of the district would use the railway if it were constructed? Most assuredly. There will be a great trade between this district and the Richmond.
 1275. Is there much dairying produce sent from here? I consider that the district is suited for dairying.
 1276. Is there much dairying at present? Nearly all who are engaged in anything are engaged in dairying and cattle-raising.
 1277. Nearly all the produce goes via the Richmond? Yes.
 1278. So that a railway would give you quicker communication? Yes. 1279.

1279. Do you know the nature of the country between here and Lismore? Yes.
1280. The line is brought very close to the coast at Byron Bay—are there any natural difficulties—a range or anything like that—which necessitate the railway being pushed out to that point? I believe there is a range close to the coast, but I do not know that that offers any obstacle.
1281. You think that the desirability of getting to Byron Bay may have had something to do with the direction of the railway? It is probable.
1282. If the railway were constructed do you think there would be a large increase in the population and the production of the place. Most assuredly I do.
1283. Do you know the estimated cost of the railway? No.
1284. £192,000 from Grafton to the Tweed—that is a large amount of money on which to pay interest and working expenses. There is nothing in the district now to pay that—it is only the future development that will warrant the expenditure? I think the future development would warrant it.
1285. Do you know anything of the country between Casino and Grafton? No, except what I have heard.
1286. Do you think people would pass by Lismore and carry produce to Grafton? I do not think they would pass the Richmond.
1287. You think that the Richmond would be the nearest port after Byron Bay? Yes.
1288. And that they would not go beyond Lismore? Yes.
1289. So that the people in this district have no interest in the portion of the line between Casino and Grafton? Not the slightest.
1290. And if there is less likelihood of that portion earning interest on the capital it will be a drag on the whole line? Yes, to a certain extent.
1291. And, therefore, it is to your interest that it should not be constructed? Well, it would be against our interest as members of the community.
1292. Is there much timber left in this district? I understand that there are several millions of feet of timber—a considerable quantity of it standing, at the present time, far back at the very head of the Brunswick—or rather on the Richmond River waters.
1293. Do you think that if the railway were constructed any timber would be carried by it—the timber at the present time goes in the log? Yes.
1294. Do you think that if railway communication were given it would lead to the establishment of saw-mills near where the timber was growing, and that the dressed stuff would be sent to market? I think it probable that saw-mills would be established in the district, and that there would be a considerable amount of freight for the railway in supplying the various parts of the country.
1295. You know where it is proposed to cross the Brunswick by the railway? Yes.
1296. I suppose the river is not navigable there? It is considered navigable 8 miles up for a fair-sized punt.
1297. A railway bridge would not interfere with that—your punts, I suppose, are not more than 6 feet above the level of the water? A punt has no mast, of course.
1298. The construction of a railway bridge at the proposed site would not be any hindrance to the navigation of the river, if you are dependant upon punts? In my opinion it would not be.
1299. Is there anything else which you would like the Committee to know? I think they ought to know that we have endeavoured to establish the sugar industry in the district, and have petitioned several companies to that effect, but the invariable reply we have obtained is that owing to the difficulty of access they could not see their way to invest capital in the district. We are, therefore, debarred from growing sugar-cane, which ought to be the staple product of the district.
1300. Where is your farm? South-west from here.
1301. I presume it is better country than that nearer to the Brunswick? Yes; this is what I referred to as lying close to the coast.
1302. It would not be fair to judge the Brunswick by what we see between the ferry and here? Certainly not. I might say that we offered to grow cane for 8s. a ton, which is a great deal less than the farmers on the other rivers get. In some cases they get 14s.
1303. The difficulty of getting the sugar away is so great that no company will establish a mill? Yes.
1304. There is not sufficient capital among the people here to establish a mill? We tried to do that, but we considered that the risk was too great, as we should have had to mortgage our farms.
1305. Were you engaged in farming before you came here? No.
1306. Are you a native of this Colony? No; I am a native of Scotland.
1307. *Chairman.*] Would cane stand the cost of haulage from here to Lismore or to Murwillumbah at the ordinary rates, supposing there were no mills at all. For example, the cost of getting coal is 11s. a ton, the cost of haulage on the railway, 1d. a ton per mile. We are told that the cost of producing sugar cane is about £6 a ton, and that the value of the sugar cane is about £17 10s. an acre. Would it be of such value as to bear the cost of carriage from the Brunswick, either to the Tweed or to the Richmond? I do not understand you—the sugar cane would not be carried; it would only be the manufactured article.
1308. You would have to carry the unmanufactured article if you had not a mill—what I want to know is would the difference between the cost of producing the cane, and the value of the cane when grown, be sufficient to bear the cost of carriage? Certainly.
1309. Then you are prepared to sell for 2s. a ton less than they are selling it for on the Tweed? Yes.
1310. It would not matter to you if the company bought it from you, whether they carried it up or down? We offered to sell it for 8s. per ton on the land.
1311. And they are paying 10s. a ton on the Tweed? Yes.

James Anderson, Esq., licensed surveyor, sworn, and examined:—

1312. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At present in Lismore.
1313. What is your occupation? I am a licensed surveyor.
1314. Are you a land owner? Yes; I have a section of land.
1315. In this district? 4 miles from here, on the Brunswick River.
1316. Have you resided in this district? I have resided here six years as the Government surveyor.
1317. Is that the extent of your residence in this portion of the Colony? In this immediate neighbourhood it is.

Mr. J.
M'Gregor.
23 Nov., 1889.

J. Anderson,
Esq.
23 Nov., 1889.

1318.

- J. Anderson, Esq.
23 Nov., 1889.
1318. I should be glad to hear what you have to say with reference to the railway proposal—first as to the route? Yes; that is the most important thing. I know all the land along the coast line, and it is certainly very inferior country when compared with that on the other route.
1319. Is that the Cudgen route? Yes; I do not consider that it goes through a really fertile farm all the way between Cudgen and the Brunswick. That 20 miles of line could be constructed without a station being necessary. The only place where they could get good land in the vicinity of the coast route would be at Burringbar Creek, and take the loading from there to the coast at Mooball Creek. The Burringbar Creek extends from 3 to 8 miles westward of the coast route, but the inland route travels right through it.
1320. Now what about the route which we are investigating—from Murwillumbah to the Brunswick? That passes through very rich land.
1321. Are you acquainted with all the country along the route? I have been all through that district.
1322. Surveying portions of it? I have surveyed nearly all of it.
1323. You are intimately acquainted with it? Very intimately acquainted with it.
1324. What do you think of it as a producing country? I think it could produce very heavy crops of maize and sugar-cane. I have not been a producer myself.
1325. Still you are thoroughly acquainted with the capabilities of the district? Yes, and I think that they are very great.
1326. Now, as to the rainfall of the district? On one occasion in three months we had only thirteen dry days. I have never kept any return of it, but I have seen by the newspaper reports that we have a rainfall of somewhere between 80 and 90 inches in the year.
1327. How will the line now surveyed from here to the Byron and thence to Lismore answer the requirements of the bulk of the residents in the district? The line from the Brunswick to Byron Bay?
1328. Yes? That would be sufficient for our local wants.
1329. How would it meet the requirements of the settlers in the Brunswick district? No produce from anywhere near the Brunswick would go to the Tweed—it would all go to Byron Bay.
1330. Could any deviation be made in the line that would better serve the interests of the residents here? It avoids altogether the Mullumbimbi residents, by going straight across here; but to my knowledge there is a very high range there, and I do not think it would be possible to cross it. I think the surveyors have tried it.
1331. You think that the most available route has been obtained? I do.
1332. And you think that it will fairly suit the requirements of the bulk of the people? I do.
1333. Which port would be the most suitable and convenient for the people to ship from? Byron Bay, most undoubtedly.
1334. Do you know anything of the Tweed Heads? I cannot say that I do. I have crossed over there two or three times, but I have never paid much attention to the country.
1335. What kind of craft trade to this river? The vessel in at present, the "White Cloud," is the regular trader. She belongs to Mr. Kethel.
1336. What is about her tonnage? Thirty-five tons they say. I do not know anything about shipping.
1337. Are there any steamers trading here? Not regular traders.
1338. Occasionally? We have had one occasionally.
1339. Do they not come here because there is no produce to send away, or because of the bad entrance to the river? I think that the bad entrance to the river has as much to do with it as anything.
1340. What is the chief thing sent away from here at present? Timber.
1341. Any maize? I think maize is grown.
1342. Is there much grown at present? I do not think so. I think the difficulty of getting it away prevents the farmers from growing it.
1343. Would there be much grown if a ready means of transit could be found? I think so.
1344. Do I understand that the district requires an outlet for the produce that could be grown here? Yes.
1345. That means some port to which ships could come at all times? Yes.
1346. Do you know about how much land has been taken up in this immediate locality? A great deal has been taken up since I left here two years ago. On a rough estimate I should say something like 40,000 acres. I include Mooball and Burringbar.
1347. Is the country in that locality equal to the scrub country you came through this morning? Yes.
1348. How far does the scrub country extend west of the road which we came down this morning? I really could not tell you. I know that it goes right on to what we call the Night-cap Range; and when you are there you can see the scrub land far out to the west.
1349. What distance would that be? Over 30 miles, I suppose.
1350. Have you any suggestions to make to the Committee? I have no suggestions to make. I am of opinion that if the country were properly developed, even an entrance to the Brunswick would not be sufficient to take away half the produce.
1351. You must get to some better port to meet a better class of steamers, and the only means of getting to a better port is by a railway? Yes.
1352. Such a port if constructed at Byron Bay would answer all your requirements? Yes.
1353. Failing that you would have to go to Lismore? Yes.
1354. Byron Bay would serve this part of the country better than Lismore would? Yes.

Mr. William Caleb Andrews, constable, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. W. C. Andrews.
23 Nov., 1889.
1355. *Chairman.*] What are you? Constable, stationed at the Brunswick.
1356. How long have you been here? Over three years.
1357. How far does your district extend down the Brunswick;—is it a portion of the Tweed Police District? The district in which I collect the Electoral Roll, and which I reckon includes my district, goes about 9 miles to the north, and runs in a narrow strip towards Lismore, about 16 miles south. It runs towards Cape Byron for 7 miles. My district extends the whole length of the Brunswick River; that is, running 16 or 18 miles west.
1358. How many inhabitants do you think there are at the present time within 10 or 12 miles of the Brunswick River? Between 500 and 600.
1359. Men, women, and children? Yes.
1360. Are the lands back from the Brunswick good lands? Excellent lands, 1361.

1361. Similar to those on the Tweed River;—do you know the lands about Murwillumbah? I think they are equally good, if not better, at the back of the Brunswick.
1362. Has the settlement been increasing at all? Yes; it has increased very much during these last two years.
1363. Is the timber at the back of a superior character? Yes.
1364. Is there much of it there still? Yes, plenty.
1365. I suppose, in travelling about the district, you hear an occasional complaint of the difficulty of getting produce to market? Yes.
1366. I suppose those complaints are pretty general amongst the farmers and settlers? Yes. I have a pretty good knowledge of the roads myself, and two years ago you could not get through at all—it was so wet and boggy.
1367. Do you think a railway from Murwillumbah, running south, would open up a market for people here? Yes.
1368. And have the effect of increasing the settlement in the district? Yes, very greatly.

Mr. W. C.
Andrews.

23 Nov., 1889.

SATURDAY, 23 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at Byron Bay, at 5 p.m.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Mr. Frederick Valentine Wareham, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

1369. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? About 3 miles from the bay.
1370. What are you? I am farming now.
1371. How long have you been there? A little over six years—six years and three months.
1372. Has your attention been directed to the proposal to construct a line of railway from Grafton to the Tweed River? It has.
1373. Do you know the country lying between those two points? I only know the country between Lismore and the other side of the Brunswick—5 miles the other side of the Brunswick, which is the richest and most productive land I have ever seen.
1374. Productive of what? Everything put in the soil and properly attended to. All tropical fruits, such as bananas and pine-apples will grow.
1375. From Lismore to the Brunswick? Yes. Sugar-cane, pine-apples, coffee, mangoes, and oranges will grow here.
1376. Your difficulty here in developing the land is the want of a market, I imagine? Yes. We have been six years here, and have made nothing off the place.
1377. Are there men in the same position as you are? There are hundreds of families in the big scrub that have been here eight years, and have been putting up with great difficulties.
1378. In the first place, I suppose the bulk of the land here will require the expenditure of a great deal of money to make it suitable for cultivation? At least £10 an acre.
1379. Is that the bulk of the land? The bulk of the land in what is known as the big scrub. To make it fit for grazing about £5 an acre would suffice.
1380. When you have made the land fit for cultivation where is your market? We look to Sydney for our market, with an outlet at Byron Bay.
1381. That is what you hope for—an outlet from Byron Bay, with a market in Sydney for your produce? Yes. If we had the railway that we have been expecting for eight years from Tenterfield we should have a splendid market for our tropical fruits there, and they would have a market for wheat and other products here. If a railway and a breakwater were made at Byron Bay the population in one or two years would be four times what it is now, and that would create an immense local market for Tenterfield, and therefore make that country productive, so that it would be able to support a greater population than it does at the present time.
1382. What is the average size of the holdings between the Brunswick and Lismore? I think between 200 and 300 acres. The largest are 640 acres, and the smallest are 100 acres.
1383. Those are the original selections; but I suppose there are plenty of people who have swallowed up several of these selections? That has happened in a few cases, but not very often.
1384. What do you think is a fair size for the farms in this wonderful country, that you call a scrub? Forty acres will keep a family in comfortable circumstances, and 100 would be enough for anybody. Forty acres, if thoroughly attended to and worked, would produce more than 100 acres half worked, because the weeds grow up so fast.
1385. If the railway were constructed to the Richmond, would that be of any advantage to you? It would place us in a better position than we are in at present; but we hope, with such a splendid port as could be made here, to get our stuff away from the bay, because the freight would only be about 10s. a ton to Sydney from here, as against about £1 per ton, together with railway freight, if it went by way of Lismore. The railway would be an immense advantage over the present state of affairs. I am sure that the construction of a breakwater at Byron Bay, with a railway from Tenterfield, via Casino and Lismore, and another from the Tweed River, via the Brunswick, having their termini at the bay (part of what is known as the Grafton-Tweed Railway), is the only solution of the problem of developing the resources of this vast and phenomenally rich country. It is almost impossible to estimate the quantity and variety of valuable products the country between the Tweed and Richmond Rivers is capable of growing; and it is a well-established fact that, with ordinary care, 30 to 40 acres of land will very comfortably support a family—in many cases much less than that area. Ten acres under fruits will return a very handsome income if facilities be granted for quick and cheap means of communication with a market. Bananas, pine-apples, mangoes, custard-apples, sugar, coffee, rice, and almost all productions peculiar to the tropics, grow with great luxuriance by the side of English clover and other vegetation peculiar to temperate climates. The Fiji banana attains a great size upon certain soil, thousands of acres of which exist near the bay. A thousand

Mr. F. V.
Wareham.

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thousand bunches, as large, or even larger, than the one produced, may be annually taken from 1 acre of land. The country for many miles back from the bay has, with the exception of reserves, been settled upon over eight years, by practical settlers, who have had a very hard struggle to make even a bare subsistence, scores having been compelled to leave and seek a living elsewhere, after spending from five to seven years vainly striving to make a living here, and all the time submitting to unparalleled hardships, and paying the annual interest to the Lands Department. Were it not for the fact that the railway has been dangled before our eyes for eight years, the entire population would have deserted the country in utter disgust years ago. Great numbers have mortgaged their selections to enable them to hold on till the long-promised works are started and completed. The timber of the district is of immense value. Even pine, which sells at 8s. per 100 feet, has distributed much wealth amongst those who have been engaged upon the Richmond in the timber industry. There are many thousands of trees near the bay worth (in Sydney) from £25 to £30 a tree. Cedar trees have been cut, each worth from £200 to £400. With the vast increase of population that must follow the construction of these works, the wheat growers of New England would have an almost unlimited market here for their produce, and settlement there would progress, especially with a railway to the coast to give them cheap carriage, instead of having to pay for its transit all the way to Sydney or Newcastle. The interchange of produce would be an inestimable benefit to both districts, and create an immense traffic for the railway. Wool would go direct to Europe from the bay. The settlement of a dense population here would return a great revenue, independent of that which would be derived directly from the railway, which would also be great. Independent of the idea of making Byron Bay a port of shipment, it should be converted into a harbour of refuge. I have seen as many as nine vessels (including four steamers) lying in the bay for shelter during south and south-east gales. Hundreds of ships put into here for shelter each year. As shown in the accompanying statement the rainfall here is great, and in ordinary seasons well distributed throughout the year. The average for the three years preceding the present, was 85.41 inches. The average for four years, including the quantity already recorded for 1889, would be over 91 inches.

1386. Are the returns about the rainfall from your own observations? Yes.

1387. Do you keep a register and rain gauge? Yes, and I furnish the Government Astronomer with reports.

1388. Have many selectors in the district gone away from here? A great many have gone away and allowed their places to be overgrown with weeds. Perhaps they will come back and work them when facilities are offered for getting to market.

1389. I suppose that in this district as in others many of them have sold out? Some of them have, but not a great many round the bay.

1390. We are speaking now of the country between Brunswick and Lismore? Some have. I know of two or three between this and the Brunswick, who have sold out because they could not hold on any longer. They had mortgaged their places, and were pressed, and had to go.

1391. Is the land round the bay of any value? It is very valuable indeed. As far as Lismore, it is all chocolate soil. There are 7,000 acres of reserves close to the bay, and a lot of valuable land included in them.

1392. What would that land bring an acre, if you had a railway and harbour works? I think that with the standing scrub it would fetch £15 an acre, and perhaps more. There is a considerable quantity of swamp which can be drained which is fine rich land.

1393. Do you think that the land round the town in the reserves would average £10 an acre? I think it would average a good deal more than that.

1394. Do you know anything of the other reserves—the Clarence forest reserves? No, I know nothing about them.

1395. You say that the population would rapidly increase if the proposed works were carried out? It would.

1396. I notice by this map that the land is pretty well alienated; would those who have got the land lease it to settlers? They would sub-divide and sell. Those who hold 640 acres would sub-divide their land into as many as six farms and lease it or sell it, as they have done at Lismore.

1397. Do you think a man could afford to pay a fair rent, and yet make his farm profitable? Yes very profitable.

1398. I see that there is timber shipped from here now; is there any quantity of it shipped? About 100 logs a week. There were about 125 I believe taken away by the last trip but one, of the steamer, and eighty to ninety by the last trip.

1399. Does a steamer come here regularly now? Yes, pretty regularly. At all events she does a trip a week. There is one regular trader and two others. A little boat from Ballina does a trade here, and the "Kuruah" sometimes calls here.

1400. *Mr. Garrard.*] You have included in the produce likely to come to Byron Bay, the produce from Lismore, is it likely that any produce will come from Lismore, or within 10 or 15 miles of it, when they have a waterway of their own? I think that the freights from Byron Bay would be so much cheaper that they would bring their stuff here by railway, because large ships will be able to come here, and large ships can always take freight more cheaply than small ships can.

1401. Your market is Sydney? Yes.

1402. What large vessels will call here? We hope to get larger vessels than those that trade to the Richmond now.

1403. Do you know that they are spending a large sum of money in making the Richmond a good port; do you not think that produce 15 miles from the Richmond will go to the Richmond? I do not think 15 miles back on this side will go to the Richmond.

1404. What is the distance from here to the Richmond? To Lismore it is 36 miles by the road; but there is a large bend—you can go straight to Wardell.

1405. You do not think that the trade would go 10 miles to the Richmond, but that it would go 20 miles to Byron Bay? I think dairy produce would come this way. Dairy men do not seem to care about sending their produce down the hot Richmond river.

1406. Is it not as warm here as at the Richmond River? It is not nearly so warm here as it is at Lismore. I have spoken to scores of dairy men and they say that they prefer coming here to going to the Richmond.

1407. You intend to concentrate the trade from the north, south, and west at Byron Bay? That is my idea—that the bay is the great outlet for all this northern district.

1408.

Mr. F. V.
Wareham.
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1408. Then it would be very foolish to waste any money on the Tweed and Richmond; we should concentrate all our efforts to improve Byron Bay? No. The Richmond has a trade of its own that will warrant the expenditure of the money there, and Byron Bay has a country at its back that will warrant the construction of a breakwater here.
1409. You have complained of the want of facilities for getting produce to market—if the railway were constructed, would your produce go to Lismore, putting aside the Byron Bay scheme? It would go to Lismore, or at least half of it would. I do not know that the perishable produce would.
1410. I want you to dismiss from your mind for a moment the possibility of any improvement being made to Byron Bay. If the railway were constructed would it allow you to send your products to market? It would when the bay was rough.
1411. How often is that—twice a year? More often than that.
1412. How many days in a year? A steamer may be detained perhaps fifteen or twenty times in a year when heavy north-easters, or heavy south-easters are blowing causing a big swell.
1413. For nine months out of the year you would avail yourselves of the present facilities of Byron Bay, and during three months you would send your produce by the railway? Yes, if we could not get it away by any other means.
1414. Would the country be justified in making a railway to carry produce for only three months in the year? There would be a great deal of produce sent between this and Lismore. I look upon the railway as part of a railway to the table-land.
1415. Are you going to bring all the stuff from Casino here as well? I believe so.
1416. Do you not think that a rather visionary prospect? I do not think so.
1417. You anticipate bringing all the trade north from the Tweed, and south from Casino to Byron Bay? Even from the western portion of New England to Byron Bay. It would be better to send stuff direct to the coast than to take it down to Newcastle and Sydney by rail.
1418. What is the sugar cane we see here? It is grown here.
1419. What is done with it? There is a mill close to the Bay. A considerable amount of cane was put into cultivation, six or eight years ago, but unfortunately the owner of the mill failed, and everybody had to burn his cane, or give it to cattle, after spending hundreds of pounds over it.
1420. The only thing exported from here is timber? Timber, butter, pigs, and all sorts of farming stuff.
1421. How many pigs go down during the year? The trade of the district has only just started, with the completion of the jetty and the erection of the crane.
1422. *Mr. Lee.* You know the Richmond River? I do; I have travelled over it.
1423. In what direction does the river flow before entering the Heads at Ballina? It comes from a south-easterly direction.
1424. I want to know in what direction the river follows the coast? It is almost parallel for some distance. It takes a bend in a south-westerly direction until near Coraki, and then it flows northward.
1425. Will you point out to the Committee on the map the locality in which the rich lands of which you have been speaking are situated? The whole of the land south-west of Byron Bay in one block is of the richest basaltic formation.
1426. Is it scrub land? It is all scrub land with the exception of a few patches of forest land near Lismore, which is also rich.
1427. Will the railway be in such proximity to this land that the settlers can make use of it? The railway runs down the valley of the Byron and Wilson's Creek, where there is very rich land; the richest in the scrub, though it is all rich, to the tops of the hills.
1428. About what distance would the line be from the 85 miles to the nearest shipping place on the Richmond River? I cannot say.
1429. Is it a fact as it has been so often asserted by the residents here that those living in the locality just indicated by you are unable to take advantage of the river for their produce? They can do it, but it will not pay them.
1430. Will you give me a reason or two why they cannot? In the first place the roads are very difficult to travel over, especially in this moist climate, and then they would have to pack the produce most of the distance.
1431. On horseback? Yes. For a great deal of the distance they would have to pack the produce, and there would be such an immense amount of labour in that, that it would not pay them to do it.
1432. Owing to the bad state of the roads, the settlers are unable to cart their produce to a shipping port on the Richmond River? Yes.
1433. And that is the reason why you think a railway should be made—to give them communication either with the Richmond or Lismore or with Byron Bay? Yes.
1434. Do you wish the Committee to understand that the whole of the trade from Casino and Lismore would be likely to come to Byron Bay if the breakwater were constructed? I do not know whether the whole of it would, but I think a great deal of it would, from Casino and right away beyond Casino. I am informed that there is an immense tract of rich country between Casino and Tenterfield, and I believe that if a railway were constructed the produce from there would come straight down to the bay.
1435. On the banks of the Richmond itself the population is rather dense? Very dense.
1436. And there is a large quantity of produce raised there? An immense quantity.
1437. The largest proportionally that is raised in the district? By far.
1438. The reason for that is that the land is close to navigable water? Yes.
1439. The produce from that land will always be sent by water? Always where the land is near good deep water.
1440. You are of opinion that the importance of the Richmond River alone will always keep it open for traffic? Yes, the lower Richmond.
1441. You still hold that the Richmond does not serve the bulk of the settlers round about Byron Bay, and where you have indicated? It does not.
1442. Nothing else would be of use to you except a railway? The railway and the breakwater.
1443. To make the bay a port? Yes.
1444. I am speaking of means for conveying your produce to an outlet? Yes. We need some means for getting it away after the terrible difficulties that have had to be encountered for many years past. The whole country would be depopulated if it were not for the prospects of getting a railway. The settlers have been living on the hope of getting a railway and a port.

- Mr. F. V. Wareham.
23 Nov., 1889.
1445. Is there much dairying carried on at the present time? Yes.
1446. Dairy produce requires sending to market quickly? Quickly.
1447. It is what you call a perishable commodity? Yes, very perishable. I am not an authority on dairying.
1448. Is there any additional information which you wish to give the Committee about this line;—supposing it were decided by the Government not to construct harbour works at Byron Bay what about the railway communication then? If they decided not to construct the breakwater we should have to send perishable stuff when the bay was rough by the railway. It would cost more, but it would be better than nothing. We would not think of sending stuff to the Richmond from this country if the bay were a harbour. I consider that even to make it a harbour of refuge the breakwater ought to be constructed.
1449. Knowing the district, and the people, and the difficulties they have been under for so many years, you are clearly of opinion that the proposed route will serve the best interests of the majority of the settlers? It will go through the heart of the country.
1450. And offer means of communication with Lismore at the one end and Byron Bay at the other? Yes.

Mr. Thomas Temperley, selector, and Inspector of Northern Fisheries, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. T. Temperley.
23 Nov., 1889.
1451. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Ballina at present.
1452. At the mouth of the Richmond? Yes.
1453. How far is that from here? It is about 20 miles from here.
1454. How long have you resided in this district? I had a selection in this district six years.
1455. Have you got it still? Yes.
1456. Do you know the route of the proposed railway? Yes.
1457. Do you know the line 15 miles back from that to the westward, between Brunswick and Lismore? Yes. I am well acquainted with the land in the neighbourhood of the bay.
1458. Right into Lismore, and back west from the bay? Yes.
1459. What is the character of that land? It is, as a block, the finest land in the Colony. I reckon that we have, within a radius of 15 miles of Byron Bay, an extent of country that is unequalled in the Colony. To my knowledge, between 80 and 90 per cent. of the land within that area is fully equal to the land which is now being alienated as special areas in portions of this electorate.
1460. What quantity of land within that 15 miles would it be necessary to allot to a man in order that he might make a fair living out of it? Forty acres, or 90 per cent. of it, would be sufficient to support a family. A smaller area would be sufficient if the family were engaged in the fruit industry—an industry that the country is well adapted for.
1461. If there was a good market for the produce? That goes without saying. It is my duty to travel through a large portion of the coast districts of the Colony. I am the Inspector of Northern Fisheries, and I am thoroughly conversant with the coast districts of the Colony, and I say, that within the neighbourhood of Byron Bay there is an extent of fertile land that cannot be found in any of the coast districts outside the Richmond electorate.
1462. You know the Hunter River district well—Maitland, West Maitland, Morpeth? I have been to Maitland and to Morpeth.
1463. Do you know the Shoalhaven district—the farming land? I know the extent of farming land there, and I know that it is very often fringed with hardwood country.
1464. Are the lands here equal to those lands? They are all scrub lands here, or nearly all.
1465. Equal to the best of those lands? Yes, and on the Richmond River there are five or six mills, all of which are engaged in cutting soft-wood—scrub-wood; you cannot say the same of any other saw-mills in the country. It shows the extent of the brush land. It is the almost unbroken extent of brush land in this district that is the real glory of it, and what gives it an advantage over the other parts of the Colony which consist of hardwood country.
1466. You have hardwood here? Very little.
1467. Do you know the country out to the Tweed River? Yes.
1468. There is a good deal of hardwood there? There is a good deal there, but there is not much in this locality, in fact, if you went away from the coast here you would have very great difficulty in finding a decent patch of hardwood country 15 miles from Byron Bay.
1469. If a railway were carried out, as proposed, from Byron Bay to Casino, but the breakwater at Byron Bay not made, would the people within that radius be served by it? Certainly.
1470. Do you think that they would have to use the railway? Certainly. It would be of great advantage in taking the produce to the nearest shipping port available.
1471. And the people here would be better off than they are now? Certainly. The people would put their produce into the train and send it to the nearest shipping port available. It has been stated publicly by several people that there is no good land within 4 miles of Byron Bay; but as a matter of fact within a radius of 4 miles of the jetty we have thousands of acres of magnificent brush-land—fertile land, equal to the land that is being alienated as special areas.
1472. That land ought to be very valuable if unalienated? The land in the neighbourhood has been alienated, but further west there are thousands of acres of special area country unalienated.
1473. And that is worth from £10 to £15 an acre? It would be if made accessible.
1474. Do you think that if it were thrown open in special areas of 40 acres each, and a railway made, those wanting land would pay the Government as much as they would pay a private individual? Just so. The reserves, if there were means of access by railway, would sell at a high price.
1475. Do you think that they would bring £10 an acre if the railway were constructed? Yes; I should like to invest in some of them at that price, when the railway is constructed.
1476. All round there would be no trouble in getting £15 an acre for the land? For a great part of it.
1477. The greater part—and higher? Yes; there is land in this district which, if you could put a railway through it, would be worth £15 an acre.

Mr.

Mr. Edward Stephen Atkins, sugar planter and manufacturer, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
E. S. Atkins.
23 Nov., 1889.

1478. *Chairman.*] What vocation do you follow? I am a sugar-planter and manufacturer.
1479. Where are you living? At Byron Bay. About $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the jetty.
1480. West I suppose? Barely west—more to the north-west.
1481. Is it there that you have got your mill, and your cultivated land? Yes.
1482. What do you grow there? Sugar-cane is the only thing that I am growing now.
1483. How long have you been growing that? Two years and three months. It had been growing there previously to my going, but the place had been left to go to ruin.
1484. What is the result of your cultivation of sugar-cane—do you produce a good cane? The land will grow splendid cane, equal or better than that grown at the Clarence River. I might mention that I was fifteen years on the Clarence River, employed in the same occupation as I follow now.
1485. Do you know the cane grown on the Tweed River? No; I cannot say that I know it.
1486. I suppose it fetches about the same as the cane grown on the Clarence? About 12s. for the cane, and 1s. for carting to the punts—13s.
1487. Is the cane you produce in this locality equal to that? Quite.
1488. And would be worth that money to the producer? If there were a means of getting it away.
1489. Getting the sugar away, or the cane to the mill? Yes.
1490. Do you buy any cane? Farmers were growing cane for the party who had the mill before me, but he failed and they are frightened to cultivate it again, for fear that they will be left in the same way.
1491. They are afraid that you will “go broke”? No. My mill is not a very large one. If the proposed works were carried out capitalists would come to the district, and give a large price for the cane.
1492. How much would you want to supply your mill? Two hundred and fifty or three hundred acres. My holding is 600 acres.
1493. Is it forest land? No; all scrub land.
1494. There is no reason why the district immediately behind Byron Bay should not produce sugar-cane equal to that grown on the Clarence and in other parts of the district? There is nothing to prevent it. Our climate is better than that of the Clarence. We have not the frosts here that they have on the Clarence.
1495. Is there not more extensive country between the Richmond and the Tweed than there is on the Clarence? Within a short radius of Byron Bay we have more land suitable for cane than there is on the Clarence.
1496. There is a very small area on the Clarence suitable for cane? Very small. There is a narrow ridge along the banks of the rivers and creeks, in some cases not extending back more than a few chains.
1497. Does the good land extend back from the Clarence any distance? In some places.
1498. Fifteen or 20 miles back? No; but up some of the creeks 5 or 6 miles.
1499. How far back could you go here? Ten or 15 miles.
1500. And up and down? Yes.
1501. You know the country fairly well? I cannot say that I know much of the country.
1502. Do you know the country between here and Lismore? Yes; and 8 or 9 miles at the back again.
1503. Then if you had means of communication you are satisfied that this industry would be very largely developed in the district? Very extensively developed.
1504. That would find employment for the farmers and labourers? Yes.
1505. How many men do you employ in your small establishment? In the crushing season I have from twenty-two to twenty-four men.
1506. How long does that last? It depends upon the quantity of cane that there is to be crushed. With sufficient cane the season would last five months.
1507. You would employ that number of men even for your small establishment? That would be in working the mill and cutting the cane; but there would be other men employed on the plantation.
1508. Apart from the growing? The number I have mentioned would be those employed in the manufacture of sugar.
1509. What number of men do they generally employ in the cultivation of sugar on a farm of 40 acres? The amount of labour varies. I should think 40 acres would give employment for four men all the year round.
1510. If you had 80 acres would you require eight men? It would take about eight men on the average to work the land; but then in parts of the year more men might have to be employed.
1511. What is the rate of wage paid in this district to farm labourers? £1 a week and their rations.
1512. What is the average wage paid to those engaged in the mill? From £1 a week up to 30s.
1513. I suppose the carters and cutters get the same? The carters 25s. a week, and the cutters from 30s. to £2.
1514. They take it by the acre? By the ton.
1515. How many tons per acre will this land yield? I believe that the land where I am now has grown as much as 70 tons to the acre.
1516. But what is the average? 40 tons.
1517. Would that be an average crop? I think it would be a little more here. I would be safe in saying that 40 tons an acre would be an average crop here.
1518. What is about the average crop on the Clarence? I have seen the returns of the Colonial Sugar Company there, and one season I believe it was 18 or 20 tons. In one season when I was living on the Clarence I remember the cane inspector saying that the crop only averaged 20 tons per acre.
1519. What was the nature of the season, good, or bad? Most of the land was not suitable for cane, and the frost had been very heavy in the winter.
1520. I was trying to ascertain the average crop in a fair season—that is, what the land would produce in an ordinary way under ordinary circumstances. I would like to know, in order to compare the two places? I might say 30 tons. While I am speaking of cane I might draw your attention to some of the cane that I have grown (*Sample of cane grown in the district shown to the Committee*).
1521. This cane was grown by you? Yes. At Byron Bay.
1522. What is the height of it? Some of it is over 7 feet of crushing cane. I might mention that it is not picked cane. I did not cut it myself, but I sent my children to bring me a few straight stalks. The cane you see was planted last December, and there were only five or six months of growing weather before the cold weather set in.

- Mr. E. S. Atkins. 1523. Is that the cane that matures in a year? It is what they call the annual variety.
 1524. *Mr. Lee.*] What is the name of it? Gray Fiji.
 23 Nov., 1889. 1525. Is it the most suitable kind of cane for the climate? It is the most suitable cane for this district and for the Clarence. It is most generally grown on the river.
 1526. How many tons of cane does it take to produce a ton of sugar? I believe that with proper machinery 10 tons of cane would produce 1 ton of sugar.
 1527. Do you know the proposed railway route? Partly.
 1528. Does it go anywhere near your premises? Well, one part of the line goes through my land. There are two surveys I think, and it is the first surveyed route that goes through my land.
 1529. Suppose the line went through your land, would you feel disposed to give to the Government free of cost whatever was required for railway purposes? It is leasehold land, but I believe it would be given by the proprietor.
 1530. Do you know whether that would be generally done in the district? I do not know for certain, but I think it would be.
 1531. You are of opinion that the line would be of immense advantage to the settlers in the district? Yes, I am of that opinion.
 1532. Do you think that if the line were carried to Tintinbar and Emigrant Creek it would give a reasonable outlet for the people? Yes, it would, and if the railway went through there, the country would be very thickly populated.
 1533. What is the nature of the land between Tintinbar and Emigrant Creek? It is similar to the land about here—all heavy scrub land.
 1534. But supposing the line were not diverted to Tintinbar, but taken to Lismore, would that meet the requirements of the settlers at this end? It would meet the requirements of the settlers at this end.
 1535. Is there any route which would suit their convenience better? I have not thought that over.

Mr. Robert Campbell, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. R. Campbell. 1536. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At Byron Creek.
 23 Nov., 1889. 1537. What is the nature of your occupation? I am a dairy farmer.
 1538. A leaseholder or a freeholder? A freeholder.
 1539. How long have you been living there? Eight years.
 1540. How far is Byron Creek from here? $6\frac{1}{2}$ or 7 miles, as near as I can say.
 1541. Is it near to the proposed line of railway? The proposed line runs through my place.
 1542. How long have you been engaged in dairying here? It is about six years since I commenced here, but I have been dairying all my life, off and on.
 1543. What is your annual production of butter? I could not exactly give you that.
 1544. Approximately? I suppose I am making a little better than 100 lb. a week.
 1545. In round numbers 4 tons a year? Somewhere about that. I have not done that all through, since the time I commenced; but that is about what I am doing now.
 1546. It took you some time to get your land cleared and grassed? Yes, and it is not all done yet.
 1547. Where is your market for that butter? Sydney.
 1548. How do you get it there? Most of my time I have had to take it on a pack horse, with the horse up to his belly in mud.
 1549. Where? To Ballina. That is the port that we used before we had a steamer to Byron Bay. At the present time I ship at Byron Bay.
 1550. Can you get to Byron Bay more easily than you can get to Ballina? I am 7 miles from Byron Bay, and 20 miles from Ballina.
 1551. It is only recently that a steamer started running to the bay? Yes.
 1552. Is your production likely to increase? Yes.
 1553. Are you bringing more land under grass? Yes.
 1554. Are you devoting any portion of your land to the cultivation of grain or maize? I have grown maize and all kinds of crops on it for my own use. It is of no use growing for a market, because I have no access to one. We are forced to work on dairy produce.
 1555. You find that the most profitable now because you can pack it to market, while you could not pack sugar or maize, or anything like that? Yes.
 1556. Suppose the railway were constructed? Then we would grow maize, potatoes, and other crops, and make money out of things that we cannot attempt to produce now.
 1557. The Richmond River is of very little use in opening up your part of the country? The Richmond is almost useless as far as we are concerned.
 1558. It has been alleged over and over again that the proposed railway is to serve a large population lying back from the river which the river does not serve and is not likely to serve—is that correct? It is. You can see what I have gone through. A man is not going to let his land drift into the hands of the banks. When I have not been able to make two kegs of butter a week I have had to hang stones on one side of the horse to balance the keg on the other. I come from the Hunter River, and I reckon the land there as good as any in New South Wales barring this scrub. I do not think the Richmond is as good as the Hunter. Some time ago land sold on the Hunter, at a place called Narrowgut, for £100 an acre; but I believe that for our business the land here is equally as good as that, if not a great deal better, and I believe that it will produce as much farm produce, barring hay. The Hunter is better suited for lucerne than this district is, though we can grow lucerne here.
 1559. Are there many settlers in the locality who are in the same position as yourself with regard to means of transit? Hundreds. I have a map here showing the settlement on the land, and I can point out to you places where people are in the same position as I am in.
 1560. Are there any creeks or branches of the river running through or near these lands? There is the head of the Richmond River—Wilson's Creek—4 or 5 miles from me, but it is not navigable.
 1561. If there were any navigable waters you would not be likely to pack 20 miles? Not likely. No man will go further than he can help.
 1562. That being the case, is the dairying industry likely to increase very rapidly? Yes; it would increase at a great rate if we only had proper access to market. In fact I might say that we have almost no access to the water, but yet we are supposed to compete against the outside world. 1563.

1563. The construction of this railway would be of very great benefit to you? Yes; it would be the making of the district and of the people.
1564. As this line will be such a benefit to you, will you be prepared to give to the Government the portion of land which it will be necessary to take it through? I pay my share to the State as much as any man does, so why should I give up my land? I would not give it up.
1565. Supposing everyone else was to do the same? Then they would be doing what has been done on other lines. Personally I should oppose this railway, because it will do me a lot of harm—it has cut my water frontage off, but I am not going to oppose it, although I shall be personally injured by it.
1566. Have you any additional evidence to give the Committee? No.

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Mr. Edmund Williams, storekeeper and selector, sworn, and examined:—

1567. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Coorabell Creek, 7 miles west from the bay.
1568. How long have you resided there? I have resided there more than two months, but I resided just below there for six years.
1569. On a selection of your own? On a selection of my own.
1570. Is this other selection a new one? It is a new one.
1571. What have you been doing with the land? I have been putting it under grass. I have a store also. I am a storekeeper and selector.
1572. What are you doing with the new selection? I am just commencing to work on it.
1573. What is the area of each of them? The original selection was 200 acres. This selection contains 100 acres conditionally purchased and 80 acres conditionally leased.
1574. What do you want to tell the Committee? A great many of us were attracted here about seven years ago with the intention of growing sugar-cane, for which the land is well adapted; and we picked out the best land that we could find for the purpose. We were under the impression at that time that the Government would give us a railway and a port at Byron Bay. We held a meeting here, and I have a report of it, showing that that was the expectation of the settlers.
1575. What is the date of that meeting? 15th September, 1883. The report shows what our difficulties were, and what the people were led to believe.
1576. By whom were they led to believe? I cannot say, but we understood from the then Government that they were going to carry out some of the works that are now proposed.
1577. I suppose you know that the Government cannot construct a railway without the consent of Parliament? Your grievances now are, I suppose, the same as they were in 1883? Those grievances have not been altered. Until three months ago we had not a place where we could ship our stuff with any degree of safety, and the expenses of shipping have been something enormous, and have precluded us from sending produce to market. We could send nothing away from here except butter or grass seed, or something that we could carry away on horseback to a port.
1578. Could you not take vehicles to a port? We have within the last two years been able to take vehicles to Lismore; but many a person in the scrub within 10 miles of here has never had a vehicle near his door.
1579. But you have completed residence on one conditional purchase and have now taken up another—you seem to like it? I cannot say that I have been very successful. I have endured hardships that I would not endure again.
1580. You are going through them again? The selection that I am taking up now is alongside the main road, and I am doing it with an eye to business. With the place of business I have now, it has cost me until within the last three months very nearly £4 a ton to get goods landed here.
1581. What has it cost you with a steamer running from Byron Bay? The freight is about half. I had to pay £1 a ton to land the stuff from the vessel on to the shore, until within the last three months.
1582. That is what you pay now—£1 a ton on the jetty? I pay £1 a ton for any goods that I get from Sydney. Until lately I had to pay from 30s. to 50s. a ton, and £1 a ton besides that for getting the goods from the vessel to the shore. After that I had to cart them 7 miles, and on one or two occasions I have been two days getting them from here to my own place.
1583. How many miles is that? Seven miles. I had more than 7 miles to go then, but the distance by the road now is about 7 miles.
1584. The Government did not make those difficulties for you, did they? Certainly not.
1585. You knew of them when you started here, and you faced them? Yes.
1586. Do you think that if railway communication were given, say to Casino, the settlement of this part of the Colony would be very much larger than it is at the present time? Certainly.
1587. Of course, if you had direct communication with Byron Bay, it would be still larger? Certainly it would.
1588. We have heard about the richness of the land here for cultivation; but you have told us that you have put yours under grass? Just so.
1589. For stock I suppose? The reason I laid my land down in grass is this: when the sugar-cane was a failure—and I may say that I brought sugar-cane all the way from the Clarence, and round the beach from Ballina—the only way I could get it—I had to give it to the pigs. No capitalist would come here and erect a mill, and I was unable to erect one myself, and did not feel inclined to do so. We could then produce nothing except butter and grass seed, which we could carry away easily; I could grow anything I like, pretty well, if I could get it away.
1590. Is there anything else which you would like to say? I would like to say that if the railway were constructed, it would certainly benefit me in many ways. It would be the means of helping me to get produce away to Lismore and Casino, or even up to the Tweed. I could send butter to any of these places, as well as to Sydney.
1591. *Mr. Lee.*] Would you be likely to send any of your products to Grafton for shipment? Well, yes, I daresay we would be able to send something to Grafton too, in the way of butter or light produce—we should never send heavy produce there.
1592. Do you know what the distance would be by the railway line? I cannot say exactly.
1593. Is Grafton likely to be the port for the produce raised in this district—sugar, maize, and dairy produce? Not at all. We should never send the whole of our produce to Grafton.
1594. You would send it to the nearest shipping port, wherever that might be? Yes.

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E. Williams.
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1595.

- Mr. E. Williams.
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1595. And as a necessity, part of your produce—perishable goods—would require quick transit? Yes.
1596. Do you know anything of the proposed route? Yes. I cannot say that I know a great deal about it; but I know pretty well where it is going.
1597. Do you think it is best calculated to serve the interests of the people of the district? I think so.
1598. You have no suggestions to make as to deviations? No. I cannot say that I know of any better route than the one proposed at present.
1599. Are you a member of the Progress Committee? Yes.
1600. Secretary? No.
1601. A prominent member? I cannot say; I sometimes attend.
1602. What is the feeling of the people generally in reference to the route—are they satisfied with it? Yes: they feel very satisfied with it.
1603. They would be quite satisfied if it were constructed? Yes.

Mr. Owen Bishop Wareham, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. O. B. Wareham.
23 Nov., 1889.
1604. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At Byron Bay.
1605. How far from the jetty? Three miles.
1606. What are you? I am a farmer.
1607. What is the size of your holding? Two hundred acres.
1608. What are you producing? Grass, bananas, pine apples, and maize; and I am shipping timber off the land—soft timber, such as pine, cedar, beech, &c.
1609. Where do you find a market for that? In Sydney.
1610. By which route do you send it to Sydney? From Byron Bay by the *Alice*—direct from Byron Bay to Sydney.
1611. Have you a statement to make to the Committee? Yes. It is as follows:—As the country dependent upon Byron Bay is, from its recent occupation, almost entirely undeveloped (although all selected by *bonâ fide* holders, with the exception of a few reserves) I have no statistics to submit—I can only give the distance between certain localities, and declare that the land is very extensive, of the richest nature, and has an annual rainfall of nearly 100 inches; that rye grass, clover, oats, barley, maize, sugar-cane, bananas, pine apples, coffee, and most of the varieties of fruits, and also vegetables flourish here; that in addition to these we have growing in immense quantities, studded through this huge brush, timbers of the most valuable descriptions, such as the red, white, and pencil cedars, rosewood, beech, red and black bean, mahogany (red) teak, three varieties of pines, deals, and very many ornamental woods such as the tortoise-shell tulip, white ditto, with all the varieties of hardwoods. The Clarence River people are aware that when Byron Bay is converted into a safe port it will be a serious rival, and may prevent their own river improvements from being carried out. The majority of the land on the Clarence is developed, whereas development has scarcely started in the Byron Bay District. The residents of the Clarence, and some of the other rivers, are exceedingly jealous of Byron Bay, and are striving to stop the proposed works, because when converted into a safe and deep harbour, they imagine it will remove the trade from their river. When the Grafton-Tweed railway, *via* Byron Bay, has been constructed, and the breakwater a reality, all the passenger traffic to and from Byron Bay, the Brunswick River and Tweed districts (the latter 35 miles to the north), and also many of the products of those large tracks of rich country will find their way to Byron Bay; and it is more than likely that holders of land in the southern portion of Queensland will also use the bay as their shipping port. To the west and north-west lies a large area of the richest brush land (including the parish of Jasper); this, for a distance of fully 15 miles back, has been selected, the holders desiring Byron Bay as their shipping port. There is a large area of unalienated brush land extending many miles still further in a west and north-westerly direction, that will be immediately taken up when the breakwater and railway works have been commenced. There is also the country to the south-west embracing Tyngrah, 'Possum Shoot, Currable Creek, 'Possum and Byron Creeks, Eureka, Clunes, the latter locality being 18 miles towards Lismore on the Richmond, depending upon Byron Bay as their shipping port. Then lie the districts to the south and south-east, embracing Byron and Wilson's Creeks, Newrybar, the "Three-mile Scrub," and Lennox Head, 15 miles towards Ballina and Tintinbar. The whole of the land embracing the localities named, is of the richest nature, as will be seen by yourselves when travelling from Byron to Lismore, whichever route you may decide to adopt. It is impossible to convey heavy produce overland to the Richmond on account of distance and the yielding nature of the soil. Besides, Byron Bay is the natural port for these districts. Passengers for and from the inland centres would gladly use Byron Bay in preference to either the Clarence, Richmond, or Tweed Rivers, because, when converted into a safe port, much larger vessels will trade to this place than to the rivers named. When the larger steamers run to the bay direct, or the Queensland boats make Byron a port of call up and down the coast, freights will not be more than from 7s. 6d. to 10s. per ton to and from Sydney, thus explaining the opposition to the works by the smaller ship-owners trading to the rivers. The residents of Tenterfield and adjacent table-lands desire to use Byron as their port, if the Government construct a railway from Tenterfield to join the Grafton-Tweed line at Casino or Lismore. Without such breakwater as proposed, Byron Bay can never be relied upon as a port of shipment, because it is completely open to the north and north-east, from which quarter, during the spring and summer months, the prevailing winds blow, making it impossible for vessels to come up and lie alongside the wharf to load or discharge cargo whilst they continue, which is from three to six days at a stretch. Vessels are, therefore, seriously delayed, in consequence of which owners are compelled to charge such high freights, that it does not pay producers to ship. Underwriters will not insure sailing vessels trading to this bay on account of the greater risk this class of vessels run of being driven ashore. Upwards of £15,000 have been expended upon the jetty, and many thousands of pounds upon roads leading to it, and the permanent survey for railway from Grafton to the Tweed runs *via* the Bay; but unless a breakwater is constructed this expenditure of public money will almost have been in vain, seeing that the port is so unreliable. The construction of a breakwater will make Byron Bay a splendid harbour, capable of floating any of the modern-built vessels, and would afford a calling-place for passengers and cargo for the large Queensland steamers, and also for the larger ones trading between the Colonies and Europe. But apart from the immense benefit the construction of such a breakwater as proposed would confer upon the whole of this vast tract of rich land, from a national point the works should be immediately started to protect,

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protect, not only the vessels trading at present or in the future, but the hundreds of boats which put into port at various times during the year for shelter. Some few months ago no fewer than five vessels ran into this bay at one time for shelter from a strong southerly gale, which eventually veered to the north-east, and all came ashore, making the seventh during the last three years. If the allotments and various reserves in the vicinity of the bay are sold when the proposed works are started, the proceeds would nearly be sufficient to construct the breakwater. I would recommend that the reserves be sold in small areas of, say, 40 acres each. A splendid sample of stone in any quantity has been discovered about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Bay.

1612. Is there a measured township here? Yes.

1613. Can you tell me what price the land brought at the last auction sale? The land we are now on brought at the rate of £800 an acre.

1614. And in addition to the owner giving at the rate of £800 an acre for the land he has erected buildings on it to the value of another £800? About £1,000 altogether.

1615. How do you get the produce away from your place? By horse and bullock-drays. Bullock-drays for the heavier stuff, such as timber; horse-drays for the lighter produce.

1616. Why do you not use the Richmond River as a port? It would be impossible.

1617. Why? In the first place it is too far, and in the second place the roads are in such a state that no vehicle could carry produce over them, it would not pay us to send goods over there.

1618. Then the Richmond River would not serve the district where you are living? No.

1619. You require some facilities for taking your stuff to market? Yes. Of course I may state that the railway would be of little use to myself individually, because I live so near the port; but to the bulk of the people it would be of immense advantage; in fact, they could not do without it.

1620. Then your immediate interests are connected with Byron Bay as a shipping port? Yes.

1621. Would you be likely to use Grafton for a port, supposing it were made a reliable one? I should not care to do so.

1622. *Chairman.*] I see that you had a public meeting here in August, 1883? Yes.

1623. Are you the Mr. Wareham who spoke at that meeting? Yes.

1624. Do you remember saying at that time that if the Government would only build a jetty for you you would have everything in the world you wanted? I may have said so then, but since then I have found out that it is impossible for a vessel to lay alongside the jetty in all weathers, and load or discharge cargo. The *Alice* has traded here three months, and during that time she has had to stand off three or four times, and the north-easterlies that blow in the spring and summer have not commenced yet. They may not blow every day during the season, but they blow every week, and the steamer might come up when they were blowing and have to stand off for two or three days.

1625. Your predictions about the breakwater may be just as far out as those about the jetty in 1883? They may be, but I do not think so. We have a natural wall to the west, south, and south-west of the bay, and if we were protected from the north-east we should have a safe port. At the present time we are exposed to all the winds from the north-east.

1626. Would the farmers about here be very much better off with a railway than they are at the present time? I think so.

1627. If they do not get the breakwater at all? Yes.

1628. You would be in Eden almost with a breakwater and a railway? I think we are entitled to such an expenditure of public money, considering that this block of land is the largest and the richest, not only in this Colony, but also in Australia.

1629. You mean from the south of Queensland to Grafton? Yes; and I could also say the block of land that is dependent on Byron Bay.

1630. For which £1 an acre has been paid by the settlers with deferred payments? That has been paid.

1631. It would not go far towards the construction of a breakwater? If the reserves were sold they would pay for the construction of a breakwater.

1632. Do you think they would bring £400 an acre? No.

1633. Do you think that the Government would be justified in spending £242,000 upon the construction of a breakwater, and £102,000 upon the construction of this line? I think so. We would not be the only people who would reap the advantages of the railway—Byron Bay, the Tweed, the Richmond, the Clarence, and the Brunswick would all be benefited by it as well as by the construction of the breakwater.

1634. What benefit will the Grafton people reap from it—you have just told us that no produce would go to the Clarence? I would not send any of mine there.

1635. I suppose it would be the same with all the others—it would not pay them? Yes.

1636. In the event of your having no better port than you have at present you might use the railway to take your produce to the deep waters of the Richmond; but you would not send it to Grafton? We would certainly prefer to ship our produce at the Richmond—we would not cross the Richmond.

1637. I suppose you are firmly convinced that there is not sufficient trade at present to pay the interest on the capital and working expenses of the railway if it were constructed—about £6,000 a year? It is not what there is now but what there will be. When a railway is constructed people crowd to a district, and selectors who hold 640 acres or even less would subdivide.

1638. How long do you think it would take, by increased cultivation, to pay £6,000 a year to the railway? I could not say.

1639. I suppose the ill-success of your prediction about the jetty has made you chary about making further predictions? With regard to the jetty I now see that since it has been constructed, we must have something further to protect the shipping that comes to it.

1640. The jetty cost £15,000? No, £9,000; but the crane, the mooring-buoys, and the store, ran it up to about £15,000.

1641. Have you given any attention to the breakwater—as to the shape or size of it—have you seen the plan before the Committee? No; I saw a plan of the breakwater, close to the jetty, in the *Daily Telegraph*.

1642. Knowing the trade that exists at the present time, and allowing for the probable trade in the future, do you think that that breakwater would enclose a sufficient area of water? I believe that a district like this is capable of expanding to an enormous extent, and that it would be unwise to build a breakwater close to the jetty in too shallow water. It would be better to construct one in deep water that would answer for all time.

1643.

- Mr. O. B. Wareham.
23 Nov., 1889.
1643. I suppose the outside scheme of Captain Howard's would suit you better? I think the curved one would be the better—No. 2.
1644. But the outside one would include the larger area? I should think the second breakwater would give ample room.
1645. You are clearly of opinion that Parliament would be justified in throwing £242,000 into the Pacific for the purpose of giving you a harbour? I certainly think that the district is entitled to that expenditure.
1646. *Chairman.*] Would you take shares in a company created to make the breakwater? Yes, I would not mind. I know of a syndicate who will give £200,000 for this reserve, if the breakwater is constructed, and the railway brought down here.
1647. What is the area of the reserve? Four square miles.
1648. Do you tell me that that would bring £200,000 if the breakwater were constructed? I was told that they would pay that if the Government would construct it.
1649. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do any members of the syndicate live in Byron Bay? No.
1650. *Mr. Lee.*] Having had the plan before the Committee explained to you, are you of opinion that number 2 breakwater would be sufficient? Yes, I think so; for the present and all future requirements.
1651. You stated that the steamship *Alice* runs here regularly? Every six or eight days.
1652. Does she take away full cargoes? Now she does.
1653. Are there any other steamers trading here? Two others erratically—the *Karuah* and a little steamer from the Richmond which brings sawn stuff.
1654. Any sailing vessels? Not now.
1655. The jetty is not altogether a mistake? No; the only thing is that there is an uncertainty about the communication.
1656. It has afforded a certain amount of accommodation? Yes.
1657. If the jetty were protected by a breakwater, so that it could be used at all times, would there be a larger quantity of cargo shipped from here? I should imagine a great deal more.
1658. What you are doing I suppose some of your neighbours are doing? Yes.
1659. Like most of your neighbours, you are only cultivating a portion of your land? Yes. If these works were carried out people would come here, and we would be willing to let portions of our land to them. That would settle a larger population on the country.
1660. You think that if the proposed works were carried out the trade of the district generally would be concentrated here? I am certain of it.
1661. What reason have you for thinking so? I cannot see where else they would take it. It would not pay them to ship from the Richmond River, and they would certainly not ship from the Brunswick or the Tweed. We have no navigable streams here at all. We have no feeders to the port like they have on the Richmond.
1662. I presume people on the Tweed will be more likely to send their stuff here to ship it? I think so.
1663. But they would not be likely to send it to Grafton? They would be very foolish if they did.
1664. It would be a question of freight—the cheapest market is the way for everybody? Trade will find its natural channel.

Mr. Edward Boyle, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. E. Boyle.
23 Nov., 1889.
1665. *Chairman.*] Do you reside near here? Yes; I reside in the parish of Byron, 6 miles from here by road.
1666. What are you? A dairy farmer.
1667. How long have you been here? I selected here in 1881. I have been here about eight and a half years.
1668. That was your first selection? Yes.
1669. When did you make your second selection? In the same year—an additional.
1670. And the next? I have no more selections.
1671. How much land have you altogether? I selected 352 acres originally, and I parted with 100 acres; that leaves me with 252 acres.
1672. Has land been a source of great profit to you? Not as yet.
1673. What did you get per acre for what you sold? £4, some time ago.*
1674. When did you buy it? In 1881.
1675. With a balance of 15s. due on it? Yes.
1676. You have not done badly? I have not done well.
1677. What had you to spend on the improvements on that 100 acres—had you cleared it? No.
1678. You sold it as you got it? Yes.
1679. What did you want to tell the Committee? Nothing that I know of. I think that a dairy farmer has already told the Committee everything that I could tell them. As we are situated here, we have to take to dairy farming. I have been a dairy farmer for the principal portion of my life, but I was induced to come here as a cane-grower. Finding after I had been here two years, though I was supposed to be on the best land in the district for cane growing, that the small mills were a failure without water carriage, I thought I had better take up dairy farming. I satisfied myself that the climate was suitable for it, and I brought cattle here from the south coast. It has been a hard struggle of course to start a dairy farm in this scrub. The land is all scrub. We have no natural grass; we have had to clear the land. When starting first on a small scale we had to pack our butter to Ballina, a distance from my place of 25 miles, along very bad roads; in fact, what many men would call impassable roads. We thought it a relief when we could pack our butter something like 8 miles, and pay 2s. 6d. a keg to have it carried by team to Ballina; but when I came to reckon it up I found that it reduced my profits a lot.
1680. It has therefore not been an eminent success since you came here? No; though I have tried pretty hard with it. I cannot claim it to be a success as we are situated now.
1681. Were you obliged to sell 100 acres to meet your expenses in connection with the rest? No.
1682. Have you anything more to tell us? I think dairying in this district was too hard a pursuit for a man to follow for a livelihood until the steamer started trading here—The *Alice*. Of course she has not given great satisfaction as yet, though she has made trips almost weekly, and it has been a great change to what we have been used. I cannot say that I consider that the railway will be an immediate benefit

* NOTE—(on revision):—The £4 I named was only a valuation between me and my sister. In reality the land sold by me was a deed of gift to my sister.

benefit to myself personally. I look for my future benefit to the construction of a breakwater at Byron Bay, though the railway will enhance the value of my land, if I ever made up mind to sell it. I have friends living further back from the Richmond, relations of mine—sisters and brothers—and this month I had an argument with them as to the shipment of our butter. I maintained that, if a railway were constructed, butter for 9 miles north of Lismore would be shipped at Byron Bay, if there were a steamer making regular trips here. I was teamster to a railway before I came here, and I understand a little of the freights. I feel certain that it is in the 75 miles of river journey that the Richmond butter receives all its damage. I cannot see that the land lying to the north of the river can look upon the river as its port—though things will certainly be better when the steamers can go straight out, and not be delayed on the bar. If a railway is constructed, and a safe port made at Byron Bay, I think that dairy produce will be shipped from here.

1683. And you think that the industry will be largely developed? The dairy farmer will be the large farmer of the Richmond, because there is more dairy farming on the Richmond than there is cane or corn growing.

Mr. E. Boyle.
23 Nov., 1889.

MONDAY, 25 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at Eureka.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX. | JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Mr. Andrew Johnston, J.P., selector, sworn, and examined:—

1684. *Mr. Cox.*] Are you a selector in this district? Yes.
1685. Have you resided here for any length of time? Yes.
1686. How many years? I took up a selection on the 14th July, 1881, and I have resided here ever since.
1687. Do you occupy a large area? I occupy 633 acres—that was my original selection. Since then I have purchased a little piece more. I have about 700 acres altogether.
1688. How much of the original selection have you cleared? About 230 acres.
1689. How do you clear it? By felling the timber and letting it lie for some time, and then putting a fire in it, and burning it off.
1690. That, of course, only clears it in a very perfunctory manner? Yes. It only does away with the light branches. Then we wait about three years and burn it off clean.
1691. What do you do before the second burning? Sow grass and put cattle on the land.
1692. What are the grasses that you find most suitable? Rye-grass, prairie, and clover are what we sow.
1693. Have you done any cultivation? Not much; only just raised corn, potatoes, and vegetables for my own use.
1694. You have not grown any sugar-cane? I have given it a small trial. It seems to grow well, but I could not make any profit out of it.
1695. What is the nearest sugar mill to your selection? I do not know what it is called.
1696. How far is it from your selection in the way that you would have to go to it? It think 9 miles, more or less.
1697. It would not pay you to grow sugar cane to take it 9 miles to a mill? No.
1698. Are you aware of the direction of the proposed railway? Yes.
1699. How far would it be from your selection? On the nearest road leading to the line, about 2 miles.
1700. Do you think you could grow sugar-cane at a profit by carting it to a railway line, and then running it out to some large mill in the neighbourhood—would that suit you and your neighbours? I have such a slight acquaintance with sugar-cane that I could scarcely answer the question.
1701. What occupation do you follow? I am a dairyman.
1702. How many acres have you cleared? Altogether about 250.
1703. How many cows have you upon that? I could not tell you the exact number of cattle on it; but the maximum number that I milked last season was 43 or 45.
1704. How many cattle have you altogether—big and little? I have something over 100.
1705. Is your land fully stocked? No; in addition to these I have had nearly fifty head on the place belonging to other people.
1706. What do you suppose is the grazing capability of the country when fairly laid down with grass and clover? In a good season I think $1\frac{1}{2}$ acre would be sufficient to keep a milch cow. In a season like this an acre of cleared land would be amply sufficient for a cow; but the seasons are not always as good as this has been. A milch cow would take nearly as much again to keep her in proper trim as a dry cow or a bullock would.
1707. Presuming there were a railway, what benefit would you derive from it? A very considerable benefit by having my produce placed on the market so quickly that it would not deteriorate. I was a considerable loser last season. On one occasion I had as many as eleven kegs of butter behind the bar, on the *Tomki*. This butter was sold at 1d. a lb. less than it ought to have been sold at, and as there were 65 lb. in a keg, you can estimate my loss.
1708. *Chairman.*] Did you miss a particular market? No; but the butter deteriorates by keeping.
1709. *Mr. Cox.*] Of course in this warm climate butter would necessarily deteriorate? It goes bad quicker here than it does in a cold climate.
1710. You are aware that the Government intend to spend a large sum of money at the Richmond River to make the bar passable? Yes.

Mr. A.
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Mr. A.
Johnston,
J.P.
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1711. Do you not think that that ought to be sufficient, without a railway? I scarcely think so. I would like the railway to be continued on to join the Northern line, and not to stop short at any of these ports, so that we could put our produce into the Sydney market.

1712. Do you know what it would cost to send produce to Sydney? I know that the cost would be considerable; but I, and I think most men, would be willing to pay it. Of course bulk produce, such as maize, potatoes, and other things would go by water; but our produce will generally go by rail.

1713. As the Government intend to spend a large sum of money in making the entrance to the Richmond navigable, at all events, except in very heavy weather, do you think they would be justified in making this railway? I think so.

1714. The proposed railway of course would not go to Ballina, but it would go to Byron Bay? Of course Byron Bay would be the outlet for all the people on the north of the ridge between Ballina and Lismore—it is the natural outlet for all those people.

1715. Presuming a railway were made from Lismore to Byron Bay, and there were a good port at Byron Bay, where would you send your produce? Of course to Byron Bay.

1716. You know the country between Lismore and Byron Bay thoroughly; do you think there is a sufficient extent of country that would be used to warrant the Government in making an expensive line of railway between those two points? I am sure of it. I can judge of the future by the past. I know that when the Southern line was made, it was proposed to build a little station at Bowral, and there was great opposition to it. Most people cried out that Mr. Roberts was only getting accommodation for himself—as that station is only backed up by Kangaloon; but no station on the Southern line has paid better than it has, and it has had to be enlarged several times.

1717. If a railway were constructed you would enter into various pursuits which you are now debarred from following—you have to dairy now because you could not get any other produce away? We have to raise produce which will cost the least amount to place on the market—the least amount of freight, in proportion to the money value. We cannot raise anything but dairy produce to place on the market with profit.

1718. Have you ever sent calves to the Sydney market? No. The voyage is too long, and the risk too great.

1719. If a railway were constructed, would you set to work and clear a considerably greater portion of your land, and make it more valuable? I cannot clear more than I am doing now; I am doing my best now. Since April I have shipped 108 kegs of butter and 53 pigs.

1720. *Mr. Lee.*] Where were you living before you came here? At Kangaloon for sixteen years.

1721. You left there to come here? Yes.

1722. Supposing the railway were constructed according to the proposed route, from which port would you be likely to ship—from Byron Bay or from Lismore? From Byron Bay.

1723. Why? Because it is nearer or equally as near as Lismore, and it is nearer to Sydney than Lismore in point of time, because so much time is lost on the river—even when the bar is excellent. A boat leaving Byron Bay this morning would be in Sydney twenty-four hours before a boat from Lismore.

1724. Where do you ship from? From Lismore.

1725. The road from Lismore is a main road? Yes.

1726. It is available for you? Yes.

1727. Is it available for all the selectors living between this and the Byron? No, only for a few along the roadside. There are a number of people at the back who have no road.

1728. Would they be able to ship at Lismore? No; they are more likely to go to the Bay.

1729. You say that you are acquainted with the route of the proposed railway—necessarily some of the settlers will lie considerably to the north of that proposed route? Rather to the west of it. The bulk of the settlers are to the west of it.

1730. Which service would suit them best—by way of Lismore or by way of Byron Bay? By way of Byron Bay.

1731. Why? Because they are nearer to it, and it brings them nearer to Sydney by twenty-four or at least twelve hours.

1732. How could they get their produce to the railway? There must be various roads leading to it.

1733. How do they manage at the present time in wet weather? It is very awkward indeed. The greater part of the produce is brought on horseback. There is no such thing as putting a vehicle even on the main road in wet weather.

1734. Did you ever know a man put a keg of butter on one side of his horse and stones on the other? Yes, it is often done.

1735. If he did not pack his butter to his nearest market, either by way of Byron Bay or of Lismore, what would become of it? He might give it to the pigs and make it into bacon.

1736. You have no other market? No.

1737. There is no local market? No.

1738. Would a series of good roads to the port answer your requirements as well as a railway would? No; because the road traffic would always be so expensive and slow in comparison with the railway traffic. The great thing we want is speed, so that our produce will be delivered to Sydney, or any other market, as quickly as possible.

1739. Do I understand you to say that you do not cultivate maize or sugar-cane at the present time because it is impossible to get it to market? Yes, the cost would be too much.

1740. So you fall back to the next best paying thing—dairying? Yes.

1741. Would you in this country cultivate maize to any extent if you had a market? Yes.

1742. What is the feeling of the people in this district as to the port from which they would like to ship? They would like to ship from Byron Bay.

1743. You look to Byron Bay as a place from which you could have certain and regular shipment? Yes.

1744. *Chairman.*] I suppose the land about here is superior, or equal, to the Illawarra land? Superior to it at the present time. The Illawarra land may have been as good in the early days; but ever since I saw it, twenty-three years ago, with the exception of some particular spots, it was inferior to this land.

1745. This has the heavier rainfall? I think that has something to do with it.

1746. I suppose your case with regard to cultivation is the case of scores of farmers in the district? Yes.

1747. With rapid communication and more certain markets you think the land would be more largely developed than it is at the present time? Certainly.

1748.

1748. Do you not think that a number of the farmers hold too large an area? I do not know what may be considered too large an area.

1749. Do you think that with such land as you have in this district men could make fair livings out of smaller areas than they hold at the present time? Certainly. I could make a living off one-sixth of what I hold.

1750. Supposing rapid communication were given, do you think those holding larger areas would let out their lands to the people who wanted them? Certainly, but most of those who have large areas have a family to divide their land amongst.

1751. I suppose many have taken up large areas with the idea of dividing them ultimately among their sons and daughters? Yes.

1752. The men have come here and have taken large areas for the sake of their children? Yes. I know of cases where a family in the south coast has sent one of its members up here to take up a section of land.

1753. That is not uncommon? No.

1754. How many children have you? Seven sons and three daughters. I have only 100 acres for each of them.

1755. In the interest of the country do you not think the land in this district should be reserved until the proposed public works are constructed, so that it would help to pay for them? Yes. But I think it would be an injury to the district to do that.

1756. But would it not be to the interest of the country to do it? I think so.

1757. At the present time are there not large quantities of timber being destroyed which might be shipped to Sydney if it could be got away? Yes.

1758. If proper facilities were provided, that timber would be used instead of destroyed? Yes, a great deal of it would be used.

Mr. Moses King, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined:—

1759. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? About $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, or it may be 3 miles, from Eureka.

1760. Are you a selector? I have purchased a selection.

1761. How many acres do you hold now? 640 acres.

1762. Where did you reside before you came to this district? At Jamberoo, Illawarra.

1763. What occupation are you engaged in now? Dairying—I am a dairy farmer.

1764. Would you have any objection to say what is about your monthly or annual yield of dairy produce? That is a matter into which I have not gone. I have nearly 200 acres cleared, but it is not all in first-class order. I have never gone into figures, and am not prepared to say what yield per acre I have had.

1765. We should be very glad to hear what evidence you have to give us—as to whether your dairying has been kept back through want of an outlet, or any suggestions you have to make as to the railway route? The money which my father gave me I invested in land here, to the extent of 640 acres, and of course I intend to make a living for myself and my family off it. I think it is only reasonable that we should have a proper outlet for our produce, which I consider we scarcely have at the present time. In leaving home I have to put my keg of butter on one side of my horse, and a few stones in a bag on the other side, and bring it about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

1766. To what point? To a point a short distance from here. Then a waggon takes it something like 15 miles to Lismore. I think that the people of this locality would be benefited by the construction of a railway. Our butter gets too much handling, as it is; while, the less handling it gets, the better it is for us. I consider that it would be a boon to the Richmond if we had a railway, inasmuch as the carriage of produce would be greatly facilitated. If we had a port at Byron Bay, our butter and produce would go to market more readily, and bring a better price. In the Illawarra district money has been spent on the Robinson basin at Kiama, and more or less at Shellharbour—money has also been spent on the formation of a basin at Wollongong; and I think that, taking into consideration the vast extent of good country there is here compared with what there is in the Illawarra district, we are very far behind them. It is a pretty well known fact now that you cannot get as great an extent of the best land anywhere in Australia as there is here.

1767. You are speaking of the scrub land generally? I speak of the scrub land generally.

1768. Could you tell us from what point it extends? I have only been here about three years, and of course, follow my own vocation more than that of travelling about. Although I have travelled a little, I am not in a position to answer the question.

1769. You have been here sufficiently long to judge whether the district is capable of producing grasses suitable for dairying purposes? Certainly.

1770. What is your opinion on the matter? My opinion is that it is capable of growing grass, and does grow it, suitable for dairying purposes. When butter was 1s. 9d. in Sydney, I have made butter on the Richmond, and have got 1s. 9d. for it. This was in the winter, when, if the butter was a shade longer on the road, it would not injure it.

1771. Does the Richmond River itself serve the people in this locality, and between this and the bay, as well as a railway would serve it; would the railway, if it were constructed along the proposed route, give you greater facilities for getting to market than you have now? It would give us greater facilities. If the railway were constructed I could bring my produce to the station in the morning, and be back for milking in the evening—it would also be a benefit to those at a greater distance than I am.

1772. If you had greater facilities for getting to market, would you be likely to grow maize and sugar-cane? That is a thing for the future. I am a dairyman, and I look to dairying and breeding of cattle to support me. There is not a doubt that maize will be grown, and sugar-cane also, if the price of sugar keeps up.

1773. The difficulties to which you refer with reference to getting butter to market would apply with equal force to your getting supplies back home? We would get the supplies more quickly if a railway were constructed.

1774. Have you to pack your supplies home? Well, at present I have only to pack from where I bring my butter to. We are charged extra by the local storekeepers.

1775. *Mr. Cox.*] I should like to know the present value of some of the land here—when you came here three years ago what area of land had you cleared? When I bought Mr. Malcolm's farm they considered that there were 100 acres, or a little more, under grass.

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1776.

Mr. A.
Johnston,
J.P.
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Mr. M. King.
25 Nov., 1889.

- Mr. M. King. 1776. You have cleared the rest since you were here? I have cleared the rest, which makes pretty near 200 acres.
- 25 Nov., 1889. 1777. If it is a fair question to ask you, what did you give for your 640 acres—I would like to know what is considered the value of the land about here? Would other land not do—for instance, the land we are on?
1778. I tell you the reason I ask this question—the Committee want to know the value of the land. They perhaps may be asking the Government to spend large sums of money here, which they probably would be chary of doing if the land were not of much value? I bought it exceptionally cheap. The land which we are on cost £6 an acre the other day.
1779. *Mr. Garrard.*] How far is your place from the nearest point of the proposed railway? I could not say exactly how far it would be—my place is nearly west of there.
1780. The other side of the road that we have come along? Yes.
1781. I suppose it would be within 5 miles of the railway? I think that I should have a station within 5 or 6 miles of my place.
1782. Byron Bay is 20 miles from here? I do not think it is, in a straight direction.
1783. What is it by road? As near as can be, 20 miles.
1784. What is the distance to Lismore? It is reckoned 14 or 15 miles.
1785. Why should you prefer to go to Byron Bay instead of to Lismore? One of our surveyors told us that we can get a road from Eureka to the Bay, which we propose asking for shortly, which will make us nearer to the Bay than we are to Lismore.
1786. If you get the Byron Bay breakwater then you will not want the railway? We think it would be a great advantage to have both.
1787. Which would suit the people of this district better—the railway or a harbour at Byron Bay? We want both. I think one depends a great deal upon the other. We want the bay for a port—we consider that it would be our best port; and a railway would facilitate our getting produce to it.
1788. But if it were 20 miles from here to the bay, and 15 miles to Lismore, is not that rather handicapping you? It is 20 miles, going round by the road, which is pretty near the shape of a horseshoe.
1789. What would be the distance by the proposed road? I have not been over the road, so that I am not prepared to say.
1790. Would it be shorter than the present road to Lismore? It would be much shorter than the present road to Byron Bay.
1791. It would be much the same distance then to Byron Bay as it is to Lismore? We have always looked upon Byron Bay as our port.
1792. If you get the new road it will save you about 5 miles of your present journey to Byron Bay, and will make the distance between this place and Byron Bay, and between this place and Lismore, the same—is that so? Yes. The Richmond River entrance is not improved sufficiently yet, and we think that our produce could be got away from Byron Bay more readily.
1793. You cannot get it away from there now? Not at the present time.
1794. Do you not think that there is a probability of making the Richmond a navigable port in a short time, considering that the works are actually being proceeded with? I would not like to say that Sir John Coode's method of getting rid of the bar will be a success.
1795. Suppose the Richmond River entrance is made as good as the entrance of the Clarence? They get bar-bound there occasionally.
1796. How often? I could not tell you. I have seen by the paper that the *City of Grafton* was outside the Clarence bar.
1797. Would you be surprised to learn that the steamers have not missed one trip during the last year? That is very good.
1798. If that was the case at the Richmond, would it not be a very good outlet for you? Certainly, if we had it.
1799. *Chairman.*] You have 60 or 70 miles to go down the river when you get your produce to Lismore? Nearly 70 miles.
1800. Is the steamer from Lismore the one that goes outside? Yes.
1801. *Mr. Garrard.*] How many miles is it from Byron Bay to the Richmond Heads? I have been told by Captain Jackson 22 miles.
1802. A very much smaller and slower boat goes from Byron Bay than from the Richmond? If we had a good harbour we would have a better boat.
1803. It is a very much smaller and slower boat that goes from Byron Bay now than the boats going from the Richmond? Yes; it is a smaller boat.
1804. *Chairman.*] If the breakwater were made you would have better steamers coming to Byron Bay than ever come to the Richmond? Yes.

MONDAY, 25 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at Clunes.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Mr. George Thomas Hindmarsh, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. G. T. Hindmarsh. 1805. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your occupation? Dairy farming at present.
1806. Do you live close to Clunes? 2½ miles away.
1807. In which direction? North-west.
- 25 Nov., 1889. 1808. How long have you resided in the district? A little over eight years.
1809. What land have you? 640 acres of scrub land.
1810. Are you engaged in anything else but dairying pursuits? I have a small number of butcher's sheep.
1811. I am breeding them.

Mr. G. T.
Hindmarsh.
25 Nov., 1889.

1811. What land have you cleared? About 200 acres.
1812. Your principal industry is dairying? Yes.
1813. Where do you find a market for your produce at present? In Sydney.
1814. What way do you get to it? By Lismore.
1815. How far would the nearest point of the proposed railway be from your place? $4\frac{1}{2}$ or 5 miles.
1816. In the event of its being constructed would you use it for conveying your produce? I would.
1817. And send it to Lismore? No. We have always looked on Byron Bay as our outlet for produce.
1818. Then why do you not send it to Byron Bay now? Because there is not a sufficiently good road.
1819. What is the distance between Byron Bay and here? Fourteen or 15 miles by the nearest road.
1820. And from Lismore to here? Fifteen miles to our place.
1821. I suppose the relative distance would be much the same if the railway were constructed? About the same.
1822. Why would you send your produce the longer distance instead of the shorter? Because it would not be longer in point of time—it would be quicker getting to Sydney, and dairy produce wants quick and regular transit.
1823. You presume that the Byron Bay works will be completed and that there will be a large harbour there? We hope to see that some day. We have always looked to that being done. I was one of three appointed six years ago, at a public meeting at Clunes, to mark out the road to Byron Bay. We marked out the Clunes portion of the road.
1824. Is the produce sent to Lismore very often detained in its [transit to Sydney? Yes; by the bar, and the irregularity of the steamers.
1825. Are not the steamers running regularly? Yes; but not sufficiently so.
1826. Are they not running more regularly than they are running to Byron Bay? They are at present.
1827. Do you know that the Government are spending a large amount of money to improve the Richmond River entrance? Yes.
1828. If as good an entrance can be obtained there as there is at the Clarence, would not the Richmond be your best port? Not the quickest to market.
1829. The cheapest? I do not think it; not if the line were constructed to Byron Bay.
1830. Though you are so close to Lismore? There is only 3 miles difference, by the present road, and there are 75 miles of river transit.
1831. Do you think that the Government would be justified in spending £100,000 on a railway from Lismore to the Tweed, and another £242,000 upon improving Byron Bay? I think so, considering the district that there is behind Byron Bay.
1832. You are not thinking of its present population, but of the probable increase if these facilities were given? If the population increases at the rate it has done during the last ten years, I consider that they would be quite justified in incurring the expenditure.
1833. Do you think that people nearer to Lismore than we are would send their produce to Byron Bay? I believe so, if the railway were constructed.
1834. The people close to Lismore? Those in the scrub land—there is not much dairying done in the open country.
1835. Do I understand that dairy produce 5 miles from Lismore would come by the railway? Yes. Although it would cost a little more freight, we would gain by having it sent more quickly.
1836. You are looking forward to having large steamers at Byron Bay? Yes; quick travelling steamers with cooling apparatus for dairy produce.
1837. As things are at present, the Richmond River is your best port? It is the only one at present, on account of there not being a good road to the Bay. I believe there would be a trade *via* Byron Bay if the road were good.
1838. Do you think that a railway from Casino to Grafton would be of any benefit to this place? Yes, as a main coast line from Sydney. I believe it would develop the northern coast district to a much larger extent than it is developed at present.
1839. Then you can shut up the Richmond and the Clarence? Not at all; there is the sugar industry to be considered, and there is maize growing on the banks of the river from Lismore to its mouth.
1840. For all the back lands you think that Byron Bay would be the best place for shipment? I am certain it would.
1841. Has there been much increase in settlement since you came to the place? A wonderful increase. Ten years ago there was not a track with the mark of a horse's hoof from Bexhill to the Brunswick. There was not a settlement between those two places. Eight years ago there were two small clearings where we are now.
1842. Have you taken up your land as a free selection? Yes.
1843. Have you added to it since you selected? No.
1844. What is the value of land here? £5 or £8 an acre.
1845. Is that for scrub land or for improved land? Every farm is improved to a certain extent; some have been sold at £5.
1846. What do you think is the value of unimproved land in this district? I believe it is worth £5 or £6 an acre.
1847. How far does this scrub land extend westward? I could not give you the extent in miles.
1848. You know the district intimately? Yes, I have been all through it.
1849. Where were you residing before you came here? At Gerringong, near Kiamā.
1850. Were you engaged in dairying there? Yes, with my father.
1851. How does this country compare with the Illawarra district? It has many advantages over the Illawarra district as a dairying district, inasmuch as feed is much more easily grown in the winter time; the cattle thrive better, and the land is better watered.
1852. Do you think that anything else besides dairy produce would be raised here if the railway and harbour works were constructed—sugar or maize? I believe there would be a great growth of cereals, and a large trade done in fruit, but the fruit industry seems a long way off. This land would all grow sugar. If there was money to be had out of the sugar-cane the farmers would grow it.
1853. Would that produce go to Byron Bay, or to Lismore, do you think? I believe it would go to Byron Bay if there were a harbour there.

- Mr. G. T. Hindmarsh.
25 Nov., 1889.
1854. *Mr. Lee.*] You are aware that the question that the Committee are considering is the advisability of constructing a line from Grafton to the Tweed? Yes.
1855. You are about midway on that line? Nearer the northern end.
1856. In the event of the Clarence Heads being made a safe entrance at all times for large vessels, would the residents in this part of the district be likely to send their produce to that river for shipment? I do not think it.
1857. Why? Because it would be cheaper to send it by the Richmond.
1858. The distance is too great, and the railway charges would be too high? It would be cheaper to send it by the Richmond.
1859. What is your reason for thinking that Byron Bay would be your port of shipment? I do not know whether it is that I have educated myself to it from the first; but we have always looked upon it as the natural outlet to this part of the district.
1860. Byron Bay being more conveniently situated than the Richmond River? Certainly—it is really not closer.
1861. The distance is about the same? Yes.
1862. What is the distance by water from Lismore to the Heads? 70 or 75 miles.
1863. Then, as you are equi-distant from Byron Bay and Lismore, if your produce were shipped at Byron Bay, it would reach Sydney 24 hours sooner than it would if shipped from the Richmond? Yes; and if the Richmond bar were bad, very much sooner.
1864. Dairy produce requires regular and speedy transit? Yes.
1865. Are you living near the Byron Bay Road, or off the road any distance? I am living north-west of Clunes—about $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles from the main road.
1866. What is the road like in wet weather? Very bad. Last April most of our produce had to be conveyed to Lismore on pack-horses. The road from here to Lismore was almost impassable for vehicular traffic.
1867. I presume that you prosecute dairy farming now in preference to cane or maize growing, because it is easier to get the produce to market? I was engaged for two years in horse-breeding, and owning stallions; but my brother and I found that that would not pay, so we took to dairying—getting the greatest value in the smallest bulk.
1868. Do you wish the Committee to understand that although you are living near the Richmond River, it would be more convenient for you and other residents to ship your produce from Byron Bay? It would be more convenient, and it would pay us better to do so.
1869. Supposing no harbour works were constructed at Byron Bay, would the contemplated railway serve the residents in the district through which it runs? It would to a certain extent.
1870. What I want to know is this: the river is already a benefit to you to a certain extent; does the railway run in such a direction that it will benefit the settlers by giving them better access to the river? Yes.
1871. Do you think it centrally situated so as to suit the majority of the selectors? Yes.
1872. If it were constructed would you in fine weather send your produce to market by it, or by drays? I think we would send it by the railway. The drays jolt dairy produce about more than is desirable, and they are very much slower than a railway.
1873. You would naturally expect to have the same facilities here for the carriage of dairy produce as they have in the south—cool chambers? Yes, that is what we need.
1874. *Mr. Cox.*] Are you sufficiently acquainted with the district to know whether the land on the map shown white is of any value? I believe most of it is rich land, from what I have seen in passing through.
1875. In the event of the Government spending large sums of money on the construction of a breakwater at Byron Bay, and a railway from the Tweed to Lismore, do you think they would be justified in keeping back the lands marked green, and selling them at a price that would probably pay largely for the work? I believe that the Government would be justified in doing that, but if the reserves were thrown open the district would be benefited.
1876. These reserves only fetch 2s. an acre, and the scrub is so thick that it will not pay a surveyor to survey it for that? They are getting more than 2s. an acre.
1877. But you spoke of their being thrown open to selection—if they were made into special areas it would be different? All the land thrown open for selection is special area land. The reserves, especially when they join a farm, are a great source of annoyance to the farmers, because they harbour vermin.
1878. The land already alienated has been taken up by selection? Yes.
1879. When a man has taken up land and served his five years upon it and improved it to a sufficient extent to warrant the Government in giving him a certificate for it, at what rate would it sell? Much of it has been sold for £5, and some, more highly improved, for as much as £10.
1880. To satisfy the requirements of the Land Boards what amount of clearing is considered necessary? A very small amount.
1881. If you had 640 acres, how much would you have to clear to get a certificate? I got a certificate when I had less than 100 acres cleared, but I had a lot of buildings on the land. That land I could make a living out of, but I did not pay expenses from it.
1882. What did the land that has been cleared cost you? Not less than £6 an acre. It took me five or six years to clear it.
1883. When you commenced to clear this scrub land, how much did you give for cutting down the trees? 25s. an acre.
1884. How do you make up the difference between 25s. and £6? Grass has to be sown and the timber burnt off—that takes months and months in this wet climate.
1885. When land is finally laid down in permanent pasture what do you consider is its value? I consider that at the present time it is worth about £10 an acre when it is cleared.
1886. How are you going to get interest on your money when you have paid £10 an acre for the land? The land will feed almost a beast to the acre—a dairy cow all the year round.
1887. What is the net return from each cow that you milk—what return do you think each cow gives you per annum? I have not the least idea.
1888. *Chairman.*] You say that in the interest of the district it would be well to throw the reserves open, but you have also told us that the growth of population here is enormous. We have heard during the course

course of our inquiry that the growth of population in this district has been something like $22\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., while in the Colony, as a whole, it has only been $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.—if that is to continue for the next ten years will not the land increase greatly in value? It will.

1889. Would it not be to the interests of the country to keep the land for future settlement? The Government would get more money, but the district would not be benefited.

1890. The district is asking for half a million of money, and it is only by people being settled here that the interest on that money can be paid? Yes.

1891. How many people living in the district now would have a slapdash for these lands if they were thrown open to-morrow? I think that most of them have as much land as they want.

1892. Have you any doubt that in a few years if a port were made at Byron Bay, and the railway constructed, these lands would double in value? I believe they would—the reserved lands.

1893. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you know the route of the proposed line? Yes.

1894. Do you think that it is the best that could be taken in the interest of the district generally? I believe it is.

Mr. G. T. Hindmarsh.
25 Nov., 1889.

Mr. James Gibson, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined :—

1895. *Mr. Cox.*] Where do you reside? At Clunes.

1896. How far from where we are now sitting? $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

1897. How long have you been a resident of the district? Eight years.

1898. Are you living upon your own selection, or did you purchase your lands? I am living on my own selection.

1899. How much land have you? 483 acres.

1900. How much of that is cleared? I have 180 acres cleared.

1901. But it is not productive? 60 acres I have felled lately. The rest of the land is productive.

1902. What occupation do you follow? Dairy farming.

1903. How many cows have you? I am milking twenty-three.

1904. Upon how much land are those twenty-three cows kept? Upon about 120 acres. I have young stock also.

1905. How much young stock? Somewhere about twenty head, and I have three horses.

1906. About fifty head altogether? Nearly fifty head altogether.

1907. What do you find is the capability of the country;—what could your land carry if fully stocked? If it were fully improved I believe I could carry a beast to every 2 acres.

1908. What has it cost you up to the present? I have given 35s. an acre to have it felled—a portion of it. The other improvements—burning off and sowing grass—I did myself.

1909. Your labour would be as valuable as that of other people? Yes; but I did not actually pay for it.

1910. Your labour would be equal to 35s. an acre? Yes.

1911. What would you expend upon the land to make it capable of keeping a beast to 2 acres? I could not tell you actually—I believe £6 or £8.

1912. Then there is the value of the stock? There is the value of the stock.

1913. What would be the return per head from the stock, in dairy produce? Three years ago, when butter was 1s. 9d. and 2s. a lb., from ten cows in two months, I realized £50 5s.

1914. What is the price of it now? From 4d. to 7d.

1915. How much will a cow give you a week? I have averaged 7lb. and over of butter from a cow per week.

1916. In summer-time you would get the price you now give us; but in winter the price would be double? The average price would be about 1s. a lb.

1917. For how many months in a year does a cow remain in milk? As a rule we milk them nine months.

1918. A cow is worth about £6? We give £10 for some.

1919. Say that a cow is worth £6; you would get the whole of that value back again within twelve months, from her production? I believe so.

1920. So that the cow pays for herself in the first year, and the expense attendant upon keeping her would be the cost of improving the land—2 acres at £6 an acre? A cow produces more than that even. There is her calf, and the milk, with which we feed pigs. The calf when it is twelve months old, if it is a heifer, is worth at a low estimate from £1 to £2, and even more.

1921. Speaking as fairly as you can, what would be the interest which you would get from each acre of your land? I would not like to let my land to any man on a lease of less than 10s. an acre—the land I have improved.

Mr. J. Gibson.
25 Nov., 1889.

Mr. Thomas Moses, storekeeper, sworn, and examined :—

1922. *Chairman.*] What are you? I was a storekeeper until two months ago.

1923. In Clunes? Yes.

1924. You are now out of business? Yes.

1925. How long have you lived in this district? A little over six years.

1926. During that time I suppose you have been intimately connected, by reason of your business, with the farmers and settlers here? I have.

1927. Have you given any consideration to the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed River—as it affects this district? I have.

1928. Do you think that the most practicable route has been selected, and the route that will give most benefit to the settlers? I believe so.

1929. Do you know anything of the country from the bay further on? No.

1930. How would it affect future settlement if the reserves were thrown open, and fresh land selected? I think it would be better.

1931. You would be fairly served if you could get good roads? Yes.

1932. You have heard some of the evidence given with regard to the produce going to Sydney via Lismore and the Richmond River;—which port do you think would be most generally used if the railway were constructed;—Lismore or Byron Bay? Byron Bay.

1933. You are going on the assumption that harbour works will be made there? Yes.

Mr. T. Moses.
25 Nov., 1889.

- Mr. T. Moses. 1934. Why do you think that they should be made? In the first place they would allow the farmers to get their produce to market much more quickly, because the steamers, after leaving Lismore, call at different places all down the river to Ballina, so that the butter and farm produce becomes almost unfit for market.
- 25 Nov., 1889. 1935. I suppose if the railway were constructed the farmers could send their produce to Byron Bay and avoid the detention in the holds of the steamers, which now takes place? Certainly.
1936. Do you think that if the railway and harbour works at Byron Bay were constructed much additional settlement would be induced to come here? I do decidedly.
1937. You have heard a great deal about very large holdings, not fully improved, being owned in the district;—do you think it likely that farmers would lease those lands to tenants? Either lease them, or sell portions of them.
1938. I understand that many of the farmers who are settled in this district came here to find homes for their children, as well as for themselves? I believe that is what they have done.
1939. Because they were not able to get large enough areas in other districts. You think that they would be willing to lease some of this land? Yes.
1940. Do you not think that it would be a wise thing in the interests of the Colony at large, suppose the works are to be constructed, for the Government to withhold the land from sale? No, I do not.
1941. Why? Because I consider that it is a most necessary thing to settle people on the land, and if the Government sold these lands, or allowed them to be thrown open to selection, the people would settle on them, and the extra amount of produce raised would pay interest on the works.
1942. Do you think it is desirable that these lands should be alienated in large blocks of 640 acres each? I do not.
1943. We have been told that 40 acres of land, properly managed, is an independency for a thrifty man in this district? I believe a man could make a living on 50 or 60 acres, properly cleared, but I should say that 150 acres were enough for any man.
1944. In many places that would be too much for a man; would it not be beyond the means of the bulk of the selectors to improve 150 acres? I do not think so. The majority of them here have taken up from 200 to 640 acres.
1945. How much of that have they cleared? They have not cleared it all.
1946. So far as the country is concerned, then, it might as well not be selected, because it is yielding nothing? No.
1947. If these large selections are not yielding anything to the country, why should that state of things be allowed to continue? You must remember that these people have only been settled on the land for a few years. In the course of a few years they will have more land cleared. Those who first took up land had not money to select with, they had to go out to work to get money to pay for their clearing.
1948. The growth of population in this district, we are told, is greater than that in any other part of the Colony; do you think that that will continue? I do, until the land is occupied.
1949. If the proposed public works were constructed, the growth of population would be still greater in the future than it has been in the past? Decidedly.
1950. There would be a greater demand for land? Yes.
1951. And when the demand is great the price is higher? Yes.
1952. As the Government may be going to spend nearly £1,000,000 in this district upon public works, largely for the benefit of the people already settled here, would it not be better if they got some of that money back from the increased value of the land? I consider that they are getting a fair share back in the way of interest.
1953. You pay interest on any debt;—if you bought land from me you would have to pay interest on the balance due? Look at the difficulties the people have had to put up with.
1954. They would get all the advantages if the works were constructed, and they are not asked to pay for them? They pay their share indirectly.
1955. You have not been engaged in farming land? Not here.
1956. The selectors here have not been trafficking in land, buying and selling—they are *bona fide* men? Yes.
1957. Many of them have had to struggle and lose their selections from want of means, but otherwise you think they are *bona fide*? I do, decidedly.
1958. Do you think that if the harbour works were constructed at Byron Bay, return cargoes would be sent there for the use of the people of the district? Yes, decidedly.
1959. Do you agree with other witnesses that the bulk of the produce would go that way? Yes.
1960. For the same reasons? Yes.

MONDAY, 25 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at the "Commercial Hotel," Lismore, at 8 p.m.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).
 The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX. | JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
 CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Mr. Alexander Meston, sugar manufacturer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. A. Meston. 1961. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your occupation? Sugar manufacturer.
- 25 Nov., 1889. 1962. How long have you resided on the Richmond? Fifteen years.
1963. Previous to that, where were you residing? I was twenty years on the Clarence.
1964. What occupation did you follow on the Clarence? General farming and sugar growing—it is about twenty-six years since I went into sugar.
1965. Do you grow sugar now, as well as manufacture it? Yes.
1966. What information would you like to impart to the Committee? I consider that a railway from here to the Tweed is absolutely necessary. It would go through magnificent country the whole way, as

Mr.
A. Meston.
25 Nov., 1889.

- I daresay you have seen. The land is all good, and I know that it is fit for sugar growing. My son, who is boiling for myself, was boiling on the Brunswick, and he considered that the quality of the juice obtained from cane grown there, was better than that obtained from Richmond River cane.
1967. How do you account for that? It was something in the soil.
1968. Is the cane that your son is growing on the flats, or on the hills? On the hills.
1969. Is it red soil? Yes.
1970. You found that the cane grown in that soil was richer than the cane grown on the Richmond? Yes. It varies in different seasons. Sometimes it is better on the mountains, and sometimes on the flats; as a general rule the mountain cane is the best.
1971. You think that if railway facilities were given, a large quantity of this scrub would be utilized for the growth of sugar? Yes.
1972. Do you know what use it is put to now? It is mostly used for grazing. They are too far from a market or a mill to raise sugar there. I would have no hesitation myself in putting up a mill there.
1973. Do you think that if the land was wholly used for grazing the Government would be justified in making the railway? Certainly not.
1974. You think that if the railway were constructed, the land instead of keeping cows, would be able to keep a large number of human beings, and produce something infinitely more valuable than butter and milk? That has been my experience, whenever a railway has been put through good land.
1975. The people who keep dairies employ no labour; but if they were sugar planters they would have to employ a considerable amount of labour? Yes.
1976. Consequently by sugar planting the population must increase considerably? Yes. You want a large population to grow sugar.
1977. You think that the prospects of sugar-planting there are so good that you would be prepared to put up a factory on some of this scrub land? I should not be in the least afraid to put one up, though I am getting rather old for new enterprises.
1978. Supposing that would justify a railway between the Tweed and Byron Bay, is there anything to justify a railway between Casino and Lismore and Byron Bay? The land between Lismore and Casino is not much good. I do not think I should feel inclined to recommend it at all.
1979. You have good water communication between Lismore and the coast? Oh, yes.
1980. But there is no water communication between Casino and the coast? Yes. The droghers run to Casino, although the deep water is a little way from Casino.
1981. Then in your opinion the Government would be quite warranted in expending money upon the construction of a railway from Lismore to Byron Bay, but not from Casino? No; because it is not good land there.
1982. Why do you think it desirable that we should make a railway from Lismore to Byron Bay, when you have good water carriage here? But the people at Byron Bay and the Brunswick have not good water carriage.
1983. Presuming they were quite justified in running a railway from Murwillumbah to Byron Bay, would the Government be also justified in running a railway from Lismore to Byron Bay, since people here have water carriage already? Yes; but how are you going to let the Tweed and the Brunswick out.
1984. If the Government made a railway from the Brunswick and the Tweed to Byron Bay, what would justify them in making one from Lismore to Byron Bay? The tract of country between Lismore and Byron Bay.
1985. Do you think that that would be sufficient? Yes.
1986. Have they no means of getting to the water now? Not with heavy goods—only by drays; and that is very tedious and expensive.
1987. So that unless a railway were constructed you think that all the good country between this and Byron Bay would remain as it is now, in the occupation of dairy farmers? I do. Other produce is too heavy for drays to transport.
1988. You are aware that in that country there is a large amount of blue metal;—the best stone in the world with which to make roads? Yes. The roads are not equal to railways for carrying produce. I believe you can carry for 1½d. a ton per mile on the railway, but you could not do that on the road.
1989. This is very hilly country, and the railway could only run in one line;—how would the people reach the railway from the various points? There must be stations along the line to which they can bring their produce at less distance than they have to go at present.
1990. Do people now reside at any great distance from the main road? Yes; some a great way.
1991. How do they get their produce to market? The best way they can. They only have dairies, so that the produce is not very heavy to transport. It would be quite different if it were sugar, or maize, or produce of that description.
1992. Do you think that Byron Bay, as it is at present, would be of any use to people if there were a railway? Not as it is at present.
1993. That would necessitate the construction of a breakwater at a large expense in order to make a harbour;—do you think the country would be justified in making that breakwater? I cannot say that I am competent to judge. I have no idea what it would cost.
1994. £242,000. Do you think that the Government would be justified in expending that sum of money in making a harbour at Byron Bay for the benefit of the people we have just been considering? If there were a railway through, and the whole country settled, I think they would be perfectly justified in doing it.
1995. Are you aware that the Government propose to expend a very large sum of money in improving the entrance to the Richmond? I am aware of that.
1996. Do you think that would be sufficient to meet the requirements of the district, without spending any more money at Byron Bay? It is a long way for people to have to take their produce to the river, and then tranship it again.
1997. Do you know the country between Byron Bay and Ballina? Yes, perfectly.
1998. Is it very easy or very rough? Pretty hilly, but splendid land. It is all dense scrub—about 40 acres of it is quite sufficient to support a family.
1999. Which do you think would be the best, to make a breakwater at Byron Bay, or a railway from there to Ballina? And spend the same amount on either—I think the breakwater.
2000. Do you know Sir John Coode's scheme for improving the entrance to the Richmond River? Yes; I have read it.
- 2001.

- Mr. A. Meston.
25 Nov., 1889.
2001. Do you know anything at all about the result of making breakwaters and training-walls? I know that they have been a failure at the Clarence. I believe that that river was better thirty-five years ago than it is now.
2002. Has any money been spent on the Richmond? Not a shilling.
2003. Have you suffered any considerable loss by the want of a good harbour at Ballina? No. I am one of the largest shippers of produce on the Richmond River, with the exception of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company.
2004. *Chairman.*] Do you ship sugar only? Yes. I have never had any delay during sixteen years, and I have never insured 6d. worth, or lost it.
2005. *Mr. Cox.*] Have you ever owned any vessels? No. The delay I have experienced is very little, and only happened at long intervals.
2006. *Mr. Lee.*] You are aware that a very large proportion of this scrub land to which you refer lies to the west or north-west of the Richmond River; for instance, Clunes, Eureka, Cooper's Creek, and thence out to the Tweed—is that country at present served by the Richmond? Yes. There is no other way to get from it.
2007. Do you think that one of the reasons why maize and sugar-cane are not produced there at the present time is the difficulty of getting to market? Yes; the difficulty of transit.
2008. Supposing a railway were made to that country, would sugar-mills be established? Yes.
2009. Of course they could not be placed at every plantation? No; certainly not.
2010. Consequently the cane would have to be carried for some distance from the plantations to the various mills? Yes.
2011. As a business man can you tell me whether the sugar cane would stand the cost of transit from the plantations by rail to the nearest sugar-mills? How do you propose to charge for it?
2012. 1½d per ton per mile? Well, we will say 12 miles—that would be only 1s. 6d. Yes, certainly it would be quite as cheap as water carriage.
2013. Can cane be conveyed in the barges in the river at the present time at the rate of 1½d. per ton per mile? Of course for about 50 miles it would cost that—if you went further it would not.
2014. What is the average return of cane per acre? It varies very much according to the soil and the cultivation.
2015. What ought this particular country to yield? A two-year crop ought to yield about 60 tons per acre.
2016. Have you known any ground on the Richmond to yield that? I have cut 84 tons.
2017. Had you any experience on the Clarence? I cultivated sugar there for three years.
2018. What is the average yield there? It was about the same in the early years—it is falling off very much now. Cane is a very exhaustive crop, and ought to be taken in rotation.
2019. If the cane can stand the cost of transit by rail at 1½d. per ton, and the yield is so enormous, the freights on the railway line would be very great, and the revenue obtained would go a good way to pay the working expenses and interest on the construction? The line ought to be used very much for the conveyance of cane. I see that at a meeting on the Brunswick they offered to grow cane for a company at 8s. a ton.
2020. Why did they offer to grow it for so low a price? To induce the company to extend their operations there. At present they have no market, and their cane has to rot. No one likes to go there, because of the difficulty of transit.
2021. Are there places there where sugar-mills could be erected? Several places.
2022. You have no hesitation in saying that the line would be utilized for the conveyance of cane? Not at the freight you have mentioned, because the difference in price would bear it.
2023. You notice the route of the line—what country would be served by it? Five miles on each side ought to be served, even for cane.
2024. What would it cost to cart the cane 5 miles? I have had it carted 5 miles for 2s. a ton—on a good road of course.
2025. But in that country would you get it carted for that? It would cost more. But you could grow an immense quantity of cane within a mile of the line.
2026. The country west of the line is not served by the Richmond River at the present time? No.
2027. Would the line serve that country? Yes, to a very great extent.
2028. In your opinion does the line take the proper course? Yes. It goes through a lot of fine land.
2029. Could you suggest any better route? No, I do not think so.
2030. As to the Brunswick and Tweed, you have no doubt that the line is an absolute necessity? Yes.
2031. You see that the line runs down to Byron Bay—could you give the Committee any information about Byron Bay as a port for shipment? At the present time?
2032. If it were converted into a harbour would it, in your opinion, be used by the Tweed and Brunswick people, and the people along the line? They certainly would use it in preference to coming here. It is much nearer, and you could get larger vessels in than you could get here, unless you improved the river. The larger the vessel the cheaper the freight.
2033. Supposing Byron Bay is not made a harbour, do you think it at all probable that the Tweed and Brunswick people will send the goods by this line round to Lismore? It is a long way.
2034. Which do you think is their proper port? Byron Bay, certainly.
2035. Do you know anything about the land on the proposed line from Lismore to Grafton? Yes.
2036. What is the nature of it? It is certainly not worth putting a railway through—the soil is very poor.
2037. Suppose the Clarence were made navigable for large vessels, do you think that the people residing upon any portion of the Richmond, or along the proposed line of railway, would send their goods there for shipment? No; they would not send an ounce.
2038. *Mr. Garrard.*] Where were you living on the Clarence? At Ulmarra.
2039. Were you frequently down at the heads? Yes.
2040. You spoke just now of the Clarence works having been a failure—do you speak from any knowledge of the works there? Yes; and I have heard the captains say that the bar was better before.
2041. You do not speak from actual knowledge, then? No.
2042. *Chairman.*] Have you ever known 100 tons to be grown to the acre in this district? No; 84 tons to the acre is the highest crop of sugar that I have had.
2043. *Mr. Garrard.*] Whereabouts on the Brunswick did your son grow sugar? He simply manufactured it—at Atkins'.
2044. Atkins' plant is rather old fashioned? Yes.

TUESDAY, 26 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met in the Court-house, Lismore, at 9 a.m.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX. | JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Charles Henry Gale, Esq., Crown Lands Agent, sworn, and examined:—

2045. *Chairman.*] You are Land Agent for the Land District of Lismore? Yes.
2046. How long have you been here? Just ten months.
2047. Have you got the records of the Crown land sales at Byron Bay? Yes.
2048. When was the land sold there—in the village of Cayvauba? The first sale was on the 31st May, 1887, and the second on the 14th October, 1887.
2049. Were many allotments sold at those sales? At the first sale half the allotments put up were sold, and a great number were also withdrawn.
2050. What did they average? The average is not worked out, but I can give you some particulars as to the upset prices, and the amounts realized.
2051. Give us the upset prices? The upset prices of lots sold at the first sale were £10. Several lots at £50 were not sold. They realized at the first sale £12. £18 10s.—these are £10 lots. Two £10 lots were sold at £40, one £10 lot at £31 10s., one £10 lot at £16, one at £20, and one at £10 10s.
2052. Were the purchasers distributed, or was one person buying? They seemed fairly well distributed.
2053. Now at the next sale? At the next sale sixteen lots were offered and fourteen sold. The other two were not offered for.
2054. For how much above upset price? £12 10s. was the upset price for the first allotment, and it realized £212 10s.; the second allotment, the upset price for which was £12 10s., realized £160 10s.; the third allotment, the upset price of which was £12 10s., realized £55; the fourth, upset price £12 10s., £40; the fifth, upset price £12 10s., £65; the sixth, upset price £12 10s., £66; the seventh, upset price £25, £50; the eighth, upset price £25, £36; the ninth, upset price £25, £32; the tenth, upset price £25, £36; the eleventh, upset price £25, £52; the twelfth, upset price £25, £40; the thirteenth, upset price £25, £25; then there were two not offered for, and the sixteenth, the upset price of which was £25, realized £32.
2055. Were those allotments purchased by different people? There were about eleven different purchasers.
2056. What was the area of each of those allotments? The first six lots were 1 rood; they were the ones that brought the biggest prices. All the others were $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre (2 roods).
2057. The first lots were near the jetty? I cannot say without referring to the map. I did not conduct the sale myself; it was held before my arrival here.
2058. You have been here during the whole of this year? I took charge here on the 1st February.
2059. How do the conditional purchases made since then compare with those made during the last few years? This present year has been better than any year since 1884.
2060. How many conditional purchases were made this year? 123.
2061. The number of selections was 123. What was the average area of those selections? About 104 acres. I got this return out hurriedly this morning, and took the average of twenty selections.
2062. I suppose some of the selections are pretty large? There are very few large selections—they are nearly all small.
2063. What do you call small? They very rarely went over 200 acres, and were generally from 70 to 80 acres. In special areas the quantity of land that can be taken up is limited to 160 acres. They cannot exceed that under the present Act. Fifty-six of these selections were taken up in special areas, so that they could not exceed 160 acres.
2064. Have you any idea of what the price was in those special areas? For most of them £2 10s., and for some of them about £4. In one case the price was something like £15 or £20, at Riley's Hill, down the river. The average price would be £2 10s., for residential conditional purchases, of course.
2065. Is there much transferring of land going on here? There has been a great deal since I have been here—a great deal of buying, selling, mortgaging, &c.
2066. But has the land been passing from one to another absolutely to any great extent? Yes; there have been a good number of *bona fide* sales. The men from the south coast are coming up here in considerable numbers and buying up the old selections.

C. H. Gale,
Esq.
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William Gibbon Walker, Esq., Government Surveyor, sworn, and examined:—

2067. *Chairman.*] You are a licensed surveyor? No, a Government surveyor.
2068. In the Land District of Lismore? I go outside Lismore, into Casino, and I work a little into the Tweed as well.
2069. How long have you been here? A little over three years.
2070. I suppose you are fairly well acquainted with the country—not only in this district, but in the adjoining districts? Yes, with the exception of right up on the Tweed, as far as the Brunswick, or a little further, perhaps.
2071. Do you know the extent of the Lismore Land District? It nearly takes in the whole of the eastern half of the county of Rous.
2072. That would include the Tweed then—the Tweed is in the county of Rous? Although it does not take in the Tweed it goes into the country of the Richmond.
2073. Have you been kept pretty busy since you have been here? Yes.
2074. Surveying? Surveying and reporting on the revocation of reserves and roads.
2075. Can you give us any idea of the average cost of surveying per acre in this scrub land? No, I cannot exactly. All I can say is that the licensed surveyors are allowed 100 per cent. on the scale of fees.

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- W. G. Walker, Esq.
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2076. What is the scale of fees per mile or per chain? About £2 per mile. They get £4 per mile for surveying in this scrub land.
2077. The cost of the survey, then, in many instances, must be more than the deposit paid on conditional purchases? Considerably more for this district.
2078. Is there very much land unalienated in this district at the present time? Yes, a considerable quantity. Do you mean particularly in the Lismore district?
2079. No, in the districts with which you are acquainted? There are a great many reserves, and a good deal of Crown land.
2080. How much of those reserves are fit for farmers—the class of people who are coming here? Nearly all of them.
2081. Is there much good land similar to this scrub land to the westward—Tenterfield way? Of course the further back you get from the coast the more you get into the forest country.
2082. Is the land of a rich character? Yes.
2083. And there is very little settlement? Yes.
2084. Do you know the route of the railway from here to Byron Bay? Yes.
2085. Have you been along it? I have picked it up here and there. I have a very good idea of the direction of it.
2086. Have you been back amongst the land coloured white on the map? I have not been much in the county of Drake. I do not know much of the land to the west, outside of the counties of Richmond and Rous.
2087. Is the country you do know to the west of Lismore, which is unsold at the present time, good average country for farming? Yes.
2088. And I suppose it is only its remoteness from the centres of population, and the difficulty of access to those centres, that has prevented it from being taken up already? That is all. It is very nearly as good as the scrub land.
2089. You say that you have picked up the line of the proposed railway here and there. With your knowledge of the district, do you think that any better route could be got than that selected by the surveyor—that is, a general route? No, I certainly do not.
2090. Would that railway, passing down to Byron Bay, serve a large number of farmers? A very large number.
2091. And away to the north, to the Tweed? Yes.
2092. Have you given any consideration to the proposed harbour works at Byron Bay? I cannot say that I have given them very much consideration.
2093. Do you know from travelling about the district what the general opinion is with regard to them? The general feeling is that they ought to be proceeded with.
2094. People generally think that they would be a great advantage to them if they were constructed? Yes.
2095. For what reason? Well, a harbour there would give them a good outlet to any market that they liked to make use of. There is deep water there for vessels to go in.
2096. Do you think the Government would be justified in making improvements at the mouth of the Richmond, and also at Byron Bay? I think so, considering the great extent of the country, and its richness, and the immense population that it could carry.
2097. I suppose there is no doubt that this country will never be settled until you get better roads, and better communication? No.
2098. Better communication to the sea-board and from that to the centres of population? Exactly.
2099. Is there anything else that you would like to tell the Committee? Nothing, except that I have never seen land to equal that in this district, and I have been a good deal over the country. I have been at Hay, down Bowral way, and in New England.
2100. You have never seen land to equal this? No. I was knocking about the sea for nine years, and I never saw any country outside the Colony to equal this. I consider 40 acres quite sufficient to keep a family, and every reserve that I recommend for revocation I recommend as a special area.
2101. Do you not think that it would be a wise policy to withhold all these reserves until the works are carried out or determined upon—would not the money derived from them go largely towards paying the cost of the works? The land would double in value if the works were constructed.
2102. The population is increasing? Rapidly.
2103. We were told that the population here had increased 22 per cent. as against 4½ per cent. in the colony at large? Yes.
2104. Do you think that that would continue if there were a certainty of the country being opened up by a railway? Yes.
2105. It would create a demand for land, and consequently the Government would get a better price for it than they do now? Certainly.
2106. Do you think that much of the land of this district is being taken up for speculative purposes? I think a great deal has been, but I do not think much is being taken up now.
2107. I suppose it is impossible for land to be taken up in this district unless a man has some amount of capital? He could not do it without money. There is a good deal of valuable timber in the scrub, which, if there were a market for it, would be saved, but now it is destroyed wholesale. There is beech, teak, long jack, woolly butt, and other timber.
2108. *Mr. Cox.*] There are no squatting leases in any portion of what they call the scrub land? No, I do not think so. I think they have been mostly abandoned.
2109. Are you aware that the present squatting leases in the coast district will expire next year? Yes.
2110. Then a large area will be thrown open for selection? Yes.
2111. I suppose you anticipate having a large amount of work when that takes place. When the hundreds of thousands of acres held in the large squattages at the heads of the Richmond are thrown open, will there not be a rush for the land? I do not think there will be any great rush, because a great deal of the resumed area has not gone yet.
2112. Will you be prepared, in the event of the leases falling in next year, to recommend a certain portion as special areas? Oh, yes; some of them could certainly be proclaimed special areas.
2113. And you would take care that the country would get a fair return for the land? Yes.
2114. *Mr. Lee.*] Do you know anything of the country between Casino and Grafton? Only about 20 miles south of Casino, on the Grafton Road. I have not travelled further than that. 2115.

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2115. What is the character of the country? It seems to me that the further you go south the poorer it gets—spotted gum ridges and that sort of thing.
2116. Does this huge belt of scrub country extend from Casino towards Grafton? No.
2117. What would be about the outside boundary of the scrub country in that direction? I do not think there is much scrub country south of Casino. As I say, it extends over the whole of the Richmond district northerly to the Queensland boundary.
2118. You know the country pretty well, between here and Cape Byron? Yes.
2119. According to the map, there has been a large amount of alienation there, and it would appear that the railway is too close to the river to serve a number of people living west of it—can you give the Committee any reason as to why the line is likely to be taken in that direction? Well, I think it was taken there chiefly on account of the country—as you get back to the west you get to the hills.
2120. Do you think that the easiest railway route has been obtained? I think there is not a doubt about it.
2121. Are the people lying to the west of that route likely to be served by the railway? Decidedly.
2122. In fact, to get to the river, they must cross the railway? They must cross it.
2123. Does the river serve that western country at the present time—you have a pretty good knowledge of the state of the roads, and that sort of thing? It has to serve it after a fashion. This country is all being neglected. The fact that people cannot get to market from there accounts for all the unalienated land in the country lying to the north-west of Byron Bay.
2124. Is that country served by the river? At the present it is.
2125. Is the river the only means they have of getting their produce to market? A steamer has started now to trade to Byron Bay, and they are making use of that.
2126. From the nature of your duties you are obliged to go over the country in all weathers? Yes.
2127. What is the state of these scrub roads in winter? They are almost impassable.
2128. Is it possible to use vehicles? Not in wet weather.
2129. I have noticed in travelling through the country that there is an utter absence of the cultivation of maize or sugar-cane—can you assign any reason for that. The difficulty of getting to market.
2130. There can be no doubt about the capabilities of the line? No doubt.
2131. You think that a valid reason why grain is not grown there? I think it is the only reason.
2132. I notice that dairying is the chief occupation here—what is the reason of that? Because it is more easy to get the produce away.
2133. You think that if the district were opened up grain, maize, and cane, would be cultivated? I am sure of it.

George Wolfe West, Esq., Inspector of Conditional Purchases, sworn, and examined:—

2134. *Chairman.*] You are an inspector of conditional purchases, but you were a forest ranger? Yes. G. W. West, Esq.
2135. You have been a forest ranger in different parts of the Colony? Yes, at Gunnedah.
2136. How long have you been here? Four and a half years.
2137. Your duties compel you, I presume, to travel all over this land district? Yes; over the Tweed, Casino, and Lismore Land Districts. 26 Nov., 1889.
2138. Are those three land districts? Yes.
2139. You go into them all? Yes.
2140. So that you are very well acquainted with them? I only had the Lismore district up to this time last year, and then I got the Tweed and Casino districts.
2141. Do you know the proposed line of railway from Lismore to Byron Bay, and then on to the Tweed—have you been along it, or struck it at any point? Yes.
2142. Do you think any better route could be obtained between Lismore and Murwillumbah? I do not think so.
2143. Why? I think this is the easiest and best route.
2144. Because of the mountain ranges? Yes, and the creeks.
2145. Going about amongst the farmers to the north and west of the proposed line, have you had an opportunity of hearing their opinions as to the value of the line to them as a means of getting to market? Yes.
2146. What is their opinion? They all think that they ought to have a railway.
2147. What is the general opinion about the port? The people about the Brunswick, Clunes, and Byron Bay wish to have a port at Byron Bay. I know that the settlers for a long distance back would use Byron Bay if they could.
2148. You know the land through which we came yesterday from Byron Bay? Yes. The people along that road would all use the Bay.
2149. Is there much land similar to that unalienated in this district? Yes, in reserves.
2150. The white pieces on the map are unalienated lands;—do you know anything about the unalienated land near the Clarence forest reserve No. 2—is it good land? Yes; it is good scrub.
2151. Can you assign any reason for that being unalienated at the present time? Yes; they have no market, and no means of access to market.
2152. Do you not think that if the works were carried out those lands ought to be reserved? It would increase their value considerably.
2153. I suppose most of the selectors who are here have got quite sufficient for their means? A good many of them are selecting again, when their time is up.
2154. Although their original selections are not cleared? No; they select again.
2155. They make one selection, improve a part of it so as to fulfil the necessary conditions, and I suppose many of them exceed those conditions? Some do, and some just barely fulfil them.
2156. Without completing the improvements on their own selections, when the time arrives they select again? Yes, in many cases.
2157. Is that for speculative purposes, or to secure land for their children? Some of them sell part of their original selections, and then select again.
2158. So as to get larger areas? Yes. They think they cannot get it elsewhere as good. I know that many selectors have left the district and gone away, and have had to come back again.
2159. You have seen a great deal of the Colony—have you ever seen better land than there is in this district? Not such a large area of good land. 2160.

- G. W. West, Esq.
26 Nov., 1889.
2160. What is allowed in the scrub land per acre for clearing? It depends upon how it is cleared. If it is cleared properly, and put under grass, it will cost £10 an acre.
2161. That is after the second burning off? Yes; that is burning it twice. If you got a good running fire it might only cost £4 an acre.
2162. That is the first burning? Yes. It all depends on the first burning.
2163. It costs you say from £4 to £10 an acre? Yes. If you miss your first running fire, and have to cross burn it, or hand burn it, it will cost you as much as £10 an acre, whereas with a running fire it might cost only £6 an acre.
2164. A running fire is when you only burn out the scrub itself? Yes.
2165. A cross fire is when you have to haul out the logs and cut them up and burn them? Yes.
2166. You have had a good deal of experience here and elsewhere—do you think that the bulk of the selectors here are *bona fide* men who have taken up land for the purpose of making homes for themselves? Yes, the bulk of them are.
2167. I daresay there is a little speculation, but apparently there is less here than there is in many places? That is likely.
2168. There is not the dummies class that we found out on the plains? Not now.
2169. You think that the bulk of the selectors here are *bona fide* men who have taken up the land to benefit themselves and their families? Yes.
2170. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you think that the people at Clunes would use Byron Bay as their port? I am sure that they would.
2171. Although they are 20 miles from Byron Bay and only 10 from Lismore? A great many of them would.
2172. But there would be an increased cost to them? I do not think so.
2173. Surely a horse would run 10 miles more quickly than he would run 20 miles? But then there is the extra water carriage to the Heads.
2174. How many miles is that? Seventy miles.
2175. What is the rate of freight from Lismore to Sydney? I do not know.
2176. From Byron Bay to Sydney? I do not know.
2177. How then do you assume that they would get any consideration by going to Byron Bay;—is not Lismore a far safer port than Byron Bay? Yes; but I am supposing that harbour works are carried out at Byron Bay.
2178. Supposing the works at Byron Bay are not constructed, but only the railway, do you think the people at Clunes will go to Byron Bay with their produce, or to Lismore? They will go to Lismore.
2179. Do you not think that the Richmond River will be a good port for them when the improvements now going on at the Heads are completed? I suppose if they can get in and out at all hours they will use the Richmond.
2180. If the Richmond is made as good as the Clarence, do you not think that it will serve all their purposes? There is a large district to serve about the Brunswick and Byron Bay.
2181. I want to keep about 10 miles from Lismore;—do you think that those people would still go to Lismore? I heard a great many say that they would use Byron Bay—a great many use it now.
2182. Do you think that that was said for the purpose of inducing the Government to make a harbour at Byron Bay, without any serious thought as to whether it would suit their interests best? I could not say.
2183. I think you said that the railway route as laid out was the best to be got? As far as I know, it is.
2184. Do you know anything of the country on the coast line from Brunswick to the Tweed Heads? Yes.
2185. What sort of country is it? Swampy. There is a good deal of swampy country.
2186. Are you aware that an alternative line was surveyed there? I believe it was.
2187. You have no doubt that the line shown on the plan would be far preferable to that coast line? Yes. There is a lot of swampy land, and three or four large creeks between the Brunswick and the coast.
2188. Is it very difficult country between the Brunswick and Murwillumbah? I do not think that it would be as difficult as that along the coast. There is a great deal of swampy country along the coast.
2189. The coast country is level—you cannot say that of the country between the Brunswick and Murwillumbah? No. It is ridgy; but the line will go through the heart of the settlement.
2190. Do you know the country down to the Clarence? Yes.
2191. What sort of land is it between Casino and the Clarence? Poor land, compared with the Lismore country.
2192. Do you think that the people of Lismore, since the Clarence is a better port now than the Richmond is, would send their goods there if there were a railway between Lismore and Grafton? No.
2193. Do you think that the people of Grafton would send their produce to Lismore? No.
2194. What is the use of the railway between Lismore and Grafton—you do not think that it would be of any use at all? I do not say that; but I do not think produce will ever be sent from the Clarence to the Richmond, or from the Richmond to the Clarence.
2195. Then what is to pay the railway—the passenger traffic? There is a fair passenger traffic.
2196. Do you know the estimated cost of this line from Grafton to the Tweed Heads? No.
2197. £198,000—and you think that one portion of it would probably be a “dead horse”? I do not think that they would send the produce of one district to another.
2198. Are the people advocating that portion of the line for the purpose of seeing a locomotive run there? There is a lot of land there that would be taken up and settled if there were a railway.
2199. Is it likely to be taken up when there is such a large area of land to the north? I think every acre would be taken up—it is being taken up very largely now—nearly every week there is a fresh selection taken up.
2200. *Mr. Cox.*] The Byron Bay breakwater and the railway must be taken as one matter; a breakwater at Byron Bay would be useless without a railway, and the railway would be useless to a large extent if Byron Bay were not improved? Yes.
2201. The railway must be contemporaneous with the breakwater at Byron Bay? Yes.
2202. In the event of there being no breakwater at Byron Bay, and because of the limit to the accommodation now afforded by the steamers trading there, would it be well to carry out a railway from Byron Bay to Ballina, for the benefit of the Tweed and Brunswick people? Besides the proposed line to Lismore?

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2203. Yes, instead of harbour works? It would certainly go through a lot of good country.
2204. Do you not think that the long railway carriage from Murwillumbah to Ballina would kill the freight? I think it would help to.
2205. Therefore you think that both proposals should be carried out? I think that a breakwater at Byron Bay will be better than a railway to Ballina.
2206. Do you think that in the event of a railway being made from the Tweed to Byron Bay and thence to Lismore, a large amount of wood would be carried? Yes. There is a large quantity of timber in the district now not worked.
2207. Not only not worked, but actually destroyed? Yes.
2208. This would be utilised if a railway were constructed? Yes; if there were a railway, or if the Byron Bay works were carried out.
2209. You are well acquainted with the country at the head of the Tweed and Brunswick? Yes.
2210. On this map of the contemplated improvements at Byron Bay, the breakwater marked No. 2 is the one we are considering. On this map of the country you will see the position of the railway marked as it runs into and leaves Byron Bay, and goes thence on to the Tweed and Murwillumbah. You have already sworn that the country in this locality is extremely rich and largely settled? Yes.
2211. Have the people in the locality of Murwillumbah and the Brunswick any proper and regular outlet for their produce? No.
2212. I presume that they can produce anything that the Richmond River district can produce? I think so. I do not say that the land is as rich right through as the Richmond district is.
2213. But it is capable of growing anything that can be grown in the Richmond district? Yes.
2214. Taking the relative positions of Murwillumbah and the Tweed, and Lismore and the Richmond, if harbour works were constructed at Byron Bay would the people on the Tweed use that place as a place of export and import? I think so.
2215. Supposing there were no harbour there at all, would they be likely to send their goods to Lismore? It would depend upon the state of the bar at the Tweed Heads; the bar there is uncertain.
2216. What I want to ascertain from you is whether the proposed line would give an outlet? I am sure that they would send from Murwillumbah and the Brunswick to Byron Bay.
2217. What about the people living at the 100, 95, and 90 mile pegs—between Byron Bay and Lismore? A great many of them, as far as Clunes, could use Byron Bay.
2218. Would the people lying between the 90 mile peg and the Tweed—the selectors living to the north-west, be likely to make use of Byron Bay—which would be their easiest and cheapest outlet? A great many would use Byron Bay.
2219. Which would be the cheapest for them—it is not a matter of sentiment or fancy—they, like other business men, would use the cheapest and most direct route—which would that be? A great many of them would ship at Byron Bay.
2220. Supposing no harbour works were made at Byron Bay, and the contemplated improvements at the Richmond have not the result expected, and the Clarence Heads are made a harbour of shipment, do you think the people of the Tweed, the Brunswick, or at Lismore, would send their produce to the Clarence for shipment? By rail?
2221. Yes? No; I do not.
2222. Do you know anything of the country west of this—between this and Tabulam? Every inch of it.
2223. And do you know that there was once a trial survey for a railway made there? Yes.
2224. Do you know the distance from Tenterfield to Lismore? About 133 miles.
2225. What is the nature of the settlement west of Casino—is there much free selection going on there? Latterly.
2226. Is it of a *bona fide* character? Yes. I would like to add that there is a lot of valuable timber on the line between Casino and Grafton—ironbark on both sides of the line.
2227. *Mr. Garrard.*] Is the timber to which you refer on the road between Casino and Grafton, or more in the direction of Lawrence? It is nearer to Casino, for the first 20 or 30 miles.
2228. Do you go through more of it from Casino to Grafton, or from Casino to Lawrence? I do not think there is much good timber after the first 25 miles. After you branch off from the turn off to Lawrence good timber is very scarce; but from Casino to that point there is valuable timber on both sides of the line.

Edward Macarthy Allman, Esq., Road Inspector, sworn, and examined:—

E. M. Allman,
Esq.
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2229. *Mr. Cox.*] You are Road Inspector for the Lismore district? I am.
2230. What is called the Lismore district in your Department? Well, it extends from Lismore down to Ballina, and is bounded by the Richmond River, taking in one or two roads on the other side of the river, going towards Wardell. From Ballina it goes to Byron Bay, and from Byron Bay back to Lismore, and out towards the Tweed in a north-westerly direction.
2231. How far towards the Tweed? To the Dividing Range, about 24 miles—to the watershed of the Tweed and the Richmond.
2232. How many miles of road have you under your supervision? Last year I had 397 miles.
2233. Is it costly to make roads in this district? Not on the whole.
2234. Metal is abundant? Yes, as a rule. In the scrub country it is as a rule plentiful.
2235. But although roads in the scrub country without metal are very good in dry weather, what are they in wet weather? Very bad as a rule—very bad indeed—that is, where no clearing has been done alongside the road.
2236. What is the cost per mile of cutting and metalling in that scrub country? I estimate the cost, including culverts, at about £1,000 a mile.
2237. That is not a very heavy price, considering the character of the country; but I presume that, metal being so plentiful, there is no great distance to cart it? Yes. And timber is also as a rule very plentiful.
2238. You are still at work at these roads, and there are a number of others surveyed but not yet cleared, I presume? Yes. Of course there are some that have not been touched yet; but something has been done on most of the roads in the district.
2239. Besides these main thoroughfares there must be a number of by-roads for the convenience of free selectors, branching off in all directions? A great number.

- E. M. Allman, Esq.
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2240. Those have not yet been touched as a rule? Many of them—yes.
2241. In travelling through the district do you find that much cultivation has been done? Yes, a good deal. Of course there is not so much in the centre of the scrub, where the land is difficult of access, because there are no means of getting produce, such as grain, or anything of that kind, away.
2242. They utilise the country chiefly for dairying? Yes.
2243. If a railway were constructed the land might be much more profitably used than for keeping cows upon? I think so.
2244. Cane could be grown upon it? I do not know about cane. I have not had experience of it myself; but I imagine that it would grow. It grows at Rous, which is similar country.
2245. There would be the advantage of an absence of frost on the hills? Yes.
2246. Do you think that that would be a sufficient inducement to the selectors to grow the cane on the hills, notwithstanding the great difficulty of cultivation? I imagine it would compensate in great measure for the other difficulties under which they might labour.
2247. With respect to this projected railway from the Tweed to Byron Bay, and thence to Casino, I presume it must be considered in connection with the contemplated breakwater at Byron Bay? I should think so.
2248. The railway would be of very little use if there were not a pretty good port at the end of it? I certainly think that the two schemes should go together.
2249. One would be of little good without the other—it would be of no use to make a breakwater at Byron Bay unless you had communication with that place by rail; and on the other hand, it would be of very little use to make a railway unless you had a breakwater? The one would make the other more useful—most decidedly.
2250. You think that in future the products of this rich country would warrant the heavy expenditure which would have to be incurred in making a railway and a harbour at Byron Bay? I think it is very likely.
2251. Do you know what the cost of these works will be? No; I do not, exactly. I believe that the breakwater is estimated to cost somewhere about £240,000, and I think that the railway will cost somewhere about £12,000 a mile.
2252. Do you think the country will be justified in going to that expense, taking into consideration the amount of traffic which now goes by the little coasting steamers once a week? Yes; but I imagine that not only the present, but also the prospective traffic would be taken into account. I think that the construction of these works would have the effect of increasing settlement and production in the scrub country.
2253. So that, although the traffic is now done by one or two little steamers from the Tweed and Byron Bay, you believe the country is sufficiently rich to warrant the construction of a railway, because you are certain that the population will increase enormously? I think there is no doubt about that, as far as I can foretell. The country is certainly very rich. I have never seen anything better.
2254. In the event of the two railways—from Casino to Byron Bay, and from the Tweed to Byron Bay—being constructed, would you still have to do as much work as you do now, in order to make feeders for the railways? Certainly. There is no doubt about that.
2255. *Mr. Lee.*] In 1888 you received £16,440 as a vote for your portion of the district? Yes.
2256. That does not include the whole of the Richmond River district? Certainly not.
2257. How many road officers are there in the district which the proposed railway will traverse? Do you mean from Grafton?
2258. Leaving off at Casino—taking the Richmond, the Tweed, and the Brunswick? Three.
2259. Do they receive as much as you do? I do not think so.
2260. You receive the largest share? Certainly.
2261. Would they receive half as much as you do? Yes.
2262. In 1889 you received £22,085? Yes.
2263. If there were two others besides yourself, they would possibly receive £22,000 between them? I do not know the exact amount of their votes. I know that they do not receive nearly so much as I do.
2264. If they received half as much, there would be a road expenditure in this district of about £44,000 a year? Yes.
2265. That has been going on for some years? I think that the expenditure has increased during the last couple of years.
2266. *Chairman.*] I suppose the more you get the more costly the roads become? Possibly.
2267. *Mr. Lee.*] The more money you would have to spend? Possibly.
2268. At any rate, we can calculate that £44,000 per annum is spent on roads and bridges in the district traversed by the railway? About that.
2269. Does the country receive anything from tolls, or in any other way, for this expenditure? No tolls are levied, except on the ferries.
2270. Although these roads give facilities to the people for getting about, the State receives no benefit from them whatever? Not directly.
2271. In addition to this, there is an annual charge for maintenance of £75 per annum? That is merely an estimate for the maintenance of a mile of metalled road.
2272. Each mile of metalled road which you have in your district costs you that amount? I do not know that it actually costs that, because I have included in that the repair of culverts and bridges.
2273. How many maintenance men have you in your district? About twenty-four.
2274. Are they paid out of the annual vote? Yes.
2275. The maintenance men have to be paid out of the £22,000, and the balance is expended on the roads? Yes.
2276. So that you have really not £22,000 to expend on the roads? It is expended on the roads.
2277. And so much is spent in maintenance? Yes, but the old roads must be kept in order. Of course you reduce the amount to be spent in new works on roads by the cost of maintenance.
2278. *Chairman.*] If the railway were built you would still want this money? I do not imagine that the vote would be reduced.
2279. Would it not be increased? Possibly it would. It would just depend upon the position of the roads.
- 2280.

2280. The construction of a railway would not save much in the construction of a road? I do not think it would save much. The following is a return showing the expenditure, &c., on the roads during 1888 and 1889, and the estimate for 1890:—

E. M.
Allman, Esq.
26 Nov., 1889.

1888.			
No. of roads, 31; Milage = 343	Schedule votes ...	£12,740	
	Special sums	220	
	Bridges	3,480	
		<u>£16,440</u>	
1889.			
No. of roads, 40; Milage = 397.....	Schedule votes	£16,170	
	Special sums	3,715	
	Bridges	2,200	
		<u>£22,085</u>	
1890 Estimates.			
No. of roads, 48; Milage = 430.....	Schedule votes	£17,000	
(Chiefly additional sums).....	Special sums ...	750	
	Bridges	2,500	
		<u>£20,250</u>	

Greatest length on Schedule, 21 miles; Shortest, 1 mile; New classification, £50, £40, £30, £20, £15, £10, £5; Old, £50, £25, £15, £10, £7, £5.

No. Roads, 1st class (1890) = 22; 2nd class = 7; 3rd class = 15; 4th class = 4 = 48.

Works executed to end 1888 (approximately).

Culverts.	Crossings.	Metal. m. chs.	Ballast. m. chs.	Formed. m. chs.	Cleared. m. chs.	Pipe-drains.
232	202	38 10	18 20	66 37	166 44	23
134	102	5 40	2 44	28 60	15 19	Executed or proposed 1889.
<u>366</u>	<u>304</u>	<u>43 50</u>	<u>20 64</u>	<u>95 17</u>	<u>181 63</u>	<u>23</u>

No. of bridges over 12 feet span, end 1888 81 }
Since built or in course of erection or proposed 7 } 88

Average cost, 80 chains, metalled road, including culverts, up to ordinary first-class (say), £1,000
Add for bridges up to £1,000 (per mile)..... 200

£1,200

(Metalled road—one man, 6 miles.) Cost of maintenance per mile per annum (say) £75.

Right Rev. Jeremiah Joseph Doyle, Bishop of Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

2281. *Chairman.*] Is your diocese a very large one? From Point Danger to 10 miles south of Port Macquarie, extending westwards to Mount Seaview and Mount Lindsay. Mount Seaview is on the Hastings, and Mount Lindsay on the Queensland border.

Right Rev.
J. J. Doyle.

26 Nov., 1889.

2282. Do you go about the district very much? Yes.

2283. Up and down? Yes.

2284. Do you know the route of the proposed railway—have you seen the map? Yes; I know the country very well.

2285. Do you think that the line is being taken along the most practicable route? I think so—to get to the population at the principal centres.

2286. Going north from Lismore, do you think it would serve the farmers to any great extent? I think so.

2287. I suppose you mix with the farmers a good deal? Yes.

2288. Do you think that the development of the land is in any way retarded by the difficulties they have in getting to market with their produce? I am sure it is.

2289. What is generally grown near Lismore, and along the river, where the facilities for getting to market are very great? Sugar-cane and maize.

2290. Is there any dairying? Yes, a great deal.

2291. As you go out 15 or 20 miles? The dairying is more extensive as you go away from the river banks.

2292. In fact there is little cultivation as you get out? They have no chance of getting their produce away. Dairy produce is more easily handled than farm produce, and that is the reason that the land is not cultivated.

2293. The soil out back is good enough to produce whatever is produced about Lismore? It is splendid soil.

2294. Do you know the country from Byron Bay right on, fairly well? Yes.

2295. Is that country similar to the Richmond River country? I do not think it is quite so good in some places.

2296. They have a better rainfall? Much the same—a little more at Byron Bay.

2297. Do you know the average rainfall here? Some years we have 60 or 70 inches—I am not sure what it is.

2298. On the Tweed River we were told that the average rainfall there for nine years was 80 inches? I may be very much mistaken. I do not know the rainfall.

2299. Going out west from the proposed railway line the farmers, you say, have great difficulty in getting to market at all? They have.

2300. And there is rarely any encouragement for them to develop their land to the fullest extent? None whatever.

2301. Do you think that if they are given facilities for bringing their produce to a port, either at the Richmond or at Byron Bay, the land will be more largely developed, and a greater yield of produce result? I think so.

2302. Have many people been coming here since you have been here? Yes; when I came here in 1878, there were in this municipality of Lismore, which was just then being established, but 500 people, and I think we have nearly 4,000 now.

2303. Is there anything else about which you might give us some information? I do not know. I think the railway will be a great benefit, and that it is very necessary for the development of this district; and I hope it will be continued towards Sydney in time.

2304.

- Right R.
J. J. Doyle.
26 Nov., 1889.
2304. You do not think that the facilities which may be given by the construction of the works at the Richmond River will be of any use to this district? I do not think the river could serve the district, unless there were a railway.
2305. *Mr. Cox.*] You know the country between Casino and Grafton? Yes.
2306. What kind of country is it? Fairly good country—not so excellent as that from here to the Tweed.
2307. Are there many selectors settled there? There are a good many selectors just at present. A good deal of land has been taken up in that part of the country.
2308. Do you think that a railway constructed between those two points would be likely to pay a fair interest on the outlay? I think the railway, on the whole, would pay very well.
2309. What would be carried on that railway? Maize and dairy produce.
2310. Is the country of which I speak suitable for growing maize? A good deal of it is.
2311. There would be no communication, I presume, between Casino and Grafton—what one river grows the other river grows, and consequently there would be no produce going across? The selectors between the two points must send their produce somewhere or another.
2312. That would be the only traffic which could be relied on? I do not know—the passenger and other traffic must be considered.
2313. Would it be large? I do not know.
2314. Is there any at present? There is.
2315. How many coaches are there running between those two points? They cannot get that way. There is no coach direct. They go round by a circuitous way to get to Grafton. They generally go to Woodburn, across to Chatsworth, and then up the Clarence River.
2316. Do you think the passenger traffic would be a factor in paying the expenses of the line? I think the coaches that are running at present between the two rivers do very well.
2317. What do you suppose would be the passenger traffic between the two rivers? I could hardly form an estimate.

Thomas Campion Lodge, Esq., Manager Australian Joint Stock Bank, sworn, and examined:—

- T. C. Lodge,
Esq.
26 Nov., 1889.
2318. *Chairman.*] You are Manager of the Joint Stock Bank here? Yes.
2319. How long have you been here? I have been about ten years on the river altogether. Five years on the lower part of the river, and about five years here.
2320. You have taken an active part in the agitation for a railway in this district? Yes, latterly.
2321. How long has that been going on? I have interested myself in the movement as far as this particular line is concerned since I came to Lismore.
2322. Have you a return prepared to submit to the Committee? Yes. When the Railway Commissioners were here some time ago we prepared a statement and had it printed, and I am desirous of tendering it as evidence. I am prepared to say that to the best of my belief the statements contained in it are true.
2323. Could you give the Committee some idea as to how the figures were arrived at? From information obtained in the Statistical Register to a very great extent, and also from information derived from the local Government officers, especially the figures connected with the land returns. Most of the information given here was obtained from the Statistical Register. I have the opportunity of knowing, from my long connection with the district, that the returns are fairly accurate. The statement will be found in the appendix.
2324. *Mr. Garrard.*] In all that, you have made no reference to the intermediate port at Byron Bay—do you think the people of the Brunswick and the Tweed are likely to bring their produce to Lismore, when they have a port capable of improvement, at Byron Bay? I think that if Byron Bay is made a good port the produce from the Tweed will go there.
2325. Do you think that the produce from the district between Byron Bay and Clunes will also gravitate to Byron Bay? Certainly.
2326. What use, then, would the railway be between Clunes and Lismore? I think that all the settlers between Lismore and Clunes would send their produce to Lismore, but the settlers between Clunes and the Bay would send their produce to the Bay.
2327. Do you estimate that there will be much freight or traffic on the proposed railway from Casino to Lismore? I do.
2328. In what direction—they have already an arm of the river there? I think the Casino people will find it cheaper to get their goods from Lismore.
2329. At present they drogher them down? Yes. They will be able to get their goods more cheaply by railway than by droghers.
2330. Do you think that if the railway were constructed, instead of sending the goods by droghers down the south arm, they would send them by rail to Lismore? Yes.
2331. What is your opinion about the portion of the line between Casino and Grafton—do you think that that would be used in any way. Would the Casino people go to Grafton, or *vice versa*. Do you know the nature of the country? I have been across there.
2332. It is not to be compared with the Casino or Lismore country? No.
2333. You do not see where the freight is to come from to pay the cost of that part of the line? Unless it were part of a through line.
2334. If the line terminated at Grafton? I do not think that there is sufficient communication between the two rivers to make it pay.
2335. Unless the line is to be continued right through as a coast line, you think that the southern terminus should be at Casino, and the northern at Murwillumbah? I should say so.
2336. You do not think there is the slightest possibility of the trade of this district going down to the Clarence, where there is better navigable water? There is no possibility of the trade of the Richmond ever going to the Clarence.
2337. Do you think that the Government would be justified in making this railway, which would cost in round numbers £100,000, and in addition paying £242,000 for a breakwater at Byron Bay? I think the Government would be fully justified in incurring that expenditure, in view of the increased value of the unsold land and the development of such a large agricultural area.
2338. Whereabouts down the river were you stationed? At Woodburn. 2339.

2339. Do the people now, between the proposed line and the river, use the river as a means of export? Yes.
2340. Do you think that half of the people between these two districts will continue to use the railway and half the river. Is there any portion of the district between the river and the proposed line which would be left unprovided for? The people down the river and along the banks, and for some distance back, would still use the river, but the others would use the railway.
2341. Would they use the railway within a distance of 6 miles on each side of it? Yes.
2342. You think that the line would serve the district between it and the river, and that, where it failed, the river would take it up? Yes.
2343. Do you know anything of the country between Byron Bay and Murwillumbah? Yes.
2344. Do you think that the line is kept too near the coast between Byron Bay and the Brunswick—would it be better to go further inland? There were two lines surveyed—one along the coast, and one inland.
2345. You are speaking now of from the Brunswick north. I am speaking of the line between Byron Bay and the Brunswick. It keeps close to the coast. Would it be better if it were taken further inland, or are there difficulties which would prevent that being done? I believe from the character of the country that there are some difficulties.
2346. Do you know anything of the country between the Brunswick and the Tweed Heads? Yes. I have travelled along the beach.
2347. Are you aware that there is an alternative line there? Yes.
2348. Do you consider the inland line preferable? The Murwillumbah line will give the most general benefit. You were asking just now about the cost of the line. There are about 4,000 acres of unsold land at Cape Byron, and you were told to-day the prices realised at a sale there.
2349. In the future, then, if this line is constructed, a great deal of the trade which now comes to Lismore will, you think, undoubtedly come to Byron Bay? Yes.
2350. Then Lismore will be going back instead of advancing? Not necessarily. I think there is room for all these outlets.
2351. With a full knowledge that some of the trade which now finds its way to Lismore will be diverted to Byron Bay, the people of Lismore urge the construction of the Byron Bay works? I believe that they will be a great benefit to Lismore and to the whole district.
2352. In view of the large amount of money being spent on the Richmond to make a good entrance, do you think the Government could spend £242,000 at Byron Bay? I think that is the only way that they can develop the districts between Lismore and the Tweed—Mullumbimbi, Clunes, and Eureka.
2353. You have no doubt that the statement made by the Clunes people that they would send their produce to Byron Bay is a correct one? I believe they are doing it now. I believe they are shipping their butter to Byron Bay.
2354. *Mr. Cox.*] When you prepared the statement you have just read it was intended for the Commissioners, who were only concerned with the railway scheme? Yes.
2355. You are fully aware that the two schemes must be considered as one? Not necessarily, by any means. I consider that if the Government did not see their way to construct a breakwater at Cape Byron, and make a good port there, it would still be a great advantage to the districts mentioned to be connected with the Richmond River by railway.
2356. What chance would the people living on the Tweed have of getting their produce to market at anything like a fair price? Certainly Byron Bay would be the best port, but, failing that, the Richmond would be of great advantage to them.
2357. Do you think the people of Murwillumbah could send their produce all the way to Lismore, and pay for that long railway carriage? I do. It would only be two or three hours' carriage.
2358. But are you not aware that the Government charge according to the mileage? I believe it would pay, considering the delays they experience at present, unless something were done to their own river.
2359. Do you think that such a bulky article as maize could ever pay that? It would be a very heavy tax on the maize growers. A great deal would depend on the freights the Government charged. If they made the freights as reasonable as possible, I think the quantity of maize sent along the line would be very considerable.
2360. As commercial men the Commissioners are bound to charge such freights as would pay the working outlay—there can be no sentiment with them? If they saw that a small charge would increase the trade and encourage agriculture, they might reduce their freights.
2361. And carry the produce at a loss to the whole community? As the trade extended they would probably meet the interests of the farmers in that way.
2362. As the manager of the bank, do you give easier terms to people who live a long way off than to people who live in the immediate neighbourhood? I do not think that there is any analogy between the two cases.
2363. My object in asking you the question was to find out whether it is not an absolute necessity to consider these two schemes as one. I know a little about what produce will bear, and I know that it will not bear much carriage. Could the people of Murwillumbah grow maize and send it all the way to Lismore, to be afterwards shipped to Sydney, and make any profit out of it? I think that, so far as the sugar industry is concerned, they could well afford to pay the cost of carriage. Of course it would depend very much upon the price of maize in the Sydney market and the railway charges whether it could be sent. If maize was low it might not pay the growers to send it to Sydney in this way; but there are other things besides maize. If it were found not to be possible to make Byron Bay a harbour, the line would be justified as part of a future extension to the table-land. I also think this would be the shortest and quickest route from Sydney to Brisbane.
2364. That is beyond our inquiry, and therefore I cannot go into it;—do you think that it is imperative that the Government should be asked to expend £242,000 in making Byron Bay a safe port for the benefit of the people on the Tweed and the Brunswick, and those living nearer Byron Bay and in the Richmond district? I think the expenditure would be justified, because I think it would be the means of opening up the country, and would be met by the increased value which the Government would derive from unsold land.
2365. On the whole of the northern coast there is not a single harbour of refuge. Would that be a sufficient reason for expending this money to make Byron Bay a port of refuge? Yes.

T. C.
Lodge, Esq.

26 Nov., 1889.

- T. C. Lodge,
Esq.
26 Nov., 1889.
2366. *Mr. Lee.*] You have been intimately connected with the railway agitation here for some years? I, in connection with other citizens, have taken an interest in the movement.
2367. The valuable information which you gave us just now was gathered by the Railway League? Yes.
2368. Therefore we must presume that you have a sound and solid case to go upon, or you would not make such a statement as you have made to-day? I am quite satisfied of that.
2369. That being the case, although you have had water communication for so many years, you have found that it has not developed the district? Yes.
2370. The river you have always had, and if there has been any change, it has been for the better. yet you come to us and say, "we find that the river will not develop the district;"—is not that the substance of your evidence? If a good harbour can be made to Cape Byron it would tend immensely to the development of the district.
2371. Although you have had this navigable river to the town of Lismore for many years it has not developed the district? No.
2372. And it is necessary that some additional outlet should be given? Yes.
2373. Therefore you advocate the railway? Yes.
2374. Then you comprise the country beyond you, which you admit is equally good—the Tweed and the Brunswick—in your scheme, and you assert that the proper shipping port for them is Byron Bay? If it could be made a good harbour.
2375. That would naturally divert some of the trade from Lismore? Yes, where my interests are principally centred.
2376. Is there any division among the people here as to the harbour works at Byron Bay? I think the general opinion here is in favour of the works.
2377. Notwithstanding that Lismore is the head of navigation the people as a whole still advocate the construction of harbour works at Byron Bay? I think they are generally in favour of them.
2378. Why? They look upon the work as the means of developing more fully the country between here and the Tweed.
2379. And that portion of the country can never be developed by the Richmond River? Not so thoroughly I think. Byron Bay would be a cheaper and more convenient outlet for them. If it could be made a good harbour there would be a better class of vessels trading there, and therefore cheaper freights; and in that way it would be a great acquisition to the Tweed.
2380. Have you any information as to the freights and rates of insurance between Lismore and Sydney? I have no definite information.
2381. If the figures which you have given the Committee were ever realised it would take an enormous fleet of ships to remove the stuff? Yes.
2382. Consequently there must be some better means of conveying it to market than the present coasting steamers? I believe there will be ample trade directly from all these districts.
2383. The trade if it develops must be carried in larger bottoms? Yes. The population and the trade is increasing very largely here, and there will be ample use for both outlets.
2384. You give an estimate of the possible increase of the trade of the district? Yes.
2385. If your figures are approximately correct, any one can see at a glance that it will require very large ships? Yes.
2386. Would the depth of water at the Richmond provided for by Sir John Coode in his scheme—15 feet, admit vessels of sufficient tonnage to carry the trade. At Byron Bay there is an average depth of 24 feet, giving jetty accommodation of 20 feet, and an extreme depth of 30 feet? I would not express an opinion about that. I consider that Byron Bay would be a cheaper and more convenient port.
2387. At all events there is no doubt in your mind that if the harbour works were constructed at Byron Bay it would be an immense assistance to the Tweed and Brunswick people, and also to the people living back from Byron Bay? Unquestionably.
2388. You have no doubt about that? No.
2389. Is it the prevailing opinion in the district? I believe that is the general opinion.
2390. You also urge the construction of this line on the broad ground of State policy—what does that term comprehend? I regard this line as only an instalment of a through line from Sydney to Queensland, and I think that on that ground it is justified, because it would be the shortest route from Sydney to Brisbane.
2391. By the coast? Even by way of Tenterfield it would be the shortest route.
2392. I presume that what you mean by State policy is that you anticipate that this line will ultimately be connected with the other railway systems of the Colony? Yes, and the interest of the State is concerned in the development of such a large area of fine agricultural land.
2393. I will ask you another question about Byron Bay. The contemplated expenditure there is large, and, if the work happened to be a failure, it would be a terrible misfortune to the country. I do not wish you to express an engineer's opinion about the work, but are you in a position to assure the Committee that if the Byron Bay works were constructed the majority of the people in the localities already indicated by me would use the harbour as a place of export and import? Undoubtedly, provided that it was a good one.
2394. I cannot say whether it will be a good or bad one—you can see for yourselves? I would not like to express an opinion as to whether the scheme is practicable. I am taking it for granted that it would be a good harbour.
2395. That it would be a safe anchorage in all weathers? Yes; and give access to ships of large tonnage.
2396. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you think the unalienated land and reserves in the district should be kept back from sale by the Crown until the railway and harbour works are constructed? Or until they are in course of construction.
2397. Until the Crown can get the increment of value naturally arising from the construction of the works? Yes. I said that I believed the expenditure was justified, and I believe that the Government would be warranted in doubling the reserve prices on unsold land the very day that they decided to go on with the work. So far as the large reserve at Cape Byron is concerned, I believe that they would be justified in putting £20 an acre upon it as soon as it is determined to go on with the work. There are 4,000 acres there, and taking the value of the town allotments there and of suburban land, I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that that price would be justified.

2398. It would not be doing an injustice to anybody, because the people there would get the advantage of it? The people could afford to pay that price. I pointed out in my statement that there is a very large area of unalienated land in the Tweed district. This work would affect the value of that land to such an extent that the Government would be justified in increasing the price of the same. T. C. Lodge, Esq. 26 Nov., 188.

Mr. Louis Armbruster, sugar planter, &c., sworn, and examined:—

2399. *Mr. Garrard.*] Where do you reside? At Lindendale, near Wollongbar, near Merum Creek.

2400. About 5 miles to the south-east of the proposed line? About that.

2401. What is your occupation? I am a sugar grower and manufacturer, and I am a farmer, dairyman, and fruit grower. Mr. L. Armbruster. 26 Nov., 1889.

2402. What area of land are you possessed of? About 320 acres.

2403. How much of that have you under cultivation? One hundred and fifty acres.

2404. What have you got—maize and sugar? Yes.

2405. More sugar than maize? More grass than anything.

2406. Your principal occupation is that of dairying? And fruit growing.

2407. Do you manufacture sugar? Yes.

2408. Have you a mill of your own? Yes.

2409. What is your output of sugar yearly? I have not a great deal of cane—only about 15 acres.

2410. You manufacture for other people, I suppose? No; only for myself.

2411. Does it pay you to maintain a mill to deal with 15 acres of cane? It has not paid me as yet.

2412. As a matter of fact, a number of small men went in for manufacturing sugar some time since before they found that it was not a success? The small mills do not pay so well as the large ones do.

2413. It is found that large plants pay better than small ones? Yes, I would go into sugar growing if I had a larger plant.

2414. Where do you find a market for your produce here? At Lismore.

2415. For shipment to Sydney? Yes.

2416. Lismore is your local market, and you use it as a port of shipment to Sydney? Yes.

2417. If the proposed railway-line were constructed, would it benefit you? I believe it would.

2418. In what way? I think we could get our produce to market more quickly.

2419. If you were some 5 miles off the line, and 5 miles from Lismore, would you not still continue to cart your stuff into Lismore? If there was not a railway-station near to me I would have to do so.

2420. You would not cart it 3 miles to a railway-station for the sake of taking it 5 miles by train? I do not think I would.

2421. In all probability you would not use this line at all; you are near enough to Lismore to be able to cart your produce in without any great trouble? I think the railway would be a benefit to us.

2422. As a member of the community, perhaps, but not directly? Sometimes.

2423. Do you know the direction in which the line goes? No.

2424. Are you growing more sugar-cane now than you grew before, or less? Less.

2425. For what reason? It is running out.

2426. Is there more cane growing in this district now than there was a few years ago? No; less.

2427. Then the sugar industry is going back? It is improving in some parts, and going back in others.

2428. Is it because the land hitherto used for sugar-cane has become exhausted? No, it is not exhausted.

2429. What is the reason then that it is giving out—are people finding something that will pay better? I do not know the reason exactly.

2430. They are tired of growing one thing, perhaps, and want a change. You can give us no idea why the sugar industry has gone back in some portions of the district? In some parts it has gone back, and in others it has advanced.

2431. What is your own case? The reason it has gone back with me is that my mill is too small.

2432. You are growing up to the full capabilities of your mill? Yes, I have been.

2433. If your mill were larger you would grow more cane? I should.

2434. Is sugar-cane looked upon as the most profitable product of the district? I cannot exactly say that it is.

2435. What is—dairying? There is not so much labour attached to that.

2436. Is your farm what is called scrub land? It is all scrub land.

2437. Is there a large increase in the number of people who have come to take up the scrub land in this district? Yes, they are increasing fast.

2438. Did you take up your land as a selection originally? No, I bought it from Mr. Porch.

2439. What is the value of improved land within a few miles of here? £10 or £12 an acre.

2440. Land cleared and laid down, and grassed? Yes.

2441. What is its value unimproved? £6 an acre.

2442. And it costs nearly £6 an acre to clear it? All that. [*Witness exhibited samples of fruit, potatoes, and lemons, grown by him, and a sample of sugar manufactured from cane grown on his land.*]

Mr. Theodore Osborne, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

2443. *Mr. Cox.*] Where do you reside? At Bex Hill.

2444. How far from Lismore? Five miles. My own residence is further.

2445. How far from Lismore do you reside? Eight miles.

2446. Have you a large farm? I have 300 acres, and my son has another 100 acres adjoining.

2447. Do you work this as one farm? We intend doing so.

2448. What do you produce? Maize, pigs, and fruit.

2449. How much land have you cleared and utilised? About 100 acres. We have other land felled, and ready to be burnt during the present season, that will bring the area up to 150 acres.

2450. Do you keep accounts of your profits? I have not done so systematically.

2451. You can give us an approximate idea of the profits you make from this farm? Yes.

2452. What pays you best? Pigs.

2453. What do you grow to feed the pigs? Maize and pumpkins. I should have also mentioned fowls and eggs. 2454.

Mr. T. Osborne. 26 Nov., 1889.

- Mr. T. Osborne.
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2454. Do you employ any labour on your farm, not taking into consideration the work done by yourself and your son? No.
2455. Not taking into consideration the value of your labour, what can you clear from your farm in twelve months? It has only been occupied five years. Of course the profits will increase when we get it into full working order. The profits are small, but increasing.
2456. I suppose you have no objection to tell the Committee what you have made off your farm during the past year? It would include partly our own support.
2457. What would you clear off the farm, not including your own and your son's labours? You mean what is sold as well as what we consume ourselves?
2458. Yes? I really could not say—£100.
2459. How much land have you under cultivation? We have a very small portion of land brought under proper cultivation.
2460. How much? Only 2 acres ploughed; but when the scrub was first burnt we planted corn without doing any ploughing.
2461. What I call cultivated land is land that has been under the plough? Maize is largely produced where the land has not been ploughed. We plant maize with a hoe during the first year.
2462. What I mean by cultivated land is land upon which you have used some implement with which to put the crop in—other than grass land? I have 40 acres under maize.
2463. What has been the cost of getting the 100 acres into the state in which it now is? There has been no expenditure, except the labour.
2464. You and your son have done it all? I have a family of sons.
2465. What would you say was the actual cost, valuing your sons' labour at a fair rate? For each acre?
2466. Yes? £5.
2467. Last year you got a return of £100 from it, after deducting the portion consumed by the family? Yes.
2468. That is £1 an acre from the land now available? Yes; but there is a quantity of grass land.
2469. Is not a large portion of the land in that part of the country used for dairying? Yes, it is.
2470. Why is that;—does dairying pay better than anything else, or what is the reason? One of the chief reasons is that dairy produce is easily got to market.
2471. If the facilities for getting produce to market were greater, more land would be put under cultivation? I think it would.
2472. About what is the value of land in your neighbourhood;—presuming that you wanted to sell the 100 acres that you have improved, what would you think a fair price for it? £7 an acre.
2473. Are you aware that the Government have sold some land recently as special reserves, and have got from £15 to £20 and £30 an acre for it? I am aware of that.
2474. Is that land generally better situated than your land that it commands such a price? That is the reason, the situation of the land. It has a river frontage.
2475. If your land was within a mile of Lismore you would expect that price for it? I would value it at double what I do now.
2476. If you had a railway running past your land you would at once put an extra price on it? Yes.
2477. And would be able to make more money out of it than you do now? Yes.
2478. Do you sell your pigs alive or make bacon of them? Alive.
2479. Do you meet with a ready sale here in Lismore? They go to Sydney.
2480. Have you ever met with any losses in sending live stock to Sydney by reason of a vessel being bar-bound for any length of time at the mouth of the river? Never.
2481. Have you ever heard of any heavy losses in live stock? I have heard of losses, but I have never experienced them.
2482. Would the railway from Lismore to Byron Bay go near your place? Within about 3 miles of it.
2483. So that probably it would be of very little advantage to you? It would be of very great advantage to me.
2484. In what way? I should be able to reach the line in 3 miles.
2485. Do you not think that the cost of sending goods by rail would be heavier than that of sending them by steamer? I do not think that it would all the way to Sydney.
2486. Then you are presuming that Byron Bay would be made a good port, so that large vessels could enter and give you certain means of communication with Sydney? Yes; that is the vital point—certainty of communication.
2487. You would prefer sending your goods by train to Byron Bay to sending them down a circuitous river to the heads at Ballina? I should.
2488. Notwithstanding that you may be charged something more for freight? The freight might possibly be a little more, but the other advantages would more than counterbalance that.
2489. In sending perishable goods, you would prefer a certain to an uncertain means of transit? Yes. Fruit is a matter in which I am specially interested.
2490. Do you grow fruit largely? Yes; I am beginning to grow it largely.
2491. What kind of fruit do you find most profitable? Grapes and peaches.
2492. Oranges and lemons? Oranges. I believe that if early fruit could get direct carriage to Sydney it would be very valuable.
2493. Would you be surprised to find that early fruit in Sydney even now fetches an extremely high price. I saw to-day that some apricots brought 4d. each? I sold ripe peaches in October in Lismore.
2494. Then ready means of communication at almost any rate of freight would pay you handsomely to get early produce into the market? Yes; and I could send any quantity. Grapes also grow here.
2495. So that you could compete successfully with the Sydney growers, inasmuch as you would be in the market a week before them? Undoubtedly; a month or more.
2496. You are quite sure that the railway would be availed of by people near the line for carrying perishable articles? Certainly it would.
2497. And they would not grumble at having to pay a fair rate? Not the least.
2498. Do you not think that it would be detrimental to the interests of Lismore—Lismore being the capital of the Richmond—to have a shipping port at Byron Bay; do you not think that this town would suffer materially if goods were sent to Byron Bay? It would affect it to some extent, but I am not prepared to say how much.
- 2499.

2499. You believe that the whole of the people in the district are in favour of having a railway to Byron Bay, and a harbour there, irrespective of any interest that they may have in the town of Lismore? I should not like to say that the whole of them are, but the large majority are.

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Osborne.

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Mr. Stanley Gordon Woodrow, selector, sworn, and examined :—

2500. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Mullumbimbi, on the Brunswick River.

2501. What are you? A selector.

2502. What area of land have you got there? 180 acres.

2503. Scrub land, I suppose? It is mostly scrub land—a little of it is mixed hardwood and scrub.

2504. Is it north-west of Byron Bay? Yes. My place is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles west-north-west from the township of Mullumbimbi. It is the last selection but one, going westwards.

2505. How far are you from the proposed railway line? About 10 miles. The township is 8 miles up the Brunswick River.

2506. Is the Brunswick River 8 miles long? Yes; there is navigable water for that distance.

2507. Then are you due west from the township? Yes; almost due west. The river branches into two parts—the main arm and the Mullumbimbi Creek, and my selection is on the Mullumbimbi Creek.

2508. Have you had a meeting of selectors out there? Yes. We have a Progress Association.

2509. Do you represent that Progress Association now? Yes.

2510. What did you come all this way to tell us—how far is it from your place to Lismore? It is about 30 miles. I started off to the Bay, but finding that you had left the Bay I came on to Lismore.

2511. What is it you wish to tell us? That in the opinion of the Mullumbimbi Progress Association, if a deviation were made in the proposed line from Tyagra Grass, going through Mullumbimbi township—that is, going through good land instead of along the coast—and then joining the line again further along, it would cause an immense amount of traffic. Nearly all the produce of something like 30,000 acres of ground would be carried from Mullumbimbi to the Bay.

2512. That is presuming that the harbour works will be carried out? Yes.

2513. Has not the attention of the surveyors been directed to this deviation? Yes. The deviation was applied for several years ago, and a party of selectors went out to find a route, and then a surveyor came up.

2514. Who was he? Mr. Wilkins. He came up and examined the route, and he said that there was no difficulty whatever in taking the line up to Mullumbimbi township; but that on the other side of the township, going towards the Tweed, the selectors who were looking for a route had made a mistake in supposing that a railway could be taken round side cuttings. The men had been accustomed to side cuttings on the road, but the route they chose for the railway was not available. He said that if they would look again, and find a place where the railway could run along level ground, and strike a point on the ridge that could be easily cut through, or tunnelled under, he would come again. The selectors are now of opinion that they have found a suitable route; but the surveyor has not been out.

2515. Have you represented the matter to the surveyor? We have lately represented it to the authorities by an application from the Progress Association.

2516. Have you put yourselves into communication with Mr. Burge, who has just been sent up to Murwillumbah? No.

2517. Have you seen Mr. Wilkins about it? Not lately.

2518. *Mr. Garrard.*] To whom did you make representations? We made them through the members for the district about two months ago.

2519. Have you received no reply? We have received no reply up to the present time. Another application will be made directly, by petition to the Public Works Committee.

2520. This route of yours will go to the eastward of what are called the Twin Peaks? Yes.

2521. You propose to leave the present survey at Tyagra, pass through Mullumbimbi, and join the line again as soon as practicable? Yes.

2522. Do you propose to go through the Twin Peaks? To the eastward of them.

2523. *Chairman.*] But there is a range near the township trending out towards the west? Yes, there is a spur from the Twin Rocks.

2524. Then you would have to go into the township, and turn round to the east to get out again. Is the township of sufficient importance to justify such a deviation? It is not the township, it is the ground. The land on the main arm and Mullumbimbi Creek is flat scrub land, and more suitable for agriculture than for any other purpose. To the westward of the township the spur dips down almost to nothing, and then rises again, and we propose to run the line through the gap.

2525. How far would the township be from the present line? I think about 6 miles by road, as the line is at present surveyed. It would answer better to strike it at Tyagra than at the Brunswick Heads.

2526. Your nearest point from the village is not more than 4 miles? In a straight line, but by the road as at present surveyed, it is between 7 and 8 miles.

2527. How far is it to Byron Bay? By the road 12 miles. But then the main part of the settlers live beyond that. It is all good ground between Tyagra Grass and Mullumbimbi.

2528. What is the nature of the country north of the Brunswick at the 120-mile peg, running up the north arm of the Brunswick? Well, it is not anything like as good.

2529. Is there anything else you would like to tell the Committee? I do not think there is anything else.

2530. Do you know the nature of the country to the westward of you? Not for any distance. I have never been further than the top of the range.

2531. You are the last selector but one? On the Mullumbimbi Creek. They go out about 6 miles on the main arm.

2532. There is a great deal of unalienated country to the westward of where you are? Yes. But there is a range that divides that part of country from the coast.

2533. Is there good country at the back of that range? I was never over there. I believe there is some good country.

2534. Where you are speaking of, there is a large amount of unalienated land shown on the map—do you know anything of the character of that country? I do not know the country further back than the range.

2535. And you do not know exactly where the Progress Committee propose to rejoin the line? No.

2536. You do not know whether their deviation is to the east or to the west of the Twin Peaks? To the east. It is proposed to join the old line again at a place called the Pocket.

2537. Do you know Burringbar? Yes.

2538.

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Woodrow.

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Mr. S. G.
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2538. How far from that towards the Brunswick would it rejoin the line—about half way between the Brunswick and Burringbar? Yes. There is at present a road through there, but it was considered at one time that it could not be made.
2539. The deviation which you propose would add some miles to the length of the line? In the opinion of Mr. Wilkins it would not do so. I think it would shorten it.
2540. *Mr. Cox.*] Did the surveyors consult with the residents, or take their own course? I do not think that they consulted with the residents much.
2541. Did they go along the dray track? There was no dray track. They have made a number of trial surveys between the bay and the Brunswick.
2542. The residents there in their various travels about the district would be the most likely people to know the best track, either for a road, or for a railway—you are always going about there? Yes. But the settlers not being surveyors, do not understand the engineering part of the business.
2543. But the route that would make a good road would make a good railway. You know the kind of track that would make a good road? Yes; but we are told that there is a difference—that a road can go round a side cutting, but that a railway must go straight through.
- 2543½. But do you not think that the settlers who have been living in the place for years must know the lay of the country better than the surveyors? Yes, they know the lay of the country, and I have no doubt that they could give the surveyors a lot of information.

Mr. James Barrie, storekeeper, sworn, and examined:—

Mr. J. Barrie.
26 Nov., 1889.

2544. *Chairman.*] What are you? A storekeeper, residing at Lismore. I have been residing in the district for twelve years.
2545. What do you wish to tell the Committee? I wish to tell the Committee specially of the commencement of the agitation for railway communication in this district.
2546. How long ago is that? It was in 1881. A number of us who were new residents then, seeing the capabilities of the district, thought that it would be an immense advantage to have railway communication with the table-land. At that time there were grave doubts whether anything of practical value could be done to the Heads at all, and we jumped at the conclusion that Byron Bay would be the port by which we could get access to the outside world. Resolutions were carried at a public meeting, asking the Government to construct a breakwater at Byron Bay, and a railway from there to the table-land.
2547. There is no truth whatever in the statement that the agitation for a breakwater at Byron Bay was got up by a syndicate which had bought land here? None whatever.
2548. As a matter of fact no land syndicate has bought up the land there? I know of none. I have looked up the report of the speech that I made, and one of the reasons I gave then, why the railway should be constructed was, that I had heard from the surveyors that there were 600,000 acres of land between here and Byron Bay then available for selection.
2549. I suppose your business has brought you intimately into connection with the selectors in this district? Yes.
2550. The bulk of them have taken up the land *bona fide* for the purpose of making homes for themselves and their families? I do not know any part of the Colony where there is more *bona fide* selection than there is here. The only thing is that people have taken up the land in such large areas with insufficient capital, and many of them have been obliged to sell out.
2551. The men who have had to clear out have been men who did not start with sufficient capital at the commencement? That is just it.
2552. Do you not think that in future it would be well to lessen the area? I think that no person should be allowed to take up more than 100 acres.
2553. In the new Land Act concessions are granted to allow of family selections that would get rid of some of the difficulties of taking up large areas? Yes.
2554. Do you not think that these men have taken up these large areas to provide a home for their families? There is not the slightest doubt about that. I hardly know of an instance where settlers have come here without a *bona fide* intention of using the land.
2555. Of late years there has been a great influx of settlers from Illawarra? That commenced at the time of the railway agitation. Mr. Larkin, Mr. Stocks, myself, and some others took the trouble to get the district advertised in the Sydney newspapers, so as to make known the quality of land open for selection.
2556. They are good men who have come here? They are a splendid sample of the pioneers of settlement.
2557. In this scrub land they must labour under great difficulties in getting to their market for want of roads? It is impossible to form any idea of what these men have gone through even to get provisions out.
2558. And the selectors going further afield will have exactly the same difficulties in future? Yes. I might be permitted to say that at one time on the road which the Committee travelled yesterday there was not even a bridle track. There were only tracks which had been used by cedar-cutters for roads, and provisions used to be sent up in a boat to where there is now a bridge 3 miles from Lismore, so that the settlers would have less distance to carry them.
2559. If the railway were constructed to Byron Bay, and thence on to the Tweed, there is no doubt but that it would give greater facilities to a great number of settlers already on the land? There is no doubt.
2560. And would have the effect of opening up other land for settlement? The great bulk of the best land is in reserves, and my opinion is that it would be manifestly unfair to the pioneers, who have gone out and taken up land, to let this land go at the same price as they have paid for theirs.
2561. You think these reserves might fairly be withheld until it is determined by Parliament whether the works shall or shall not be carried out? I do not think that an acre should be sold until the question is decided.
2562. Do you think that those reserves would to a large extent pay the cost of these proposed works? I have only made a rough estimate. I had something to do with the statistics prepared, and I think the money derived from the land would more than repay the construction of the line.
2563. And the harbour works at Byron Bay. We heard to-day that there are 4,000 acres there that would realise £80,000 if the harbour works were constructed; I suppose it is almost impossible to know what they would realise? To give an idea of what people thought of the land at the time that the sugar rush began, I may say that I have known scrub land to be sold at £10 an acre, without anything being done on it. Of course the value has gone down since sugar fell in price. It was then selling at from £38 to £42 a ton. It is now down to £25 and £30 a ton.
2564. What is your opinion about the port at Byron Bay? I have been dubbed an enthusiast about this port at Byron Bay, because I have always conceived that it is the natural outlet for the district, and the land beyond it as far as Warialda and Moree.

2565. From here to the Queensland border? From here to the Queensland border, and to New England. *Mr. J. Barrie.*
2566. You say that you have given the matter a great deal of consideration? I have been agitating about the matter, or thinking over it, ever since I came to the district. *26 Nov., 1889.*
2567. You are a resident of Lismore, and the bulk of your interests are in and round Lismore? Yes.
2568. I suppose it would be much better for you personally to concentrate all business round Lismore? Yes. I have no interest now in Byron Bay beyond one allotment.
2569. In the interests of the country from here to Queensland, you think that Byron Bay would be the most useful port that could be obtained? I have a very strong opinion that it would be. I did not agree with the first proposal of a breakwater, from its being too small.
2570. That is the inner breakwater;—you do not think it extensive enough? I do not.
2571. No. 3 was proposed by Captain Hixson as a shelter for the jetty. No. 1 was proposed by Mr. Darley to provide a harbour of refuge and a port. Then apparently Mr. Darley abandoned it—after a visit to the place, I think—and proposed No. 2, which will give an area of 500 acres of protected water. That is the scheme I would like to see carried out.
2572. *Mr. Cox.]* How long is it since you knew Byron Bay first? I think it is about thirty-two years ago since I saw it first; but until within the last twelve years I had no further knowledge of it.
2573. Do you think that the sand has silted into the bay much since you first knew it? I should not like to give an opinion, because my visits have only been occasional.
2574. Your attention was not much drawn to it? No. I do not think I shall be able to say anything definite on that point, except what others have told me.
2575. There is a rumour that there was at one time a bed of rock where the jetty is now? I have heard that spoken of, and I have heard others say that it is not so. I am not in a position to say yes or no.
2576. You say that when a great rush took place here some years ago, when sugar was at a good price, land fetched extreme prices;—are you aware that the price of land has fallen because the land has become worn out by the sugar-cane, which is a very exhaustive crop? I have only heard of it.
2577. Have you grown sugar? Only a little, experimentally.
2578. You do not think that it has impoverished the land? I have not heard of any instances of its doing so, and several of the farmers have told me that although they have cultivated their land for a long while the sugar is better now than it was at first.
2579. You know Mr. Meston? Yes.
2580. He has a knowledge of cane growing as well as of sugar manufacturing? Yes; Mr. Meston is one of the best practical men with regard to sugar.
2581. He has given it as his opinion that the continuous cropping of sugar exhausts the land,—is that correct? I should not like to question Mr. Meston's opinion. He knows more than I do about sugar land.
2582. Would not the periodical floods leave deposits, and enrich the fields? I have no doubt that they would, but I was speaking more of the cultivation on the hills.
2583. *Mr. Lee.]* From your long residence in the district you are pretty well acquainted with the country between this and the Tweed and Byron Bay? Moderately well.
2584. Have you given any attention to the route selected for the contemplated railway extension? I have given considerable attention to it.
2585. What is your opinion about it? I believe it is the best route that could be chosen. At one time I favoured a route nearer the coast, between here and Byron Bay, but in view of the number of people that would be served by this present route, I think it is the best.
2586. Do you think that the route will serve the interests of the people residing on the Tweed and on the Brunswick? I have no doubt whatever in my own mind that a railway from Byron Bay to the Tweed would serve the people along the route, and would give them a market which they cannot get in any other way. I would not like to say whether those on the banks of the Tweed would use the railway.
2587. How do you think it would suit the convenience of the people between the bay and Eureka, Clunes, and places to the north-west? I have little doubt, from what I have gathered from the residents out that way that they look upon the bay as their natural port.
2588. Of course you have the river now, which is navigable to Lismore, and is in a better condition than it has been for some time past; I believe that you have a better class of steamers trading here now than you used to have? The bar is better now than it has been since I have resided on the river.
2589. And you have better communication now than you had some years ago; if access were given to the river by a series of roads running through the district, would not that enable the residents to get their produce to the river? Well, they would be at a great disadvantage from as far out as Eureka.
2590. Do the Committee clearly understand that the river—serviceable as it is for those within easy distance of its banks, is of little or no use to the residents in the localities which I have indicated? I am perfectly satisfied that the settlers beyond Eureka will never be able to cultivate their land to advantage if they have only the river to look to. I say it deliberately, after studying the cost of freights by land.
2591. You are a business man, and have taken into consideration freights and insurances, so I want you to be careful in answering this question? I am perfectly satisfied that what I say is correct. The difference in the settlement between Clunes and Lismore, and Clunes and Byron Bay would show you exactly how the people have been affected by the present state of things, and give you practical evidence that the people beyond Eureka have simply existed.
2592. And they want railway communication for an outlet? I am satisfied that nothing else will do those people.
2593. And you think that outlet should be at Byron Bay? I think so.
2594. The cost of making a harbour at Byron Bay would be £241,723. Do you, as an intelligent man of business, think that the country would be justified in expending that amount of money in making a harbour? I am perfectly clear in my own mind that the country would be recouped for the outlay by the sale of the land, and if they had taken it earlier they would have been much better recouped.
2595. Suppose the Richmond River Heads were made secure and navigable for rather a better class of coasting steamers than you have at the present time, would not that serve the interests of the people? Not beyond Eureka. They would need a tramway or something to put them on a fair footing.
2596. So that no matter what is done at the Richmond Heads some other outlet must be given? These people must have some other outlet.
2597. Do you think the importance of that part of the country is a sufficient justification for the expenditure

- Mr. J. Barrie. expenditure of that amount of money? I think the unoccupied land is sufficient to justify the outlay. I might say further that the population per acre which this land will carry would justify the outlay.
- 26 Nov., 1889. 2598. Supposing the country were to adopt the scheme for improving the bay, but that when they commenced operations they found it to be impracticable, and supposing that the works sanctioned at the Richmond Heads were found to be a failure, and those at the Clarence were found to be good and serviceable, would you send your produce from the Richmond to the Clarence for shipment? Certainly not. People might occasionally get a ball dress or a wedding present that way, but general produce would go out of the Richmond, even supposing the bar were as bad as it has been since I have been here, and it has been so bad that I have known there to be only 2 cwt. of flour in the whole of the district about Lismore from the impassable state of the bar.
2599. I suppose it is the cost of carriage that would prevent you from going to the Clarence? Yes. There is no produce that would stand the cost of carriage.
2600. I suppose the Richmond River people look on a port at the Clarence as utterly out of the question? Yes.
2601. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you know the site of the station at Lismore? I do not.
2602. Do you know the nearest point that the railway comes to Lismore? I know that it is over in what they call North Lismore. I know where it is staked out, also the highest land in that part of the township.
2603. Do you think that it might be brought nearer to the centre of the town with advantage, or would it cost too much? I do not think that it would make any material difference in the cost. We have left the matter of the station arrangements for the Department to deal with, but we are anxious that there should be a connection with the deep water. We look upon that as an absolute necessity. It is one of the strong points that we would like to be brought under the notice of the Department, before the matter is thoroughly settled. It seems to me that they go too far away from deep water at the present time, with the station appointments.
2604. *Mr. Cox.*] Is not the land here very much flooded? No. We have higher land than where they have gone. I do not know if there are any engineering objections to the alteration; but it seems to me that the line must connect at South Lismore with the navigable waters of the Richmond, and to do this with the line as now surveyed they will have to make a branch line to deep water. If the Committee will look at the surveyed line they will see that it is a long way off from navigable water, and should be altered so as to avoid the branch line. I wish to add that two of the Committee inspected the surveyed route and fully agreed that a fresh survey should be made.

James Francis O'Flynn, Esq., Mayor of Lismore, sworn, and examined:—

- J. F. O'Flynn, Esq. 2605. *Chairman.*] You are Mayor of Lismore? At the present time I am.
- 26 Nov., 1889. 2606. How long have you been living in the district? I have been nearly seven years in Lismore, and I was about thirteen years on the Clarence.
2607. I suppose you are familiar with both districts? Yes; I am.
2608. In your opinion, which district is capable of sustaining the larger population? Undoubtedly this district.
2609. Is the land suitable for farming more extensive here than it is on the Clarence? Infinitely so.
2610. I understand that on the Clarence the good land is only on the banks of the river and of the creeks? In some places it is only a chain or two wide.
2611. That is so? It is so—and on the islands.
2612. You cannot measure the good land by chains here? No; by miles.
2613. Will you tell the Committee what has been the growth of this municipality during the last nine or ten years? I have not taken much notice of municipal matters until recently. It is about nine years since the municipality was established, and the population now is, as near as I can ascertain from inquiry, about 4,000 souls.
2614. What was it nine years ago? 500. It took one solitary vote to make up the 500. Bishop Doyle made up the 500.
2615. What were your rates at that time? I was not here then. I could not tell you.
2616. What are your rates now? I presume that they would not be far short of £2,000.
2617. General rates? Yes; general rates.
2618. And you have established gas and water works here? Yes.
2619. And I understand that you have a little sewerage? Scarcely. We have made application to the Government for that under the Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage Act. What we have done is hardly worth mentioning.
2620. Is the town still growing? Rapidly.
2621. And now it is entirely dependant on the district at the back of it? Yes. It would not exist without the district at the back.
2622. And as those districts improve so must the town improve? Naturally.
2623. You for a long time were engaged in the sugar industry? Yes. For many years I was chief engineer for the Sugar Company on the Clarence, and also on the Tweed for a time.
2624. Are you competent to give an opinion as to the value of these lands for sugar purposes? I ought to have a reasonable opinion.
2625. Is the land on the proposed railway, which can be used for sugar, extensive? The great bulk of it can be used.
2626. Without the railway the land is so far away that it would not pay to grow sugar? That is, I think, the principal reason why it is not more cultivated. It is only cultivated in the immediate vicinity of the town, and on the navigable creeks and rivers.
2627. Do you know what they pay for sugar-cane here? For many years the Sugar Company has, to my knowledge, been getting it for 10s. a ton, but latterly they have been paying 12s. 6d. It was sold by some farmers back here at Rous for as low as 8s.
2628. That is because there is no market? Where there is no competition the mill-owners take advantage of it.
2629. They sold it to the local mill, far back from navigable waters? Yes; they are 8 or 9 miles from navigable waters.

Mr.

Mr. William Barnes, selector, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
W. Barnes.
26 Nov., 1889.

2630. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Dunoon, on the Tweed road.
 2631. What area of land have you there? 127 acres.
 2632. How much of it have you brought into cultivation? I am cultivating 5 acres now.
 2633. How long have you been cultivating the land? About five years.
 2634. Have you a wife? Yes, and six children.
 2635. Born in the district? Not all of them.
 2636. Have you been depending on the 5 acres alone for those years? No; during the last three years I have been living on the land; before that I went out to work, and kept my selection going until I could get my fruit up. I now get my living from it, and hold a license to go to Lismore to sell it.
 2637. Could you give the Committee any idea of what you make from the land a year? This year it has given close on £100—last year I got close on £50 from an acre of bananas.
 2638. This year you have made £100? Not quite, but I shall do before the year is out.
 2639. Is that from the 5 acres alone? That is from the 5 acres alone.
 2640. How far are you from Lismore? Nine miles.
 2641. Are any of your sons grown up and assisting you? My eldest is eight years of age.
 2642. *Mr. Garrard.*] You said just now that you had a great deal of your land cleared? Yes.
 2643. How much? About 30 or 40 acres down—not cleared. It is overgrown with weeds and underbrush; but I shall be able to cut it down again.
 2644. You are not doing anything with it? No; I have only a cow running in it.
 2645. How much stock have you got? Only one cow and one horse.
 2646. What are your other products? I only produce fruit and vegetables.
 2647. Do you ship your bananas to Sydney? No; I sell them in Lismore and Casino.
 2648. In what direction is your place? I think it is north or north-west from Lismore—it is on the old mail track from Lismore to the Tweed.
 2649. Is your land better than the land in the district generally? Not in the least—it is the same all through. I see no difference in it.
 2650. Have you a good road by which to bring your produce? Pretty fair. It is getting better every day. It was pretty bad two years ago, before they started to improve it.
 2651. What kind of fruit do you grow there, besides bananas? These elevated lands will grow almost anything I have seen growing in other parts of the world. I have a large variety of fruit growing. The almond grows here to perfection; loquats and pine-apples also. By applying guano I have produced tobacco equal to any I have seen in America.
 climate; I have apples, peaches, plums, grapes, guavas, apricots, and figs.
 2652. *Mr. Cox.*] How far are you from the proposed line of railway? I could not give a decided answer; but, as far as I can understand, I would be 3 or 4 miles in a direct line. I do not think the distance would be more than that.
 2653. Would the construction of the railway benefit you materially? Decidedly.
 2654. In what way? Because I could get my produce in in the winter time, when the roads were bad, and I would save 5 miles. It is a day's work going to Lismore.
 2655. You would put more land under cultivation if you had the railway? I should put it under cultivation at once. I am waiting for the railway.

Mr. Felix Tonkin, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
F. Tonkin.
26 Nov., 1889.

2656. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Hanging Rock.
 2657. How far away? Seven miles.
 2658. How much land have you there? 319 acres.
 2659. Is it scrub land? Part of it is.
 2660. Have you done anything to clear any part of it? Yes; I have 12 acres worked.
 2661. What do you do with the 12 acres? I garden on it.
 2662. Raise fruit? No, vegetables.
 2663. Bananas? No, I do not sell them.
 2664. You have water near you, I suppose? There is a creek.
 2665. Where do you find a market for your vegetables? At Lismore.
 2666. And round about? And round about, where I can sell them.
 2667. How much a year do you estimate that you make out of these 12 acres? I have been working on the land for nine years.
 2668. Has it kept you and your family during these nine years? Yes.
 2669. How many of you are there? I pay a man 15s. a week, and his keep, from it.
 2670. How many have you in family? A wife and two children.
 2671. Do they help you at all? No; they go to school.
 2672. How much a year do you make out of that 12 acres? I cannot tell exactly. I have bought two farms since I have been here—one I gave £2 5s. an acre for.
 2673. How many acres? Eighty-nine, and the other I gave £2 an acre for—40 acres.
 2674. Did you save that money out of the 12 acres? Yes, and paid cash for them, and I have got money to spare now.
 2675. Have you made money by any other means during these nine years? Yes. I keep some store cattle.
 2676. On what? On the remainder of the land.
 2677. Have you got your land cleared? It is all fenced in.
 2678. And cleared? The scrub land is all cleared—part of it is forest.
 2679. How many cattle do you generally keep there? Sixty head.
 2680. Do you do any dairying? No.
 2681. You just buy cattle and fatten them and sell them? I do not fatten them. I sell them as store cattle when I have enough. I rear them and sell them.
 2682. Then you have not made all your money out of the 12 acres? Not much has been got out of cattle.
 2683. What do you estimate that you would make out of the 12 acres in the year, after paying wages? I get two crops a year out of this land, and some years I have got 5 tons of potatoes to the acre. I sell them in the town wholesale.

- Mr. F. Tonkin.
26 Nov., 1889.
2684. Tell us roughly, if you can, what you think you make out of it every year, after paying wages? I should say about £200.
2685. After paying your man's wages? No, including all that.
2686. Are there any Chinese gardeners in the district? I suppose there are around the town.
2687. Notwithstanding that competition you are able to make this amount? Yes.
2688. Which is your principal market—Lismore or Casino? Lismore, and round amongst the settlers.

- Octavius Lloyd, Esq., surveyor in the Railway Department, sworn, and examined:—
- O. Lloyd, Esq.
26 Nov., 1889.
2689. Mr. Garrard.] You are a surveyor in the Railway Department? I am.
2690. How long have you been so engaged? Eight years in this colony. I was four years on the same work in Victoria.
2691. You have been engaged on the railway from Grafton to the Tweed? From Grafton to about 5 miles beyond the Brunswick, on the Murwillumbah side. I know nothing of the country beyond that.
2692. What is the nature of the country between Grafton and Casino? It is sandy country. Some of it has a clayey sub-soil. It is very good grass country in wet weather, but I do not fancy that it is country that would stand a drought at all.
2693. Has a permanent survey been made between those two points? Yes, and deviations.
2694. What is the ruling gradient on that line? 1 in 40. That is the determinate grade. It exists only in one place, and can be cut out. I suggested how a portion of it could be cut out, and I believe that my suggestion has been approved of.
2695. By lengthening the line materially? Only about 30 chains, and that will reduce the works.
2696. It will leave the grade what? 1 in 50, or, if you like, lighter.
2697. What is the nature of the country between Casino and Lismore? The richest possible land.
2698. You come into scrub country? A little beyond Lismore, at Bex Hill, you get into the scrub country.
2699. There is no comparison between the two? There is no comparison.
2700. What are the grades between Casino and Lismore? There are no steep grades. There is a tunnel, I think. I have not seen the section, but I am sure that 1 in 50 is the steepest grade.
2701. Did you survey the line near Lismore? I surveyed the line from the crossing at Leicester Creek, to about 2 miles beyond Bex Hill.
2702. What was the object of keeping the line so far from Lismore? To keep on the high ground for station purposes. There is a flood level of nearly 12 feet at Bex Hill. The Engineer-in-Chief —
2703. Mr. Whitton or Mr. Deane? Mr. Whitton—and I infer Mr. Deane concurred—thought that to put a station on the flat ground would necessitate raising the line 12 feet the whole of the way to Bex Hill, and as it is only slack water, and the flood lasts only a few days, it was thought more economical to make the line nearly flat on the surface, but to put the station on high ground, so that trucks standing there, filled with valuable goods, might be secure from damage.
2704. That is the only reason? Yes, so far as I know.
2705. What is the nature of the land between Lismore and Byron Bay? There are 70 chains of 1 in 40 on the main route.
2706. Can that be cut out? Yes.
2707. Have any steps been taken to do it? I have nothing to do with that part of the line, except in levelling it. We were told to work to 1 in 40 grades, so as to get the easiest possible works, and the line was laid out on that condition. The grade is from the top of the hill to the flats. The mean grade is 1 in 50, and that can be got. I suggested some weeks ago to the Acting Engineer-in-Chief a way by which a larger expenditure, I thought, could be saved, and I think that is under consideration now.
2708. Has not Mr. Burge been sent down to confer with the surveyors on the various deviations? He has been through measuring waterways.
2709. Has he been down here? Yes; he has been right through the line.
2710. Have you conferred with him in reference to these deviations and alterations? I told him about the deviation when he was down.
2711. When was Mr. Burge here last? He was here six weeks or two months ago.
2712. You are aware that he is in the district now? Yes, to see about some modifications north of the Brunswick River.
2713. Not for anything further south? No. He has already dealt with the line further south.
2714. What is the reason that the line from Lismore runs so far east to the sea coast—is it for the purpose of avoiding ranges, or of tapping Byron Bay;—what were the instructions given in surveying the Byron Bay line? The original survey was carried out eight or ten years ago. The country was then practically a wilderness, and I fancy the surveyor got the easiest line he could, and it has been followed since without much consideration.
2715. You know the country between here and the bay intimately? Yes.
2716. Knowing the country so well, do you think that the best route has been taken? Unquestionably I do. I know nothing about the Mullumbimbi route, but the route from here to the bay, with slight modifications, is the best that could be got.
2717. If you were aiming to get from Lismore to Byron Bay, and to serve the largest number of settlers, the present line would be the best? Yes, I think so.
2718. Supposing the desire was to get from Lismore to Mullumbimbi, what then? I have only heard that it is a rough route. I could not tell you about it.
2719. I suppose it would be a rather heavy line to construct between here and the bay? I do not think so now. The determination seems to be not to avoid these heavy flood-levels by raising the line.
2720. Have you any idea of the cost per mile? I fancy that from Walmesley's, the crossing at Wilson's Creek, up to the top of the coast range, there being very little rock, the line, could be constructed for about £8,000 or £9,000 a mile.
2721. It would not be a cheap line to construct, then? Hardly that; the bridge work would preclude that.
2722. There are so many watercourses to get over? Yes.
2723. I understand you to say that you know nothing about the proposed deviation to Mullumbimbi? No; only that I had heard that it is difficult.
2724. You have not been there? No.

O. Lloyd,
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26 Nov., 1889.

2725. There have been two or three deviations between Byron Bay and the Brunswick? Yes, but they are only of trifling importance; the last one goes up to Tyagra Flat.
2726. Do you recognize the pencil line put on the plan by Mr. Wilkins? Yes. There is one line near the coast, and there are modifications of it which affect the crossing of the south arm of the Brunswick. There is another that goes up to Tyagra, and of that the Commissioners appear to approve? The station I imagine would be on a large reserve, and near the Mullumbimbi country.
2727. Then the red line on the plan would be subject to a little deviation—it would come further westward? No. The last line I have is as far west as the Engineer-in-Chief approves of.
2728. Where are you now? I have been on the Brunswick, but I am now at Leicester Creek to superintend the borings for the bridge.
2729. You know nothing of the line beyond the Brunswick? Five miles beyond there.
2730. You come into difficult country then? Heavy country, but the grades are good.
2731. What is the object of going so near the coast from the Brunswick? There are two lines—the coast line and the heavy line. At the present time I believe Mr. Burge is examining the possibility of connecting some portion of the coast line with the heavy line.
2732. The coast line from Byron Bay to the Tweed Heads was the first under consideration; then you deviated with your survey to what is known as the inland line beyond the Brunswick? The first line was the inland line—the coast line was run subsequently.
2733. What reason was there for taking the line so near the coast beyond the Brunswick? To avoid works. You have heavy swamps, but the question was whether it was a good line to tap the Tweed.
2734. Do you know anything of the country beyond the Brunswick? Nothing at all beyond five miles.
2735. Your 5 miles brought you into heavy country? The heaviest work.
2736. Do you know the grade between the Brunswick and Murwillumbah? The works are heavy, but the grades cannot be very heavy.
2737. Coming into contact with the people of the district as you have done, do you think the line shown on the plan would serve the largest number of people and the largest area of land? I fancy it would.
2738. Do you know anything of the country west of Byron Bay? I know it for some little distance.
2739. It is rough broken country? Broken country; but it is all good country.
2740. What is the estimated cost of the bridge across Leicester Creek? I could not tell you. I do not know what sort of bridge they propose to make, and I do not know whether they intend to raise it much above the maximum flood level.
2741. What do you estimate would be the cost of construction between Casino and Grafton? Between £5,000 and £6,000 a mile. They have everything close at hand there. They have timber on the work.
2742. Have you any knowledge of harbour works? I was connected with harbour works for seven years—five years with one, and two years with another engineer.
2743. Have you seen the plan for the improvement of Byron Bay? Only the sketch in the newspaper.
2744. Have you given any thought to it? I only hold an opinion.
2745. You would not like to express an opinion on the project? I had better not, perhaps.
2746. Does it strike you that there is any defect in it? Only that I do not think that they have enough data to work upon to elaborate a scheme.
2747. In what respect? As to the silting of the bay or the currents. Anybody who has lived there any time can see all that for himself. It is a matter of years to ascertain that sort of thing.
2748. Do you know that their scheme is based on surveys made many years ago by Captain Howard, and observations taken more recently by Mr. Keele, of the Harbours and Rivers Department? I do not question Mr. Keele's observations at all, extending over the limit of the time that they do.
2749. Do you think that it is a desirable thing to have an opening in the breakwater near the mainland? That would depend upon extensive observations of the tidal flow and the northerly set. It is a matter that could only be determined on after you have actually settled how things are going, on what at present, in my opinion, we know next to nothing.
2750. You think it would be desirable to leave the opening so that you would not have to remove a portion of the breakwater in the event of the bay silting up? Yes, but it is too big a thing for me to express an opinion upon.
2751. *Mr. Cox.*] When you were in the neighbourhood of the Brunswick River, were you met by some residents there complaining about being left in the cold, and saying that they would show you a better route for the line? No. I was not the pioneer of the line. There were trial surveys. I have only been staking out the permanent line from plans that I could not depart from.
2752. *Mr. Lee.*] Did you make a provisional survey? No, I did not.
2753. Were you employed in the district at that time? No. I made several modifications in the line about Grafton. I made a report, suggesting several modifications between Casino and Grafton, and they were all carried out.
2754. Where were you employed in 1880? In Victoria. I joined this service in 1881.
2755. You were not employed in the service of this country? No.
2756. What railways have you laid out? From Cootamundra to Gundagai; the line over the mountains which has been so much cavilled at—Bell's line, from Richmond to Wallerawang; and also the modifications from Goulburn to Cooma.*
2757. In traversing this scrub country it is a matter of great difficulty for a surveyor to get the best track? It is.
2758. Since this survey has been made the country has been cleared to a considerable extent? A little.
2759. Would it be easier to obtain a better line now than when the survey was made? I think not, but after the trial survey was made in last January I suggested modifications near Byron Bay that may be carried out and embodied in the present survey.
2760. They will reduce the grade and straighten the curves? Yes.
2761. Will the result be the lengthening of the line in any way? It will tend to shorten it a little.
2762. It will not increase the cost? Not if a grade of 1 in 50 is adopted.
2763. The changes will result in a reduction of cost? Yes.

Mr.

*NOTE (on revision):—I omitted to mention that I was also engaged on the Permanent Survey of the line Kiama to Jervis Bay, and about 100 miles of trial line in connection with the proposed North-Coast Railway.

Mr. William Walmesley, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. W. Walmesley.
26 Nov., 1889.
2764. *Mr. Lee.*] What are you? A dairy farmer.
2765. Where do you reside? At Wilson's Creek, about 2 miles from Clunes, and about 9 miles from Lismore.
2766. How many acres do you own? 944; also 223 acres on Cooper's Creek, and 200 acres on the Brunswick River; a family living on each.
2767. How many of these are cleared? I could not say. About 140 acres are cleared and under grass, and a small area is under crop; and there would be about 350 acres more felled and partly fired—pretty well burnt.
2768. What do you desire to tell the Committee? I have been there for some time, and our dairy produce very often gets damaged before it gets to market, particularly on the river, and that causes us loss. When the butter is put on the decks of the steamers and covered with a tarpaulin the sun makes it hot and soft, so that it does not fetch the same price in the market as it would otherwise do.
2769. How do you bring your butter to the steamer? In a spring cart.
2770. Is the road to your place pretty good? It is fairly good at the present time.
2771. Then what do you want a railway for? If we had a railway we would ship our produce direct from the Bay.
2772. Do you think the damage done to your butter is done on board the steamers coming down the river? The greater part of the damage would be done there.
2773. Supposing you shipped it from the Bay, how far would you have to carry it then? It would leave the spring cart, and be on the ocean at once.
2774. But if it is the practice to carry the dairy produce on deck, would the butter not be carried on the deck of the ocean steamers? Yes; but there would be a current of fresh air caused by the swiftness of the steamer.
2775. If you had a railway and a port at Byron Bay it would suit you better? I fancy so—very much better.
2776. How far is the proposed railway from your place? It is close to it.
2777. Half a mile? Not a quarter. It goes right through the place.
2778. Then it would be very convenient for you? Yes, it would be convenient.
2779. Consequently you approve of it? I should think so. I would be wrong if I did not.
2780. Do you grow any corn? Not for market—only for my own use.
2781. Do you grow any sugar-cane? Not any.
2782. Do you confine your attention solely to dairying? It would not pay me to send anything else away.
2783. You would not want a railway to send your butter here? Not unless it was for the benefit of the country as well as for myself.
2784. Would you produce anything more? Yes; I should be producing a great many things now if I could get them away at a reasonable rate.
2785. It would take a good deal of butter to load a train every day? Yes; but there would be a great lot produced in the district, if there were a railway.
2786. Would you be likely to cultivate anything else? Yes; 300 or 400 acres of corn very likely, and lucerne.
2787. Is your land suitable for the cultivation of cane? A portion of it is.
2788. And if facilities for getting to market offer themselves you might cultivate that? Yes.
2789. *Mr. Cox.*] What profits do you make out of your dairies? We are milking between sixty and seventy cows.
2790. I suppose you are getting a very low price now for butter? Yes. About 6½d. I have been getting less.
2791. You send pigs away as well? Yes.
2792. Does it pay you to send your butter to Sydney at 7d. a lb.? I can do nothing else with it.
2793. What return will each cow give you on an average throughout the year? A cow would milk about nine months, or over nine months, and would average about £5—sometimes you might make more than that, and sometimes not so much.
2794. Do you keep sixty cows? We will have this summer over 100.
2795. How much are you getting for your butter? From 6d. to 2s.
2796. In winter you get a good price, and in summer less? Yes. You could take an average.
2797. With railway communication you could make better use of your land than by growing grass on it? Yes. I have sufficient for grass, and 200 or 300 acres under cultivation. I have a small piece of land growing potatoes—2 acres—and I expect to get over 6 tons an acre from it.
2798. Where do you come from—Wollombi? I have been there, but I lived in Kiama. I was in Kiama fifteen years before I came here.
2799. The only adjunct of the dairy is pigs? Pigs and calves.
2800. Do you sell them here, or in Sydney? In Sydney.
2801. Have you ever met any loss in sending your pigs to market, by the detention of steamers at the bar? Two or three months ago, through the steamer not getting away for four or five days, some of them died. I believe that they died on the steamer.
2802. You believe that with railway communication and a good port at Byron Bay, you could increase your production very much, and get your produce away without any danger of loss? I am quite convinced of that.
2803. Have you any children? Nine.
2804. That is 100 acres apiece? Quite that.
2805. You would not justify any one man in taking up 900 acres? You could not make use of the land.
2806. I suppose you Illawarra farmers left Illawarra because you could not get enough land for your growing families? I had 100 acres there, but it was of no use for my family.
2807. So you came here to make a home for yourself and for them? Yes.

Mr. James Stocks, farmer and dairyman, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. Stocks.
26 Nov., 1889.
2808. *Mr. Cox.*] Where do you reside? At Caniaba.
2809. How far from Lismore? About 6 miles.
2810. What do you follow—farming and dairying? I do not incur any expense myself. I live on the property, but I have a practical working farmer who works the land and carries on dairying.

2811.

Mr. J. Stocks.

26 Nov., 1889.

2811. What acreage have you? About 1,448 acres.
2812. Is that all taken up by yourself and family as a conditional purchase, or have you been purchasing from others? No; it was partly taken up by myself and my son, and some others whom I bought out; and some of the land was purchased at auction, or selected after being offered for sale at auction.
2813. How much of this land is cleared and in occupation? It is all in occupation, with the exception of a little scrub land, say 20 acres.
2814. Was it originally scrub? No. I do not suppose that there is 20 acres of it scrub. About 120 acres of scrub have been cleared.
2815. Consequently you had nothing to do, except to utilize the grass? And make improvements.
2816. Do you cultivate much? Only for my own consumption.
2817. Why do you cultivate only for your own consumption—does it not pay to cultivate for the market? Not to pay wages.
2818. In what way are you able to make it pay? We want better means of communication by a practicable road to Lismore for shipping purposes.
2819. With better communication you would cultivate more largely? Certainly.
2820. Of course the communication which you are anxious to obtain would be with Byron Bay—you would wish to have a port there, and get your produce away to market without the vexatious delay that sometimes occurs on the river, in consequence of the state of the entrance? That would not meet my case at all. Caniaba is west of Lismore, in a direct line to Tomki and Casino, and a railway would make no material difference to me.
2821. Do you advocate or deprecate the construction of a railway? I have advocated the construction of a railway for the last twenty years.
2822. Not that you would benefit by it, but that it would be beneficial to the district? Yes.
2823. If the district were benefited it would be an advantage to your property? I daresay it would—though that did not influence me much.
2824. Do you know Byron Bay? I do.
2825. How long have you known it? I have been connected with it more or less for thirty years.
2826. Has the bay changed since you first knew it? Not appreciably.
2827. What alteration has taken place? None that I could recognize.
2828. Are you aware that there were rocks where the pier is now, and where it is apparently a bed of sand? No; I am not aware of that.
2829. You are not aware that the bay has silted up to any appreciable extent during the last thirty years? No.
2830. Therefore any well-constructed or well-devised breakwater would not have the effect of silting it up? Not so far as I am able to form an opinion.
2831. *Mr. Lee.*] You are an old resident in the district? I have been here a little over thirty years.
2832. Consequently you are pretty intimately acquainted with all the surrounding country? I know all the surrounding country.
2833. Have you seen the plans showing the proposed railway route? I have not.
2834. Just tell the Committee what you think of that route—as to how it would serve the settlers, and whether in your opinion a better track could be obtained? Of course, when I said that I had not seen the plan of the railway route, I meant the plan that you had here. I have seen the plans of the surveyors, and, so far as the land taken up is concerned, I could not conceive a better route.
2835. You are aware that this railway, if carried out, would cost a very large sum of money, and that the interest would be very great? I am aware of that.
2836. You have seen the district develop very much in thirty years? Yes.
2837. Do you think the Government is warranted in going to the expense of constructing a line? I think the Government is warranted in going to the expense now. As matters are now, and have been for some years past, many people have gone to considerable expense, and have been absolutely ruined, simply because they had no means of conveying produce to market. I also know a number who are in a precarious state now, and unless they obtain relief from outside, such as the construction of a railway line, they must come to grief.
2838. Do you think the railway would give the relief they require? I am sure that it would.
2839. I presume you take a more patriotic view of the question than the desire to see money expended in the district. In conjunction with other citizens you wish to see every railway pay interest. Having in view the rapid development of this district, and its probable still further increase, do you think that the produce of the district would be sufficient to pay interest and working expenses on a railway? I think the line from the Tweed to Lismore would be likely to pay you—not handsomely, but sufficiently for working expenses and interest.
2840. What do you think of the proposed harbour at Byron Bay? That I have also taken a great deal of trouble about for the past ten or twelve years, merely because I considered that it would be beneficial to the district if it could be carried out.
2841. Although you are resident at Lismore you have no feeling of jealousy about the opening up of Byron Bay? None whatever.
2842. Because you believe that it would give relief to the settlers in that part of the district? I believe that it would be the natural outlet for 10 or 12 miles to the west, south, and up to the Tweed River north. It would by a long way be the best outlet that could be devised.
2843. You know the country between here and Casino? Yes.
2844. What is the character of it? Generally good.
2845. Is it well settled? Not so thickly settled as this locality, but two-thirds of the land is alienated.
2846. Are there any well-to-do farmers along here? Yes.
2847. Does that particular piece of the line offer a fair and reasonable prospect of yielding a return? I think so, but there is one source of income connected with that route that I have not heard of, and I confess that I am somewhat surprised at it. There is a large extent of very superior country north of Casino known as the Upper Richmond, that seems to have been snuffed out and ignored as being no sort of profit. I know personally that there is a very large extent of very superior country there with very good natural roads to Casino, and the railway would give an outlet for it either to Lismore and Coraki or to Tenterfield. Unless something of that sort is done, it must, I presume, be occupied in the future as it is occupied now. There are a few large selectors there, but the bulk of the land is taken up entirely by squatters. Of course I am not averse to squatters—I look upon them as being in the main the backbone of the country, but as the population increases the squatters must retire.

2848.

- Mr. J. Stocks. 2848. Do you know anything of the country along the proposed railway route from Casino to Grafton? I do. I know it all.
- 26 Nov., 1889. 2849. What do you think of that country? The first three or four miles is fairly good. I think I may say the first 5 miles. It then deteriorates, and is poor hungry soil, or at least what we on the Richmond describe as such. As you go further south it does not improve until you get beyond what is called the cross-roads, about 40 miles south of Casino. From there on to Grafton there is some improvement. It is not nearly so bad after that as before you get there.
2850. To Lawrence? No, not to Lawrence, but to Grafton. When the Commissioners were here that matter came up, and when I described the land as inferior Mr. Oliver said, "You mean that it is inferior by comparison with the land in the Richmond district proper?" I said "yes;" but he asked, "What is it compared with the land about Yass and Goulburn?" I said, "It is equal to that."
2851. At any period during your long residence in the district has it been the practice to send the produce of the Richmond over to the Clarence for shipment? No.
2852. Supposing a railway were constructed there, do you think any Richmond produce would be shipped at the Clarence? Nothing worth much.
2853. Is there likely to be any interchange of produce between the two rivers? It will be very small. The productions are similar, and I cannot imagine what could induce anyone to go from the Richmond to the Clarence, providing they had a proper water way to the sea themselves. That is not the only light in which I should regard the line to the Clarence, though it is one aspect of the matter.
2854. Do you think that, in addition to the water-ways which you at present have, the district requires another outlet such as Byron Bay? In that locality, as I stated before, taking a distance say 12 or 15 miles to the west of Byron Bay, and a similar distance south, and the entire distance to the Tweed, I think all that country very urgently requires much better accommodation than they have by going to Lismore or to Ballina.

Mr. Henry Brown Chisholm, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. H. B. Chisholm. 2855. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Cooper's Creek, about 4½ miles from Bex Hill.
2856. How far is that from Lismore? Nine and a half miles.
- 26 Nov., 1889. 2857. Are you a farmer? Yes.
2858. Have you been farming for any length of time? For five years on the Richmond.
2859. Where did you come from? I came from the Clarence.
2860. Were you farming on the Clarence? No; I have not farmed on the Clarence.
2861. The Committee would be glad to hear any information which you desire to give as to the productiveness of the country which you farm, or anything else—what acreage have you? I hold 90 acres.
2862. In the scrub lands? Yes.
2863. How much have you cleared? I have 75 acres down, and 17 under cultivation.
2864. What are your principal crops? Maize and potatoes.
2865. And fruit-trees? Fruit-trees of different kinds.
2866. Are you making your living out of them? Yes.
2867. You have stock I suppose? Yes, I have about 30 head of cattle. I combine dairying with farming.
2868. In this district, if you had a good market, from 90 to 100 acres is ample for any man? Yes, it is quite sufficient.
2869. He would want a little more if he had a growing family? Yes.
2870. Can you give me any idea of the yield of maize on that land? About 60 bushels an acre.
2871. On the average? Yes, that is about the average.
2872. Any other crops? Six tons of potatoes have been taken from an acre in that locality.
2873. Do you get two crops of corn in a year? No. We have not time. There is time for two crops of potatoes.
2874. Is your sugar cane good? In the locality where I live there is a great deal of high land adapted for sugar.
2875. Uncultivated? Yes.
2876. Simply because I suppose you are not near enough to a mill? Yes. Some farmers there started the industry, and erected a small mill, and put a small area under cane; but they had to abandon it, because their appliances were not sufficient, and the carriage was too far.
2877. Are there any farmers there? There are a great number of small holdings.
2878. Do you suffer much from want of markets? A great deal, especially in dairying.
2879. Suppose the railway were constructed from Lismore to Byron Bay, and a breakwater was constructed at Byron Bay, would you increase the area under cultivation to any great extent? Certainly.
2880. Do you think that the construction of those works would be an incentive to the bulk of the farmers to increase the area under cultivation? Yes, they would give us two markets.
2881. You do not think that the men are holding the land for speculative purposes? There are no speculative holdings—they are all *bona fide*.
2882. If Byron Bay were made a port there would be a very large increase in the quantity of land cultivated? Yes.
2883. Do you know the line of railway? I do for a considerable distance.
2884. Do you think it fairly serves the present and future settlement? I think it does.
2885. Do you know the reserves? Yes.
2886. The land there would be very valuable if the works were carried out? Yes.
2887. And would go a long way towards paying the cost of them? Yes, certainly.
2888. Do you think Byron Bay would be used very largely by the farmers to the north of Lismore, away from the banks of the river? I think it would be used almost wholly.
2889. Do you know the country beyond that? Not beyond Byron Bay. I have been through it; but I could not give any definite information about it.
2890. How do your farmers get supplies? From Lismore.
2891. I suppose you are better off than the bulk of them, inasmuch as you have a fairly good road? Yes.
2892. How do men 15 or 20 miles out get their food? They pack it out principally on horseback.
2893. Anything that they produce they have to bring in in the same way? Yes. They produce nothing, further back, but butter. They could not bring in anything else.
- 2894.

2894. I suppose they are struggling along? Yes; but they are in a very bad way.
2895. If the railway were constructed they hope that roads will be opened up to give them facilities for getting their produce away? Yes.
2896. If not to Byron Bay to Lismore? Yes; but Byron Bay would be preferable.
2897. Is there anything else which you would like to tell the Committee? Simply that Byron Bay would open up two markets;—it would give us an opportunity of sending to Brisbane. At the present time we send our produce to Sydney, the agents buy it from us there, and reship it for Brisbane.

Mr. H. B.
Chisholm.
26 Nov., 1889.

Thomas Campion Lodge, Esq., Manager Australian Joint Stock Bank, sworn, and further examined:—

2898. *Chairman.*] You wish to state? I wish to qualify the evidence I gave with reference to that portion of the line between Casino and Grafton. I was asked the nature of the country there, and I said that I thought that it was not to be compared with the land out this way. I may state that I was speaking of the land to be seen along the present mail road. I have no other knowledge of the country.

T. C. Lodge,
Esq.
26 Nov., 1889.

WEDNESDAY, 27 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at Broadwater, Richmond River.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX, | JACOB GARRARD, Esq.,
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Mr. R. F. Holden, sugar-cane inspector, examined:—

2899. *Chairman.*] What are you? A cane inspector at the Colonial Sugar Company's Mill, Broadwater, Richmond River.
2900. You say that many of the men from the Italian settlement come here during the sugar season to get employment? About thirty.
2901. So that these people do not entirely depend upon the produce of their own land for the means of subsistence? No.
2902. Are they paid at the current rate of wages? There are two working at the mill now. They get the same as the other employés do. Those outside work by contract, and are on the same footing as all our other cane-cutters.
2903. *Mr. Garrard.*] Have they been coming to the mill ever since they settled in the district? Since 1885 I think if you went through their settlement in the sugar season you would not find half a dozen able-bodied men there. They are either working for us, or for the small mills, or for the farmers on the river banks. They are able to exist and to carry on their homes upon the amount which they earn. They also depend a great deal upon timber-getting for a livelihood.

Mr. R. F.
Holden.
27 Nov., 1889.

THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at the Court House, Casino, at 11 a.m.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX, | JACOB GARRARD, Esq.,
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Richard Barling, Esq., licensed surveyor, sworn, and examined:—

2904. *Chairman.*] What is your position in the Government service? I am a licensed surveyor.
2905. A staff officer? No; but in charge of part of the Casino land district.
2906. You are stationed in the land district of Casino? Yes. My district also includes part of the Lismore land district.
2907. Is the whole of the Casino land district in your charge? No; only the southern side of the river.
2908. And then on to Lismore? No, it does not reach Lismore; it goes down as far as Woodburn; as far as the coast—it is the county of Richmond.
2909. You have been residing within the land district of Casino for about twenty years? Quite that.
2910. Continuously for the whole of that time? Continuously.
2911. Have you a general knowledge of the land in this district? I think so—as much as any man.
2912. You have been all over it? Over very nearly every part of it, except the far part, up the river—Mount Lindsay.
2913. Can you tell us what is the total area of the land district of Casino? Something like 60 miles square.
2914. Tell us in acres? Over 2,000,000 acres.
2915. Can you tell us how much of that has been alienated? I daresay not half of it. I daresay 1,000,000 would be unalienated—2,000,000 acres is an under-estimate. I have not the figures here.
2916. Where is the bulk of the conditionally-purchased land located? It follows the main part of the river and its tributaries.
2917. The creeks? Yes.

R. Barling,
Esq.
28 Nov., 1889.

2918.

- R. Barling,
Esq.
28 Nov., 1889.
2918. How far back from them does it go? Taking the whole district of course the back part?
2919. I am asking you where the bulk of the selections are located? On the banks of the rivers.
2920. How far back has that settlement extended from the rivers and from the arms of the rivers? Miles back in some places.
2921. What is the furthest place back where there is any considerable settlement? It is settled between Ballina and Lismore—a distance of 18 miles.
2922. What do you call settled—alienated? It is selected.
2923. Are they residential selections? Residential selections. It is also selected from Lismore to Casino, on both sides of the road.
2924. For what purpose do the selectors generally use the land? For agriculture and for grazing.
2925. Do they use it for agriculture to any great extent? All along the rivers and creeks the land is used for agriculture.
2926. How do they get their produce away to market? By the steamers—the steamers go to Lismore. The people have to send their produce by drays to the different wharves, and the droghers take it from there to the steamers.
2927. And then it goes out of the Richmond River heads? Yes.
2928. What is the character of the bulk of the land about here—is it good agricultural land? It is good agricultural land on the northern side of the river—I am reckoning the south arm as the main river—and for a distance of 10 or 12 miles south of the river.
2929. Are the lands held in large areas, or are they fairly well distributed? Along the banks they are fairly well distributed. The agriculture is carried out in small areas.
2930. And when they get into the grazing districts? They take 640 acres, or 1,280 acres with a lease.
2931. Are any of the lands now used for grazing fit for agricultural purposes? Yes.
2932. Will the railway, if constructed here, bring those lands within a reasonable distance of a market? Yes; I have no hesitation in saying that.
2933. To any great extent? To a great extent. All the people now on the back creeks have no means of getting to market. If the railway were constructed there would be double the settlement.
2934. I suppose the people who are so far back from the river use the land for grazing purposes because they have no facilities for getting to market? Yes.
2935. I suppose those lands are not as good as the land close to the rivers; but are they good agricultural lands? On the banks of the creeks. The farther you get up the river the better it is.
2936. Is there any quantity of land reserved? A great quantity.
2937. Close to the town? Not just close to the town itself, except within the population boundaries.
2938. Are there any reserves on the rivers and creeks? Yes; on the creeks there are plenty, and there is a large reserve on the Tenterfield line, within 10 or 12 miles of the town—thousands of acres of the best description.
2939. Is there any good timber in the back country you are speaking of? Yes; all kinds of the very best.
2940. If the railway were constructed, do you think that it would bring that timber to market? Yes.
2941. How far would they have to haul it? Well, they are hauling cedar now for 40 miles.
2942. Would they haul that by the railway? It might pay to make a light line to bring it in.
2943. Do you know the route of the railway as laid out? Only on the rough.
2944. If the lands within the population area were thrown open for conditional purchase would they be taken up under the new Act, which provides that a few acres may be selected in that way? Every bit of the land will be taken up.
2945. At how much per acre? I should say at £3 or £4 an acre now, but the smaller areas near the town would be more valuable—£10 an acre.
2946. That is within a short distance of the town? Yes. The larger reserves of which I was speaking are on the western boundary of the counties of Richmond and Rouse, and contain very valuable timber.
2947. You know the reserves running along the railway line from here south to Grafton? Yes.
2948. All that land has been open for years; these are only recent reserves? The land has been reserved for the last five years.
2949. The whole of it? I fancy so. Some of the reserves were made in 1881; the others might be a little later.
2950. Are these railway reserves? The chief part are railway reserves.
2951. There is a great deal of unalienated land to the south of Casino, and to the east of Myrtle Creek, right out to the coast? Yes.
2952. Those lands are unalienated? Yes.
2953. Is the country different there—is it good, bad, or indifferent? Following the creeks it would be good. There are portions you see picked out on the creeks.
2954. Very few portions as compared with the total area of the country to the east of Myrtle Creek? Yes. You must bear in mind that the leasehold areas have cut up this land so that it cannot be selected. Every bit of the resumed areas has been taken up since it was thrown open. A portion of Myrtle Creek is in the resumed area, and it has all been selected on the Wyon Run.
2955. These leases will all fall in next year? Yes; I understand so.
2956. Do you think there will be a rush for the land then? Yes. I have heard of several who have looked out land in the leasehold areas already.
2957. What is the value of these lands now in the leasehold area of that particular run? 25s. an acre, to take up a selection.
2958. I am asking you what they would be honestly worth if put into the market—the unalienated land and reserves? In their present state I should not put them down as worth more than 25s. an acre. I would put that as the upset price.
2959. What about the reserves near Casino—what are they worth per acre? £4 or £5, and £10 close to the town.
2960. Within the population boundary? Yes.
2961. Is that the largest value that you would put upon any of the reserves in the Casino land district—£5 an acre? Yes, at the present time.
2962. Without the railway? Yes.
2963. And the unalienated lands within the leasehold areas of the runs you say are now worth 25s. an acre? Yes.
- 2964.

R. Barling,
Esq.

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2964. Supposing a railway were constructed to Casino, what would be the value of the unalienated land within the reserves and leasehold areas in the land district of Casino? The value would be more than doubled within 10 miles on each side of the railway.
2965. The reserves between Casino and Grafton seem to be pretty extensive? Yes, they are.
2966. Would you apply the same value to the lands right through to Grafton which you do to those around Casino? Yes. I should put their value at double what it is now if the railway were made. If they are worth £5 an acre now they ought to be worth double that if a railway were made.
2967. Is the land, as you go further south, as valuable as the land round Casino? No.
2968. It is poor country? Without following the watercourses. The road itself goes through the very worst of it.
2969. The good country which is unalienated and fit for agricultural settlement is on the creeks? Yes.
2970. You have some idea of what it is proposed to spend in these districts at the Clarence River Heads, the Richmond River Heads, Byron Bay, and on this railway;—do you not think that in the interests of the country these lands should all be reserved until a determination has been arrived at with regard to the construction of these works. I am not speaking of the interests of the district, or of the present land-owners who want land? I do not think it would be in the interests of the country to reserve all the land; though it might be reserved within a certain distance of the railway.
2971. Take the reserves—do you think that any of them should be thrown open before railway communication is given, if it is to be given? Not until it is decided whether the railway will be made.
2972. Would they be of as great value when it was decided that the railway should be made as if the railway were made? If it is once decided to make the railway their value is made.
2973. Do you think the value will be as great when it is decided to construct the railway, but before the railway is constructed, as it will be after the railway as constructed? It will double the value now, and it might give ten times the value to the portions remaining.
2974. Do you not think that the country should get a fair value from the land to recoup the expenditure on these public works? Yes.
2975. It would not do any injury to anyone, except the land-grabbers, to reserve the land? I think not within a distance of the railway.
2976. Take Myrtle and Myall Creeks? I think they ought not to be reserved. They would bring population, and the population would give traffic to the railway.
2977. Then there is not population enough for a railway at the present time? Yes; but this country would be a feeder to the railway.
2978. Would not the country get the enhanced value of these lands better after the works were carried out than before? I think not.
2979. *Mr. Cox.*] I think you mentioned that you expect that a large amount of land will be taken up as soon as the leasehold areas fall in? Yes.
2980. Do these leasehold areas contain much valuable land? Yes. The land is of just as much value as that which is already taken up.
2981. As a rule, are they more valuable than the resumed areas? No; I think not. They are about the same.
2982. When the leasehold areas fall in, where do you think the greater settlement will probably take place—up the river, or between the Richmond and the Clarence? Up the river from here.
2983. That is really the most valuable land? Yes, up the river.
2984. So that next year the population will probably settle up the river above Casino? Yes.
2985. Consequently a railway from Casino to the coast would help those people very considerably? Yes.
2986. At the present time there is very little agriculture carried on in this neighbourhood for want of a market? For want of means of transit.
2987. Do you think the railway would give better means of taking the produce to market than the present river gives? The communication is so uncertain at the present time. We have to depend upon the droghers, and the channel gets blocked up by every flood. None of the ocean steamers can come up here.
2988. You think that speedy communication by rail with the coast, although perhaps not cheaper than the river traffic, would be largely availed of, because of its greater certainty? Yes, in a great many cases, especially for perishable goods. Of course it would not be used for heavy timber.
2989. Where do you think is the proper part of the coast to take the railway to? I think that the railway, as I see it marked on the plan, would feed all the rivers. Lismore is the head of navigation for ocean boats, and the railway would feed that place, and, if Byron Bay was made a port of call for steamers, it would also feed it; but the Casino traffic would not pass Lismore and go to Byron Bay—it would go down its own river.
2990. Therefore the advantages of a railway between Casino and Lismore would be to give speedy and safe traffic for all produce going down the river? Yes.
2991. Is that in the event of the Richmond Heads being made available for larger steamers? Even if there was no more done there a great deal would go out of the Richmond Heads.
2992. Is there much traffic between the Richmond and the Clarence? There is passenger traffic between the Richmond and the Clarence? Lawrence is our port on the Clarence.
2993. Does much produce go to Lawrence to be shipped? None from here, but if the railway were constructed it would feed the Clarence at one end and the Richmond at the other.
2994. When this expected influx of population to the heads of the Richmond takes place, they are not likely to send their produce to the Clarence? No, I should think not.
2995. Is there a large amount of passenger traffic between the two rivers? Not very large. Since we have had more certain steam communication half the passenger traffic has gone through the Richmond Heads. Formerly the whole of the passenger traffic went by the Clarence.
2996. In the event of the Richmond River Heads being made more available for traffic, there would be little chance of any produce from this river going there? I think so.
2997. In the event of a railway being constructed between Casino and Grafton, what are the prospective profits—how would they arise? The land all along the line which is fit for agriculture would be settled, and half of the produce would go to the Clarence and half to the Richmond.
2998. But that settlement would not take place until all the superior land on the heads of the river was taken up? I think it would take place at the same time in one part, but not so readily. I say that that is where the rush would be—up the river.

- R. Barling, Esq.
28 Nov., 1889.
2999. I am to infer from what you say that if a railway were made anywhere it would create a certain amount of traffic? It would create a certain amount, but you must have the land.
3000. Is the whole of the land between Casino and Grafton available for settlement—would it support a considerable population? I have been over the whole of it, as far as my own district is concerned, to 40 miles from here, but I would not answer for the other part.
3001. What I want to gather from you is, whether the land is of sufficient value to warrant the railway being made, or whether, the railway being made, the land, though inferior, would be taken up because of it? It is inferior along the road, but on the creeks it is not. People passing along the road say,—“Oh, this is very poor country; it will never pay a railway”; but on the banks of the creeks there are thousands of acres that would be productive.
3002. Those lands are not productive now, because of the want of means of transit? Yes.
3003. *Chairman.*] Looking at the map, you can see how the land has been alienated on the Tweed and on the Richmond for a considerable distance back? Yes. But I said that all the country between Ballina and Lismore was taken up.
3004. And away to the north the land has been alienated at the back of the mountains where there are none of these watercourses? Yes, but that is in prospect of having some means of transit.
3005. The same thing might apply to the country between here and the Clarence—how is it that so much of the country has remained unoccupied? The good was picked up first—the worst is always left to the last.
3006. Does not that rather go to show that the land on the Tweed, and on the Richmond back from the creeks, is superior to the land back from the Clarence and between here and that river? I would not say that.
3007. Do you know the country at all? Yes, back from the Tweed.
3008. Do you know the distance from here to Grafton? 70 miles.
3009. Sixty-two and a half miles by railway, and the railway is estimated to cost £776,000; the annual charge on it will be £23,280;—is there any possibility of that being paid. The working expenses are generally another 3½ per cent., so that the total charge on the line would be about 7 per cent.;—do you think that if the railway were constructed, and all these lands thrown open, the line would even pay its interest? I think not. To stay at one place, at Grafton, I think not.
3010. What would make it pay interest? If it was part of a national coast railway, when it was continued it might pay, but I should advocate its joining the main line somewhere. I should only look upon it as a feeder to the rivers at the present time.
3011. The non-settlement of the land by the people before 1884 goes to show that it was not worth taking up? The rush has set in during the last few years.
3012. Do you know how the population has increased during the past five years? I could not say. I have known it this twenty years.
3013. *Mr. Garrard.*] Have you any land of your own in this district? I have a little near the town.
3014. What area? About 400 acres freehold, and 640 conditionally purchased.
3015. In what direction is your land? Up the river. Within the municipality and up the river, about 4 miles out.
3016. The distance from Lismore to Grafton is about 80 miles? More than that—90 miles.
3017. You think that half way between Lismore and Grafton the trade would go to Lismore, and for the other half it would go to Grafton? Yes; that is my idea.
3018. Do you know the route of the line between Casino and Grafton? Yes.
3019. Do you think it is the best route that could be taken to serve the greatest number of people and the largest area of good land;—would you go further east or west? No; I think it is as well where it is.
3020. To tap the rich lands on the creeks? Yes. I think they could all come on to the line laid down on the map.
3021. Is the land between here and Lawrence better than that between here and Grafton? No; it is the same.
3022. You think that the line between here and Grafton could not be improved? No; I do not think that it could. I do not know that you could tap any richer land by moving it.

Frederick Burgess Gulley, Esq., Mayor of Casino, sworn and examined:—

- F. B. Gulley, Esq.
28 Nov., 1889.
3023. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your occupation? I am a storekeeper.
3024. You are also mayor of the borough? Yes.
3025. How long have you resided in the Casino district? Fourteen years.
3026. Has there been much progress made in the district during that time? Yes, great progress.
3027. Where do the people at the present time find a market for their produce? Sydney is the principal market.
3028. Do they send it down the river from here or from Lismore? They send it via Irvington.
3029. That is on the main river? Yes. That is where the Government wharf is—it is about 2 miles from Casino.
3030. At present you have to tranship your inward and outward goods to the ocean steamers at Coraki? Yes.
3031. Do you think that if the railway were constructed people would use it at all? I do.
3032. Where would be their port of shipment then? For the portion of the district between here and Myrtle Creek, Casino would be the port of shipment; and beyond that, Grafton.
3033. Then the railway would only get the 20 miles of traffic between Myrtle Creek and Casino? Casino would get the whole of the traffic perhaps as far as Myall Creek.
3034. That would be brought to Casino? Yes.
3035. Then put into droghers and taken to Coraki, and transhipped into the ocean steamers? No; that is the present mode of doing things; but there is no doubt that if a railway were constructed it would be largely used instead of the droghers.
3036. Where to? Very probably a portion of the traffic would go to Lismore and to Byron Bay.
3037. If the railway were constructed, produce, instead of being sent out from Casino by the south arm, would go on to Lismore for shipment to Sydney and other outports; or would it go by Grafton? It would go to Sydney by Lismore. It would certainly not go by Grafton except from south of Myall Creek.
- 3038.

F. B. Gulley,
Esq.
28 Nov., 1889.

3038. You would look upon Lismore as your deep seaport? Yes.
3039. And all the trade to the south of Myall or Myrtle Creek would find its way to Grafton? I think so.
3040. How far is Myall Creek from here—south? About 30 miles.
3041. Roughly half way to Grafton? Yes.
3042. Half of the district between this and Grafton would find its market at Grafton, and the other half at Lismore? Yes.
3043. Do you know the country between here and Lismore? Yes.
3044. Is the soil good? In comparison with that in other portions of the district we consider it only third rate, but in comparison with other parts of the country it is very fair land.
3045. In comparison with the brush land it is very poor, but in comparison with other parts of the Colony it is average land? Yes.
3046. There is a large amount of good land still available for settlement? Yes.
3047. I suppose it would naturally be taken up before this comparatively poor land? Yes, but I know for a fact that there are a great number of persons waiting for the leases to be thrown open, and when they are thrown open there will be a great deal of competition.
3048. *Chairman.*] You mean in the number of applications—there can be no other competition? Yes.
3049. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you get any of your goods via Grafton or Lawrence? No.
3050. No produce is sent that way? No.
3051. You send it via Coraki? Yes.
3052. Do you think that if the railway were constructed there would be a large increase in the quantity of land put under cultivation? I do.
3053. What is the principal product in this part of the district—within a radius of 10 miles of Casino? Maize and dairy produce.
3054. Dairying is a recently established industry? Quite recent.
3055. Is it being developed very largely? It will be a very important industry—one of the most important in a few years.
3056. It is absolutely necessary for the development of that industry that the produce should have speedy transit to market? Yes.
3057. Have you, during your residence in Casino, suffered much from the detention of goods in or out, through the bad state of the bar? We have suffered severely. To give you an instance that came under my own notice. Some years ago I happened to be at Ballina, and I saw thirty-seven sailing vessels and two steamers—the “Susannah Cuthbert,” the only steamer then trading to the river, and an auxiliary screw steamer called the “Examiner”—in all thirty-nine vessels, detained there. Some had been bar-bound for four months, and the “Susannah Cuthbert” was bar-bound for six weeks. I went to Sydney in her. A great number of these vessels had maize and perishable cargoes on board, and when they arrived in Sydney the cargoes were perfectly worthless.
3058. You are speaking of what happened many years ago;—have you during the last five years suffered any serious loss from the detention of goods at the Heads, or outside? Yes, repeatedly.
3059. Would it not be better in the interests of this district if you were connected with the Clarence, where there is deeper water, than with this river, where you are subject to so much loss? Certainly not. We contend that when the improvements at the bar are carried out we shall have all we want in the shape of river accommodation.
3060. You have so much confidence in Sir John Coode, and in the common sense of the Committee who recommended the work, that you think that the port will become a good one? Yes.
3061. Lismore will be your shipping place then? Yes, for the great bulk of the produce.
3062. Do you think it would retard the district at all if all the unalienated lands were withdrawn from sale until a railway was constructed? I am afraid it would.
3063. Do you not think that the country should get the benefit of the increased value that would naturally arise from the construction of the railway? I am inclined to think that they would to a great extent.
3064. The unalienated land should not be absolutely withdrawn from sale during that time? No, I think not. I am quite satisfied that when it is known for a certainty, that we shall get a railway from Grafton to the Tweed a very large area of land now lying idle will be utilised, and the railway used.
3065. So far as you are concerned to Lismore? Just so. There will be a very large influx of population from all parts of the Colony.
3066. A railway to Grafton is out of your consideration;—it is a railway to Lismore that you want, because you tell us that from 30 miles south of Casino the produce will come to Lismore? I am of opinion that it will.
3067. How long has Casino been incorporated? About ten years.
3068. What has been the growth of the population and the rates during that time? The population, I should say, is three times as large now as it was when the town was incorporated.
3069. You had 500 inhabitants when you were incorporated? About that.
3070. And you have 1,500 now? About that.
3071. What is the growth of rates? The rates now are about double as much as they were at first.
3072. What is your annual rate now? About £800. That, of course, does not include the subsidy.
3073. You have outgrown the subsidy, except by special favour of Parliament? Yes.
3074. *Mr. Cox.*] In making a railway, although there may not be a prospect of the country being immediately reimbursed the large expenditure which it incurs, there must be a fairly immediate prospect of the railway paying; all matters of this kind must be conducted, as far as possible, on commercial principles? Yes, I am aware of that.
3075. Would the Government be justified in expending very large sums of money unless they saw a prospect of the works paying for themselves in the immediate future? I think not.
3076. A railway between Casino and Lismore would be $17\frac{1}{2}$ miles long; and would cost £10,000 or £11,000 per mile; the interest on that would be $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and the working expenses $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., in all 7 per cent.; do you think there is any immediate prospect of an amount of money necessary to pay the interest and working expenses being obtained from a railway between these two places? I think that within a reasonable time the line would pay.
3077. What would be the chief products that the line would foster and develop in this district? The dairying industry would perhaps be the principal.
3078. What would be the produce of the dairies? Butter and cheese largely.

3079.

- F. B. Gulley, Esq.,
28 Nov., 1889.
3079. Do you think there would be sufficient butter and cheese made to warrant the construction of a line to carry it to market? Not solely for it.
3080. What other produce would there be? There is a large quantity of maize grown on the south arm. There is more maize grown in the vicinity of Casino than on any part of the river.
3081. In the event of a large settlement taking place when the leasehold areas are thrown open it would tend no doubt to a still larger production? It would; there is no question about that.
3082. Then would come in the cost to the farmer; would the cost of railway traffic be so heavy as to prevent a farmer from getting any fair return for his labour? If the rates were at all reasonable he would get a fair return.
3083. With the present scale of charges do you think that a railway would induce farmers to grow grain? I think so. There is a large quantity of unalienated land suitable for wheat growing, and I believe that if they could get the wheat to market readily a great quantity of it would be grown up the river on what is known as the Upper Richmond.
3084. Would it pay to carry timber down by railway? I think it would. There is a large quantity of valuable timber between this and Myall Creek—a very large quantity; and within a radius of 20 miles from Casino there are thousands of pine trees—some millions of feet of pine, which, no doubt, if there were a railway, would be brought into Casino.
3085. Do you think the railway would compete with the water carriage between Casino and Coraki for timber? That is doubtful.
3086. Then you think it is very doubtful that there would be any traffic in wood on the proposed line? At present, of course. There is a great demand for piles for the Melbourne and other markets. There are a great quantity of trees suitable for that purpose between this and Myall Creek, and I think it would pay to cut them if there were a railway. At present they are almost valueless.
3087. Presuming that you are right in your expectation that eventually a large population will be settled on the heads of the streams running into the Richmond, and that the heavy produce that will be brought down by rail, do you think that that would also take place if a railway were constructed between Casino and Grafton? I do.
3088. What could be produced in that country that would warrant the very large expenditure that would be incurred in making the railway? There is a lot of unalienated land to be taken up, and a large portion of that land is suitable for cultivation. As I stated before, the balance of it must necessarily go to Grafton. The rest of it would come to Casino from about midway.
3089. Do you think the people would settle there at the same time that people were settling on what we hear are richer lands on the heads of the rivers and creeks? I feel confident that they would.
3090. Only because of the railway? Simply because of the railway. If the railway is not constructed a large quantity of this land will not be taken up for many years to come.
3091. And the probable receipts of this line from Casino to Grafton would be halved between the two towns, and would come from farm produce and timber? Yes; there would be a large quantity of timber.
3092. Sufficient to pay the working expenses and a fair interest on the capital? There would be hides and tallow, and lots of things. There are a large number of cattle in this neighbourhood, in fact this is where nearly all the cattle are reared.
3093. *Chairman.*] It is proposed to start a railway from Grafton. It runs out from there 25 miles into what is known as the Clarence forest reserve No. 1. That place is about 10 miles distant from Lawrence. What is to be gained by taking the line this 25 miles;—you must bear in mind that the whole of these settlers are in reach of the river? As I understand it this railway is part of a scheme for a north coast line.
3094. We are inquiring into a proposal to construct a railway from Grafton to the Tweed? If the line were part of a Great Northern coast railway, then it would have to go to Grafton.
3095. Then we would only be justified in taking it to Grafton in the event of the line being part of a north coast railway? That would greatly affect the matter.
3096. The line passes almost alongside the farms situated on the banks of the river or close to the river. If this is only to be a line to the Clarence is there any justification for taking it to Grafton when it could go to Lawrence? No.
3097. If the object of the railway is only to feed a port on the Clarence, from which produce could be taken to Sydney by water, would it not be better to find that port at Lawrence rather than at Grafton, and thus save 15 miles of railway? I think it would.

Frederick George Crouch, Esq., storekeeper, sworn, and examined:—

- F. G. Crouch, Esq.,
28 Nov., 1889.
3098. *Mr. Cox.*] What are you? I am a storekeeper, residing in Casino.
3099. How many years have you been residing here? I have been here nearly fourteen years, and I resided on the Clarence about ten years previous to my coming here.
3100. Have you any interests still on the Clarence? I have some small interest on the Clarence. My chief interest is on the Richmond.
3101. Do you own any large extent of land in this district? Principally town and suburban land, and one or two farms.
3102. No agricultural land? One or two farms.
3103. Do you farm them yourself? No, I do not—they are leased.
3104. I presume that you are fairly well acquainted with the district round here? I am thoroughly well acquainted with it, I think.
3105. You know its capabilities and potentialities? Its capabilities are immense, and it has progressed by leaps and bounds since I have been acquainted with it.
3106. Have you any statistics to show the trade of Casino? They will be submitted by a later witness.
3107. In the event of a railway being constructed between this place and Lismore, and continued thence to Byron Bay, do you think it could successfully compete against the river traffic? I do. I consider that in the near future the Richmond must seek the markets of the world rather than a local market for her produce.
3108. In that case you would ship it in larger vessels? I think that ultimately that would have to be done. At present it is taken by the droghers to Coraki, and there transhipped again into comparatively small vessels.
- 3109.

3109. If you wanted to trade with the outside world, and Byron Bay were made a safe port, would you ship there? I think that that must come about in the near future.
3110. Do you anticipate that there will be a large settlement next year, when the leasehold areas will be thrown open for selection? I anticipate confidently that there will be a large accession of population. Already people are coming to the district, and selection is going on to a large extent, as can be proved by the Land Office records. The immense area of good agricultural land that is now simply held for grazing purposes will, as time goes on, be brought under cultivation.
3111. As a man who has lived here for some time, and who has represented the district in Parliament, you must know that a railway is not payable if taken to a pastoral district? Certainly; but the present and previous Governments have constructed railways to carry wool.
3112. In the event of the country above Casino being held for purely pastoral purposes, or even for dairying purposes, do you think that it would support a railway? Dairying will not be the only industry. We can produce fruits, tobacco, hay, and wheat, on the ridges.
3113. Do you think these things will be produced? Yes, to a very large extent, if facilities are afforded when once the settlement comes.
3114. What do you know of the country between this and Grafton? I have traversed it repeatedly.
3115. What kind of country is it? By comparison with other parts of the country where railways have been constructed, good.
3116. *Chairman.*] Do you include in that category Bourke and Hay? Yes. I speak comparatively. As pointed out by Mr. Gulley, this land, compared with our richer scrub lands, is inferior; but, compared with land in other parts of the Colony, where railways have been constructed, and which is known to be fair average land, it is good.
3117. *Mr. Cox.*] After you leave the banks of the Clarence, according to the map, comparatively little land is taken up? No agricultural produce could be made to pay there, because the land carriage would be excessive.
3118. How is it that all the land on both sides of the Richmond have been taken up—the circumstances there are the same? It is better land.
3119. But your argument is, that this land has not been taken up because there is no access to market; but the other land has been taken up, where there is no access? Yes; but there is no comparison between the two. The land which has been taken up between here and Grafton has been taken up for grazing purposes principally.
3120. Would it pay to run a railway through that country, if it is to be used merely for grazing purposes? I think that is questionable. I think that a good portion of the land that is not now used for any but grazing purposes will be used for agricultural purposes—that is, on the banks of the creeks. On Myall and Myrtle Creeks there is excellent land, and on Deep Creek there is magnificent land, both up and down—scrub land, too.
3121. Probably only half the produce from that land would come to Casino? Only one-half. It would certainly not come from beyond Myall Creek.
3122. The other would go to Grafton? Yes.
3123. Do you think that the traffic would be sufficient to warrant a very large expenditure on the railway? It must always be borne in mind, I think, that this will be part and parcel of the north coast line, which has been spoken of with some degree of authority by Sir Henry Parkes, and by previous Premiers.
3124. That is not the question which we are considering now. Do you think that the country would be warranted in making this line, presuming that there was to be no extension. What traffic would there be in the event of a line being constructed from Casino to Grafton, except the produce raised on the banks of the creeks. There is a large amount of timber there? Yes, a large amount of timber—hardwood, ironbark, and so on—that would find its way to market. It is now being carted to Lawrence and to the Richmond.
3125. Do you think that they would take that to Grafton and ship it from there, rather than to Lawrence? I think so, because the difference of transit, when you once have the timber on the line, is so trifling compared with the shipping and transshipping, that I think it would go to Grafton.
3126. If the produce from the country between the two rivers was to be taken to the nearest port, do you not think that Lawrence, which is very much nearer than Grafton, would be the most desirable place to take it? There is a difficulty about taking the line to Lawrence, because, if it were intended to go further south, the cost of bridging the Clarence there would be an insuperable obstacle.
3127. But leaving that out of the question? Certainly Lawrence is the nearer port of the two, but there are other considerations which would govern the direction of the line.
3128. It is your opinion, at any rate, that a railway constructed between Casino and Lismore would pay? I am satisfied that it would in a very few years.
3129. And you believe that it would develop a very large trade in years to come, especially if Byron Bay were made a harbour? Yes, I have no hesitation in saying so. There is one industry that has not yet been alluded to, and that is the frozen-meat industry. We have at the present time something like 160,000 horned cattle in the district. Fat cattle were now taken from the district, and trucked at Tenterfield, and if the Government offered facilities, in the way of freezing-chambers and freezing-depôts at Darling Harbour, the intercolonial trade would, in the near future, be a very important industry, and we should probably ship carcasses to England in very large numbers.
3130. *Mr. Garrard.*] You made a comparison just now between the land between this and Grafton and that in other parts of the Colony—you have a knowledge of other parts of the Colony? Yes.
3131. To what part of the colony would you liken the land between here and Grafton—to Bowral, the south coast, or where? You are taking the best parts of the Colony.
3132. To Bourke? This land is very much superior to that.
3133. Do you know the rainfall at Jerilderie? I do not know it exactly, but I know that ours is large and regular—40 or 50 inches annually.
3134. Jerilderie does not get more than 25 or 30 inches? I suppose it does not.
3135. If Jerilderie only got 25 inches per annum, while you got from 25 to 40 even though your land was not better in quality than the land at Jerilderie, would not the rainfall make it much better? Yes, undoubtedly.

- F. G. Crouch, Esq.
28 Nov., 1889.
3136. Therefore, the fact of your having a better rainfall would place the land between here and Grafton in a better position than similar parts of the Colony where the rainfall was less? Precisely. I have been in the district fourteen years, and we really have not known what a drought is. With facilities for regular communication, I have no hesitation in saying that the district will go ahead.
3137. Can you tell me what is the cost of conveying a ton of produce by the Clarence? From Sydney to the Clarence?
3138. Yes? There is a difference of about 2s. 6d. per ton deadweight in the freight between Sydney and the Richmond and Sydney and the Clarence, and of about 3d. per bag with maize.
3139. If we have been told that the average freight to the Clarence was 15s. 6d., and that to the Richmond 17s. 6d., is that correct? Approximately.
3140. Do the people of Casino have to pay more freight than the people of Lismore pay? We have to pay additional freight, to compensate for the drogherage.
3141. What does it cost you to take your goods to Sydney by Coraki? For dead weight we pay from £1 to 25s. a ton. Flour is carried at a different rate from that at which other heavy articles are carried.
3142. You expect that in a few years you will have the market of the world open to you, and that you will have to go to Byron Bay to ship your goods;—do you know the distance between Casino and Byron Bay? About 46 miles.
3143. And the nearest point of the Clarence—Lawrence? About 50 miles.
3144. I suppose you are aware that the freight from Byron Bay is more than the freight from the Clarence? Not a great deal more.
3145. Five shillings? About five shillings.
3146. Do you not think that it would be better to avail yourselves of the good navigable waters of the Clarence, if you have only to convey your goods a few miles further, than to pay the increased freight from Byron Bay. Do you think that the Government would be justified, seeing that the Clarence is so near to you, in spending £242,000 in making a harbour at Byron Bay? My reason for saying so is this: I think the produce of the district must so increase in the course of a few years that the present class of vessels trading here would be unequal to it—we must have vessels of a larger draft.
3147. The Clarence at present has vessels with a draft of 16 to 18 feet of water? No vessel drawing over 13 feet could reach Grafton.
3148. Sixteen feet of water? We have that on the Richmond.
3149. You are aware that vessels drawing 15 feet of water can and do use the Clarence River? No, I am not aware of it. The Clarence River steamers draw from 10 to 12 feet.
3150. Are you aware that with Sir John Coode's improvements it is anticipated that vessels drawing from 18 to 20 feet will come into the Clarence? They may enter the Clarence, but I question whether they will get to Grafton.
3151. Would you be surprised to learn that there are no bars which could not be dredged, so that vessels could get to Grafton? I know a little about it, and I say that it would be some time before vessels drawing 16 or 18 feet of water would get to Grafton.
3152. There are no obstacles but what could be removed by dredging? No. The river could be dredged.
3153. Do you think the Government would be justified not only in improving the Richmond and the Clarence, but also in making a harbour at Byron Bay? In view of the connection at Byron Bay, certainly—that must come about, in my opinion.
3154. Taking it in its narrowest aspect, which is before the Committee now, the connection between Grafton and the Tweed, do you think the Government would be justified not only in making this railway at a cost of about £200,000, but also in constructing a breakwater at Byron Bay at a cost of £242,000? Yes. Byron Bay is in the centre of a very large and rich district.
3155. Do you think the Government would be justified in expending money on the four public works that I have mentioned? I do, in view of the advantages that will accrue from the expenditure.
3156. And the future north coast line, and line to the Tableland, which you cannot get rid of? I think that must come about. I find that the rate of freight between Sydney and Grafton is 15s. a ton.
3157. That is dead weight? Yes. The freight from Sydney to Casino, including droghers and so on, is 25s. a ton.
3158. What is it to Lismore—do you know? Lismore, I think, pays £1 a ton; but I am not quite certain.
3159. Can you give us any information as to what the freight is to Byron Bay? Only from hearsay. I have no knowledge of it, but I have been told that it is £1.

Mr. John Charles Irving, pastoralist, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. C. Irving.
28 Nov., 1889.
3160. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Tomki.
3161. How far from Casino? 5½ miles.
3162. Have you been a resident there for any length of time? Since 1865.
3163. What pursuits have you been following? Pastoral pursuits.
3164. In connection with cattle stations? Yes; I have been managing a cattle station.
3165. You have done nothing in the agricultural line? Only in connection with the station.
3166. What do you wish to tell the Committee in connection with this railway;—what information can you give? I have no wish to give any evidence; but I shall be very glad to answer any question which you like to ask me.
3167. Where do you find your markets for fat cattle;—I suppose that it is only fat cattle that you send away? Fat cattle mostly. I am a buyer of store cattle. Sydney is the principal market—that is, if the prices are high; if not, Ramornie is.
3168. Those are the meat-preserving works? Yes.
3169. If the railway were constructed in what way would it be to the advantage of the graziers of the district? It would benefit them largely—indirectly, if not directly.
3170. By bringing population to the district? Yes.
3171. But it would not open up any other than the local markets. Would it assist you to get your produce away? I have no doubt that it would.
3172. Do you think that that would be a source of profit which may be fairly reckoned upon if the railway is made? I should say so.
3173. Have you ever gone into the question of the carriage of stock on the railway? I cannot say that I have.
- 3174.

3174. Do you know that there is no profit whatever made from it, or next to none? Do you mean as far as the railway is concerned?
3175. Yes? No; I cannot say that I am aware of that.
3176. If that is so, you can hardly take into consideration the carriage of stock? Yes.
3177. All the runs in this Eastern Division will be thrown open to selection some time next year? I believe so.
3178. Do you think that when these runs are thrown open there will be any greater advance in the settlement of the district? I do most certainly.
3179. And the reserves, I presume, are looked upon longingly by a great number of persons at the present time? Very much so indeed.
3180. Do you not think it would be to the interests of the country to keep the reserves locked up until it is determined whether the railway should be constructed or not? I think it is a good precaution to take to keep reserves in every part of the Colony, and not to have every part of the land thrown open to selection?
3181. We have been told of one reserve in the locality of Byron Bay of 4,000 acres, which, if the railway were constructed and the harbour made, it is estimated would bring £80,000; if the proposed works were carried out, do you not think that the value of the lands in the district would be enormously increased? Of course it would.
3182. And that that would assist in paying for the construction of the works? Yes.
3183. You know that we are nearly emptying the Treasury into this district at the present time? At last it is spoken of spending some money here.
3184. Do you not think that it would be a wise policy to keep back the alienated land from sale until an enhanced value had been given to it by the construction of these works? Most certainly.
3185. Do you know the Tweed River district? No. I have been to Byron Bay and to the Brunswick, but I have never been from there to the Tweed.
3186. From the Brunswick south the bulk of the country is good agricultural land? The bulk of the land is very good indeed.
3187. Down to Lismore, and there is a good deal of good land about here? A great deal.
3188. Equal to that which we see about Lismore? I think so—yes.
3189. Do you think the area is as great? There is a very large extent of good land both about Lismore and about this place.
3190. Passing on to Grafton—if you look at the map you will see that the country in the Richmond district is alienated from the coast right back almost to New England, and on the banks of the Clarence; do you know the country between Casino and the Clarence? Yes.
3191. Do you know it further out west, towards the New England district, in the county of Drake? Not very far out. I have been out part of the way. I know it to about Drake.
3192. Is it not a fact that land there has remained unalienated because the character of the soil makes it unfit for small settlers? Not entirely. To some extent it is. It is not taken up because of the want of communication.
3193. Does not that exist in a tenfold greater degree in the big scrub? That is nearer the river than up here.
3194. What about their facilities for getting to market; there there is a dense scrub through which everything has to be packed? If any one went far in.
3195. Within 15 miles of Lismore we are told that everything that is taken into or brought out from a number of these selections is packed on horseback, and yet that country is taken up? I know that that used to be true; but I should say that it is a little overdrawn at the present time.
3196. We have had it on oath from not one witness but several? There may be some isolated parts in which it is necessary to do it.
3197. What is the character of the country near Casino? Open forest country.
3198. Iron bark country? It varies very much. There is some iron bark, some scrub country, some sandy, and some spotted gum ridges.
3199. Assuming that the railway is only being constructed for the purpose of affording facilities to settlers to get to a port, is there any reason why it should go into Grafton rather than to Lawrence,—if it went to Grafton would it make both the railway journey and the water journey longer? It would be much more advantageous and cheaper to take the railway to Lawrence—that is, if it is merely a question of taking a line to the Clarence.
3200. Of course, if this is to be a north coast line, Grafton is the best place at which to cross the river? Undoubtedly.

Mr.
J. C. Irving.
28 Nov., 1889.

Mr. Robert Pyers, timber merchant, sworn and examined:—

3201. *Mr. Cox.*] Have you been long a resident of this district? About nine years.
3202. From where did you come? From Grafton.
3203. How long did you reside in Grafton? About nine years.
3204. What caused you to change your residence from Grafton to Casino? I was in the timber trade at the time, and I found that I could do better here than on the Clarence. That is what brought me here.
3205. Is that your occupation now—timber getting? I am an auctioneer and timber dealer.
3206. Have you any land? I have no land.
3207. You have had no experience of carrying timber by railway, I presume? No, none whatever.
3208. You either carry your timber to market by waggon or by water? Yes.
3209. For what distance can you afford to drag timber by waggon? It depends upon the class of timber.
3210. Cedar, being a very valuable timber, would stand a long land carriage, I presume? Yes; you can drag cedar a long way.
3211. How far can you afford to draw valuable timber? The people here are drawing timber 60 miles. I do not think that they make anything out of it.
3212. Can it be obtained nearer than that? 50 miles would be the nearest distance that you could get it. Of course if you could go in a straight line it would be nearer.
3213. With what other timber do you supply the market? With pine and hardwood. The hardwood is used for piles and girders.

Mr.
R. Pyers.
28 Nov., 1889.

- Mr. R. Pyers. 3214. Where do you chiefly obtain the timber? The piles and girders are obtained between here and the Clarence. There has never been any got north of this.
- 29 Nov., 1889. 3215. To which river do you generally take them? To both rivers.
3216. In the event of a railway being constructed between these two points would it pay you to carry that timber by rail? Yes, it would.
3217. Do you think that the timber trade would largely develop if railway communication were given? I am sure it would.
3218. What other trade would be likely to develop if railway communication were given? A trade in produce. Hay would be largely grown on the road from here to Grafton. All that land would grow hay and wheat.
3219. You are not a grower? No, only for my own use.
3220. Are large profits made in the timber trade? Yes, a good profit is made in the timber trade.
3221. Who gets the lion's share—the middlemen, or the cutters? Well, I should think the middlemen got the best of it.
3222. Are there very large forests of timber between this and the Clarence? Yes, I have been on all the coast rivers, and there is no better hardwood to be obtained than between here and the Clarence—iron bark, spotted gum, stringy bark, tallow-wood, and other classes of timber.
3223. Do you know the course that the railway would take? Yes.
3224. Does it run through good timber country? It runs through fine timber country.
3225. But country that is not much good for anything else? It is good for wheat and hay growing.
3226. Is it good for wheat growing where the timber is? Yes.
3227. Can you account for so little land being taken up in that part of the country all these years compared with the very large area that has been alienated in other places? The land is poorer, of course, or else it would have been taken up years ago, but there is a want of communication with a market. The same thing applies to the land at the head of the river, which is the best in the Richmond district; it has not been alienated because there has been no prospect of getting the produce away.
3228. *Chairman.*] That will still be the case? Yes.
3229. *Mr. Cox.*] How far is it to the head of the river? Fifty miles, right to the head—Mount Lindsay.
3230. Do you think that in some future time the grand country there would warrant the extension of the line? Either that or the locking of the river.
3231. Would locking the river make it navigable? Yes.
3232. Do you know anything about the locking of rivers? No, I have had no experience of it. I have read about it.
3233. It would not be a costly work? That I could not say.
3234. Would the line between Casino and Lismore be largely availed of for the business with which you are connected? I do not think so. It would only be used for the carriage of goods and produce.
3235. The quantity of produce would probably be increased if a railway were constructed? Yes.
3236. Is there much passenger traffic between the two rivers? There is a good deal of passenger traffic, but it goes chiefly by Woodburn, which is the more convenient and cheaper way.
3237. *Mr. Garrard.*] You spoke just now of there being a large amount of hardwood between here and the Clarence—is it on alienated land? No, on Crown land.
3238. In large quantities? Yes.
3239. You have an intimate knowledge of our hardwoods, and you say that, in your opinion, there is a larger quantity of hardwood there than on any other river? Yes, there is more hardwood there than on any of the other rivers with which I am acquainted, and I have followed the trade for a great many years.
3240. Where would that timber go to? Partly to the Richmond and partly to the Clarence—mostly to the Clarence.
3241. Would that timber be taken on the railway? Any of it would go to navigable water within 10 miles of the river by team; beyond that it would go by rail.
3242. As log timber or sawn? As log.
3243. Do you ship much timber? Yes; cedar.
3244. Cedar only? Yes.
3245. In log? Yes.
3246. Do you know the country between here and Grafton? Yes; well.
3247. And on the Clarence? Yes.
3248. Do you know the greatest depth of water that the vessels going up there draw? I think a vessel can get up drawing 14 feet. I do not know whether she could get out drawing more than that.
3249. You do not know of there having been any delay at the Clarence Head for twelve months? No.
3250. Has there been any detention at the Richmond during that time? Yes.
3251. Is the Clarence entrance very much superior to the Richmond entrance? Yes, because it has been improved. A lot of money has been spent on it. The Richmond has had nothing done to it.
3252. Do you not think that the Clarence will always be better than the Richmond? In my opinion it will.
3253. Therefore a larger class of vessels will be able to go up the Clarence than can go up the Richmond? Yes; but the Richmond can be used.
3254. Do you know anything about Byron Bay? Yes; I have been to Byron Bay a few times, to my sorrow.
3255. What do you think of the project to make a harbour there, is it feasible? No doubt it can be done.
3256. Do you think it would be a benefit to the district, or would it be better to bring the produce of that part of the district to the deeper waters of the Clarence? Byron Bay would be a benefit to the people who live there.
3257. And only to those? It could be used by deep-sea vessels, such as those going to England or foreign parts; but as to Byron Bay ever getting anything from Casino if it is made a harbour, in the way of produce, in my opinion, it will never get one bag.
3258. Excepting for foreign shipment? Yes, or for deep-sea vessels.
3259. Or for intercolonial trade? The river will be used for that.
3260. Do you mean the river to Lismore or the main river here? The North Arm, as they call it. The main river will be used in preference to going to Lismore.
- 3261.

3261. Do I understand you that none of the produce for the intercolonial markets from in and around Casino will go further north than Lismore? I do not think so. It will never go to Lismore.
3262. Then, so far as the railway is concerned, it will only get freight for 20 or 30 miles south of Casino? The population within 30 miles would patronise the railway to here, to Lismore for some products, and to Byron Bay for others.
- 3263-4. Have you any land in the district? No, I cannot say that I have; my son has.

Mr.
R. Pyers.
28 Nov., 1889.

Donald Campbell, Esq., J.P., pastoralist, sworn, and examined:—

3265. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? About 5 miles above Casino.
3266. How long have you been residing in the district? Thirty-seven years.
3267. What business do you follow? Well, I have been looking after station property.
3268. You have been the manager of a station? For the greatest part of the time.
3269. Are you still? No; for the last three and a half years I have been living on a small place of my own.
3270. What have you been doing with it? I have used it partly for cultivation and partly for grazing.
3271. What information can you give the Committee;—do you know the proposed line of railway? I do not know it all. I think I know partly where it is meant to go. I have come across the line in places.
3272. Do you know the Lismore district? I know all this side of Lismore.
3273. And down to Grafton? Yes.
3274. Do you think that if a railway were constructed there is a fair chance of its paying interest and working expenses within a few years? I think so. I think it would settle a great population on the soil.
3275. Of producers and consumers? Yes.
3276. We have been told that the lands between here and Grafton are of an inferior character, and the map shows that they have not been sought after much? I think myself that the reason why that land has not been alienated so much is that there are no conveniences for getting to market.
3277. Because of the difficulty of getting produce to market? Yes.
3278. You have seen similar lands further back in other parts of the district which have been selected and laid down in grass;—why should that not be done here? There is no doubt that if ever a railway comes here you will find the whole of that country taken up. Very little of it will be left. There is a great deal of it that is very valuable for wheat-growing.
3279. Have you seen any wheat growing in the district? Not for many years.
3280. Is there any hay grown in the district? Yes.
3281. Oaten hay? The country between here and Grafton is grand country for growing hay and wheat. It would grow any quantity of oaten hay.
3282. What quantity of land there would be a fair area for a settler to make a living from. At present they can take it up in 1,248-acre blocks, and they will not touch it? A great deal of that land has been taken up within the last year or two. They are beginning to settle on it now.
3283. You think that if facilities were given for taking their produce to the Clarence the bulk of the land would be taken up? Yes.
3284. How many years have you known the country? Thirty-seven years. The population that has been coming here for the last few years is something wonderful, and if it keeps on as it is doing now there will be very little land left, whether they get the railway or not.
3285. You mean between here and Grafton? Even between here and Grafton.
3286. Do you know any of the wheat-growing districts of the country—Tamworth, or lower down? I have seen part of it.
3287. Tamworth is a fairly good wheat-growing district; but do you know anything of the Hunter River District—the upper part. Are the lands which you speak of outside Grafton equal to that land? I believe there is a lot of it better, because when the timber is ringbarked, and the country is worked, it is wonderful how well it improves.
3288. Is there anything else which you can tell the Committee? The country up above here is far superior to the country below.
3289. Where do you mean? Up the river from here to Lismore, and right to the west, between here and the head of the river, and towards Tabulam.
3290. But this railway would not serve that country? I believe it would bring a population to settle on the land.
3291. This railway is very near the head of navigation, so that it will not bring the western land any nearer to navigable waters than it is now. How can you take the settlement on that country into consideration? It is wonderful how the population has been coming during the last few years. It is only lately that the people have been finding out the land.
3292. They are taking the best of it at present? They are all going for the best at present, you may depend on it.

D. Campbell,
Esq., J.P.
28 Nov., 1889.

Mr. Thomas Carlill, senior, grazier and timber-getter, sworn, and examined:—

3293. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Spring Grove.
3294. How far from Casino? About 8 miles.
3295. What business do you follow? Rather a various business. Myself and my family are timber-getters and graziers.
3296. What area of land have you—you and your family? A little over 4,000 acres.
3297. Conditionally purchased? Yes.
3298. How many in family have you? Three boys and myself.
3299. You use your land for timber-getting and for grazing? Yes.
3300. What have you got on it? Horses and cattle. A little over 500 head of cattle and thirty or thirty-five head of horses.
3301. That is 6 acres for each head of cattle? Yes.
3302. Is the land fully stocked? We have about seventy or eighty head of working bullocks.
3303. Then there are about 5 acres for each beast? Yes.
3304. Is the land fairly well stocked? There is a great deal under scrub that does not produce grass.

Mr. T.
Carlill, sen.
28 Nov., 1889.

- Mr. T. Carhill, sen.
28 Nov., 1889
- 3305 How much of it? About 800 acres in all.
 3306 What does it cost you to improve your land? What has it cost me?
 3307 Yes? I could not tell you—a great deal
 3308 Have you to fell any scrub? Yes, a great deal I think we felled nearly 400 acres of scrub.
 3309 Did you lay that down in grass? Yes I sowed artificial grass in some of it, but the expense is £1 5s or £1 10s an acre for felling alone
 3310 Where do you find a market for your produce—your fat cattle? There are local buyers.
 3311 And your timber? The timber I dispose of to Mr Yager, at Coraki
 3312 You, at all events, would not be a customer for the railway—what have you got to send by it? We have any amount of land that we could till if there were a way of getting produce to market
 3313 Surely you do not think that 8½ miles is an unreasonable distance for people to go to market? No, but there would be people who would lease the land
 3314 Then you are holding the land in hopes that some one will come and buy it from you? Lease it or buy it if required
 3315 You are only 8 miles from Casino, so that you do not want the railway? I think the country would be benefited by it—though I might not be myself perhaps
 3316 Do you know what it would cost the country to pay the working expenses and interest on this railway? No
 3317 You have not taken that into consideration? No
 3318 If you wanted to buy a piece of land yourself you would calculate what you could make out of it, and you would expect a fair rate of interest on the money put into it? Yes
 3319 You have not entered into any such calculation with regard to the railway? I have always left that to people who are better able to do it than I am myself
 3320 You are a taxpayer, and just as much interested in it as anyone else You are not prepared to plunge the country into the construction of unprofitable works? I see a little ahead of the times I see that the railway will pay eventually, and will pay well
 3321 How can you come to that conclusion when you have not taken the trouble to work out what the cost of the railway would be? I can see a great opening for it
 3322 What do you anticipate would be the earnings of the railway between the Tweed and Grafton if it were constructed? It is a thing which I do not understand, I could give you no opinion

Robert Page, Esq, journalist, sworn, and examined —

- R Page, Esq
28 Nov., 1889.
- 3323 *Chairman*] What are you? I am a journalist, and have resided at Casino for six or seven years
 3324 Have you written out any statement? I have written out a statement showing the trade of the Richmond District for the six months ending 30th September last
 3325 Where did you get the figures? I got the pilot at the Heads to send me a report of each vessel that went out, and I checked that by the report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* The figures were compiled with great care, and are not in any sense exaggerated. They are as follows —

Richmond River Shipping Statistics for six months ending 30th September, 1889

Timber (unspecified)	2,860,900 feet	Eggs	1,557 cases
Do do	143 logs	Molasses	2,747 casks
Pine	575 "	Poultry	211 coops
Do	279,954 feet	Bones and horns	313 bags
Cedar	802 logs	Skins	78 bales
Do	18,000 feet	Calves	59
Box material	511 bundles	Horses	12
Do	9,200 feet	Potatoes	57 bags
Beech	51 logs	Fish	146 cases
Do	12 fitches	Hay	114 bales
Piles	520	Soap	60 boxes
Sleepers	1,800	Honey	6 pkgs
Hardwood	10,000 feet	Fruit	44 cases.
Maize	18,824 bags	Pumpkins	120 bags
Sugar	7,476 "	Wild ducks	51 pairs
Do	2,368 mats	Minerals	20 bags
Do	1,040 tons	Bacon	11 pkgs
Butter	6,214 kegs	Peanuts	9 bags
Cheese	362 packages	Oysters	22 bags
Hides	5,030	Beeswax	2 pkgs
Pigs	4,129	Chaff	10 bags
Tallow	173 casks	Sundry cargo	1,719 pkgs

(Shipments from the Tweed, Brunswick, and Byron Bay not included)

Coal imported, 7,550 tons

Arrivals seaward, 148 vessels, departures seaward, 155 vessels Total, 303, or nearly twelve per week.

Passengers by Richmond River steamers only —Inward, 1,143, outward, 833 Total, 1,976, or an increase to population of 310 in six months This return does not include passengers to and from the Clarence or Tenterfield

- 3326 So far as you know and believe that statement is correct, and in no way exaggerated? Yes, it is in no way exaggerated, but if anything the other way about.
 3327 The return of the export of sugar cannot embrace the yield for this year? Oh, dear, no—only up to the 30th September, which is but a small portion of the year The export of sugar will continue up to the end of December, or the beginning of January. My figures do not show one-third of what the total exports will be
 3328 I suppose, like all newspaper men, you are ubiquitous—here, there, and everywhere? I go about a little occasionally
 3329 Going through the district, have you made yourself fairly acquainted with it? Yes, from personal observation, and from what I have heard from those who have taken up the land
 3330 Have you gone in amongst the farmers to any extent? Yes
 3331 The farmers who hold land near the river, I suppose, are perfectly well satisfied with their conveniences for getting to market? They are not as well satisfied as they will be when the bar is made better
 3332 The bar is very good now? Yes.

3333.

3333. Going back from Casino do you think that many of the farmers are prevented from cultivating to any large extent, by reason of the difficulty of carriage? I am quite sure that they are. R. Page, Esq.
28 Nov., 1889.
3334. If a railway were constructed from here to Lismore, and from here to Grafton, do you think that it would benefit the farmers already on the land? I do.
3335. Have you been from here to Grafton? Yes.
3336. By the railway line? Not on the line itself.
3337. But through that way? Yes.
3338. Do you think that if a line were constructed it would be an incentive to the farmers to cultivate more than they have done? There is no doubt of that. There have been two or three parishes wholly selected during the last three years, on the understanding that the line would be constructed.
3339. The dairy industry here is developing? Yes; we have the largest factory in the district.
3340. How many others are there? There is another on the road which you are going, and there are others starting.
3341. I suppose the success of one tempts others to try the same thing? Yes.
3342. Have you thought of the cost of the railway? Yes.
3343. You know that the working expenses and interest on all the lines which have been made, have come to nearly 7 per cent.—do you think that if this line were constructed it would be able to pay that? At the present time, between here and Grafton, and adjacent to the line, there is country that would be served by the line, that is now being selected at £1 an acre. I am satisfied that the greater portion of that land, if a line were constructed, or if it were known that a line was to be constructed, would be applied for at from £2 to £3 an acre, and the first cost of the whole line would be realised from the sale of that land.
3344. You think that if national works are carried out the country should be recouped the expense from the increased value of the land? Yes; there would be no harm in keeping the reserves; but the same object could be obtained by putting a price on the land now.
3345. You would put a price on it which you imagine would be fair if the work were carried out? Yes.
3346. If the people chose to buy at that price you would let them do it? Yes.
3347. You would not reserve the land until the line was constructed? No; I think it would be a mistake. This portion of the district has not developed as that from Lismore down—that portion has not been locked up from settlement; the other portion has.
3348. Have they no runs on the Richmond? Not in the district between Lismore and the coast.
3349. What you think is, that the leasehold areas here between the coast and the proposed line, and between the proposed line and the western boundary of the district, have to a certain extent stopped settlement? To a very large extent. I noticed that fact because I am intimately connected with the selection of land.
3350. The Clarence River district is well settled? In the immediate vicinity of the river.
3351. But if these lands were so good as you and some other witnesses describe them, why have the people not gone out further;—they have done it in the scrubs, where it has cost them from £6 to £7 an acre to clear the land? I might explain that in the past the land law was so worked that a large proportion of the water frontages to the creeks and the picked portions of the country were secured by private purchase, and there were no means of conveying produce or anything of that kind to market.
3352. But with an average rainfall of from 40 to 50 inches in a year there can be no want of water? No; but that would retard settlement.
3353. How do you think the lessees on the Darling get on? They are in a position to conserve water.
3354. You say that inability to secure water frontages has terrified energetic settlers from coming here, although there is a rainfall of 40 inches in the year? I do not say that altogether. I say that it has to a very large extent prevented settlement.
3355. The absence of water? The alienation of the water frontages.
3356. That is, men, if they could not get water frontages, would rather do without the land altogether? For the time being.
3357. Now you say that if a railway is built they will not mind these difficulties? Because the railway would give them a means of communication with the market that they have not got at the present time.
3358. Will the people at the back of Casino and of the Clarence be any nearer a market with the railway than they are now? They would in a way.
3359. Take any unoccupied line to the west of the railway line about Casino or Grafton;—how would a railway give it communication with a market? But if you worked out west you would have 20 or 30 miles to go to Casino. There would be stations at various points, and settlers would only have to travel 12 miles to a station instead of 20 or 30 miles.
3360. Is there anything else which you would like to tell the Committee? Something has been said of the value of the land between here and Grafton. I produce some wheat which has been grown at Camden Valley, near Sandy Creek, 11 or 12 miles from Casino South.
3361. Can you say how many bushels to the acre that land has produced? No, I cannot. I have not had an opportunity of ascertaining.
3362. Do you know how much the owner has got under crop? I understand that he has about two acres—he only selected eighteen months ago.
3363. Do you know of any other wheat being grown? Yes. At Myrtle Creek, a man from Victoria has 3 acres.
3364. Has any attempt been made in this district to produce wheat or oats? Not up to the present time as far as I know. But thirty years ago the squatters used to a large extent to grow their own wheat and make their own flour. If that could be done then, it could be done now.
3365. But you have no records of what they did? That, I believe, is a fact.
3366. You think that if the railway were constructed right through from the Tweed to Grafton, within a few years—4 or 5 years—it would pay interest and working expenses? I do.
3367. On an average cost of £12,000 a mile? I do, considering the increase of population.
3368. I suppose you base your opinion on the fertility of the district, and the former increase of population here? Yes. I think that the railway will lead to the development of the mining industry to a large extent. Within 18 miles of Casino there are some of the largest coal deposits in the Colony.
3369. We have only got the Newcastle series and the southern and western series? There is some on the Clarence too.

- R. Page, Esq. 3370. Have they ever got 50 tons out? No. This is undeveloped. I sent some to Sydney, and the analysis of it was very favourable. Mr. Wall, a mining authority, spoke very highly of it.
- 28 Nov., 1889. 3371. Have you got a copy of the analysis;—who analysed it? The Mines Department. I have not a copy of it, but I will send you one.
3372. Was this an outcrop, or was the seam opened up? This was a seam in the bed of the creek.
3373. The outcrop? Yes, but it was the seam in the creek. The seam could be seen.
3374. Where the creek had passed through it? Yes.
3375. What was the thickness of it? I could not say. It has not been opened up.
3376. You only know that coal has been found there? I know that the coal is there.
3377. Did they sink at all to get the specimen for analysis? No, they did not. They sank a foot or two in the creek at the outcrop.
3378. You say that it is a good analysis? Yes, as compared with many other analyses that appeared in the mining report.
3379. Have you anything else you which would like to tell us? No, I have nothing else.
3380. *Mr. Cox.*] Are you aware that the Committee have recommended the expenditure of some £300,000 or £400,000 at the Richmond Heads? Yes.
3381. With this large expenditure to facilitate traffic on the river, do you think it advisable that the country should expend large sums of money in competing with that river by a railway? I take it that the railway would not compete with the river—it would simply feed it; it would simply show the greater necessity for spending money on the river.
3382. In what way would the proposed railway between Casino and Lismore, and Lismore and Byron Bay feed the river? In the first place it would open up a large extent of country for settlement which is at the present time not used, and the produce from that land would necessarily go to Byron Bay or to Lismore.
3383. I am now speaking with regard to the Richmond River. Looking at the fact that £300,000 or £400,000 is to be spent at the Richmond River Heads, would it be desirable to compete with the river traffic by making a railway? Certainly not. I think it would be folly to construct a line of railway simply to compete with water traffic.
3384. Then you would deprecate the construction of a line unless as a feeder to the river? Yes.
3385. Have you given any consideration to the question of making Byron Bay a harbour? I know nothing at all about the bay myself; I am simply guided by the scientific evidence which has been given. I am satisfied that Byron Bay would serve the requirements of this district, and I do not know how soon the produce may be so great that it will have to be shipped into a class of vessel that could not possibly come into the river itself.
3386. *Chairman.*] If the anticipations of Sir John Coode with regard to the Richmond River are carried out, do you not think that a very much larger and superior class of vessels will be able to come here? There is no doubt about that, but Sir John Coode's scheme would not give a depth of more than 18 feet, and, therefore, you could not get in a vessel drawing more than 14 feet.
3387. Could the "Newcastle" and "Namoi" come in? There are some much larger coming down the coast, which, if they could get in, would call at Ballina, and carry much more cheaply than the boats running direct.

Mr. Alfred Clarke Simpson, timber merchant, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. A. C. Simpson. 3388. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your occupation? I am a timber merchant.
3389. Residing at Casino? Yes.
- 28 Nov., 1889. 3390. How long have you resided in the district? Twenty-two years.
3391. Have you resided in this portion of the district all the time? Yes.
3392. I suppose you export a considerable amount of timber? Yes—from £6,000 to £10,000 worth a year.
3393. In the log, or do you dress it here? In the log.
3394. Where is your market for it? At present we get it towed to Coraki from Irvington, a little below Casino.
3395. It is carried down to Casino and towed to Coraki? Yes, but the difficulties are getting very great. With large logs we have to wait for freshes. A log drawing 4 feet 6 inches, or 5 feet, will not float down.
3396. At Coraki it is shipped into a Sydney-going boat? Yes; there is only one steamer that can take large timber at present—that is the "Tomki."
3397. What is the greatest distance that you can bring this timber? It is brought 60 miles westerly.
3398. I suppose it is only a matter of time when that trade will cease, owing to the long distance which the timber will have to be carried? I think it will be some years.
3399. What is the distance that you had to go for timber when you first came to the district? There was no timber industry on this arm at that time; it was confined to the lower parts of the river, where they were almost on deep water; but the distance that they draw the timber now has extended gradually from 20 miles to 50 or 60 miles.
3400. But you can only bring cedar that distance; it would not pay you to carry pine or any other wood? There is pine within a shorter distance in large quantities—pine, beech, rosewood, and silky oak.
3401. You deal in all these classes of timber? Most of that timber we cannot raft. We can only raft pine or cedar.
3402. What good would the railway do you;—what you want is more water carriage? Yes; but if the railway were constructed we should probably send large quantities of cedar and other wood to Lismore for shipment there.
3403. But you would be getting your timber at right angles to the railway line? Yes; we should still have to draw it some distance to tap the line.
3404. You propose to draw it to the railway, and then take it to Lismore and load it there? Yes. It would suit us and the Company better.
3405. Would that be better than to take it to Coraki? It is just as easy to load on to a railway as it is to load on to a wharf.
3406. Are you aware of the nearest point on the line to the shipping place at Lismore? Judging by the line as lock-spitted and marked out, I should think that our timber-carriers would draw it to Casino.

3407. You propose to draw it from the bush to the railway, to take it by railway to Lismore, and then draw it from Lismore railway station to the steamer, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles; would it bear all that handling? At present they have to put it on the timber trucks, take it off, put it on again, put it into the water, float it to Irvington, pay a man to look after it there, and drogher it to Coraki, and when there is a fresh in the river the timber is swept from the banks, and we lose sometimes as much as £200. All these things make it rather expensive.

Mr. A. C.
Simpson.

28 Nov., 1889.

3408. As a business man, you think it would pay you to make use of the railway for carrying the timber? You construct it, and you will soon find out.

3409. Would it pay you to take the timber to Grafton? Certainly not.

3410. Is there not a larger class of steamers going to Grafton? There is very little difference. The "Tomki" runs to the Clarence occasionally, and the "Electra" runs here.

3411. What is the difference in freight from the Clarence and from the Richmond? It is precisely the same, I think, in timber.

3412. So that undoubtedly it would pay you to go to Lismore? Undoubtedly.

3413. Is it likely that you would go to Byron Bay? Byron Bay would open up the Brisbane market and markets further north, such as Townsville and Rockhampton. We are shut out from those markets at present. We would have a good market there during the greater part of the year for cheese.

3414. How long do you estimate it will be before the timber which you deal in will all be cut down in this district? I do not anticipate living to see it exhausted in that enormous belt of scrub that runs across the Tenterfield road.

3415. I suppose you have seen the timber yourself in the forest? Yes.

3416. Are you connected with the butter and cheese industry? Yes.

3417. That is in its infancy at the present, I suppose you consider? I do not know. We have two very large factories in the district, and the possibilities are very great.

3418. These are owned by co-operative companies? No; by private people.

3419. Do they graze their own cattle, or do they get their milk from adjoining holders? Partly; and they purchase from adjoining holders. In the case of the Tomki dairy, I think I am right in saying that the milk is the produce of their own cattle, and that they grow their feed on their own ruin. We have already shipped to Brisbane under great difficulties, sending it by coach to the line, and thence by train, and have found a good market.

3420. *Mr. Cox.*] At the present time the cheese goes to Sydney and is sent back to Brisbane? Yes.

3421. *Mr. Garrard.*] I suppose that if the trade were sufficient you would get a vessel to go from Brisbane to the Richmond? I doubt whether they could keep a vessel trading continually between the two places.

3422. You would only avail yourselves of vessels that went by occasionally? There would probably be a place of call for mails, or something of that kind at Byron.

3423. Do you know the country between here and Grafton? I have been over it frequently.

3424. Do you think that there is any occasion for making a railway from Casino to Grafton? I can only speak by comparison. I think so, if the Government were justified in constructing railways to other parts of the Colony.

3425. Looking at it as a question of pounds, shillings, and pence? I am afraid that they have not been considered in times gone by.

3426. Supposing that it were considered desirable to connect the Clarence with the northern portion of the Colony, and there were no intention of an extension south for a north coast line, do you think Lawrence would be a better place at which to tap the Clarence than Grafton—the distance there would be 15 miles less? I should not think so. There must be a large local market at Grafton.

3427. But is it not supplied from the district immediately around it;—what do you grow that they do not grow? I think that the products of the two rivers are identical.

3428. Then they would supply their own wants—you would not supply any? We would not supply them, but probably half the produce would gravitate that way, and the other half would draw this way. It depends on the condition of the road.

3429. Is there not sufficient land cultivated in and about Grafton to supply all the wants of Grafton? No. I think that they import an enormous quantity of grain and cereals from Sydney, together with potatoes.

3430. Do you know the nearest point of the line to Casino township? Yes.

3431. Do you think the route of the line is the best that could be chosen in the interests of the people;—would it go through too much valuable property, or is it too far away? I think the line has been marked out in the interests of economy for the Government.

3432. And also of convenience for the people? Yes.

Mr. William Joseph Fanning, pastoralist and dairyman, sworn, and examined:—

3433. *Mr. Cox.*] You reside at Wooroowoollgen? Yes, 3 miles from Casino.

3434. How long have you been living there? I came here in 1879, and I have been here nearly ever since. I was away for two or two and a half years.

3435. Your pursuits are wholly pastoral? Principally pastoral; I look after a dairy as well.

3436. How long is it since you started dairying? Since last March.

3437. Have you found that it has succeeded up to the present? Well, it was a heavy expense starting the business, and I cannot say at present that anything has been made out of it.

3438. Will it warrant you in still further developing the industry? I believe it will.

3439. In fact, I suppose you will do so? We intend to do so. We did not expect to make anything out of it at first.

3440. Do you think the dairying industry is capable of large development? Yes.

3441. I presume also that you would do a considerable trade in fattening calves for market? No; we have not done anything of that sort.

3442. You have room for all your calves? I think the rearing of calves is generally done at these dairies.

3443. Attached to your dairy have you a large number of pigs? I have some—sixty or seventy at the present time.

3444.

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- Mr. W. J. Fanning.
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3444. Have you found them profitable? I have not as yet. The affair is so much in its infancy that I cannot say whether any profit has been made.
3445. Since you commenced have other people in the neighbourhood also started dairying? I believe some of them have.
3446. Will you be prepared, in the event of your enterprise succeeding, to take the milk of all your neighbours—selectors and others? I am prepared to take it now from anyone who will send it. In fact, I am taking milk from some of them.
3447. So that in that way a large amount of good will be done to the selectors and others in that district? I think so.
3448. Do you think that in the event of a railway being constructed from Casino to Lismore, and thence to Byron Bay, it would foster agricultural pursuits in the district? I believe it would.
3449. Do you think, considering the cost of train carriage, that such heavy produce as potatoes and maize could be carried at a profit? I have had so little experience that I am not prepared to offer an opinion.
3450. Have you ever had anything to do with timber? No; nothing at all.
3451. Next year the leases in the coast district will expire—how many acres will be thrown open then that you now occupy? I could not tell you. In the leasehold area I suppose there are about 80,000.
3452. Do you think that that will be taken up very largely? A great deal of it will be taken up.
3453. Is that land fitted both for agricultural and for pastoral purposes? Some of it is very bad, but some of it will bear cultivation.
3454. This district is as a rule well watered? Very well watered. It has creeks, lagoons, and swamps.
3455. That of course tends to develop settlement? Yes.
3456. Do you know the country between Casino and Grafton? I only know it from having travelled along the coach road between Casino and Lawrence.
3457. You do not know the surveyed line of the railway? I cannot say that I know it anywhere beyond the boundaries of Wooroowoollgen Run.
3458. Do you think that in the event of large areas being thrown open next year that land will be taken up? I think that the greater part of the land in the neighbourhood of the railway so far as it passes through Wooroowoollgen, has been taken up.
3459. I am speaking of the land generally between this and Grafton? The land beyond, as far as one can see it from the coach road, does not recommend itself to the pastoralists at all.
3460. You recommend the construction of a railway from Casino to Lismore and thence to Byron Bay? I think that that would be a desirable line.
3461. Do you think that it could be made to pay the interest on the construction and working? I have not given the matter sufficient consideration to be prepared to say.
3462. In the event of Byron Bay being made a safe shipping port, would you avail yourselves of it for shipping large stock? I do not know that we should. We should probably make use of it to ship cheese to Brisbane. Our fat cattle has been sent by train from Tenterfield lately, and they have also been sent from Lawrence by steamer at different times, but the consumption in the district has been large.
3463. So that at the present time you would hardly see your way to make use of Byron Bay as a shipping port? Not as a shipping port.
3464. In the event of the production of meat being in excess of the requirements, do you think it is likely that freezing or canning works would be started on this side of the country similar to those at Ramornie? I should think it very probable.
3465. Of course you are aware that the nearer stock are slaughtered to their pastures the better it is for the meat? Yes.
3466. In the event of Byron Bay being made a shipping port large vessels would come in and alter the present state of trade on the rivers? Probably.
3467. Do you not think that that would make people ship cattle from there? Cattle get knocked about by the steamers.
3468. More so than going from Tenterfield by train? I do not know that there is very much to choose.
3469. *Chairman.*] You have topped the market with your cheese? I believe we have once or twice.

Thomas George Hewitt, Esq., newspaper proprietor, sworn, and examined:—

- T. G. Hewitt, Esq.
28 Nov., 1889.
3470. *Chairman.*] You are the proprietor of a newspaper? I am the proprietor of the *Northern Star*, published at Lismore.
3471. Will you tell the Committee precisely what you have to say? I have heard the evidence given by Mr. Pyers as to the quantity of timber between Casino and the Clarence, and I would confirm that evidence. At the present time timber is conveyed long distances to Grafton by water and by land for use there, and a railway would be largely used to carry it if one were constructed.
3472. You say that a railway would be largely used for the conveyance of timber to Grafton? For the carriage of hardwood.
3473. For local consumption? For local consumption and export.
3474. Export where? Export to Sydney, Victoria, and New Zealand.
3475. You know that timber in the log is not an article which can stand very many charges? I estimate that it would bear the charge of the distance it would have to be carried there. There are large areas of timber land within 20 miles of Grafton.
3476. Why go to Grafton with it if you want to get it to Sydney by steamer. You give it 15 miles more railway carriage, and an additional water carriage, which it would not have if you took it to Lawrence? I take it that the water carriage between Grafton and Lawrence counts for nothing. A steamer would convey it for the same price from Grafton as from Lawrence.
3477. Do you know what hardwood is worth in the log in Sydney? I cannot say what it is worth at the present time, but some time ago I believe it was worth 8s. or 9s.
3478. Do you know what it is worth in Grafton, in the log? I could not say what they are paying at the present time; but I know what they are selling cut timber at.
3479. Do you think that any railway in the Colony would be payable simply from the timber traffic on it? Certainly not from the timber alone.
3480. The timber traffic would not pay for the engine driving? Perhaps not; but I believe that every acre of land between Casino and Grafton would be taken up if the line were constructed. 3481.

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3481. In large areas? There is no doubt that people would prefer it in large areas if they could get it.
3482. They could get 1,280 acres? Well; it would be taken up in 1,280-acre blocks.
3483. For grazing? For grazing and agriculture combined.
3484. Can you point to a farm in the Colony of 1,280 acres? Not an agricultural farm.
3485. There must be millions of acres between here and Grafton? I would not say millions of acres, but there is a very large area for 10 miles on each side of the line, which I take it, would all be available.
3486. For grazing and agriculture? Combined.
3487. You have nothing to base your opinion upon? Exactly; but I have nothing to gain by giving this evidence. It has been said here that the land has remained vacant and has not been taken up. I believe that is to a great extent due to the fact that the people did not know what to do with the land. They saw the land on the banks of the Clarence, and nothing would satisfy them but similar land that would produce sugar-cane or maize with a return of 50 bushels to the acre. That has been seen on the Richmond to a great extent. Even the people that first took up the rich scrub land which you have seen there did not know what to do with it.
3488. They know fairly well what price to ask for it? Yes. I was going to point out that that land was being developed by people who have gone there recently from the south coast, who, knowing the value of it, put it under grass. They are showing the other people what to do with it, and others are now following their example.
3489. Do you think that the people from Illawarra will come to the Clarence and take up land which the Clarence river people will not look at? I know of one case where a man has taken up land which would be reckoned by the majority of people on the banks of the Clarence as unfitted for them—he is Mr. McGill.
3490. Whereabouts is that? He purchased a run called Glenreagh West, and he has taken up land on it to secure it.
3491. You do not call that settlement? I think it is settlement. He intends to dairy, I understand.
3492. I suppose the agitation for the throwing open of the runs in these districts began because the land was taken up by the squatters? No, certainly not with stock.
3493. You say that this gentleman has bought the land? He has bought the run, and he is taking up land to secure it. He had tried previously to buy an estate nearer Grafton.
3494. Can you mention any other settlers who have taken up the land there? We have not had south coast men up there, for the simple reason that they prefer the scrub land. I mentioned that one man, because he came from the south coast. It had been said that the land along the surveyed line of railway is not good. From my knowledge of the country I can say that the section that is traversed by the railway is about the poorest land that you can find there. Better land exists out of sight on either side, particularly along the creeks—Myrtle Creek, Camira Creek, Myall Creek, and Sandy Creek.
3495. You do not want a railway to the Clarence to serve Myrtle or Myall Creek? I take it that if there were a railway from here to the Clarence it would suit them to use it to take their produce to the market.
3496. The cost would be £733,000? I am aware of the estimate, but I consider that the State is in the position of a large landed proprietor who is justified in laying out money in order to make his estate more valuable.
3497. In giving a sprat to catch a mackerel? Yes, you can put it that way. I think we would all do that.
3498. *Mr. Cox.*] It is your opinion that if the Government carried a railway through fairly good or even indifferent land the country round would be shortly taken up? Yes.
3499. Do you not think that it would be more desirable to run a railway through better land, and let that be taken up? If a better route could be found, I certainly think so.
3500. I am not speaking of routes. If better land than that could be found in other parts of the country would it not be better to make a railway there? In a general way certainly. If a district had superior land which could be opened up it would have quite as good a claim as this district. As a matter of State policy, I believe it would be more advisable to construct railways where the best land exists.
3501. Are you aware that there is very superior land at the head of the Clarence River? I am.
3502. Ought not a railway to go there rather than through this poor land? If a line could be taken there at a reasonable cost I think it would be a judicious thing to take it there.
3503. Would it not be better to do so? I do not think it would be advisable to take it there in preference to making it here, because here you are connecting two important districts—the Clarence and the Richmond—already largely settled.
3504. Which produce the same articles, and therefore there can be no exchange? We can scarcely say what exchange there would be. I am aware of places in the district where, if a person had suggested a few years ago that there would be a traffic, he would have been laughed at, but now there is important traffic.
3505. I could quite understand a contention for making a railway from the coast to the table-land, because the products of the two ends of the line would be very different, and there would be an exchange; but I cannot understand why a railway should be constructed where there can be no exchange? It would develop the passenger traffic that is there.
3506. Why would the people leave the port of Lismore to go to the port of Grafton? At the present time people have to go over. A short time ago a number of witnesses had to go over simply because they were subpoenaed there. People have to go there because their business takes them there.

THURSDAY,

THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER, 1889.

*The Sectional Committee met at Myrtle Creek.***Present:—**

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).
 The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX. | JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
 CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Mr. William Morrison, farmer and grazier, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. W. Morrison. 3507. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a farmer and grazier.
 28 Nov., 1889. 3508. Where at? My farm is on the Clarence at Copmanhurst, and my conditional purchase is situated about 6 miles from Myrtle Creek, westward from here.
 3509. What area have you? 1,280 acres.
 3510. That is a conditional purchase and lease? Yes.
 3511. How long have you held it? I applied for the land in October, 1887.
 3512. Is it near the main road between Casino and Grafton? It is in the parish of Wyandah.
 3513. Do you know the number of it? No; I do not. It was a surveyed block when I applied for it.
 3514. You are near the Tenterfield and Lawrence Road? Yes.
 3515. Have you got the land fenced in? I have.
 3516. What have you got on it? Store bullocks.
 3517. What business do you carry on? Fattening cattle at present.
 3518. What have you got to say in reference to the proposal to construct this line of railway;—do you know what it will cost? I do not know exactly, but to the best of my knowledge it was estimated that it would cost £14,000 a mile.
 3519. The estimate is £12,000 right through. There will be 62½ miles of railway from Grafton to Casino, and the total cost will be £733,500;—do you think there is a reasonable prospect of such a line paying interest and working expenses? I do.
 3520. Do you know what the interest and working expenses come to? No; I have no idea.
 3521. Then how do you know that the railway will pay interest and working expenses? For this reason, that there is a considerable area of good agricultural land locked up here that will never be cultivated, until it has access to market. If a railway were made, where one man is now trying to drag out an existence, I am satisfied that five or six families would make a living.
 3522. What produce would you raise? Almost any produce that could be raised in the northern district, excepting sugar-cane.
 3523. Then why do you want 1,280 acres for farming purposes—is not that locking up the land? Not by any means. I should divide my 1,280 acres, and lease out the land to several families.
 3524. Are you on any water-course? A water-course runs right through the conditional purchase and lease.
 3525. And how is it that conditional purchases have not been taken up to any extent in that parish away from the water-courses? The whole of the land has been selected for about 6 miles.
 3526. On the water-courses? Certainly; but 6 miles west from the proposed railway line.
 3527. On the water-courses? They are not all on the water-courses.
 3528. What do you think the working expenses and interest would be? It is a thing I have not studied very much.
 3529. Then what is the value of your opinion as to the railway paying expenses? That is a matter of opinion.
 3530. We want to test the value of your evidence;—you tell us that this railway will pay? To the best of my knowledge.
 3531. You must have some reason for coming to that conclusion, otherwise your opinion is of no value? I have come to the conclusion that it would pay, because a great part of this land would be cultivated, and a great deal of produce would be sent along the railway.
 3532. Where to? It would depend upon the end of the line. My idea is that the best market would be in Grafton.
 3533. That would be the best local market? Yes.
 3534. Would you produce anything here which cannot be produced on the Clarence? No.
 3535. Are the farmers there not able to produce enough for the local market? A great deal of the land about here is very suitable for growing oats, and they do not grow oats on the Clarence to any extent, to my knowledge.
 3536. They bring them from Sydney? Yes; and I have bought chaff and hay that has come to Grafton from Victoria.
 3537. Yet the farmers there will not try to grow oats? They do not grow any quantity. Further than a local market, I think Grafton would be the route that most of the produce would take to Sydney.
 3538. Suppose all the country to the west of the railway were conditionally purchased, do you think the farmers would raise sufficient grain and produce to pay £50,000 or £60,000 a year to the railway? That is more than I can say. There is also land selected to the east.
 3539. Do you think the line between Casino and Grafton would pay £50,000 or £60,000 a year—you say that you are satisfied that it would be a paying line? I did not say that I was satisfied that it would pay. I said that to the best of my belief it would. I selected in 1887, and we looked upon the railway as a certainty then. Since I selected there have been 21,842 acres taken up in this particular district.
 3540. And used for grazing purposes? Some of it is used for nothing—they are living in hopes of getting a railway.
 3541. *Mr. Cox.*] It was taken up on account of the railway? To the best of my belief and knowledge.
 3542. What is the area of your farm on the Clarence? I am farming in conjunction with two brothers, about 95 acres, the area of our farm being 153 acres.
 3543. What do you grow? Maize wholly and solely.
 3544. What do you raise per acre? A good average crop is 15 bags per acre, which means 60 bushels.
 3545. Your market for that is Sydney, of course? Undoubtedly, 3546.

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3546. If the projected railway from Casino to Grafton had not been mentioned, would you have taken up the land here? I would not, because when I came here I thought I should be a certain distance from the proposed railway, and I made the remark to my friends when I went back that what induced me to select land here was that I looked upon the line as a certainty.
3547. Do you think that other people took the land up also for speculative purposes? To the best of my knowledge they have taken it up in the hopes of getting a railway to take their produce away.
3548. You have bought the land, not intending to farm it yourself, but to sell it to farmers? I said that I did not intend to farm part of it. If there were means of getting produce to market, there is no doubt that it would pay me better to farm than to grow cattle.
3549. That is taking up the land for speculative purposes? To a certain degree it is.
3550. What produce do you suppose could be raised on this country about Myrtle Creek? That is a very broad question.
3551. Supposing the whole of it available for cultivation was actually under cultivation—and I imagine that Myrtle Creek and Myall Creek have land fairly good for cultivation—what produce would you grow—you say oats and hay? I say maize, lucerne on selected patches, potatoes, oats, and wheat. There has been wheat grown on the creek here, and without a particle of rust on it.
3552. What was the yield per acre? There was only a little crop of it grown for a test, and there is a stalk of tobacco at the back grown on uncultivated land.
3553. *Chairman.*] Is the sample I produce as good as that grown there? Yes.
3554. *Mr. Cox.*] Could you raise 60 bushels of maize to the acre here—you say that you raise it on the Clarence? Not from the whole of the land. I daresay I could from a great part of it.
3555. What is the distance between this and Grafton? Somewhere between 45 and 50 miles.
3556. You think you could grow maize and carry it 40 or 50 miles by rail, and then compete with people on the river who have richer land? I feel satisfied about growing maize, and having it carried to Grafton and sent to Sydney. I have known people who grow maize and carried it on bullock-drays for 20 miles, which is far more expensive than railway carriage. Their land is poorer than that we have about Myrtle Creek.
3557. You think that if the whole of the land at Myrtle Creek were under cultivation it would give sufficient to pay the working expenses and interest on a line between Casino and Grafton? I do not mean to say that it would at once. In the course of time—after some years—it would.
3558. After how many years? This is a new place. I should say that it would take five or seven or perhaps ten years to get it started as an agricultural centre.
3559. You are aware, of course, that all these matters must be conducted upon strictly commercial principles. The Government must occasionally spend money for some prospective advantage, but you could not expect them to spend three-quarters of a million merely to carry a few bushels of oats, wheat, and potatoes to and from Grafton at a cost of £50,000 a year? My opinion is that it will not be only a few bushels.
3560. You could not pay very much for the cost of transit? I think we could compete with most places.
3561. Do you think you could see your way within the next ten years to make the line pay £50,000 a year? I would not say that, but, to the best of my belief, if a line were constructed between Grafton and the Tweed, upon the whole it would pay. The whole of the land between Casino and Grafton is fairly good. There is none of what I call really barren soil.
3562. We are not asking you anything about the country between the Tweed and Byron Bay or Casino, but only with regard to the country of which you have some knowledge. Have you any knowledge of the country about the Tweed? No.
3563. *Mr. Garrard.*] Would this be the nearest point to your land, if a railway were constructed? I could go to the railway in a direct line without coming this way. I could take half a mile or a mile off.
3564. You said just now that you considered that Grafton would be your port of shipment;—is it likely that you would go 50 miles to Grafton when you have only 25 miles to go to Casino? There is no doubt that it would depend greatly upon the prices. Wherever people could obtain the highest price, there they would send their produce.
3565. I suppose you anticipate that your oats would be for the local market only? No.
3566. Do you think you could compete with the Sydney market? I do not see why I could not compete as well as with water carriage.
3567. Is it possible for water carriage to compete successfully with the railway or road carriage? It is a matter of opinion. If oats were grown on the banks of the Richmond or the Clarence, and sent to Sydney, I think we could compete almost with the same advantage by sending it to Grafton by rail.
3568. If you had 40 miles of rail carriage you would compete at a disadvantage. We have come along the main road from Casino to Grafton—is there much traffic on that road? There is not a great deal of traffic on the road.
3569. Is there any other road by which the traffic goes, between Casino and Grafton? Undoubtedly there are other roads by which the passenger traffic comes to the Clarence, between Woodburn, Chatsworth, and Swan Bay.
3570. I mean within a radius of 12 or 15 miles from here? There is a road to Coraki, but whether there is any passenger traffic on it is more than I can say.
3571. Is the land which you have taken up as good or better than the 21,000 acres that have been taken up during the time you spoke of? No; I think it is about the average—similar to what has been taken up.
3572. Do you know the rainfall of this district? I could not give it to you exactly.
3573. Is it greater than it is on the banks of the Clarence? I believe I could safely say that. I was on the Clarence the other day, and they were very badly off for rain, while we have had a splendid season.
3574. The land here is not to be compared with the land on the banks of the Clarence? No.
3575. You think it is possible that the extra rainfall may compensate for that? It is quite possible.
3576. Do you know anyone who has grown wheat here? Only the gentleman I spoke of; he is a Victorian farmer.
3577. Do you know if he put in half an acre? No, I do not think he did. He grew it just for a test.
3578. All breadstuffs come from Sydney or other parts of the country? Yes.
3579. Therefore, if wheat could be grown here there would be a considerable local market for it? Yes.
3580. You think the waters of the Clarence would be your best place of shipment. Suppose the railway were

- Mr. W. Morrison, 28 Nov., 1889.
- were constructed, do you think it would be better to go to Grafton or to Lawrence—Lawrence is 15 miles nearer? I think Grafton, by all means.
3581. Would it not be to your advantage to have less railway carriage by 15 miles? It might be a lesser distance, but Grafton is the port of the Clarence, and I certainly think that the line should go there.
3582. That is a mere matter of sentiment, that does not rule in business. If your destination was Sydney, or anywhere outside of the Clarence Heads, and you could save 15 miles of railway, you would save it, but at Grafton you have a local market as well as an outside market? Yes.
3583. You prefer to have the terminus of the railway at Grafton because it would give you the option of a local market at Grafton and a market outside the Clarence Heads? Yes; and there is another argument in favour of the railway going to Grafton. I believe that the country between the Flying Horse—the junction of the Lawrence, Grafton, and Casino roads—and Grafton is better than the country between Lawrence and the Flying Horse, and the railway would open up the better country.
3584. You have an intimate knowledge of the country? A pretty good knowledge.
3585. You think it is better from the Flying Horse to Grafton than from the Flying Horse to Lawrence? In my opinion it is.
3586. Is there any timber along this route? Yes, there is.
3587. What is it? The principal timber is iron-bark, spotted gum, grey gum, and bloodwood.
3588. There are several large forest reserves between here and Grafton? Yes.
3589. Is there good timber on them—I mean hardwood? Fairly good.
3590. Do you think that if the railway were constructed a great deal of this timber would go to Grafton for shipment to outside ports? I feel pretty well satisfied about it.
3591. *Mr. Lee.*] Do you wish the Committee to understand that when you selected your land here it was with the view of speculating in land because the railway was coming? Not by any means.
3592. You selected your land because you were under the impression that if the railway were constructed you would be able to make use of the land to advantage? Undoubtedly.
3593. As a matter of fact, if a railway were constructed you would be able to use it for the conveyance of your produce? Yes.
3594. You have spoken about growing hay and wheat—do you know whether there is much hay grown on the Clarence—oaten hay? There is very little oaten hay grown on the Clarence.
3595. If it is not grown there it is not likely that you will grow it here? The country is better adapted for it here.
3596. Would you not depend more on your maize? Undoubtedly it would be my principal product.
3597. The freight for the railway would be maize, timber, live stock, and dairy produce—those would be the principal freights? I think you might include hay also. I am satisfied that there would be a deal of hay grown here.

Mr. Thomas Arthur Small, selector, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. T. Small, 28 Nov., 1889.
3598. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? Three miles from here, on Myrtle Creek.
3599. Are you a selector? Yes.
3600. How many acres do you hold? With a conditional purchase and lease, 1,052 acres.
3601. How much of that do you cultivate? I have about 7 acres.
3602. What do you grow? I have had corn, barley, potatoes, and millet on a small scale.
3603. What do you do with the rest of the country? I use it for grazing, and I keep stallions.
3604. Do you do any dairying or cheese-making? No.
3605. What is the usual occupation pursued by the farmers in your locality? Well, the residents here have only recently come. They are hardly settled.
3606. When did you take up your land? It was confirmed on the 5th July, 1888.
3607. You are comparatively a new comer? Yes; I have hardly completed fencing.
3608. What freight would you be able to give to a railway if one were constructed? The principal things my land would grow would be oats and lucerne. Oats, lucerne, and maize are the only things that I have grown on the Clarence. I am not acquainted with the growth of wheat.
3609. At the present time you are not a producer, and you are not qualified to speak as to the actual capability of your land? I have grown oats in several parts of the Clarence, and from the nature of the soil here I think it is suitable for that crop.
3610. You intend to try them? Yes.
3611. Would Grafton be your port of shipment. I think so.
3612. Would Lawrence suit you better? As far as distance is concerned.
3613. Which place would you be likely to go to? With the present condition of affairs, having to draw my produce with teams, I should take it to Lawrence.
3614. But supposing the railway were made? It would all depend on the market. If there were any sort of local market I should prefer Grafton.
3615. Supposing the line were made from Lismore to Grafton, would you send your goods to Grafton or to Lismore? That is a question that I could hardly answer.

Mr. James Wells, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. Wells, 28 Nov., 1889.
3616. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Myrtle Creek.
3617. What are you? A farmer.
3618. What area of land have you? 640 acres conditional purchase, and 640 acres conditional lease.
3619. When did you take up the land? I think it was confirmed on the 6th July this year. I am not quite certain about the date.
3620. At all events it was confirmed this year? Yes.
3621. Where is your other farm? I have no other in this Colony.
3622. Where did you come from? From Victoria.
3623. Were you farming there? Yes.
3624. In what part? At Kerang, 200 miles west of Melbourne, on the Murray.
3625. You have got a railway to Kerang? Yes. The railway goes on to Swan Hill.
3626. What area had you there? 320 acres.
3627. I suppose you have not cultivated any of this land yet? I have put in about 4 acres of corn, and 1½ acres of wheat.
- 3628.

Mr.
J. Wells.
28 Nov., 1889.

3628. Is it ripe now? Yes.
3629. Have you cut it? I have cut a portion of it. Some of the land is down in vegetables.
3630. About how many bushels to the acre did it go? About 25, I think.
3631. Is that on a flat or a watercourse? It is on flat country.
3632. On a watercourse? On the bank of a creek.
3633. Is the land extending back from the banks of the creek similar to this? Yes, similar.
3634. Covered with spotted gum and ironbark? There is no spotted gum. It is ironbark and apple-tree.
3635. How long have you been in this district? About fifteen months—perhaps a little over.
3636. Were you working here before you selected? No. I was only here about a fortnight before I applied to the Government.
3637. You know that it is proposed to construct a line of railway from Grafton to Casino, and from Casino to the Tweed, the distance between Casino and Grafton being 62 miles, and the cost of that part of the line £733,000;—are you in a position to show the Committee how the country is going to be paid £50,000 a year by that railway? I think it is a good farming district which will guarantee payment.
3638. I suppose you have not gone into figures at all as to the cost of the railway in working expenses or interest? No, I have not.
3639. You think that if the railway were constructed it would induce settlement? Yes.
3640. And by that means tend to produce the freight which would be necessary to make the line pay within a reasonable time? Yes.
3641. Do you think it would pay the interest on the money now if it were constructed? I think so; perhaps not just at the present, but before very many years are over.
3642. £24,000 a year? That is a good sum, certainly.
3643. £49,534 a year working expenses and interest;—it would take a tidy lot of produce to pay that? There is no doubt that within a few years there will be a tidy lot of produce grown here.
3644. You think so, and hope so, having this large farm? I am almost certain of it. I know that if there were the same people here as there are in Victoria they would make it pay.
3645. You have only been fifteen months in the district? About that.
3646. Could they not find an older resident than you to work out this difficult railway problem? I dare say they might have done so if they had tried.
3647. Your evidence is simply what you believe? Yes, and what I have seen.
3648. There is not very much traffic here, is there—from here to Casino? I think there is a good deal.
3649. What do you call a good deal;—how many tons of goods go along this road in a week? I am sure I could not say, but I see a good many carts going by.
3650. Why, the road is hardly formed;—what would the carts carry? I suppose they carry goods between Lawrence and Casino.
3651. Have they been sending goods from Casino to Lawrence, or from Lawrence to Casino? I do not see what else the traffic can be.
3652. Have you seen goods being carted from Lawrence to Casino? I could not tell what was in the carts.
3653. How many carts have you seen in a week? I have not counted. I am not living on the road to see what goes by in a week.
3654. Looking at the road, do you think that it carries much traffic;—do you think that there are a dozen carts passing between here and Casino in a week? Yes.
3655. Do you know that there are? I could not swear it, not living on the road.
3656. *Mr. Garrard.*] Where will you find a market for your produce? If I had anything to send I should find it in Sydney.
3657. But where would you take it—to Casino? To Casino or to Grafton.
3658. How many miles would that be from here? Between 18 and 20.
3659. What produce have you actually taken to Casino? I have not taken anything.
3660. Have you taken any to Grafton? No.
3661. You have not taken anything off your land? No.
3662. But you have made up your mind where you will take your produce? I must take it to one place or the other.
3663. It is 40 miles to Grafton—would you take it there when Casino is only 20 miles? It would depend upon where I could get the best price for my grain.
3664. If you had to go to the Clarence, where would you go—to Grafton or to Lawrence? Lawrence is the nearer.
3665. Are you to the eastward? Yes.
3666. You are between here and Lawrence. You would go to Lawrence in preference to Grafton, but if the line were made to Grafton you would go to Grafton? I have to get on to the main road to get to Lawrence now, so that I would have to come to the line.
3667. Is the land that you have left in Victoria better than this? I believe the soil is better.
3668. Do you know the rainfall;—have you a better rainfall here than there? Yes; about three times the rainfall here.
3669. That would go to compensate for any loss in the quality of the soil? Yes. You could not grow anything for six months of the year through drought.
3670. You estimate your wheat crop at 25 bushels to the acre;—what did you get at Kerang? Fifteen, generally; but we had to irrigate there or else get nothing.
3671. But you think you will be able to depend on the rain here? Yes.
3672. That would enable you to grow wheat more cheaply, and with better results? Yes. I worked 300 or 400 acres four years in succession, and got nothing from the land.
3673. Do you think that if a railway were made there would be a great increase in the quantity of land put under cultivation in this district? Yes.
3674. You do not know much about the country otherwise than at Myrtle Creek? I have been through between Casino and Grafton several times, but I have never been further up the creek than about 8 miles.
3675. Is this creek about the best of the numerous small watercourses between here and Grafton? I think it is.

- Mr. J. Wells.
28 Nov., 1889.
3676. I suppose you looked round before taking up land to see which was the best position? I travelled for twelve months before I came here. I did not go up the creek.
3677. Had the proposal to construct this line anything to do with your fixing upon this district for your home? It had something to do with it.
3678. If there had been no possibility of getting a railway, would you have chosen this place for your home? Yes; but I would not have gone in for farming; I would have gone in for grazing.
3679. Mr. Cox.] You said that you would not have bought the land only that you knew that the railway was likely to pass here? No, I did not.
3680. Did you take it up *bona fide* for a home for yourself? Yes.
3681. And not with the hope of being able to sell it after five years? No; I knew no person in the Colony when I selected here.

FRIDAY, 29 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at Lawrence.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX. | JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Mr. William Olive, innkeeper, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. W. Olive.
29 Nov., 1889.
3682. Chairman.] What are you? I am an innkeeper, residing at Lawrence.
3683. How long have you been residing in this district—when did you first come here? I think that I came here about 1843.
3684. You have been living on one or other of the rivers ever since? I was in Victoria for fourteen months, and I was in New England for about eighteen months.
3685. The greater part of your life has been passed on one or other of these rivers? Yes.
3686. What do you desire to tell the Committee with regard to the construction of the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed River? What I wish to say to the Committee is that the line could be made shorter, and would pass through better country, if it were taken from Lawrence to Coraki. We are at the head of deep-water navigation here. I am told that there is about 70 feet of water under the hill here where the Government buildings are, but from here to Grafton the dredge is continually at work keeping the river deep enough for the vessels now trading here—that is estimated to cost about £20,000 a mile.
3687. How far is Coraki from Lismore? 13 miles.
3688. Would you go from Coraki to Lismore? Yes, and thence to Byron Bay and the Tweed.
3689. Is the country between Coraki and Lawrence similar to that between Casino and this place? It is better in one respect, and that is for grazing. The grass is sweeter, and the cattle would stop there.
3690. Between Lawrence and Casino it is purely grazing land, is it not? Yes.
3691. Better as you get towards Casino than at this end—it is poor grazing land at this end? Ten or 12 miles out the country gets better.
3692. It is only about second-class grazing land from here out for 14 or 15 miles? That is all.
3693. Is this country similar to that between Grafton and the Flying Horse? That is about 26 miles.
3694. As against what from the Flying Horse to here? About 11 miles the way you came.
3695. Is the country between the Flying Horse and Grafton superior to that between here and the Flying Horse? Ten times worse.
3696. Absolutely unfit for grazing, I suppose, until you get on to the alluvial banks? Or anything else.
3697. Do you know it well? Every inch of it.
3698. After you leave the alluvial flats of the Clarence? Until you get to Riley's. About 12 or 13 miles from here it begins to get better, but from that until you get to Deep Creek, within about 6 miles of the Richmond, it is not good grazing country. There is plenty of grass, but the cattle will not stop on it, and that is the reason why there is so much. The land is practically no good.
3699. Do you know of any land between here and Casino that could be occupied for agricultural purposes to advantage? No.
3700. Have you had any experience of wheat-growing? When I was a boy on the Hunter I saw plenty grown. I was reared on the Hunter, and I came from there to this country.
3701. You know something, then, of wheat-growing? Yes.
3702. Do you think there is any wheat land at the back between here and Casino? There is no wheat land until you get to New England.
3703. No land on which they could profitably grow hay? I do not think it. There are beautiful scrubs on the creek, but the land would not grow oats—at least it would grow them, but it would be no good.
3704. The rich land on the creeks, with the heavy rainfall, is not suitable for oats? No.
3705. And the land back from the creeks is too poor? It is too poor where you came from this morning.
3706. Myrtle Creek? Yes. That is the best spot.
3707. Of course, the object of giving railway communication with the Clarence is that people may get to Sydney by the shortest route? Yes.
3708. If the railway were brought to Lawrence, how many miles would it save as against going to Grafton? At a rough guess I think it would be about 30 miles to Coraki.
3709. We are assuming that the line comes as far as Riley's? It does not go that way.
3710. The surveyed line—how far is it from Riley's to Grafton direct, and from Riley's to Lawrence direct? From Riley's to Grafton would be 28 or 29 miles, and from Riley's here it is 13 or 14 miles.
3711. Going by Coraki, how far is it? About 30 miles.
3712. As against what going to Casino? It was always called 70 miles from Grafton to Casino. Take 30 from that and it will leave 40. From here to Casino is 54 miles.
3713. From Coraki to Casino is what? They reckon that 20 miles.

3714.

3714. Then you would leave Casino out altogether? Yes. My nephew drove twenty-four passengers up from Coraki during the last races in his coach—from Coraki to the Lismore races.
3715. You mention that to show the character of the country—that it is level? That it cannot be bad when that can be done. It is supposed to be 13 miles.
3716. Do you anticipate that if a railway were taken from here to Casino, or to Coraki, or from Grafton to Casino, or to Lismore, that these lands for 20 or 30 miles back would be occupied for anything except grazing? I do not think they would.
3717. Do you think they are fit for anything else? I do not think they are fit for grazing at the present time. They want ringbarking and fencing.
3718. Do you know Myrtle Creek? Yes.
3719. Do you know the land on either bank of the Creek? Yes.
3720. Is it fit for agricultural purposes? I do not think it. It is all sandy there.
3721. Is it suitable for growing oats? I do not know.
3722. Is it suitable for wheat-growing? I think not.
3723. Is it suitable for growing maize? No. You can see that by the paddocks round about the place now.
3724. With your project the Richmond River would have to be bridged at Coraki? Yes.
3725. That would stop all use of it for navigation to Lismore? No; they would still have the use of that arm.
3726. Do you propose to cross the river from Coraki to the north side? Yes.
3727. Would not that cut off all communication with Lismore? No.
3728. Where would you cross? The river branches into two arms at Lismore—you must cross one of them.
3729. Would you cross it at the same place as it is proposed to cross it now? I hardly know where that is.
3730. About a mile above the junction of Leicester and Wilson's creeks, on Leicester Creek. What is the nature of the country between where you would cross the south arm at Coraki and Lismore? Beautiful brush land.
3731. In the event of the proposed railway being connected with the main coast railway to the metropolis, you would have to bridge the Clarence here, supposing the line were brought to Lawrence? If you wanted to take it to Grafton you could use the road which you are going to traverse this evening.
3732. Then you would be doubling back? It would be a straight line to Grafton, and this would still continue straight.

Mr.
W. Olive.
29 Nov., 1889.

Mr. Edward Shields, J.P., carpenter and builder, sworn, and examined:—

3733. *Chairman.*] Do you reside at Lawrence? Yes.
3734. How long have you been living here? Twenty years.
3735. What business do you follow? I am a ship carpenter, but I do not follow my calling much. There is not much to be done at it here. I can do any kind of carpentry.
3736. You are a builder also? Yes.
3737. And you are a Justice of the Peace? I am.
3738. What do you desire to tell the Committee? I just wish to point out the possibility of getting a somewhat shorter route for the railway by going from Coraki to Lawrence. By comparing the two routes on the map that would save about 46 miles, and the line would come to the head of navigation on the Clarence, because between here and Grafton the water is shallow.
3739. And has to be dredged continually, so that vessels can get up? About 2 miles here has been dredged three times, and it has been stated in Parliament that it cost £20,000 per mile each time, so that the dredging comes to a good penny. The river is very little deeper now than it was, and the dredge will have to come again in a year or two.
3740. Between here and Grafton? Yes. Half of our town fronts shallow water, but from there down to the heads there is no obstruction to the navigation.
3741. You have no difficulty in getting in and out of the heads? Very little, excepting in very rough weather.
3742. Such weather as would keep a ship inside Port Jackson? After stormy weather the entrance shoals up, but in a little while the water opens it again. I think Byron Bay is a better place for a permanent and good harbour.
3743. Do you know Byron Bay? I have been near it on the sea. I have a fair knowledge of many of the bays on the coast, some of which have been improved—Wollongong, Kiama, and Ulladulla. I know those well.
3744. You think that Byron Bay might be made a port for the whole of this district for a larger class of vessels than can come up these rivers? Yes.
3745. Do you not think that if the entrance were improved larger vessels could come inside of the river and droghers do the work on the river? Yes; but the entrance will always be liable to silt up after heavy floods and long droughts. The shoal extends in front of the breakwater about 3 miles, I believe, and it will increase as the breakwaters go out.
3746. Do you know the land back from here to Casino? No; only by what I have heard from others. From the description they gave me of the timber growing on them, I should not think the lands were good. Spotted gum and iron bark, to my knowledge, never grow on good land in any quantity. I have a good knowledge of timber.
3747. The land adjoining the alluvial flats on this river is poor country and not fit for agriculture? As soon as you are off the flats it is useless, except for grazing, and it is very poor for that.
3748. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you know anything of the timber between here and Casino;—is there much of it? I only know what I hear people say—that it is plentiful and good.
3749. I saw some timber lying on the banks here; where does that come from? That comes from not far out. I know the country for 14 or 15 miles out, and the timber is good.
3750. Is that on the road we have come, or further east? It is on both sides of the road.
3751. Does the timber get thicker and better, or is it the same all along? I do not think there is much difference.

Mr.
E. Shields
J.P.
29 Nov., 1889.

3752.

Mr.
E. Shields,
J.P.
29 Nov., 1889.

3752. Occasionally there is a fair-sized tree and at other times the trees are small? Yes, it is a good place for colonial hardwood.
3753. What would you do, supposing the railway were made from Lawrence to the Tweed, and eventually it was decided to make a coast line, how would you join the coast line—you could not bridge the Clarence here? I think the Clarence could be bridged very well at Cowper, just above Woodford Island,—you would not deviate a quarter of a mile.
3754. Would it not practically make the river useless higher up? I think the river is wide enough to make a high bridge.
3755. It would stop the "Helen Nicoll" from going up? I think it might be made high enough to let the "Helen Nicoll" through, but I think the river would not be needed above the bridge, except for droghers.
3756. Then you would wipe out Grafton? I would make the depôt Lawrence.
3757. What is the name of the dredge here? The "Clarence."
3758. Has she been working here? Yes—backwards and forwards; she is at the heads now.
3759. And has frequently been drawn off from here to go and work at the Heads? She is never away from here, except when she is at the Heads—she has not often been drawn off.
3760. Do I understand you that the work she has done here is of very little use? Very little. That is proved by her coming here three times in twenty years.
3761. Has not the dredging given an increased depth? The channel was deep after she left, but it silted up again. It was very temporary work, and always will be temporary while done on the same plan.
3762. Are you aware that Sir John Coode's scheme takes in not only the entrance to the Clarence, but also certain works up here, such as training banks and protection banks? I do not think he would do much up here.
3763. Did you think that Sir John Coode's scheme was only for the improvement of the entrance, or for the improvement of the whole river? I thought he dealt principally with the Heads.
3764. Are you aware of any improvements suggested by Sir John Coode in the river above Maclean? I am not sure that I noticed anything. I did not pay much attention to Sir John Coode's report, further than to that part dealing with the Heads.
3765. What is done with the timber we see lying here? It is sent to Melbourne principally.
3766. In the log? Yes.
3767. Is the ship at the wharf going to load logs? Yes, she is loading now.
3768. How often do you have a vessel loading here? Not very often. There are only three teams drawing.
3769. Are they employed regularly? Yes; they have been for a couple of years, at any rate.
3770. There are no saw-mills in the neighbourhood? Yes, there is a saw-mill, but it is shut up now. The proprietor got into difficulties.
3771. Was it from want of trade? I do not know; I do not think so.
3772. What is it keeps Lawrence going? The carrying business from Tenterfield, and the surrounding farmers. This is the point where the Tenterfield traffic comes in, and the Richmond River trade is done from here. The coaches travel from here with the mails twice a week.
3773. Does not the passenger traffic from the Richmond go over from Woodburn to Harwood Island? Yes, a good deal of it connected with the Lower Richmond.
3774. How many coaches daily? I could not say—two I think.
3775. *Mr. Cox.*] Are there any shoals between this and the heads? Not any to stop vessels.
3776. Of what draft? A vessel drawing 20 feet could safely come up from the Heads to here.
3777. So that the difficulty in river navigation would be between here and Grafton? Yes;—it begins here.
3778. *Mr. Lee.*] On the road from Coraki at which end does the good land lie? I do not know.
3779. Do you know the route of the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed? I have seen it on the map, and that is all that I know about it, except by report.
3780. Do you think that a more suitable route could be found? From the Richmond to the Tweed: I could not say.
3781. From the Richmond to the Clarence? Yes—between here and Coraki.
3782. Is the land better at the Coraki end or at this end? The land, as far as I can ascertain, is a little better at the other end.
3783. Consequently, there is likely to be more settlement at that end? Yes.
3784. Is there any settlement at this end? None.
3785. What traffic would there be across? The same as on any other route.
3786. But if a connection were made between the Richmond and the Clarence, at the points mentioned by you, what traffic will there be across in the shape of goods? I do not think much would come. I am certain that none will come by the long route from Casino to Grafton. If you cut off 46 or 47 miles from the length of the railway that might make it come.
3787. Is it likely that the Richmond people would send their produce to the Clarence for shipment to Sydney? If their bar was bad they might occasionally send the more valuable kinds.
3788. Are you aware that the Richmond River is to be improved? Yes, I have heard so.
3789. If it is improved so that coasting vessels can get in and out in ordinary weather do you think that people would send their produce here? I do not think so. I do not think they would be wise in doing so, and I do not think we would send anything to them. If it were found to be better to go lower down the river I would be in favour of that. Do not think that I have come here as an advocate of the claims of Lawrence. I do not care a button for Lawrence. I come here in the interests of the country. I have for many years studied this question, and have written about it, and have done my best to insist that the shortest and best route should be taken. I have always maintained that the Government should be allowed to pick the route, and that the interested parties should not interfere.
3790. *Chairman.*] You cannot see any object at all in connecting the rivers if they are both to be made good? No. The only reason I can see for the line is as part of a coast line.
3791. So far as you know from your residence here, and from what you have heard, it is not likely that a railway would develop an agricultural population between here and Casino, or here and Coraki? Not of any consequence.

SATURDAY, 30 NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Grafton, at 9.30 a.m.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX. | CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Patrick Riddle Donaldson, Esq., District Surveyor, sworn, and examined:—

3792. *Chairman.*] You are a district surveyor? For the whole of the Land Board district of Grafton, extending from Kempsey to the Tweed.

3793. To Queensland, practically? Yes.

3794. That embraces how many land districts? It embraces the land districts of Kempsey, Grafton, Casino, Lismore, and Murwillumbah.

3795. Approximately, what is the area of country within those districts? About 10,000,000 acres.

3796. How long have you been residing in Grafton? Twenty-nine years.

3797. That was long before free selection came into operation at all? I came here in 1861, the year that the free selection Act came into force.

3798. It came into force on the 1st January, 1862. I suppose you came up here to make ready for it? Yes.

3799. And you have been here ever since? Ever since.

3800. Of course you have a general knowledge of the whole of the district under your charge, and you have travelled through it? Yes, I have. I have a statement here which I should like to read to the Committee:—

“The whole of the country between Grafton and Casino is well adapted for grazing and dairy-farming, and a great deal of it, in proximity to the watercourses, for agriculture. Settlement on this part of the district is retarded for want of better means of communication than the ordinary roads, and the land cannot be profitably utilized for anything but grazing purposes under present conditions. Yet notwithstanding existing drawbacks, and as showing the faith entertained in the future of this part of the district, there has been taken up during the last four years, within a distance of 5 miles on each side of the railway line, and within the 46 miles, commencing about 8 miles from Grafton and extending to the same distance from Casino, an area of 32,500 acres in fifty-three separate holdings, averaging 615 acres each conditional purchase and conditional lease combined. This has been taken in the resumed areas alone. The leasehold areas, where the land is equal, if not superior, will not be available for selection until the leases expire in 1890, and therefore could not be touched, but will be selected when available. The land between Casino and Murwillumbah embraces a better class of country, nearly all being suitable for either agriculture or dairying purposes. Although some parts are very broken, the soil is all rich except near the coast and the highest ranges. The land near the railway line has nearly all been alienated, the greater part several years ago, or else is reserved pending decision as to whether the railway is to be carried out or not. It cannot be fairly utilized without better means of access to markets or places of shipment. Comparatively little progress has been made in developing its great resources, principally in consequence of this want, and a large proportion of the alienated land remains in its natural state. The area of unalienated land within 10 miles on each side of the railway line now available, and which will be when the leasehold areas are opened in 1890, including railway and other temporary reserves that may be revoked, is 375,000 acres; estimated value, £395,000; this is situated between Grafton and Casino; whilst between Casino and Murwillumbah there is an area of 222,000 acres, valued at £215,000. Exclusive of the above, there is a large extent of town and suburban lands, and country lands adjacent to towns, through which the railway will pass, at present protected from sale by population areas, which could be sold after completion or pending construction of the railway. The estimated area is 25,000 acres, and the amount it may be expected to realize £150,000, giving a total area of 622,000 acres, estimated to realize £760,000, within 10 miles on each side of the railway line. * The above sum does not include the amount that may be expected to be realized from the sale of allotments in any new towns and villages that may be projected on the railway route. The construction of the railway will materially assist in the development of the timber trade in these districts. The Colonies of Victoria and New Zealand draw largely on the resources of the Clarence for timber, such as ironbark piles, girders, and sawn timber for decking of wharves, bridges, &c. At present the timber is obtained within a reasonable distance of water carriage. When this supply becomes exhausted, and the industry cannot be profitably carried on by the employment of horse or bullock teams, the railway could, if constructed, then be availed of for carriage from the back lands. There are large quantities of timber in the vicinity of the line, and thirty-two timber reserves within 10 miles on each side of the line, embracing an area of 144,000 acres, whilst beyond that distance there are other extensive timber reserves, containing, in addition to the usual hardwoods, iron and stringy bark, bloodwood, blackbutt, gum, oak, &c.; pine and cedar in some of those which are least easy of access. The section of railway between Grafton and Casino runs through country very favourable for construction of a railway, a large extent being nearly level. The cost of the construction would be small, compared to that of the section to the north of Casino. I have no doubt whatever that if the railway is constructed the sale of the land would realize more than would pay the cost of this section. The unalienated land in the three counties (Clarence, Richmond, and Rous) alone, through which the railway will pass, amounts to 2½ million acres. Of this, I estimate 65 per cent. is suitable for occupation for agriculture, dairying, and grazing purposes, by selectors; 25 per cent. suitable for grazing only, but not considered good enough to be profitably occupied by selectors; and 10 per cent. inferior, practically valueless, broken, and scrubby. I have indicated by pink tint on index map herewith the parishes on and in close proximity to the proposed railway, showing in red figures the percentage of Crown lands in each parish, and a schedule in two sheets showing the approximate percentage of—1st, alienated; 2nd, reserved; and 3rd, of land now available for selection in those parishes. From the schedule, which I hand in as an appendix, it will be seen that the proportion of land at present available for selection between Grafton and Casino is very small—twelve parishes being wholly in leasehold areas not available until next year, and five partly so. In the section Casino to Tweed, the land, where not alienated in the vicinity of the line, has been reserved. There are

*NOTE (on revision):—In explanation I stated to the committee that these estimates were the amounts the land would realise if the railway be constructed.

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are no leasehold areas to prevent settlement, and, although large temporary reserves exist in four or five parishes, the percentage of available land on this section is much greater than on that from Grafton to Casino."

3801. That you swear to as the truth, and tender as your evidence? Yes.

3802. What do you estimate the present value of the land between here and Casino, if put on the market now? I cannot say, as there is no demand. In my estimate I have taken some of it as of no value whatever, and the rest, excepting the railway reserves, at £1 an acre. The land in the railway reserve I value at £2 per acre, so that you will see that my estimate is very moderate. I believe that the land will realize very much more than that, but I have put that down as moderate.

3803. Do you know the road from Lawrence to Casino? I do.

3804. And of course you know Wooroowoolgen? Yes.

3805. Is there any land along that road on either side, which you would say is fit for dairying purposes? Yes; about Myrtle Creek.

3806. Is there much of it there? Yes; there is a large extent of it there.

3807. Which you say is good for dairying? On the road itself there is perhaps 2 or 3 miles, but it extends up and down, following the watercourse.

3808. There are not many watercourses between here and Casino? Yes, there are.

3809. What are they? The larger watercourses are Myall Creek, Batten's Bight, Myrtle Creek, Sandy Creek, Deep Creek, and on the Grafton side, Salt-water Creek and Sandy Creek.

3810. According to the map before us, is only a comparatively small fringe of land alienated on the Clarence—the alienation extends no distance back from the river? No; nor will it do so until we have better means of communication with the river. The alienation will continue, and as a matter of fact the average alienation for the last five years in this district has been upwards of 30,000 acres per annum.

3811. As a matter of fact, did not that alienation set in just about 1884? I can give you that.

3812. Tell us what the applications were in 1883? I have only taken them out since the new Land Act came into force—for 1885, 1886, 1887, and 1888.

3813. That is two years after the proposal to construct this line of railway. I want to test the *bona fides* of these applications, and I want to compare the year previous to 1884 with the year subsequent to it. According to the map before us, which we got from the Lands Office, there is an enormous area of land round Grafton which is now as it ever was. The Act came into operation in August, 1885? Yes. The number of applications and the area applied for between that date and the 23rd November, 1889—four years and three months—in the Grafton land district, were 1,008 and 154,301 acres respectively. In the Casino land district there were 452 applications, embracing an area of 134,000 acres. In the Lismore district there were 449 applications, embracing an area of 59,295 acres. In the Murwillumbah district there were 423 applications, embracing an area of 64,440 acres.

3814. Can you tell the Committee how many acres were allotted to the applicants? No; I am not able to give you that information.

3815. Do you know that in 1884 £1,980,000 were voted for the construction of a line of railway from Grafton to Casino, Lismore, and the Brunswick? Yes.

3816. And the Land Act of 1884 came into operation in August, 1885? Yes. The principal disallowances were in the year 1885.

3817. When the applicants were probably not acquainted with the Act? Yes. In the Grafton district the disallowances have been almost nil recently. From the system which is adopted few mistakes occur.

3818. What was the average area of the application in the Grafton district? The average holdings in the Clarence electorate—that embracing the lower part of the river—in the year 1888, were 133 acres. In the Grafton electorate the average holdings were 237 acres, and in the Richmond electorate 318 acres.

3819. The railway will not bring the people in the Clarence electorate within better communication of the port than they have now? It would a portion of them—in the parishes of Lawrence, Southgate, Banyabba, and Stuart.

3820. Banyabba is to the north of Grafton, on the railway line? Yes; on the boundary between the Clarence and the Richmond.

3821. What I should like to know is the average area of the holdings along the railway line, or within 5 miles on each side of the railway line, out from the parish of Clifton? I can only give you the average of the holdings that have been taken up since the new Act came into force. I presume that is what you want, but will exclude the land within 8 miles of Casino, and within 8 miles of Grafton. The land has all been taken up in large holdings—by fifty-three separate applications, embracing 615 acres each—that is, conditional purchases and conditional leases combined.

3822. Really those lands have been taken up for pastoral purposes, not for agricultural purposes? They are held now for pastoral purposes, but in the hope that a railway will be given them, so that they can be turned to a better use.

3823. You were saying a while ago that a great deal of the lands which are now vacant round Grafton, and in the Clarence district, are vacant because of the want of access to market? Yes. Of course there are exceptions.

3824. For want of roads and for want of railway communication? Yes.

3825. Yet the bulk of those lands are good for grazing or dairying purposes? Yes.

3826. And much of them for agriculture? Yes, on the banks of the creeks.

3827. Are the difficulties of getting to market from round Grafton and in the Clarence electorate greater than the difficulties in the Richmond electorate, or are they as great? They are not as great.

3828. Do you know of any places about here where the settlers have to get their dairy produce to market on pack-horses? No.

3829. Do you know that such is the case in many places in the Richmond electorate? I have heard so. I do not know it of my own knowledge.

3830. Looking at the alienations in the Clarence River electorate, and those in the Richmond electorate, how can you account for the fact that so much land has been taken up on the Richmond, and so much land has been left on the Clarence;—is it that the Richmond land is very much better than the Clarence land? That which is gone is very much better.

3831. You see that it has gone in the Richmond district from the east to the west, and much further west than any alienations appear to have been made in the Clarence district? The part from Lismore to the Brunswick is very much better, excepting the high ranges there—the watershed between the Brunswick and the Richmond, and between the Brunswick and the Tweed.

3832. Is not the bulk of the land from Casino right round to Queensland on the water-courses, and away from the water-courses, much better than the bulk of the land in the Clarence district? Yes, I think so.
3833. And you see that the settlement has extended almost as far east as it can in those districts? There is comparatively little settlement on the principal part of the Richmond.
3834. Are the water-courses in the Richmond districts better than they are in this? I think so generally.
3835. And more available;—the rivers go through a greater extent of country, I suppose? The river itself is hemmed in; the principal part of it is hemmed in as it gets towards the border.
3836. Do you know that they are laying down a great deal of the land in this Richmond district in grass? Yes, in the neighbourhood of Lismore.
3837. Have any of the selections in this district since 1884 been laid down in grasses, that you know of? No. There is always some natural pasturage here, but on the Richmond there is no grass at all, unless you clear the scrub and plant it. I have put in grass myself as an experiment.
3838. Is the whole of the land from the east coast to the railway line, say from Lawrence, timbered with iron-bark, such as we see on the road? Not the whole of it. There are large reserves. The principal part of the timber land is reserved. There are good ridges here and there.
3839. We want to know the class of timber that grows on it? Ironbark, stringy-bark, blackbutt, gum, forest oak, and tallow wood occasionally.
3840. That is very good timber, is it not? It is all good timber. Of course, there would be no good timber near the banks of the water-courses. It would be on the ridges and ranges. The worst country is where the timber would be.
3841. Has not a great deal of this settlement in large areas along the railway line taken place since the proposal, in April 1884, to construct a railway? It has all taken place since 1884.
3842. Since £1,900,000 were voted by Parliament for a railway? Yes. All that I have mentioned just now.
3843. All the agricultural lands along the river are within ready access of the river at some point or other—the bulk of the lands we see marked on the map as alienated? On the Clarence?
3844. On the Clarence? Fairly so.
3845. So that all that those settlers would want is good roads? Yes, on the lower part of the river.
3846. And on the upper here about Grafton? About the railway line they would be too far away to get in.
3847. What is the distance from Grafton to the furthest settlement north along the railway line? How far north?
3848. In the parish of Clifton? Ten or 12 miles—Burkhardt's.
3849. Is that too far away for it to be profitable to farmers to bring their produce to market? No. I think they could manage to bring it from there. They are no very great distance away.
3850. But it is not obligatory upon them to bring their produce to Grafton—they could touch other points on the river? The road goes to Grafton, and they could not touch the river anywhere else so easily.
3851. Can you tell me why the railway should come to Grafton at all? No, excepting that it would be the best place to cross the river, and continue the line to the land to the south, which is now being taken up.
3852. But suppose the railway is only to be constructed from the Tweed to the Clarence. Is there any reason why it should come to Grafton? Certainly not.
3853. If it is only for the purpose of bringing the settlers into communication with the river, it had better go to Lawrence, had it not? For that part of the country between Casino and Grafton it would be decidedly the shortest way to go to Lawrence.
3854. But if the railway is to be extended south, you think that it ought to go to Grafton, that being the better place to get away from? Yes, and the interests of the town, which I presume, would be considered as the centre of the district?
3855. The cost of a railway from Grafton to the Tweed will be £1,728,100—that is a very large sum? About £12,000 a mile.
3856. £11,000 odd from here to Byron Bay? The whole of the expenditure would be at the other end, comparatively.
3857. Twelve thousand pounds a mile for a railway is a tidy expenditure anywhere? This end will not cost £12,000 a mile.
3858. Eleven thousand pounds a mile to Byron Bay? That is putting in the bad country and the bridge over the Richmond. Between Grafton and Casino, or Lawrence and Casino, there is no bridge, and it is flat country—£6,000 or £7,000 a mile would make that portion.
3859. There could be no justification for the expenditure of that money for the present population? No.
3860. Do you know what the interest and working expenses will come to, assuming that the working expenses on this line are similar to those in other parts of the Colony, though there is every reason to suppose that they will be much greater, because the line will not be connected with the other systems? No, I have not gone into figures; I simply looked upon it that the sale of land would recoup the expenditure on the line. I certainly thought that any traffic there might be would pay for the working expenses.
3861. The interest alone would be £25,772 a year? But if the land paid for the cost of the railway the interest would be gone.
3862. Then the working expenses, at the most reasonable calculation, are 3½ per cent. on the capital—that makes another £25,000,—in all, £51,544 a year. Do you think there is any chance of that sum being paid to the country within a reasonable time, apart from the sale of the land? No; and I think if the matter is to be tested in that manner there will be no more railways constructed in this Colony.
3863. The object of the Committee is to test these proposals by commercial principles. Hitherto it has been a complaint that railways have been built without consideration;—do you think that within a reasonable time the railway would earn £51,000 a year? That is a matter which I have not gone into, and I should not like to say. My impression is that as the sale of the land on this section would certainly recoup the expenditure on the line, and that the land on the other section would go a long way towards doing so, that would be a justification for constructing the railway, because the settlement which would be brought about would be an advantage to the Colony generally, by increasing the population.

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3864. Do you know the class of settlers who have been taking up land here since 1884 along the railway line in these large areas? I know several of them.
3865. Do you think that they are *bona fide* settlers, or are they speculators? I have not the slightest doubt of their *bona fides*.
3866. Have you heard of such a thing as a syndicate being formed to buy up the land along the railway line? There has been nothing of the kind.
3867. Have you heard of any such syndicate being formed to buy up land at Byron Bay? I do not know of any syndicate being formed to do anything of the kind.
3868. So far as you know the settlers are *bona fide* men? I would not quite say that. I could not say that.
3869. There is a little speculation? In that neighbourhood there is, but there is nothing of the kind at this end. There is no doubt that there has been speculation ever since the Byron Bay scheme was mentioned.
3870. And on the line from there to the Tweed? Yes, since there has been a chance of the railway being constructed.
3871. Has not the same thing been going on here since 1884? I do not think it.
3872. If the lands on the Clarence are so good for dairying and grazing purposes, can you tell the Committee how is it that there were such enormous areas of Crown land unalienated until this vote was passed by Parliament? The difficulty of getting anything away from them is, I presume, the principal reason.
3873. Greater difficulties, you tell us, exist in the north? Yes; but not for such considerable distances. That country is broken up by the rivers and creeks.
3874. Is it not a fact that the land is not worth taking up? I think it is shown that that is not so by the fact that the land is being taken up now.
3875. Along the railway line and along the creeks? They are extending back from the creeks. They cannot get within a mile of the railway because of the reserves.
3876. But they could have done that until a couple of years ago? No. The land has been reserved for at least four years. It was reserved in 1885.
3877. Do you not think that the alienation speaks for itself—if the country was worth taking up it would have been taken up, notwithstanding these difficulties? No; because the greater part of the country in the north has been taken up comparatively recently. It is only since there has been such an immense expenditure upon roads that that country has been taken up so much from Lismore northward.
3878. The expenditure for roads in that district would be comparatively high compared to this? Yes; compared to this.
3879. Notwithstanding that, you have not had sufficient roads to enable people to get their produce to market? Roads are only good to a certain extent. It is not profitable to carry on roads beyond a certain distance—10 or 15 miles, I should think. The land within 10 miles of here is shown to be taken up. As you get back the land is not so good as it is on the banks of the river.
3880. Is the land between the railway line—the 30-mile peg and the coast—poor land? There is a lot of fair land out in that direction—on the creek and extending back.
3881. That is in the parish of Gibberagee? Yes.
3882. There is good land to the east of the railway out towards the parish of Gibberagee, but too far away for settlers? Too far away.
3883. Will they be within reach of the railway line? Yes; land was taken up there shortly before the Act of 1875 came into force to block selection in the interest of the owners of the run.
3884. They have not taken it up very wisely for that object? It answered the purpose at the time.
3885. *Mr. Cox.*] I understand from your remarks that although the land between Grafton and Casino has not been alienated hitherto, on account of its inferior quality, yet, in the event of a railway being made, you believe it would all be taken up, or sufficient to pay the cost of the railway? I do.
3886. If the railway is only to be made to facilitate settlement, would it not be better to take it into better country than this;—if the object of the Government is to induce settlement, would not that settlement be better induced by taking the railway through rich country rather than through poor country? Yes.
3887. Is there not much better country in these districts through which a railway could be taken than that between Grafton and Casino, so as to induce settlement and be more profitable to the community? Yes; there is rich country about the head of the Orara.
3888. What justification has the Government for putting railways through poor country when there is rich country asking for a railway? Because you would have to bring a railway through some poor country to get to a shipping port.
3889. But if it is one of the primary objects of the Government to settle population on the land, why should that not be done? Because you would then take it through a lot of similar country to the Richmond country.
3890. Do you know the country in the upper parts of the Richmond? Yes.
3891. Is that not very good country? Some of it is very good; but a large proportion of it is perfectly worthless, except for the timber.
3892. Up the banks of the river is not the good country? On the banks of the river the country is exceedingly good; but the greater part of the good land on the banks is alienated.
3893. But is there not a considerable quantity of good land up the rivers, at the heads of the Richmond, still unalienated? There is a large quantity of it; but the best has been bought in the interests of the runs.
3894. Do you not think that there will be a considerable rush up those rivers next year when the leasehold areas fall in? There are only one or two parishes up the Clarence which the leaseholds will affect. The majority are over in the Richmond direction.
3895. Are there any runs in the vicinity of Casino that have now a large amount of leasehold land that will be thrown open next year? The greater part of the Wooroowoollgen run is in that direction. Runnymede is nearly all gone. At Kyogle the greater part of the rich land has gone, but at Wiangarie there is some good land, and there is also good land at Ettrick and Dyrabba.
3896. A railway constructed in that direction would pass through rich land, although it was alienated? These lands are 20 or 30 miles from the proposed railway.

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3897. But if it were thought desirable to construct a railway for the settlement of the people on the land, would it not be better to go up to this rich country rather than to go through poor country? It depends very much upon the amount of poor country that you have to go through to touch the rich country—upon the proportion of the rich country to the poor.

3898. But would you go through any poor country to touch the heads of the river? There is very little poor country there up the river; but much of it is forest country, a shade superior to that over this way—better grazing country.

3899. In answer to a question by the Chairman I understood you to say that if all that was needed was to connect the Richmond and the Clarence, it would be desirable to go to Lawrence in the event of a coast railway not being under consideration? I did not go so far as the coast railway. I said, "In the event of there being no railway to open up the land on the south side of the river." In that case I presume the two railways would be connected, and you could not do that anything like so easily further down the river as you could do it here. The river is three-quarters of a mile wider at Lawrence.

3900. Why could not a bridge be made over the river at the top of Woodford Island? Because the river there is as wide as at Grafton, and you would also have the south arm to cross. You would then have to go through a lot of low flat alluvial country, very liable to flood, and cross the Coldstream, or work between it.

3901. Are there not flats in the neighbourhood of Grafton? Yes, excepting where the railway line is. It is nearly out of water, the whole of it, and the distance is very short.

3902. Would the expense be an insuperable objection to crossing the river at Woodford Island? I do not think there is anything insuperable in railway construction after the Blue Mountains and the Hawkesbury Bridge, but the railway would not cross here—it would cross higher up.

3903. So that it would not come into Grafton at all? It would come within 5 or 6 miles of Grafton and cross there, if it was a continuation of the coast railway.

3904. The projected railway would come within 5 miles of Grafton? I am speaking of the coast railway. Of course the Grafton people would take a branch to the railway if the Government would not bring it to them.

3905. You say that you believe the land through which the railway will pass, although of a poor description, would realize sufficient to pay the cost? I said that, referring to the section Grafton to Casino. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying it.

3906. You stated that there were about 370,000 acres of Crown land in this district? Three hundred and seventy-five thousand which I estimated at £390,000 on the Grafton to Casino section.

3907. Are you aware of the cost of the projected railway? I know that it averages £12,000 a mile, taking in the Casino, Brunswick, and Lismore bridges, and all the rough country; and therefore I take it that £5,000 or £6,000 a mile ought to make this comparatively level section, where there are no bridges.

3908. We have been given to understand that the cost of a railway between Grafton and Byron Bay would be £733,000; consequently the land which you say would be sold would not realize half that? If the average cost of the whole railway was £12,000 a mile, this piece would certainly not cost more than £5,000 or £6,000 a mile.

3909. Well, if the cost of the railway were recouped from the sale of the land, all that would have to be met would be the working expenses? That is what I am thinking.

3910. Do you think that if the whole of the land were taken up sufficient would be produced to warrant the expenditure of this sum of money. Is there any possibility of a repayment to the extent of £25,000 a year for working expenses? I am not prepared to say. I have not gone into anything of that kind. The figures that I have given I have taken out with a great deal of care. I am not prepared to make any rash statement, especially about the probable traffic. The Commissioners themselves would not venture to do that, and I think it would be an impertinence for me to do it.

3911. You see it is desirable that we should know if there would be sufficient produce to warrant the carrying out of the line? You have travelled through the Colony, and know the country through which railways have been made. The country has been brought under a kind of mixed settlement—cultivation and grazing have gone on together, and I think this country will be similarly settled.

3912. *Chairman.*] Can you tell us what is the average rent for farm land in the Clarence district—do you know the highest and the lowest rents that are paid? I have heard that £2 10s. an acre is paid. I am receiving £2 myself.

3913. You have some farm lands here? I have one farm.

3914. You get £2 10s. an acre rent for it? No, not for the farm. I get 30s. for it—it is quite close to Grafton.

3915. I see that Mr. Campbell states that he was informed that the average rent of farm land was about 30s. per acre per annum? For agricultural land I daresay that would be right.

3916. I am informed; however, that the general average rent for farm land is at present about 30s an acre, and that the tenant farmers are paying in some cases as much as £2 10s. an acre? £1 an acre is said to be the usual rent, but of course there are farms for which very much more is paid. The returns that I have given are only approximate. I went through the figures myself, but it is impossible to get every thing exact.

3917. Are any of these good lands in the district now being conditionally purchased in large areas? No.

3918. The large areas taken up by conditional purchasers are grazing lands? They are all ordinary lands—grazing land and agricultural land mixed.

3919. What steps have you taken as district surveyor to reserve any of these good lands in view of the construction of the railway—have you recommended reserves being made? There is a reserve of a mile wide along the railway line.

3920. But the construction of the railway will influence the value of land further away than a mile? Excepting in choice spots nothing has been done.

3921. Do you not think that if an increased value were given to Crown lands by the construction of a railway, that land ought to be retained in the interests of the country? When you were Minister you wanted all the reserves throughout the country cut down, and I have cut down a good many since that.

3922. They have been thrown open since I was in office, in this district? Yes.

3923. Do you not think that it would be a good thing to keep these reserves until it is determined by Parliament whether the railway should or should not be constructed? Yes, but there is great pressure brought to bear to get the reserves, and I am made the scape-goat.

3924.

- P. R. Donaldson, Esq.
30 Nov., 1889.
3924. You do not care for that? Well, I have not been a public officer for twenty-nine years to take much notice of that.
3925. You think it would be a wise thing to keep those lands until it is determined by Parliament what is to be done with regard to the construction of the line? Yes.

Mr. George Herbert Gibson, Land Agent, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. G. H. Gibson.
30 Nov., 1889.
3926. *Chairman.*] You are the acting land agent? I am.
3927. How long have you been here? I took charge of the Crown Lands Office here on the first of the present month.
3928. You are only a relieving officer? I am one of the relieving officers of the Department.
3929. Have you brought the registers with you? I have brought the land agent's registers.
3930. In 1881 there were 143 conditional purchases in the Grafton land district, in 1882 there were 289, in 1883, there were 216, in 1884 there were 222? Yes.
3931. Conditional purchase was stopped from 31st December 1884, until the 6th August, 1885? It was.
3932. Then to the 31st December of that year there appear to have been 121 conditional purchases; in 1886, 174; in 1887, 161; in 1888, 137; and up to the 28th November, 1889, 149—is that so? That is so, according to the register.

John Cummins, Esq., Railway Engineer, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Cummins, Esq.
30 Nov., 1889.
3933. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your position in the Government service? I am a railway engineer.
3934. How long have you been in the Clarence River district? I was here about two or three years altogether.
3935. Have you been making any recent surveys in the proposed line of railway between Grafton and the Tweed? Not for three years. Three years ago I was on the work. I made the first trial survey from Grafton to Casino, and I was on the permanent staking between Casino and Lismore.
3936. Are you at present at work on these lines? No; I am making a trial survey for the proposed line from Grafton to Guyra. I started a fortnight ago.
3937. How far have you got on that line? 4 miles, and I have shifted camp about 8 miles from Grafton.
3938. Three years ago you had something to do with the railway line between this and the Tweed? Yes; as far as Lismore. I do not know anything of the country beyond Lismore.
3939. Do you think the best route has been taken between Grafton and Lismore, or would it be possible to find a better? I do not think it would be possible to improve it much now.
3940. What is the steepest grade between this and Casino? It was 1 in 40 when I was on the line, but now I believe they are going to change it to 1 in 50.
3941. Is not 1 in 40 a very steep grade compared with 1 in 50? 1 in 40 would, in my opinion, be cheaper. The first thing that increases the cost is the flattening of the grades.
3942. *Chairman.*] But how about the haulage hereafter? Well, calculations ought to be made to show which is the cheaper.
3943. *Mr. Cox.*] Consequently your duty is to try and get a railway line which can be made as cheaply as possible, quite irrespective of the cost hereafter? Yes.
3944. The working expenses have nothing to do with your business? That is considered, but the ruling gradients are always fixed by the Engineer-in-Chief.
3945. So that if you could get a grade of 1 in 40 you were quite content? I would make it 1 in 50, if I could. On the survey from Werris Creek to Dubbo I tried at first to get a grade of 1 in 100; then I tried 1 in 80; and at last 1 in 50. The other surveyors close to Dubbo were obliged to use a grade of 1 in 40. I got through that far with 1 in 50 to show that I had tried to get as flat a grade as possible.
3946. This would be a main line—is it not desirable to have the easiest possible grades on such a line, for the purpose of taking the largest amount of traffic? You must get the best grades you can, for the money allowed.
3947. Would not your recommendations weigh with the Engineer-in-Chief? Yes. I think the first thing to do is to get the flattest grade possible for the money.
3948. What is the greatest curve on the line between Grafton and Casino? I think the curves are very flat. There is no difficulty with them.
3949. Is it a fairly considered line, and there are no intervening ridges to avoid? Yes. There is only one range to cross between here and Casino, and it is very low—I think it is called the Richmond Range.
3950. I presume you know the line of road as well as the line of railway? Yes. Within a few miles on each side of the railway I know the country very well. I have been over every inch of it.
3951. Is the land through which the railway runs superior to that through which the road runs? Well, the railway keeps within a mile or two of the road all the way, and runs through the same country.
3952. Have you had any experience of land—are you able to judge of its quality? I have done no farming in this country; but I was born and bred on a farm. I consider the land very good, especially if it is improved. It wants improvement in some places—the clearing off of scrub and so on. There is no better land than that on the flats along the creeks and rivers.
3953. What would be the area of that land? Well, it is not very wide on the creeks. It is 60 miles from Grafton to Casino, and the land is fairly level. In quality it is good, bad, and indifferent.
3954. You never had any alternate route given to you between Grafton and Casino? No. Some surveys have been made since I left the district, to improve the line. I believe that they have made a deviation at a place called the Flying Horse, since I was on the work.
3955. Was this line surveyed wholly with the idea that it would form part of a future coast line? Yes, it was.
3956. So that anything else would be subordinate to that? Yes. Ultimately it was intended to connect at Morpeth.
3957. In the event of its merely being intended to connect the Richmond and the Clarence Rivers, would you have taken the railway between Casino and Grafton? That is for a local line.
3958. Merely to connect the two rivers—would you have taken the line between Casino and Grafton, or between some other places, if it had been needed to do that? I do not know the country very well along the coast—it is very rough indeed about Lawrence, and for 6 or 7 miles out—very unsuitable country for a railway.

3959. Do you know the country between Lawrence and Coraki? No; I have never been over it, but I think it would be difficult to make a railway there above the flood-level.
3960. Do you know the river on the west of Woodford Island? No; I do not know the river except from going up and down it in a steamer.
3961. *Chairman.*] Do you not know that in the Old Country now there is a great desire, at almost any expense, to keep the grades low? There is a great deal of heavy traffic there, and they can afford to do it.
3962. The traffic will have to pay for these heavy grades. Do you not think that it would be better to cut down the grades now than to make the customers of the railway pay for them for all time? Most decidedly, if we can afford it. I understand that the Victorian surveyors are actually proposing a grade of 1 in 30 and 5 chains curves in Gippsland. I have been five months making a survey at Bombala, and I met some of them there. It has not actually been decided what grade they will use, but the tendency there is to increase the grade. It is the through line between Sydney and Melbourne, via Monaro and Gippsland.
3963. *Mr. Cox.*] That line would not be a main trunk line? Probably not.
3964. *Chairman.*] But it is into an agricultural country that it is thought will carry a good population? Yes.
3965. Do you know that there is a proposition in England to reduce the grades from 1 in 100 to 1 in 200? Where there is a heavy population no doubt it pays, but they had to construct the railways with a grade of 1 in 40.
3966. But it is more costly to reduce the grade after the line is made than it is to make a low grade at first? It would cost double, because you have to keep the line open for traffic.
3967. Then there is really no economy in making a grade that you would have to reduce afterwards? No; but the ruling grade is made under the authority of the Engineer-in-Chief. He says, "Make a trial survey between Grafton and Casino, with the steepest grade 1 in 40, and the sharpest curve 15 chains."
3968. Are you an engineer or a surveyor? Both. I have been for years at both.
3969. Are you on the list? I am not a member of the Institute of Civil Engineers.
3970. Do you not know that instructions are given that the surveyors are not to work on a less grade than 1 in 40, and that it is left to themselves to use that? Yes. But now the grade is 1 in 50, and it is very difficult to work to that. In the last line that I was on I would have a steady rise of 1 in 50 for 4 or 5 miles; while if I had had a grade of 1 in 40 I might have got level pieces. With a grade of 1 in 50 you cannot pick your ground at all—you have no break—no level.
3971. If a grade of 1 in 50 costs the country so much now, and a grade of 1 in 40 costs the country so much in the future;—if the former grade is adopted the people will have to wait for their railways until they can afford them? Yes.
3972. You think there is no difficulty in getting a grade of 1 in 50 between here and Casino? I think not. There is only one little bit where I got 1 in 40. The curves are very flat—probably 20 chains.
3973. That is nothing? Comparatively nothing.
3974. *Mr. Lee.*] Are you at present in the Railway Department? Yes.
3975. What portion of the line now under consideration did you actually survey? I made the original trial survey between Grafton and Casino, and I staked out the permanent line which is now being altered between Casino and Lismore. They went in the wrong place first in doing the permanent staking. I propose to go round by Dawson's. I believe the line has all been altered and improved.
3976. When you receive your instructions from the department to proceed from one point to another, do you try to find out the best and most direct route? Yes.
3977. Could you find a better route between Casino and Grafton? I walked over the ground seven or eight times.
3978. Is there any better route? Certainly not, or I should have suggested it.

Mr. William Goodger, late farmer, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
W. Goodger.
30 Nov., 1889.

3979. *Mr. Cox.*] Have you resided long on the Clarence? Thirty-one years.
3980. What part? At Ulmarra, about 10 miles down the river.
3981. Are you a farmer? I was farming for a number of years, but I am not farming now.
3982. How many acres have you? Two hundred acres in Ulmarra—four farms.
3983. What do you grow chiefly? Maize and oats.
3984. Sugar-cane? I did grow cane, but my land is not of the quality for growing cane—river-bank land is the best for it.
3985. You do not front the river? No.
3986. What is the average yield of maize in this district? I should put it at 55 bushels on the average.
3987. Is there any great difference between the alluvial lands on the banks of the river and the land which you occupy, with regard to the yield of maize? Yes. The river-bank land has a much larger yield.
3988. What would be the difference between the yield on your land and that on the river banks? About 20 bushels an acre on an average.
3989. What kind of land is it that you farm? It is forest land, with small patches of scrub.
3990. Do you know the country between Grafton and Casino? I have been through it several times.
3991. Is there any land there equal to the land you farm? Some of it is.
3992. Where? On the creek banks, and on several of the flats I noticed going through.
3993. Would it be possible on portions of that land to cultivate corn at a profit? Corn, oats, fruit, and potatoes on parts of it, but not on the whole of it. The rest of the land would make good grass land if it were improved.
3994. None of that land is at present cultivated? Some parts of it are—there are patches on Myrtle Creek.
3995. For what reason is that land not put under cultivation? I think it is for want of means of transit.
3996. The cost of getting produce to market by dray takes away all the profit? Yes.
3997. What would you consider the area suitable for agriculture in that country—have you any idea what it would be? I could not give you an opinion about that. I have travelled it several times, and there are good patches of country that would grow anything, I believe. A lot of this land is suitable for dairying. I have a large dairy, too.
- 3998.

- Mr. W. Goodger.
30 Nov., 1889.
3998. Have you heard what the cost of constructing a railway between this and Casino would be? I have read it.
3999. You are aware that it would amount to many thousands? Yes.
4000. Do you think it would be possible to get any fair return for that large outlay. We would have to pay 7 per cent. on it for interest and working expenses before we could get any profit. Do you think the country would warrant the expenditure—would it give a fair return? I think it would eventually. If the line were constructed as part of a coast line there would be a great deal of settlement there. The district is growing very fast. I can notice the growth during the time I have been here, and the increased value of the land.
4001. So that at Myrtle Creek or at Myall Creek the farmers would send their produce to Grafton and to Casino, as it suited them? To wherever the freight was cheapest.
4002. Do you think that they could ever compete successfully with the growers of corn on the rivers, having to pay railway freight on their produce? Not in a local market, but of course with fair prices they could send it to Sydney.
4003. But do you not think that they would be very considerably handicapped by having to pay freight on the railway? Of course they would.
4004. Would not that tend very much to stop agriculture in that part of the country? I think dairying would be followed there a great deal, because dairy produce is so much more valuable, and the freight no higher.
4005. Would it not pay to carry on dairying there now—butter is easy to carry? But the steamers have not a freezing apparatus.
4006. But how would that apply to the people there now more than if a railway were constructed? They could send their produce in at night, and have it put on the steamer in the morning.
4007. Would not that be possible now? No; they are too far away. They could not possibly travel in the time, especially with the roads that they have.
4008. If they had good roads? Then it would be a long way by waggon. Of course you cannot drive fast with a load of produce.
4009. You have been many years a farmer, and you are a practical man. Do you think it would be possible to load the railway with butter and other produce of that kind between this and Casino so as to pay the working expenses? It would be some considerable time before you could do that.
4010. How many years do you suppose? From ten to fifteen years, judging from the strides that the Clarence has made since I have been there. Timber and other things would go by the railway.
4011. Do you not think that it would be better to wait ten or fifteen years before constructing a railway? That would retard the settlement of the district. At first we had to make our own road with considerable trouble.
4012. There is no traffic between the Richmond and the Clarence—they both produce the same commodities? Yes.
4013. With the exception of a small passenger traffic? Not that I know of.
4014. The only other article that would be carried by the railway would be timber? Yes, but timber-getting is a very large industry.
4015. Do you think there is sufficient good forest timber between this and Casino to pay anything like the working expenses of a railway? I do think so.
4016. Do you urge this railway construction purely for the sake of increasing the population? Yes, and as part of a through line. I understand that this is part of a through line between here and Morpeth.
4017. What benefit would it be to have a through coast line? It would open up the heads of all the rivers south, and of the Richmond, Brunswick, and places to the north.
4018. What would be the use of that if they had to pay the enormous amount of freight that the carriage over that long distance will impose? I believe that the Government would be reimbursed by the sale of the land. There are lands on the south side that would bring from £5 to £10 per acre, if the people there could get their goods to market.
4019. But those goods could never go to market if they had to pay freight for 300 or 400 miles? They have to pay that now.
4020. But they use the sea now? Yes. Then they could take them either way. If water carriage was cheaper they could send their goods by sea.
4021. Are you not aware that railways can never compete with water carriage? I should imagine so.
4022. Therefore to get all the rich portions of the country in communication with the metropolis and the neighbouring colonies you would only want to run down from the interior to the sea? Yes. But there are a lot of places where they cannot get over the bar, because the water is too shallow. That is the case at the Bellinger and the Nambuccera. I have been over that country, and that is a great drawback to it.
4023. What would they benefit by having a railway? They could send their goods straight on.
4024. What could they grow that would pay the cost of transit—do you think corn would pay it? I think corn would go.
4025. Could it bear a freight of 1½d. per ton per mile for that distance—would not the freight completely shut out these people from the market? I do not see a clear way at that rate of freight for sending stuff by rail.
4026. It is only within a very reasonable distance that farmers could afford to send such heavy rates to market by rail? Yes.
4027. Would it not be better for the people about these rivers to have good entrances to their harbours—would not they be sufficient without a railway? Of course I am of opinion that we require both to open up the district properly.
4028. Then you advocate this railway to Casino only on the understanding that it is to be carried right through as a coast railway? Yes; I look upon it as a part of the coast railway.
4029. But you are unable to see how it would pay if the people had to pay the cost of carriage that I have mentioned? I believe it would increase settlement.
4030. The rest of the people in the community would have to pay the cost of the railway to benefit the people living along the line? I do not believe a railway yet has paid working expenses when first constructed.
4031. Is that any reason why the Government should run into debt over this one? It may follow that it will pay. It is a fine district.
- 4032.

Mr.
W. Goodger.
30 Nov., 1889.

4032. *Chairman.*] You have been here thirty years? Yes.
4033. You have seen the land taken up from the very commencement under the Land Act? Yes.
4034. What has been your experience as to the large holdings—have they accumulated, or have they been gradually cut up and sold to smaller men? Of course capitalists have taken up the land, and in several instances it has been subdivided.
4035. There is a tendency in the district to subdivide the larger holdings? Yes.
4036. Has that been going on as the place has been more developed? Yes; more people are coming into the district.
4037. The farmers on the river banks either rent their land in small areas, or own it in small areas? Yes. At Ulmarra every bit of it has been taken up in a solid block.
4038. The whole of these areas has been utilized? Yes; every inch of them.
4039. Is there any dairying? Yes. I have the largest dairy in the district.
4040. What is your output? 120 lb. of cheese daily.
4041. How long have you been at that? Three years.
4042. Have you found it profitable? I have lost, I suppose, £1,000 at it, through Free Trade.
4043. As there is a demand for farms here, the bigger men subdivide, and either lease or sell? Yes; that is the tendency.
4044. You think that that would go on throughout the district, if the land were better developed by roads and railways? I believe that the land would be taken up and legitimately settled.
4045. Dairy-farming is only in its infancy in this district? Yes; it has just begun.
4046. *Mr. Lee.*] Is your dairy at Ulmarra? It is about 9 miles from Ulmarra.
4047. On the opposite side of the river from here? Yes, towards the coast.
4048. Consequently on the side of the river opposite to where the railway will come? Yes. I have no interest whatever in Grafton on this side of the river.
4049. Supposing the railway line were constructed, would you be likely to send your produce across the river and then some distance to meet the railway, instead of sending it by the steamers? The railway would be too far away from me. The line is already surveyed.
4050. So that it would be very little benefit to you? No benefit at all. It would only benefit the district generally.
4051. And you, like most business men, would send your produce to market in the most direct and cheapest way, whether by water or by railway? Yes.
4052. Maize is a product which will not stand a heavy rate of freight? It will not.
4053. *Mr. Cox.*] What do you think farmers could grow corn for, delivered at the bank of the river? If they cleared 2s. 6d. a bushel it pays them very well.
4054. Not less than 2s. 6d.? 2s. 6d. is what a farmer could live on, pay labour, and put a little by. He would have to be very industrious to do that.

Mr. Cornelius Duggan, butcher and grazier, sworn, and examined:—

4055. *Mr. Lee.*] What are you? I am a butcher and grazier.
4056. Where do you reside? About 9 miles from Grafton.
4057. How long have you been living in the district? Thirty years.
4058. You wish to give evidence before the Committee—will you give as precisely as possible the information which you have? What is it you wish to know?
4059. We shall be glad to hear anything you have to say—reasons for the construction of the line? I think myself that the line would induce settlement along the route, and south of it.
4060. The matter under consideration is the advisability of constructing a line from Grafton to the Tweed—can you give us any information about the route of that line, or as to what the settlement will be on the line, or on any portion of the line of which you have a personal knowledge? I cannot speak of the Tweed or the Brunswick, but I think that between the Clarence and the Richmond the line would induce settlement.
4061. Are the selectors likely to grow larger quantities of produce than they are doing now? No; I do not see that they are likely to produce larger quantities.
4062. But if there is more population I presume that the produce will be greater? Certainly.
4063. What are they likely to do with that produce when they raise it—is there a local market? I think not.
4064. Where is it generally sent for sale? To Sydney.
4065. Would it be sent to Sydney if a railway were made along the coast from Sydney to Grafton? I do not believe it would be sent along the coast. It would be sent to the nearest available waterway.
4066. Would the Clarence be the nearest available waterway to the people residing in the Clarence River district? Yes.
4067. Can you give me any other reason for the construction of the line? As a through line I think it would be advisable. I think it would be justifiable as a national undertaking.
4068. You know something about stock, I presume;—what do you think of the country between Grafton and Casino as grazing country? From fair to good, and some very good.
4069. What is it like in dry weather? It is tolerably fair country in dry weather. It is fairly watered, and I believe if its grazing capabilities were improved it would carry considerably more stock than it does at the present time.
4070. Do you think any portion would be suitable for agriculture? Yes.
4071. In what localities? Some of the land about Myall Creek and about Saltwater would be suitable for agriculture. I am cultivating myself a little about 9 miles from here. The land yields fair crops. I think I can say that I have a yield of 3 tons of hay to the acre this year.
4072. Is that land as near to the banks of the Clarence as it is to the route of the proposed railway? No. It is closer to the railway route.
4073. What we want to arrive at is this: if the railway were constructed, what would there be for it to carry? There would be maize, oats, oaten hay, timber, and fruit. The greater part of the country is, I think, very suitable for the growth of fruit and the vine.
4074. You think that if the line were constructed by the Government settlement would take place between here and Casino? I think so.
4075. *Chairman.*] Have you anything else that you would like to tell the Committee? I think not.

Mr.
C. Duggan.
30 Nov., 1889.

Samuel See, Esq., Mayor of Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

- S. See, Esq. 4076. *Chairman.*] Are you the Mayor of Grafton? I am.
 30 Nov., 1889. 4077. How long have you been living in the district? About nineteen and a half years.
 4078. What business have you followed? For the first six years I was on the Clarence River I was farming, and previous to my coming here, from a boy, I was on a farm. Since then I have been dealing in maize, and have had the general management and control of steamships running between Grafton, Sydney, and Melbourne.
 4079. You have taken a great interest in the proposal to construct this line of railway? I have taken some interest in the proposal to construct a line of railway from Grafton.
 4080. Have you gone into any calculations to show the possibility of this line paying working expenses and interest within a reasonable time? Not actual calculations; but I have made mental calculations, and I am firmly of opinion that, taken as a part of a proposed line through Grafton and away south, it would pay.
 4081. Within what time? I think probably within the time that it is possible for the land to pay the freights.
 4082. Do you think that the southern extension would have to be made before the line would pay? No, I do not.
 4083. How far would the line have to go south from here before it would begin to pay? I think it would pay from the moment it was constructed from here to Casino.
 4084. What is to make it pay—the people of Casino would not exchange any produce with the people of Grafton? No; I do not think they would.
 4085. You produce what they do, and they produce what you do? Yes.
 4086. Would it not be nearer to them to send their produce by the Richmond rather than by the Clarence? Probably it would, bearing in mind the improvements to the Richmond Heads. But those are prospective. If the line were constructed now from here to Casino, I think the probability is that it would be availed of by the people of Casino at the present moment.
 4087. Not at the present moment, having regard to the condition of the bar? Well, they report 15 feet this morning, as against our 12.
 4088. We were there the other day, and were told the same thing. Your freight is somewhat influenced by the insurance, is it not;—is not the insurance charged against the consumer? Our insurance is very much less.
 4089. But in estimating your freights you have to take into consideration the insurance which is charged against you? Yes.
 4090. If it is a high rate, you charge that proportionately in the freight against your customers? Well, it is not the insurance that makes the difference; it is the fact of being able to trade regularly. The freights are cheaper between the Clarence and Sydney because we can trade regularly.
 4091. If the works now being carried out at the Richmond River had the effect anticipated, the trade of that district would be done by the Richmond? I do not anticipate that any of that trade will come when the railway is constructed.
 4092. Do you anticipate that there will be sufficient produce passing to and fro to pay for the construction of the line? Yes, taking the timber.
 4093. How much of that line will trade to Casino? I think for 40 miles Grafton will get the benefit of it—from Myrtle Creek, 42 miles.
 4094. Casino would get the rest of the traffic? I imagine so. Of course it is impossible for me to say from what point the traffic will go to Casino. We should probably get it from a little beyond Myrtle Creek.
 4095. Do you know that country at all? No; I am not acquainted with it.
 4096. You were never there until the other day? No. Of course I know the country on this side of it pretty well.
 4097. What do you mean by this side? The back of the land to the west. I know the character of the country for a distance of 20 miles. Past that I only know it from what I have seen on the road.
 4098. What is the character of the country to the west? The country between here and the point to where I am acquainted with it is land that would grow oaten hay, wheat, and fruits. There are also large forest reserves.
 4099. You could only find a local market for oaten hay? I think we could find a Sydney market.
 4100. Could you compete against New Zealand? I think so, especially under altered circumstances. I think that oaten hay would grow. I am growing it at the present moment on land very much inferior to that which I am speaking about. I have had crops for three years, and have obtained from $\frac{3}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ a ton per acre. I consider that the land out there will produce 1 ton to the acre.
 4101. What we saw? Yes. Of course it would be quite different from the hay grown on the Hunter—that is too coarse.
 4102. You think that 1 ton of hay to the acre would pay a farmer to carry it 30 or 40 miles by train and 260 to Sydney by water? Yes. He could grow maize, which, on the present tariff, he is charged 1½d. a bushel, or 6d. a bag, for 60 miles—that is about 5s. a ton.
 4103. Is it a special class? I am speaking of grain now, and I am taking a distance of 50 miles, which is, of course, considerably beyond the limit. Farmers getting land out there would probably be able to acquire a larger area than they could get here, and of course the mode of living would be cheaper. Taking everything into consideration, I think a man could grow maize and barley out there. Barley grows here, but the land on the banks of the river is not as good for it as the land out there is. A man out there with a fair area of farming land would be able to compete with a farmer here, remembering the rent that a farmer on the Clarence would have to pay—on the average, 30s. an acre.
 4104. There is no doubt that it would take some time to develop all this—five or ten years? It would; but we shall have a population coming along in that time. There are thousands of boys growing up for whom we have to make provision.
 4105. Has not the population of Grafton increased very much lately? No.
 4106. Is it not a fact that you have a good number of vacant houses? We have a few, but it is the same all over the country.
 4107. The population of the district has not decreased? No; it has increased.

4108. Have not a number of your farmers gone further afield—north? A good many of them have gone south. S. See, Esq.
30 Nov., 1883.
4109. But have not a good many of them gone north, to Byron Bay and the Brunswick? A good many have; more of late years than to-day. Some have come from the Richmond here.
4110. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your charge for corn between Grafton and Sydney? Ocean steamer, 1s. 3d., without drogherage.
4111. 1s. 3d. a bag? Yes, 12s. 6d. a ton.
4112. That is 260 miles? Yes.
4113. To carry that by train 40 miles would be another 5s.? That would be a ton. We are anticipating, in fact, we are certain that there will be a reduction in the freight, providing that a harbour is made, so that the vessels can enter the rivers at the same time. I quite anticipate a reduction of 25 per cent. in the freights. I am mentioning that incidentally, to show that a man living 50 miles out from here could compete successfully with a man at Tumut.
4114. Is it a fact that you can only produce less than a ton to the acre here? I produced and stacked 3 tons to the acre the other day, but I am giving what I consider the minimum for the whole of the land available for agriculture.
4115. If you can grow 3 tons an acre on the river, will there be any inducement for people to go to Myrtle Creek to grow 1 ton? Yes; here we have to pay 30s. an acre for the land.
4116. Is it your chief desire to have this railway so that a population may settle on the land? There are many desires. We consider that we are entitled to communication with the people to the south. We also think that the Government should make provision for absorbing the population that is growing up. They will have to go somewhere—they are going somewhere.
4117. Are not many parts of the country here richer than the land between Grafton to Casino? Yes.
4118. Would it not be much more desirable to settle people on the rich land than on the poor land? I think the land is pretty well alienated, excepting in the reserves, which are locked up.
4119. The lands now reserved will eventually no doubt be thrown open? They may be, but there are lots of people ready to take up the land.
4120. Are you aware that next year all the eastern leases will fall in, and all the land will be open for selection? Yes.
4121. Do not some of these leasehold areas contain superior land to that between Grafton and Casino? Probably they do.
4122. Would it not be more desirable to carry the railway into that neighbourhood rather than into this comparatively poor country? It is desirable to carry it there, but it is more desirable to carry it here.
4123. Is it not more desirable to save our money and to carry the railway to good country than to try to induce people to settle on comparatively poor country? It may be desirable certainly; but I think it is desirable to develop all this land.
4124. But the rich first, I suppose? I would select between here and Myrtle Creek if I could.
4125. If the line were merely for the purpose of connecting the two rivers, the proper route would not be between Casino and Grafton, but where the rivers are much nearer each other—say between Coraki and Lawrence? Quite so—between Chatsworth and Woodburn, and direct on through the big scrub to the Tweed, missing Byron Bay; that is the true policy; there is no doubt about it, if you wish to get where the population is.
4126. Do you think a sufficient quantity of produce would be grown between Grafton and Casino to warrant the expenditure of the large sum of money that it would take to construct a railway? Yes, I do; together with the increased passenger traffic that would take place. The increased passenger traffic over and above what we have now would be considerable.
4127. Do you think that the timber trade would develop to any extent? I do. We have an enormous timber trade here, and my experience as one who carries timber, and knows something about it, is that the timber alone will warrant the creation of facilities for carrying it. It is developing into a large industry here, and giving employment to hundreds of people. The cutting down of the timber is the first question towards clearing the land, and it could not all be carried by dray. I do not think that these lands should be alienated until after the construction of the line, as otherwise they might be taken up for the purpose of speculation and not for the purpose of settlement.
4128. Is it a fact that a very large amount of valuable timber is now destroyed when men take up land for selection, simply because they have no means of getting it away? That is a fact. There has been more timber burnt on the Clarence than has been sold, and the same thing is being repeated every day. I consider that between here and Casino there is probably some of the finest hardwood in Australia. It may be excelled in the south, but not by much.

Hamilton Fisher, Esq., licensed surveyor, sworn, and examined:—

4129. *Mr. Lee.*] You are a licensed surveyor, residing in the Clarence district? Yes; I reside in Grafton. H. Fisher,
Esq.
30 Nov., 1883.
4130. How long have you been here? Seventeen years.
4131. Have you had much to do with the survey of lands since you have been here? I have been continually engaged since I have been here in measuring Crown lands.
4132. Within the immediate district of the Clarence, and outside it? In the Clarence, Richmond, and Tweed districts, and nearly down to the Macleay.
4133. Do you know anything of the route of the proposed railway? Yes; I know the line well between here and Casino, and I may say right through to the Tweed.
4134. What is the quality of the land through which it passes? The whole of the land between here and Casino is suitable for settlement, and I believe every inch of it would be bought at once if the railway were constructed.
4135. *Mr. Cox.*] For how far on each side of the line? Within 7 or 8 miles on each side.
4136. *Mr. Lee.*] For what class of settlement is the land adapted? Chiefly for agricultural settlement.
4137. What would be grown? Nearly the whole of the land is suitable for growing oaten hay, fruit, and vegetables, *i.e.*, potatoes, &c., also tobacco.
4138. Is it suitable for maize or sugar-cane? No, excepting in limited areas. There is no land at all suitable for sugar-cane, but there is a limited area of land suitable for maize-growing.

- H. Fisher,
Esq.
30 Nov., 1889.
4139. Some of this land would lie close to the Clarence River? None of it would lie close to the Clarence River, but some of it would lie close to the Richmond River. I am speaking of land away from the immediate vicinity of Grafton.
4140. Not yet alienated? Yes. From within 8 miles of Grafton to Deep Creek.
4141. Would any of the produce raised there find its way to the river for transit? No. Between the surveyed line and the river, for a long distance, the country is intersected by numerous deep and wide swamps, across which it would be very expensive to construct good roads, and several such roads would have to be made to bring the produce within 15 miles of the river.
4142. Not any of it? No. I think it would all go by road either one way or the other.
4143. Some to the Richmond and some to the Clarence? Exactly; according to the distance.
4144. Is there any better land than that which the line passes lying either to the west or east of the route between here and Casino? Only on the river bank.
4145. Would it be possible to divert the line in any way so as to get into a better class of country? No.
4146. *Chairman.*] Is the country through which the line runs a fair sample of that 8 or 10 miles on each side of it? Yes. The line passes over the main water-courses, on which the best lands are to be found, in such a way that only a very small portion of the best land can be seen. The main road between Grafton and Casino, or rather, between Grafton and Deep Creek, passes over the very worst of the land.
4147. *Mr. Lee.*] And you think it would be settled if opportunities were given to people to get produce to market from there? I am quite sure that the whole of it would be settled.
4148. Are you a land owner? No; I have not any land in the district only a small indirect interest.
4149. You are not personally interested in any land along the proposed route? Certainly. I am personally interested as much as every other man in the district, but I have no landed interest outside the town.
4150. Is there anything else you would like to tell the Committee? I should like to invite your attention to some land in the district which, though of much poorer quality than most of the land along the railway line, has been brought under cultivation.
4151. Where is it situated? Well, take that piece of country now called New Italy, between Chatsworth and Woodburn. Before it was taken up and successfully cultivated, we always looked upon it as the poorest land in the district. It is white pipe-clay soil, covered with the heaviest timber, but it has been successfully cultivated for some years. If that land could be cultivated, I am sure this could.
4152. *Chairman.*] Do you think a farmer could live under the same conditions as those under which the Italians are living? I do not think that they live under uncomfortable conditions.
4153. Have you read Clifford's description of New Italy? No, I have not.
4154. What do they produce there? Fruit in large quantities. They have beautiful vineyards. There is no doubt that the land is very inferior to that on the railway lines.
4155. Is the vine cultivated to any extent on the Clarence? Yes, it is, to a considerable extent.
4156. Is any wine made? Yes. I do not know in what quantity; but there are several wine-making establishments.
4157. The chief products of the river at the present time are cane and maize? Yes.
4158. But the soil is capable of producing many other things? Yes.
4159. Is tobacco grown in any quantity? No.
4160. Cane and maize are cultivated at the present time, because they yield the best crop, I presume? They are cultivated because they grow on the very richest soil. The reason that the second class quality land is not cultivated is, that it does not pay to cultivate it, because the means of communication with a market are bad. If there were reasonable means of communication with a market, land of an inferior quality could be successfully cultivated.
4161. At about what distance do the lands of which you are now speaking lie back from the river? Some of them are 20 miles from the river.
4162. Down the river from Grafton? Mostly in to the river. The geological nature of the country prevents the making of good roads. It would cost an enormous sum to make a good macadamized road over the sandstone formation between here and Casino. I do not think that I can add anything to Mr. Donaldson's estimate of the value of the land. You asked one or two of the witnesses whether they had looked upon the line merely as a connection between two rivers. It has never been so looked upon.
4163. How do you look upon it? I look upon it as a section of the coast line. If you want to connect the two rivers, you would go across from Woodburn to Iluka—the line surveyed and recommended years ago. You would not have to come up here.
4164. *Mr. Cox.*] Have you ever been to New Italy? Yes, frequently; both before and since the land was taken up.
4165. Do the people make a living off the land? I am not aware whether they do now. They certainly did not when they took it up first.
4166. How long have they been there? Six or seven years, or more perhaps. They were the remnant of the Marquis de Ray's expedition.
4167. Do you know what area they occupy—some 3,000 acres? About that.
4168. Do you know the number of Italians settled there? About thirty families.
4169. Do you know whether they could subsist there without help from outside? I believe that they are making homes for themselves, to live there altogether on the land.
4170. Do you think it at all likely that they will be able to support themselves on the products of the land? I think so, judging from what I have seen.
4171. Are you aware that a large number are now employed in cutting timber? I have no doubt that there are.
4172. Are you aware that a large number are also employed in the sugar works on the river? They always have been, since they went there.
4173. Consequently they only make the land their home? There is no doubt that if they can get better wages by working at the sugar mills during the season they will do so, but from what I could see of the land, going over it, I think they could live off it if they chose.*
- 4174.

* NOTE (on revision):—No Crown land in a state of nature in this district is capable of supporting anybody, hence people without capital who settle upon the lands are compelled to earn a living for some years outside their homesteads. The men who settled New Italy were practically penniless, and their efforts have been apparently directed towards the creation of orchards and vineyards, which must necessarily take some years before becoming capable of supporting families. The Italian women also work much more in the field than is usual with Australian women of British extraction, thus enabling the men to absent themselves to a greater extent.

4174. Do you think an Englishman could live on the products of that land? I do not see why he could not. H. Fisher,
Esq.
4175. Are you aware that these people, as a rule, never taste meat? I do not know that they are the worse off for that. Some of the men are fine, healthy, strong-looking fellows—you cannot take exception to their appearance. 30 Nov., 1889.
4176. I suppose they live well when they are working for wages? I think they live well in their own places too.
4177. You would justify the taking of railways into poor country because this is an instance of poor country being made profitable? I did not say poor country—I said it was land of second class quality. The land about here is of the richest quality.
4178. Is all the richest land in the district taken up. Are there 1,000 acres of rich land still to be taken up, or is it all alienated? No, certainly not.
4179. Then why do you try to induce settlement upon the poorer land when there is a large quantity of rich land still to be taken up? We do not contend that the line is to be made to induce settlement only.
4180. Then in the event of the north coast line not being made it would not be worth while to make a line from Grafton to Casino? Certainly not. Even if the north coast line were not made, there would be sufficient settlement along this line to pay for it. The section of the line between Grafton and Casino is much less expensive than that between Casino and the Tweed, and the difference in the cost of construction should be allowed for in estimating the interest and working expenses. The line is only a section of the line from Morpeth to the Tweed.
4181. What could be produced on the land 10 miles on each side of the line—an area of about 250,000 acres—that would warrant the expenditure of some hundreds of thousands of pounds, and an annual cost of £40,000 or £50,000? It would not only be for the settlement immediately along the line. The construction of a railway would bring other land within touch of a market. I believe it is generally estimated that it will pay to carry produce by road for 10 or 15 miles, according to the state of the road.
4182. Is all the land within 15 miles of the Clarence taken up? No, not all.
4183. Why is it not taken up, if persons could make it pay within 15 miles from good carriage? I did not say that they could make any land pay.
4184. Is this land so utterly bad that no person could take it up? Some of the land within 15 miles of the town is quite worthless for agricultural purposes.
4185. We are not only speaking of agriculture—you say that for general purposes the land could be made available within 15 miles of a railway or river? Agricultural land.
4186. Is all the land between Grafton and Casino agricultural land? The greater part of it is suitable for agriculture.
4187. Is the land between this and the Flying Horse suitable for agriculture? That is about the worst bit of country that we have, but even along there you will find a good deal of good land. There are patches of good land on the Saltwater Creek. There is a good piece of land on Sandy Creek, and there are several odd patches of good land even along that very bad piece of country.
4188. Do you think that within the next ten years there will be a sufficient population and sufficient produce grown to pay the working expenses of the railway here? That I am not able to answer.
4189. The Committee could not recommend the expenditure of money on a railway unless they saw a fair prospect of the railway paying—not perhaps in the immediate, but in the near future? Exactly. All I can say is that the land would be taken up or sold, and a large proportion of it made productive. Whether there will be sufficient revenue produced to pay for the line it is quite impossible for me to say.

Mr. John Bede Carlton, sworn, and examined:—

4190. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? Near Brushgrove, on the Clarence River.
4191. What do you desire to tell the Committee? I wish to point out the benefit that would be derived from the construction of a line from the Tweed to Grafton, to form part of the coast railway at some future date. Mr.
J. B. Carlton.
30 Nov., 1889.
4192. It would give a greatly increased value to the land held in the district? No doubt; and it would increase the value of the unalienated land too.
4193. To what extent would it increase the value of private land? I am not prepared to say.
4194. It would not be of any value to settlers on the river? I think it would.
4195. In what way? It would benefit people bringing stock across from the Richmond.
4196. Would that give much traffic to the railway? In certain times of the year it would. At Ramornie there is one of the largest meat-preserving establishments in the country, and the stock used there comes from the north.
4197. Would it surprise you to learn that the Government makes nothing out of the carriage of stock? That I cannot understand. I was under the impression that stock-carrying was very profitable.
4198. You know very well that if the railway rates were increased it would have a tendency to drive stock from the railways to the road? Not in all cases. It might if grass were plentiful and the distance were short.
4199. Those are precisely the circumstances here? Yes; but you can get cattle trucked much more cheaply than you can take them by road.
4200. Have you had anything to do with the trucking of cattle? No.
4201. What is the trucking from Tenterfield to Maitland? I do not know. From Armidale to Farleigh is 12s. or 13s. per head.
4202. Do you suppose a single fat beast would be sent such a short distance as from Casino to Clarence by railway? I have known them to be sent by train a short distance.
4203. In large quantities? Yes. As a rule they generally bring their cattle from Tamworth to Armidale by train.
4204. The butchers, for the local market? Yes.
4205. Is not that only in winter? I have seen them do it in summer-time.
4206. In what other way will this line obtain revenue? It will be the means of settling people on land that is not settled now. People will take up land when they can send their produce from it to market.
4207. That is if they can get a market for the produce. We have had evidence from a gentleman here that in three years he has lost £1,000 by dairying? There are many things that people take up that they do not understand. If people have not had experience they are bound to lose. 4208.

- Mr. J. B. Carlton. 4208. Have you anything else to tell the Committee? I have nothing more. It was said, "Why will not a railway do lower down the river." I know for a fact that in flood-time a railway would not be seen here, and would be carried away.
- 30 Nov., 1889. 4209. That would be a matter for the engineers to decide? Yes; but the line would have to stand a very strong current in flood-time.
4210. *Mr. Cow.*] How far is Ramornie from here? It is 7 or 8 miles to the meat-works by land.

Thomas Bawden, Esq., ex-Mayor of Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

- T. Bawden, Esq. 4211. *Chairman.*] Have you any statement to make to the Committee? Yes. But in dealing with the questions of railway construction and harbour improvement, for many years past I have done so upon national grounds solely. My statement deals with the two questions from that standpoint, for the reason that in my opinion, shorn of localism, the two questions are inseparable, and should be considered together.
- 39 Nov., 1889. 4211½. You may make your statement in the form you have it? It is as follows:—The question of railway extension and harbour improvement in these districts being a vital one, it will probably be interesting to see what the Statistical Register says of them, the districts referred to being the electorates of the Clarence, Grafton, Richmond, Tenterfield, Glen Innes, Inverell, part of New England, and the Macleay. Those districts form the north coast tableland and north-western districts of the Colony, and all will be largely affected by the construction of the harbour improvements at the Clarence Heads, and the authorized lines thence and their extensions. The benefit will be chiefly as regards the tableland and north-western district, through their being brought into communication by the shortest means with water communication, as well as with an extensive market for the products of those districts. Besides this, the coastal line from the Macleay to the Tweed, with the line from Grafton to the west, will place the western district in direct communication with districts producing commodities which go largely into consumption in those western districts. I look upon it that the true interests of these districts lie in their being drawn together by the closest bonds of commercial unity, if not of political unity also. Hence it is that I group them together. In the first place I find that on the 31st March last the total area of land in the whole Colony is given at:—Alienated, 22,686,748 acres, and here I would remark that the term alienated only includes freeholds; it does not include conditional purchases which have not yet had the balance of purchase money paid on them; unalienated, 173,195,402 acres, or a total of 195,882,150 acres. Now, our group of districts contains in all 20,108,050 acres, of which 1,681,151 acres only are alienated, leaving 18,426,899 acres still the property of the Crown—that is to say, a little under 1-10th (about 9·7) of the area of the whole Colony is comprised within these districts. Of the alienated land, the proportion as to the whole Colony is nearly 13·5. The area of land under cultivation in the whole Colony is 994,679 acres; in these districts only 150,158 acres are under cultivation, although there is no better agricultural land in the world for the growth of cereals than those vast areas on the tableland and western slopes. The distribution of that cultivation is given as follows, in the respective electorates, indicating that all that is required is means of communication with a market to ensure a much larger area being brought under cultivation, as those districts most convenient to water carriage show the largest areas under cultivation:—The Clarence, 23,956 acres; Glen Innes, 8,333 acres; Grafton, 13,392 acres; Inverell, 12,815 acres; Macleay, 32,446 acres; half New England, 8,028; The Richmond, 47,016 acres; Tenterfield, 4,172 acres. Now, taking the principal crops, the acreage of the whole Colony under wheat is 407,641; maize, 171,093; oats, 93,423; potatoes, 15,419. Of the above districts it is—wheat, 10,484; maize, 73,602; oats, 8,845; potatoes, 2,663. The produce of the Colony being—wheat, 1,450,503 bushels; maize, 4,910,404 bushels; oats, 109,931 bushels; potatoes, 36,839 tons. The produce of these districts being—wheat, 54,257 bushels; maize, 2,396,943 bushels; oats, 32,533 bushels; potatoes, 6,456 tons. Taking the districts in detail, results show some very interesting facts in support of the railway construction contention. First, as regards the acreage of the chief crops:—

	Wheat.	Maize.	Oats.	Sugar-cane.	Potatoes.
	Bushels.	Bushels.	Bushels.	Tons.	Tons.
The Clarence	1	17,499	51	6,000	197
Glen Innes	1,974	1,431	3,321	.....	523
Grafton	9	11,361	294	275	557
Inverell	4,716	4,432	812	.....	189
New England	2,812	768	2,940	.....	569
Macleay .....	.....	24,626	58	165	102
Richmond	25	11,323	605	8,835	224
Tenterfield	947	1,662	764	.....	297
Totals.....	10,484	73,602	8,845	15,275	2,663

The produce of the acreage above given in crop was as follows:—

	Wheat.	Maize.	Oats.	Sugar-cane.	Potatoes.
	Bushels.	Bushels.	Bushels.	Tons.	Tons.
The Clarence .....	.....	588,421	.....	27,764	489
Glen Innes	9,901	26,787	22,229	.....	1,476
Grafton .....	.....	435,272	62	2,667	1,199
Inverell	11,966	81,536	240	.....	528
New England	17,824	11,489	8,447	.....	1,446
Macleay .....	.....	853,379	.....	2,139	385
Richmond.....	20	362,803	.....	77,648	533
Tenterfield	14,546	37,256	1,555	.....	490
Totals.....	54,257	2,396,943	32,533	110,218	6,456

Another

Another important indication of the necessity for providing facilities for reaching markets not now available lies in the extent of the holdings. Contiguity to or readiness of access to markets brings increase of settlement, the bursting up of large holdings, and the increase of production, through the land being more carefully cultivated. The average acreage of the holdings in the Colony, from one acre upwards, is 853. The average holdings in these districts are—the Clarence, 133; Glen Innes, 752; Grafton, 237; Inverell, 643; Macleay, 169; New England, 464; Richmond, 318; Tenterfield, 335;—proof here, I submit, that the Clarence, Grafton, and the Macleay, by reason of their facilities for export by water-carriage, have an advantage, and that if the other districts were brought into communication with them the average areas of the holdings would speedily be cut down by reason of the demand for land. Not only this, but large quantities of the unalienated land would be taken up. These are points that should not be overlooked. Leaving the subject of agriculture, I come to that of live-stock, and I find that our grouped districts possess 51,461 horses, 342,301 horned cattle, 1,077,860 sheep, and 28,956 pigs. The figures given are taken entirely from the official statistics, and should be convincing to the sceptical of the vast importance of these districts even at the present time, an importance which I submit more than justifies the construction of railways, even now, as a commercial undertaking. But what shall be said of the result of railways leading to the natural ports of those districts in serving to promote settlement in what, notwithstanding present production, is literally a waste. The population of the districts I have grouped together numbers, roundly, 120,000 souls. The prosperity or non-prosperity of whom must reflect beneficially or injuriously upon the whole people. But what shall be said of the population these districts are capable of sustaining. I believe that following the speedy construction of the lines of railway advocated, in these districts, within the space of fifteen years after their completion, the population will be far nearer one million than 120,000. I also propose to append to my evidence some statistical figures taken by myself from the Statistical Register for 1888.

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4212. You also hand in a map illustrating your statement? Yes, showing the scheme that I advocate.

4213. The statistics you hand in are true extracts from the Statistical Register? Yes.

4214. In the statistics which you have handed in, showing the alienated and unalienated land, you have carried into the column of the unalienated land the conditional purchases and conditional leases? Yes.

4215. And you say that Mr. Coghlan has done the same in the Statistical Register? Yes.

4216. So as to show the true quantity of unalienated land the conditional purchases in the various counties should be deducted? From what appears here as unalienated.

4217. Do you know the country between Grafton and Casino? Yes.

4218. Do you know it further north between Lismore, Byron Bay, the Brunswick and the Tweed? I know it to the Brunswick and to the Tweed, but I have never been to Byron Bay. I have never been off the road.

4219. There is a great deal of good country all along there? Yes, I am aware of that.

4220. Rough, but good; with an extraordinary rainfall? Yes.

4221. The country between Casino and Grafton is more a grazing country than an agricultural country? Yes. The land at the other end is covered with a dense scrub. There is no grass at all upon it, except where the timber has been felled.

4222. But a few miles this side of Casino there is fairly good dairying land, is there not? Yes.

4223. Do you, as a resident of Grafton, really think that there will be any settlement on the land between Grafton and Casino to pay the interest and working expenses of the line of railway? I do. I would like to explain that when I speak of working expenses I consider that the State should provide facilities for settlement, and they should not immediately look to the railway itself for both interest and working expenses. The life of a railway is a very long one, and that should be extended to those who use it after the present generation.

4224. But the life of interest is not so long—it has to be paid yearly? No; but the life of debt is; and the State should look to the increased production from a railway. I think railways should precede settlement.

4225. The object of railways is either to produce settlement or to help settlement; here there would be no justification for helping settlement? No; but there would be for my scheme as a whole.

4226. Apart from your scheme, there would be no justification for the construction of this railway at the present time? I would not go so far as to say that.

4227. Do you think there is the slightest prospect of the line paying interest and working expenses during the next ten years—£51,000? I do not think that the interest upon this section of the railway would amount to that.

4228. Why? Because I understand from the railway engineers that this part of the line could be constructed for £6,000 per mile, and I do not think that it is right to charge this end for the expensive portions of the line. Instead of the line having to pay £50,000 it would probably only have to pay £25,000.

4229. Do you think a railway will produce settlement in the next ten years to pay interest and working expenses? Yes. I think the timber forests on the line should be largely utilized in making it.

4230. Do you know that the working expenses are likely to be more than the estimate that I have given you, because if the line is not connected with the main system of railways there will have to be independent workshops? I am aware of that, but I hope that it will be connected as I advocate.

4231. Which connection do you advocate? That from here direct west.

4232. To Glen Innes? Yes; as the shortest distance to get to the present railway system.

4233. Do you know what is the best grade that they have been able to get on that line? The heaviest grade is 1 in 40. In my calculation of the passenger traffic on the line between here and the Richmond, which was a very rough one, I estimated that in the very early stages of its existence the line would produce £6,000 a year. There are pretty close on 6,000 passengers a year travelling across by the very inconvenient mode of communication that exists at present—some coming from Sydney and some from other parts of the country.

4234. But assuming that the Richmond entrance is made as good as this, if not superior to it, what would bring passengers here at all? I think people will come here then from other parts of the country. They would prefer travelling by land to travelling by sea, even if you made the harbour good. Of course I speak always in view of my complete scheme.

4235. The interest and working expenses for the whole 40 miles of line will be £120,960;—do you not think

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think that a great deal of produce which would be sent along the railway would be sent along the rivers if their entrances were made good? I consider that between the rivers the railway will act as feeder to the rivers, and will induce a settlement between the rivers that could not otherwise exist, while adding to the trade on the rivers. I do not anticipate that any produce will be sent from one river to another, neither do I look forward to the time when produce will be taken from here to Sydney by rail. It would be too expensive to do that; but I think produce would be conveyed to the table-land by rail from the Tweed and from the Macleay.

4236. *Mr. Cox.*] Nature has behaved very unfairly to the coast districts by placing a terrible difficulty in the way of communication with the table-land? Yes.

4237. What would be the great traffic between the table-land here and the coast? I think that a great deal of the merchandize required by the settlers on the table-land would go up from the nearest port, and I think the agricultural lands on the table-land would be developed by a short line to the coast. We, in these coast districts, have to import all our breadstuffs. I am not a believer in growing wheat here, and I look to the table-lands of New England as the place from which to get our breadstuffs. Not only will we get them from there but the whole Colony could also be supplied from the same locality.

4238. Little or none comes down from there now? None, and very little other trade is done between the table-land and coast districts, owing to the differential rates. They appear to have been established to cut the throat of this district.

4239. Which takes the greater amount of traffic—the road between Grafton and Glen Innes, or the road between Lawrence and Tenterfield? I think the road between Grafton and Glen Innes. Some years ago it had the trade altogether. I have not been acquainted with the trade on either road for the last few years.

4240. There are two sources from which trade goes to Tenterfield—the Richmond and the Clarence. A large amount goes from Lawrence? I do not believe any trade in the shape of merchandize or produce goes to the Richmond. I believe an attempt was made a short time ago when the Fairfield diggings broke out to establish a trade between Coraki and Fairfield, but I do not think that it succeeded.

4241. Do you know anything of New Italy? I have never been there, but I know the character of the country. I have been very close to it. It is 17 miles off the surveyed line to Casino. I know something about the habits of the people there and that sort of thing.

4242. Do you think it is desirable to encourage population to settle on poor land rather than on rich land? I think that wherever there is land available for settlement facilities for communication with a port should be given by the State. There may be reasons for people settling down close to the present population instead of going a distance away. The settlement along the line from here to Casino is either by families already established in the district, who do not like to go very far from their old homes, or by people coming here from other districts. I know of a man the other day selecting land at Myrtle Creek, when he might have gone to the Orara, and got much richer land—land of a different description, scrub land.

4243. Did he go to Myrtle Creek in the hope that a railway would be made there? I do not think so. That may have influenced him to some extent, but there is a hope of a railway going towards the Macleay.

4244. What would be grown between Grafton and Casino? I think hay and fruit principally, and dairying would be carried on to a limited extent.

4245. Why do you suppose that the land is so suitable for the growth of hay? We grow very little hay in this district—we import most of our hay, because the land under cultivation is too valuable to grow it. It pays the people better to use it for growing other crops, such as maize. If this poorer land were thrown open, and hay grown there to a large extent we should be enabled, when the entrance to the river was improved, so that larger vessels could come up, making a reduction in freights, to send hay to Sydney and sell it at a profit.

4246. Are there not large areas of land in the vicinity of the river suitable for hay growing? There is not very much of it.

4247. Why is the land not suitable? It is rather too rich.

4248. But adjoining the alluvial flats on the river? I do not think they are suitable. The back lands are generally too swampy.

4249. Is not that the case with a great deal of the land between Grafton and Casino? I do not think so, not if it is cultivated; it generally gets too dry, I fancy.

4250. Is not the Wooroowoolgen land very wet? It is wet in wet seasons.

4251. Would it be suitable for the cultivation of hay? I think it would be if it were cleared; it might require a little draining.

4252. Could the land be drained sufficiently well to be put under cultivation? I think sufficient fall could be obtained.

4253. *Chairman.*] Do you know Mr. Darley, the Engineer-in-Chief for Harbours and Rivers? Yes.

4254. He said that this land is some of the poorest country in Australia? I do not think that Mr. Darley knows anything about land, though he may be a very good engineer.

4255. We have heard the land between the Flying Horse and Lawrence spoken of as good grazing land? I think it is too heavily timbered to be good grazing land.

4256. Have you ever seen good grazing lands growing ironbark and gum? Yes, I have.

4257. Where? On the Darling Downs, and I have seen it on the head of the Richmond River.

4258. You have resided in the district a great number of years? Yes, rather over forty-nine years.

4259. And at one time represented the Clarence in the Legislative Assembly? Yes.

4260. You have had ample opportunity of seeing the progress of all the northern districts? Yes.

4261. Has the development of these districts gone on very rapidly during the last ten years? Yes.

4262. More so than in other parts of the Colony? I believe so.

4263. Has the production developed in proportion to that in other parts of the country, or to a greater extent? I think to a greater extent.

4264. After your long experience of the district you have come to the conclusion that a railway here would not serve the district sufficiently? Not unless a connection were made.

4265. Of the two you favour a connection with the table-land of New England? Yes.

4266. You are strongly of opinion that an outlet for the west would do more to develop the resources of this great country than the coastal railway would do? Certainly. My opinion is that there should be a coastal

coastal railway from the Macleay to the Tweed; and a connection with central New England and the country further west. That would do more to develop the resources of the district and settle people on the land than anything else, accompanied of course with the improvement of our harbours.

4267. The production of maize on the Clarence is something enormous? Yes. That would go by water to Sydney at 12s. 6d. per ton.

4268. What would it cost to take it by train 300 miles? It would come under class A and cost £1 1s. 10d.

4269. We have been informed to-day by a ship-owner that if the Clarence heads were improved the rate of freight would probably be reduced? I think so. Some time ago when there was a brisk competition between the steam companies maize was carried at 6d. a bag, and with larger steamers it could be carried at that now.

4270. Consequently very little of that could be expected to go by rail? Very little. It would always go by water.

4271. You deal with this railway question as a whole? Exactly. I have never looked at it as a local question.

4272. You are probably willing to admit that there are sections that will not pay? That is very likely, if they are taken alone.

4273. You know that the annual cost of the railway would be very large? Yes.

4274. Do you think there is any prospect of its giving a reasonable return? I believe so, within five or six years, because I think that the vast estates on the Richmond will be broken up, and a large number of families settled there.

4275. You can take no account of the traffic in maize, which is a very large item in the produce at the present time? Yes. But I think that it is very likely that the people residing on the rich brush lands between Lismore and the Tweed may require maize, and if they follow up dairying pursuits they will also require fodder.

4276. Is there any other source from which the railway might obtain freight? I think a large income would be derived from timber. That magnificent forest between Sandy Creek and Myrtle Creek should, I think, in the interests of the State, be carefully tended, and no trees in the reserve sold unless they were properly matured, and a good price got for them. The consumption of timber in the Clarence district is very nearly 1,000,000 feet annually. To bring that here now costs 4s. 6d. per 100 feet, but to bring it by rail it would not cost more than 1s. 9d. or 2s.

4277. *Chairman.*] There is no doubt whatever, that if there were railway communication between this part of the Colony and the table-land of New England, there would be an absolute interchange of commodities, because you grow here what they do not grow there, and they produce there very largely what you want down here? Yes.

4278. So that, instead of the market for maize being limited to Sydney, you would have the whole of that north-western country for a market? Yes.

4279. Do you think that the farmers here would grow lucerne to any extent if they had a market? Yes.

4280. It grows very well here? Yes.

4281. Do you know what the yield is? I cannot say.

4282. It is not largely cultivated, owing to the absence of a market? A few persons grow lucerne, but only for local requirements, because the freight in the present steamers is too high to allow them to send it to Sydney, and we have no back market. The connection with the table-land would give us a market, and relieve the Sydney market.

4283. It would give you a larger market, and almost a monopoly of the north-western market? I think it would. I think we could deliver it more cheaply there than we could from any other part of the Colony. I have just learned from a reliable authority that the trade on the Glen Innes Road is four times that on the road to Tenterfield, and 60 bales of wool came in yesterday from Glen Innes. I hand in a return showing the railway merchandise rates in comparison between Tenterfield, Glen Innes, Inverell, and Armidale on the one hand, and the respective ports of Sydney, Brisbane, Grafton, Newcastle, and Byron Bay on the other.

Herbert Valentine Haynes, Esq., licensed surveyor, sworn, and examined:—

4284. *Chairman.*] Are you a licensed surveyor? Yes.

4285. In the district of Grafton? In that part of the district traversed by the railway from Grafton to the watershed between the Clarence and Richmond Rivers.

4286. You are working under the District Surveyor? I am.

4287. What evidence have you to give us that has not already been given by the District Surveyor? Well, the evidence that could be brought forward with reference to this railway is so extensive, that I very much doubt whether anyone could give it all. One of the Committee referred just now to the unkindness of nature to this district, because we are so isolated. We are so cut off that we may be regarded as a colony within a colony; but whereas a colony has the advantage of managing its own affairs, and of spending the proceeds of its land upon itself, we are debarred that privilege. If this part of the Colony had had the disposing of things here, it would have undoubtedly constructed railways. We claim—at least I claim—and I am sure I am speaking the mind of all the residents here—that we have a right to a railway.

4288. We are not discussing your right, or what you would do if you were a separate colony. We want you to give us what information you can with regard to the railway from Grafton to the Tweed? I know the district very well, having traversed it in many directions, and I am also well acquainted with other parts of the Colony, such as Bathurst, Orange, Molong, and Sydney, with which this favourably compares. It has been said that because the land here is comparatively poor, the railway should not be constructed, but I desire to point out that it is sometimes an advantage to have a railway constructed on poor rather than on rich land. Sydney was founded in poor country, and as a consequence the people had to push out early until they found better. Now, if we had a railway across the poor country here the people having first settled that, will push out further and find the rich. It is quite a mistake to suppose that there is no rich country between this and Casino. I know Saltwater Creek very well, having been instructed by the Government to survey and report upon it. It is the creek draining the greater part of the country within the Grafton district through which the railway will pass.

4289.

T. Bawden,
Esq.
30 Nov., 1889.

H. V. Haynes,
Esq.
30 Nov., 1889.

- H. V. Haynes, Esq. 4289. *Mr. Cox.*] How far is it navigable? It is navigable for about half way between Saltwater Bridge and the Clarence River.
4290. *Chairman.*] How many miles? I suppose 7 or 8.
- 30 Nov., 1889. 4291. They do not want a railway there if it is navigable for that distance? It is navigable for small craft.
4292. How many thousand acres of agricultural land are there on the banks of that creek? I suppose there are 6 or 7 miles on both sides of the creek frontage.
4293. How many thousand acres? About 14 square miles of agricultural land.
4294. That is 7 miles fronting the river and a mile wide? Yes. That is taking the average. Of course it would be impossible to find one block of that area, but, taking one piece here and another there, I have no hesitation in saying that there would be as much.
4295. How much of this land has been taken up? It is now, I believe, within a leasehold area, and none of it has been taken up—an argument why a railway should be constructed.
4296. How far is that from here? It varies from about 16 to 23 or 24 miles.
4297. How far is it from Lawrence? About 17 miles.
4298. Does it run into Broadwater? No. It runs into the Clarence, just below Lawrence.
4299. It is navigable 7 miles up from Lawrence, so that they would only have about 7 miles of haulage for a railway;—is that a justification for spending £733,000? I am not aware that because there is a river to which produce could be brought it proves that produce would not be brought to a railway. It might be brought to a railway when it was not brought to a river.
4300. Is not water carriage cheaper than train carriage? It may be cheaper.
4301. If a railway were constructed it would be to bring produce to market? To bring it ultimately to some market. If a railway were constructed, there would be a larger local market available than there is at present. With regard to the comparison of distance between Lawrence and Grafton, I think it is an undoubted fact that the chief settlement on a river, and I have witnessed a great many in this Colony and in other parts of the world, is at the head of navigation;—such is the case, for instance, on the Thames, and on the Hooghley.
4302. Can you give us any evidence showing a reason for the construction of the line, and the possibility of its paying working expenses? I have a piece of land myself which came into my hands about four years ago which is very similar to the land that will be traversed by the proposed railway. At that time it was grazing land, but I have grown many varied and profitable crops upon it. I have grown potatoes, turnips, carrots, parsnips, vetches, beans, mustard, chicory, hay, sugar-beet; besides rearing pigs and poultry.
4303. Do you know the North Shore? Yes.
4304. Well, I have grown everything there that you have mentioned, with the exception of chicory? This country is better than that of North Shore.
4305. What area have you? About 40 acres.
4306. How much profit have you made by growing these articles? Enough to pay a man and his keep.
4307. How much was that? About £70 a year, but then only a small part of the land was under cultivation—not more than about 18 acres was under cultivation.
4308. How many loads of manure did you put on it? I put none on it.
4309. Has the land a water frontage? It has.
4310. To what creek? To the Clarence River.

Mr. John Henry Munro, stock and station agent, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. H. Munro. 4311. *Chairman.*] What is your business? I am a stock and station agent.
- 30 Nov., 1889. 4312. You have been residing in Grafton for a long time? Yes, sixteen or seventeen years.
4313. Would you tell the Committee what you want them to know? I could confirm a great deal of the evidence that you have heard to-day, but it struck me that one matter has been omitted with regard to the return from the railway. I think it has been calculated that the profit to the revenue is something like £3 a head for each individual. I think there is very little doubt that there would be a population between here and Casino within 5 or 10 miles of the line of 5,000 people, and that should be taken into consideration when the revenue of the railway is spoken of.
4314. Would you apply the whole of that £15,000 to the reduction of the annual cost of the railway? Certainly not; but a great proportion of it. But if these 5,000 people were there, in the nature of things they would increase, and consequently the revenue would increase with them—that is the only point that I think has been omitted.
4315. *Mr. Cox.*] No doubt the very fact of a railway being constructed through a piece of country tends very materially to the development of that country, and the settlement of people upon it? There can be no question about that.
4316. Is there anything else to warrant the taking of the line in this direction, when we know that in other portions of the country there are lands of a superior quality? If this is to be a main line I see no other direction which it can take.
4317. You only look on this line as being desirable in the event of a north coast line being constructed? Yes, and a line to the table-land.
4318. You would not advocate the expenditure of this large sum of money merely to make a line from Grafton to Casino? If it were not for a future connection I should not advocate a line between here and the Tweed. I have had something like twenty years' residence in the western district, and I think I know it as well as any one in the country. I have resided in the Gwydir and Barwon districts, and I think that if a line were taken from here to the table-land, it would develop those districts as well as these on the coast.
4319. Do you advocate a line between Grafton and Casino, in the hope that in the future it will be extended to Tenterfield? No. I do not think that Tenterfield is the centre of New England, or that a line there would meet the wants of the people of New England.
4320. Your reason for advocating this line is, that it should be a great coast line from south to north, eventually connecting with the table-land? With the central table-land.

4321. It would be of far more importance to you to be connected with the northern system than with the southern? I believe so; but there is a great deal of rich land unoccupied to the south, between here and Macleay.

Mr. J. H.
Munro.

4322. If we spend immense sums of money to construct ports, do you not think that it would be better to take the railway to those ports instead of to Sydney? I am certain of it.

30 Nov., 1889.

Samuel See, Esq., sworn, and further examined:—

4323. *Witness.*] I should like to supplement my evidence. I wish to inform the Committee about something which I have a little delicacy in speaking, inasmuch as I am interested in it, and that is a coal-seam within 22 miles of Grafton up the river—I think 8 or 9 miles from the river.

S. See, Esq.

30 Nov., 1889.

4324. *Chairman.*] How far have you proved it? I have gone down to 75 feet in depth from the top, and I have struck a seam 46 feet from the surface, of 8 feet.

4325. Clean? Good coal. I have had sections of it exhibited in Grafton. There is an 8-ft. seam, a 4-ft. seam, a seam 4 ft. 6 in., and another 3 ft. 6 in.

4326. Has Mr. Wilkinson reported on it? Mr. Wilkinson has inspected it. He has not reported upon it officially.

4327. Have you had an analysis made? Yes.

4328. Have you got it with you? No. Dr. Robinson has seen the sections I have sent away, and has pronounced them excellent. I have engaged him to visit the district. I have spent something like £8,000 over it.

4329. When Mr. Wilkinson saw the mine how deep was it? I had not got these seams.

4330. It was only an outcrop that he saw? No. I had driven to get shale, and discovered the coal.

4331. Dr. Robinson has not seen it yet? He has seen the section. Mr. Wilkinson has not seen the larger seam, but he directed that certain works should be done where it would be found. He also informed me that there was a coal-measure underlying Grafton at a depth of 600 or 700 feet.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.
Railway from Grafton to the Tweed.
 [SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.]

APPENDIX.

[To Evidence of P. R. Donaldson, Esq.]

A.

GRAFTON-TWEED RAILWAY.—GRAFTON TO CASINO SECTION.

SCHEDULE showing percentage of land—1st., alienated; 2nd., leasehold areas and reserves; 3rd., now available.

Parish.	Alienated.	Leasehold or Reserved.	Available.	Parish	Alienated.	Leasehold or Reserved.	Available.
COUNTY CLARENCE—				COUNTY RICHMOND—			
Great Marlow	95	5	...	<i>continued.</i>			
Clifden	20	30	50	Dobie	2	25	73
Stuart	5	65	30	Myrtle	35	63	2
Southgate	75	20	5	Wyandah	55	5	40
Banyabba	3	97	...	Burrawanga	25	...	75
Lawrence	5	60	15	Darke	30	53	17
Richmond	3	97	...	Ellangowan	55	40	5
Chapman	15	60	5	Nandabah	65	20	15
Whiteman .....	...	...	100	Coombell	15	85	...
Lardner .....	...	80	20	Richmond	75	25	...
COUNTY RICHMOND—				Shannon			
Camira	15	85	...	Mongogarie	40	60	...
Marsh .....	...	99	1	Hogarth	15	85	...
Myall	3	17	80	Woorooloolgan	7	81	2
Whiporie	1	99	...	Bundock	75	25	...
Powerpa	10	90	...	South Casino	99	1	...
				East Casino	50	50	...
					98	2	...

GRAFTON-TWEED RAILWAY.—LISMORE TO TWEED SECTION.

SCHEDULE showing percentage of land—1st., alienated; 2nd., leasehold areas and reserves; 3rd., now available.

Parish.	Alienated.	Leasehold or Reserved.	Available.	Parish.	Alienated.	Leasehold or Reserved.	Available.
North Casino	85	9	6	Jasper	80	...	20
Tomki	95	5	...	Brunswick	77	20	3
Kyogle	99	1	...	Mullumbimby	50	3	47
Bungabbee	66	30	4	Billinudgel	57	18	25
South Lismore	100	...	...	Toolond .....	...	...	100
North Lismore	92	8	...	Nullum .....	...	85	15
Lismore	100	...	...	Mooball	55	18	27
South Gundurimba	100	...	...	Dunbible	55	20	25
Blakebrook	65	35	...	Wollumbin	40	10	50
Tunstall	91	7	2	Burrell	6	2	92
Bexhill	90	10	...	Murwillumbah	42	16	42
Tuckombill	96	3	1	Condong	75	3	22
Teven	97	3	...	Chillingham	5	50	45
Dunoon	55	40	5	Kynnumboon	45	33	22
Clunes	85	14	1	Berwick	32	13	55
Byron	70	30	...	Cudgen	60	20	20
Whian Whian	5	65	30	Tygalgah	100	...	...

N.B.—These figures are approximate only.

[To Evidence of T. Bawden, Esq.]

B.

STATISTICS, 1888.—PRODUCTION.
STOCK.

	Horses.	Sheep.	Pigs.	Ordinary Stock.	Dairy Cows.
Clarence	6,442	1,082	3,571	12,467	1,679
Glen Innes	4,370	237,408	2,095	35,233	2,478
Grafton	6,624	2,361	4,721	27,772	2,311
Inverell	5,068	235,226	2,439	20,732	1,603
Macleay	6,491	672	9,713	19,743	3,065
New England	4,836	506,337	3,126	21,103	1,869
Richmond	13,309	1,777	1,199	120,485	10,856
Tenterfield	4,321	93,047	2,092	58,691	2,209
Totals	51,461	1,077,860	23,956	316,231	26,070

NOTE.—A large portion of the Richmond Electorate is upon Clarence waters, and, consequently, connected with the Clarence;—Yulgilbar, Tuculan, Benalbo, Sandilands, Toolom, Wondabury, Mosquito Creek, and Cheviot Hills North.

APPENDIX.

113

STATISTICS, 1888.—PRODUCTION.

CROPS.

	Wheat.	Maize.	Oats.	Potatoes.	Sugar-cane.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
Clarence	1	17,499	51	197	6,000
Glen Innes	1,974	1,431	3,321	528	.....
Grafton	9	11,861	294	557	275
Inverell	4,716	4,432	812	189	.....
Macleay .....	.....	24,626	58	102	165
New England	2,812	768	2,940	569	.....
Richmond	25	11,323	605	224	8,835
Tenterfield	947	1,662	764	297	.....
Totals	10,434	73,602	8,845	2,663	15,275

PRODUCE.

	Wheat.	Maize.	Oats.	Hay.	Potatoes.	Sugar-cane.
	Bushels.	Bushels.	Bushels.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Clarence .....	.....	583,421	256	489	.....	27,764
Glen Innes	9,901	26,787	22,229	1,065	1,476	.....
Grafton .....	.....	435,272	62	494	1,199	2,667
Inverell	11,966	81,536	240	1,244	528	.....
Macleay .....	.....	853,379	.....	257	385	2,139
New England	17,824	11,489	8,447	2,693	1,446	.....
Richmond	20	362,803	.....	1,212	533	77,648
Tenterfield	14,546	37,256	1,555	975	490	.....
Totals	54,257	2,396,943	32,533	8,196	6,456	110,218

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOLDERS OF LAND.

Clarence	837
Glen Innes	421
Grafton	744
Inverell	506
Macleay	1,180
New England	535
Richmond	1,996
Tenterfield	466
Total	6,685

AREAS OF HOLDINGS.

	Total area.	Average area of Holdings over 1 acre.	Alienated Holdings over 1 acre.	Area cultivated, including Crown Lands.
	Acres.		Acres.	Acres.
Clarence.....	537,600	133	111,397	23,987
Glen Innes	2,433,280	752	316,656	8,829
Grafton.....	1,386,240	237	176,576	13,392
Inverell	1,905,280	643	325,850	12,819
Macleay	1 703,680	169	199,576	32,471
New England	2,282,240	464	496,923	8,040
Richmond	2,867,200	313	633,887	47,061
Tenterfield	1,972,480	335	156,128	4,374
Totals.....	15,088,000	.....	2,416,793	150,973

AREA OF LAND CULTIVATED.

	Acres.	Hands employed.
Clarence	23,956	1,461
Glen Innes	8,333	634
Grafton	13,392	903
Inverell	12,815	772
Macleay	32,446	1,789
New England	8,028	813
Richmond	47,016	3,368
Tenterfield	4,172	521
Totals	150,158	10,261

STATISTICS, 1888.—MONETARY AND FINANCIAL.

SAVINGS BANK.

Grafton.—No. of depositors, 1 January, 1889, 727; amount, £24,058 12s. 6d.; increase since 1 January, 1888, £1,732 15s. 7d.

ELECTRIC TELEGRAPHS.

	Messages.	Value.		
		£	s.	d.
Brushgrove	1,520	85	3	8
Copmanhurst	919	54	17	5
Grafton	19,246	1,406	1	5
Harwood Island	1,801	105	0	4
Lawrence	2,659	143	2	1
Maclean	5,268	323	11	1
Palmer's Island	1,525	78	4	11
South Grafton	3,554	192	12	9
Tabulam	873	62	1	1
Ulmarra	2,505	139	15	9
Yamba	2,212	79	7	5
	42,082	2,669	17	11

MAILS.

Grafton, South Grafton.—Mails made up weekly, 163; distance travelled, 4,168 miles.

STATISTICS, 1888.—MISCELLANEOUS.

LAND SALE AND OCCUPATION.

Conditional Purchase Applications Received.

	No. of Applications.	Area applied for.			Deposit paid.		
		a.	r.	p.	£	s.	d.
Casino	75	14,452	2	32	1,493	5	11
Glen Innes	31	3,754	2	0	389	19	6
Grafton	137	13,112	2	0	1,574	2	0
Inverell	49	6,377	3	0	747	19	0
Lismore	87	7,326	3	0	1,321	19	6
Tenterfield	28	3,163	3	0	316	7	6
	407	48,187	3	32	5,813	13	5

Value of Property, Rates, &c., in Boroughs and Municipal Districts.

	Capital value of property.	Annual value of improved lands, &c.	Ordinary Rates.	Total Receipts.
	£	£	£	£
Ballina	108,800	5,286	381	801
Casino	120,000	9,851	462	1,090
Glen Innes	409,198	25,900	1,274	2,944
Grafton	608,880	32,601	1,179	2,348
Inverell	280,000	20,000	932	1,255
Lismore	299,151	19,096	854	3,310
Maclean	77,100	5,122	210	421
Tenterfield	180,600	13,589	378	891
Ulmarra	229,460	8,973	532	662
	2,313,189	140,427	6,302	13,722

STATISTICS, 1888—MISCELLANEOUS.
LAND SALE AND OCCUPATION.

Counties.	*Area Alienated.	Unalienated.	
	Acres.	Acres.	
Buller	9,436	897,644	* The areas alienated include only those lands of which the full amount of purchase moneys have been paid, and do not include conditional purchases upon which balances are still due, nor do they include areas held and occupied under conditional leases.
Ararat	118,113	1,233,567	
Burnett	174,521	1,113,479	
Clarke	15,004	927,076	
Clarence	90,360	749,080	
Clive	25,085	968,195	
Courallie	269,133	998,367	
Drake	73,179	838,181	
Dudley	30,919	946,081	
Fitzroy	18,364	821,316	
Gough	152,444	1,048,156	
Gresham	9,256	753,744	
Hardinge	46,577	1,018,383	
Murchison	85,698	1,122,612	
Raleigh	8,892	933,388	
Richmond	64,547	631,773	
Rous	155,251	1,227,149	
Sandon	183,009	707,871	
Stapylton	151,363	1,435,837	
	1,681,151	18,426,899	
Burnett	174,521	1,113,479	
Courallie	269,133	998,367	
Murchison	85,698	1,122,612	
Stapylton	151,363	1,435,837	
The remaining counties.....	1,000,436	13,756,604	
Total	1,681,151	18,426,899	

STATISTICS, 1888—POPULATION.

	Estimated Population.	Electors on Rolls.
The Clarence	9,720	1,944
Glen Innes	11,505	2,301
Grafton	11,435	2,287
Inverell	11,680	2,336
Macleay	17,913	3,587
New England (½)	10,400	2,080
Richmond.....	29,650	5,930
Tenterfield	12,490	2,493
	114,315	22,003

Increase since 1871 in Grafton and the Clarence, 12,190 souls; since 1881, 6,659.

[To Evidence of T. Bowden, Esq.]

B 1.

RAILWAY.

MERCHANDISE RATES.

Per Ton.

	Distance	Special Classes.		Classes.			
		A.	B.	1st.	2nd.	3rd.	4th.
	Miles.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Tenterfield to Sydney	479	1 10 9	2 19 3	5 18 6	7 7 7	10 5 10	13 5 1
Do Grafton	157	0 14 0	1 5 7	2 11 3	3 3 6	4 8 1	5 13 9
Do Byron Bay	132	0 12 2	1 2 0	2 3 11	2 14 5	3 15 5	4 17 4
Glen Innes to Sydney	422	1 7 11	2 13 7	5 7 1	6 13 4	9 5 11	11 19 5
Do Grafton	103	0 10 0	0 17 8	1 15 3	2 3 5	3 0 2	3 17 9
Do Byron Bay	189	0 16 1	1 9 11	2 19 9	3 14 2	5 3 1	6 12 11
Armidale to Sydney	353	1 4 9	2 7 2	4 14 3	5 17 4	8 3 6	10 10 7
Do Grafton	167	0 14 8	1 6 11	2 13 11	3 6 10	4 12 9	5 19 9
Do Byron Bay	253	0 19 6	1 16 8	3 13 3	4 11 1	6 6 9	8 3 4
Inverell to Sydney	464	1 10 0	2 17 9	5 15 6	7 3 10	10 0 7	12 18 4
Do Grafton	145	0 13 1	1 3 11	2 7 10	2 19 4	4 2 3	5 6 2
Do Byron Bay	231	0 18 5	1 14 6	3 8 11	4 5 7	5 19 0	7 13 6
Newcastle to Tenterfield	377	1 5 8	2 9 1	4 18 1	6 2 1	8 10 1	10 19 2
Do Glen Innes	320	1 2 10	2 3 4	4 6 8	5 7 10	7 10 2	9 13 6
Do Armidale	256	0 19 8	1 17 0	3 13 10	4 11 10	6 7 9	8 4 8
Do Inverell	362	1 4 11	2 7 7	4 15 1	5 18 4	8 4 10	10 12 5

RAILWAY.
MERCHANDISE RATES.

	Distance.	Truck Loads (not exceeding 6 tons).		Per 4-wheeled Truck.
		Special A Class.	Miscellaneous.	Hay.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Tenterfield to Sydney	Miles. 479	7 9 10	6 14 10	5 0 1
Do Grafton	157	3 15 0	3 7 7	2 5 5
Do Byron Bay	132	3 7 7	3 1 0	1 19 5
Glen Innes to Sydney	422	6 18 5	6 4 7	4 10 10
Do Grafton	103	2 19 5	.....	1 12 6
Do Byron Bay	189	4 4 3	3 15 10	2 12 4½
Armidale to Sydney	358	6 5 6	5 13 1	4 0 5
Do Grafton	167	3 17 10	3 10 2	2 7 7
Do Byron Bay	253	5 2 3	4 12 0½	3 3 2
Inverell to Sydney	464	7 6 10	6 12 2	4 17 8
Do Grafton	145	3 11 5	3 4 4	2 2 7
Do Byron Bay	231	4 16 2	4 6 7	2 19 9
Newcastle to Tenterfield	377	6 9 4	5 16 6	4 3 6
Do Glen Innes	320	5 17 3	5 5 7	3 14 3
Do Armidale	256	5 2 10	4 12 7	3 3 10
Do Inverell	362	6 6 4	5 13 9	4 1 1

C

STATISTICS OF TRADE AT THE TWEED RIVER.

Sir, I have the honor to forward herewith, at the request of the Chairman of the Sectional Public Works Committee, some statistics relating to the trade outwards from the Tweed River.

As, at the time of the visit of the Committee to the Tweed Heads, I was suffering from an affection of the throat, which precluded me from speaking, except in a low tone, I trust my evidence, with the addition of the enclosed memoranda, will be found to be satisfactory.

Customs, Tweed River Heads, 10 December, 1889.

I have, &c.,

EDWARD OSLER,
Sub-Collector.

To the Secretary, Public Works Committee, Sydney.

In 1880—Vessels outwards, 49 sailing and steam = 5,062 tons register, including 922 tons in ballast.

In 1881—Outwards = 5,434 tons, including 1,881 tons in ballast.

In 1882—Outwards = 6,042 tons, including 360 tons in ballast.

In 1883—Outwards = 6,500 tons, including 625 tons in ballast.

In 1884—Outwards = 7,873 tons, including 464 tons in ballast.

In 1885—Outwards = 10,841 tons, including 712 tons in ballast.

This tonnage in ballast is principally Colonial Sugar Co.'s steamers.

In 1886—Outwards = 12,668 tons, including 491 tons in ballast.

In 1887—Outwards = 12,354 tons register, including 960 tons in ballast.

In 1888—Outwards, 107 = 7,751 tons, including 276 tons in ballast.

In 1889 (ten months)—Outwards, 90 = 6,953 tons; none in ballast.

The s.s. "Karuah," 82 tons, replaced the s.s. "Tweed," 151 tons.

The s.s. "Tweed," 151 tons, started to run the latter end of 1885, during 1886 and 1887. Was lost early in 1888.

The s.s. "Terranora" stopped running here in 1885, early.

30 November, 1889.

EDWARD OSLER,
Sub-Collector.

Outwards from Tweed River.

	Value.
	£ s. d.
1880—	
382 tons sugar, at £20 per ton	7,640 0 0
89 tons molasses, at £10 per ton	890 0 0
891,000 square feet timber, at £5 per M	4,445 0 0
880 bushels maize, at 2s. 6d. per bushel	110 0 0
264 hides, at 10s. each	132 0 0
9 casks tallow (say 3 tons), at £15 per ton	45 0 0
13 cases sundries, at £1 each	13 0 0
Total	13,275 0 0
1887—	
2,716 tons sugar, at £20 per ton	54,320 0 0
389 tons molasses, at £10 per ton	3,890 0 0
2,924,000 square feet timber, at £5 per M	14,620 0 0
1,152 hides, at 10s. each	576 0 0
25 casks tallow (say 9 tons), at £15 per ton	135 0 0
612 packages sundries, at £1 each	612 0 0
Total	74,153 0 0
1889 (ten months)—	
1,786 tons sugar, at £20 per ton	35,720 0 0
352 tons molasses, at £10 per ton	3,520 0 0
1,804,000 square feet timber, at £5 per M	9,020 0 0
927 hides, at 10s. each	463 10 0
8,434 bushels maize, at 2s. 6d. per bushel	1,054 5 0
34 bags bones, at 5s. each	8 8 0
31 casks tallow (say 10 tons), at £15 per ton	150 0 0
4 tons potatoes, at £5	20 0 0
12 pigs, at £1	12 0 0
2,000 lb. butter, at 1s.	100 0 0
564 packages sundries, at £1	564 0 0
Total	£50,632 3 0

1889.—This has been a bad year for sugar, also no vessel carrying timber to Brisbane.

EDWARD OSLER,
Sub-Collector
Memos.

30 November, 1890.

Memos. re Tweed River.

In December, 1886—s.s. "Tweed" arrived in Bay, 17th instant; came inside on 29th. Bad weather and shallow bar. Five schooners inside ready (three since December 20, two since January 1, 1887). They and the s.s. "Tweed" did not get out till January 12, 1887.

January 1, 1887—"George Thornton" in bay till 11th instant.

September, 1886—s.s. "Tweed" and two schooners in bay for seven days.

April, 1887—s.s. "Tweed" and one schooner bar-bound for twenty days; also five other schooners part of this time.

April, 1888—s.s. "Tweed" bar-bound for nine days.

During 1888 the vessels were going out often with only their registered tonnage on board instead of being always full. For instance, a 66 tons registered vessel trading here carries 90 tons when loaded, and on account of the shallow water on the bar went out with only 66 tons about.

During the past year (1889) the water has been deeper on the bar. The vessels have not been bar-bound so often nor so long; but I understand it is getting shallower again.

There are fourteen public-houses or hotels on the river, or within a mile or two of the river, and about fourteen or fifteen stores.

We have daily communication with Brisbane by coach and rail, except Sundays.

There is no trade much at present with Brisbane, and no regular communication by water, which is only 90 miles via Southport passage.

30 November, 1889.

EDWARD OSLER,
Sub-Collector

Outwards from Tweed River.

In 1874—Twenty-four vessels = 1,310 tons register. Smallest, 12 tons; largest, 64 tons.

In 1880, &c.—The vessels have been generally of a larger size and more trips since the establishment of the sugar-mills on the river:—s.s. "Terranora," 199 tons register; s.s. "Tweed," 151 tons register; "George Thornton," 182 tons register; "Sussex," 97 tons register; "Kent," 104 tons register; "Spurwing," 90 tons register, besides several smaller. The "Terranora," I find, has taken out over 200 tons cargo. The "George Thornton" (January, 1887) brought in 100 tons coal and took out 60,000 feet timber (cedar and beech). The vessels (steam and sail), as a rule, have taken more than their registered tonnage every trip.

In 1888—Vessels out in ballast—

	Tons.	
S.S. "Tweed," tug	32	To Sydney for repairs.
S.S. "Victoria"	20	To Richmond River, having brought salvage gear to wreck of s.s. "Tweed."
S.S. "Comet"	56	To Richmond River, brought sawn timber.
S.S. "Muriell Bell"	26	To relieving tug.
"Jonathan"	43	To Macleay River for sawn timber.
"Georgine Davis"	62	Camden Haven, brought sawn timber here.
"Maggie Taylor"	37	Camden Haven, brought sawn timber here.
Total	276	

1889—No vessels out in ballast.

30 November, 1889.

EDWARD OSLER,
Sub-Collector.

Outwards from the Tweed River.

In 1872—Carried in 38 vessels = 1,458 tons register. Smallest vessel, 15 tons register; largest vessel, 65 tons register.

322,000 feet cedar to Sydney.

42,672 bushels maize to Sydney and Brisbane.

145 hides to Sydney.

1 cask tallow to Sydney.

2 cases maizena to Sydney.

No record of any sugar, live stock, eggs, &c.

1875—First sugar sent from the River, 7 tons.

As sugar-cane growing increased maize seems to have decreased. Probably paid better, for in 1880 we find there were only 880 bushels sent away from the River.

In 1887 there was no maize sent away from the River. We had to get maize from Sydney or Brisbane for horse feed. During the same year we sent away 2,716 tons sugar and 389 tons molasses. There has been a large quantity of log timber going to Brisbane, but none now from this river, partly through the increased duty, partly through depression in the timber, and large importations of sawn timber from other places—some from the Nambucca River, N.S.W.

30 November, 1889.

EDWARD OSLER,
Sub-Collector.

D.

LAND SELECTED IN THE TWEED RIVER DISTRICT.

Crown Lands Office, Murwillumbah, 26 November, 1889.

Sir,

Adverting to the inquiry held here by you on the 23rd instant, in reference to a proposed railway from the Clarence to the Tweed, and your personal application in connection with same for all land selected in this district during the year 1888; I have the honor to report that during such period the total amount of land applied for as conditional purchases, exclusive of any that has been disallowed, would appear from Register to be six thousand six hundred and sixty-seven acres (6,667), and that conditionally leased amounts to two thousand four hundred and forty-nine (2,449) acres.

The land taken up in 1889 up to the present date is conditional purchases 13,957 acres, and conditional leases 9,456 acres; this is also exclusive of any disallowed applications.

The Chairman Public Works Committee.

I have, &c.,
E. A. BARRINGTON.

E.
[To Evidence of Mr. F V. Wareham]

RAINFALL AT BYRON BAY
Rainfall at "Koorelah," Byron Bay, for the year 1886

Date	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches.
1		24	70		30	53	91			3		
2	0		18	4		120	89					
3	2		9	0		2	45			0	51	0
4	0		0	0			4			32	0	
5	142		19	2		27	2	26			0	27
6	28		1		89	103	12	10				6
7	1	0		2	2	168	1					4
8	10					40	75			3	51	6
9						23	1			109		
10	2					13			2	5		129
11				10		95			2	98		
12	1		4	171		2		21		328		
13	55		22	48						4		6
14	17	0	21	1		1	0		79		204	95
15	85		17		11	10	135		21	39	434	61
16	63		22	1		110	48		63		256	2
17	42	28	31			14	64		18	4	67	
18	104	4				9	124		1		247	12
19						12	4		2	2	239	6
20	22				2	80	9		3		2	1
21	14			18		192		50	9	0	35	21
22	2	1		73	25	85			14		43	3
23		4			78	225				30		0
24		6	29		2	108	15				5	22
25		10	0		3	2	21	34	113			37
26		97	14	13	8	36	647		48		7	382
27	51		1	21	140	34	3		79		23	188
28	217		5	32	110	101		2	265		1	154
29	35			15	276	2		157	1			
30	1			16	3	3			9			2
31	4		1		22			45				
Total	8 98	1 74	2 84	4 27	8 01	16 70	14 20	3 45	7 29	6 57	16 65	11 64
Days	23	10	18	17	15	28	20	8	17	14	17	22

Total rainfall for 1886—102 34 inches, falling on 209 days
The above is a true record FRED. VAL WAREHAM, Observer

Rainfall at "Koorelah," Byron Bay, for the year 1887.

Date	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches.
1	11				5	201	15					5
2		131	109		5		46				2	2
3		5	22				17			15		1
4	10	56	6			2	7			28		
5	20	2	76			3	70					
6	17	26	81	33	54							
7	53	49	44	8					2			
8	17	3	55	2				15			48	3
9	1	2	60	11							21	
10		3	8	44				9				5
11		2	10	2				149			9	6
12		68	14	1		18	53	80				11
13		573	51	3		0	153	495	24			4
14	11			3			170	305	142		11	
15	11		63	6			98	43	180		0	
16	0	11	2						1			
17	148	2	223	6								
18	16	6	38	89	13				2		43	2
19			49	93	11			15			79	
20	102		127	30	0			21	2	0	0	
21	67	12	30	30	15			29				4
22	351	3		16		0		57	2		18	42
23	68	38		143							126	7
24		76		88							20	
25		11	19	40					16			
26	2	76	1	84	0			13				
27	0	29		62	215			34				102
28	2	0	102	14	98	3			2	3	20	9
29	5		45	1	36	15	3	1			76	65
30			11		244	31	2	2		20	21	197
31	10				649			3				12
Total	9 22	11 84	12 46	8 09	13 45	2 73	6 34	12 71	3 73	0 66	4 94	4 77
Days	21	23	24	23	13	9	11	16	10	5	15	17

Total rainfall for 1887—90 94 inches, on 187 days.
The above is a true record. FRED. VAL WAREHAM, Observer

Rainfall at "Koorelah," Byron Bay, for 1888.

Date.	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September	October.	November.	December.
	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.
1.....	2	.....	192	17	1	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	176
2.....	.....	.....	15	58	9	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	78
3.....	.....	.....	122	3	17	.....	2	.....	5	.....	.....	104
4.....	1	32	49	4	3	.....	136	.....	.....	.....	.....	7
5.....	2	.....	.....	31	1	9	131	.....	8	.....	.....	.....
6.....	.....	.....	9	35	195	107	2	.....	.....	1	.....	.....
7.....	.....	.....	.....	4	12	381	1	.....	.....	.....	30	.....
8.....	.....	.....	15	.....	1	93	12	.....	9	.....	57	.....
9.....	.....	109	.....	.....	.....	26	1	26	.....	54	2	0
10.....	.....	201	.....	1	0	1	.....	.....	4	37	.....	.....
11.....	6	24	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	210	2	30
12.....	.....	80	.....	.....	55	.....	.....	.....	.....	276	.....	53
13.....	.....	47	.....	.....	6	.....	.....	.....	0	10	5	60
14.....	.....	27	19	.....	.....	.....	.....	16	104	.....	.....	43
15.....	.....	.....	.....	20	.....	.....	.....	9	149	.....	.....	15
16.....	.....	132	.....	44	.....	.....	.....	.....	100	.....	.....	67
17.....	.....	7	.....	11	.....	.....	6	.....	23	1	.....	.....
18.....	.....	438	.....	12	.....	.....	20	.....	6	16	.....	.....
19.....	.....	15	17	.....	23	.....	13	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
20.....	6	49	25	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
21.....	.....	0	.....	9	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	45	.....
22.....	.....	.....	18	6	21	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0	.....
23.....	.....	.....	7	61	13	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
24.....	2	.....	65	17	19	.....	.....	6	27	.....	.....	.....
25.....	3	24	.....	16	.....	6	.....	.....	.....	2	.....	.....
26.....	4	174	.....	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
27.....	32	215	11	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	22	2	.....	.....
28.....	.....	43	172	13	.....	.....	.....	21	17	9	.....	4
29.....	.....	12	21	0	.....	2	.....	.....	6	0	51	12
30.....	59	.....	4	1	.....	2	.....	.....	.....	40	5	.....
31.....	18	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	7	.....	10	.....	.....
Total...	1.35	16.29	7.61	3.67	3.77	6.27	3.25	0.85	4.80	6.68	1.97	6.46
Days ...	11	18	16	22	16	9	11	6	14	14	9	13

Total rainfall for 1888—62.97 inches, on 159 days.

The year 1888 was the driest I have recorded here; and I believe was the driest on record in the Colony.

The above is a true record.

FRED. VAL. WAREHAM,
Observer.

Rainfall at "Koorelah," Byron Bay, for part of 1889.

Date.	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September	October.	November.	December.
	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.	inches.
1.....	.....	17	131	30	5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	4	.....
2.....	1	40	20	2	80	4	.....	.....	.....	.....	32	.....
3.....	2	1	57	26	.....	.....	.....	34	.....	.....	.....	.....
4.....	.....	.....	50	.....	.....	.....	8	309	32	.....	.....	.....
5.....	.....	.....	5	.....	0	.....	63	534	9	.....	.....	.....
6.....	1	423	59	4	4	.....	5	302	.....	.....	.....	.....
7.....	.....	6	4	5	49	9	.....	301	.....	.....	.....	.....
8.....	3	.....	.....	30	156	.....	21	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
9.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	26	.....	34	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
10.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	.....	.....	15	.....	.....	21	.....
11.....	.....	.....	4	11	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
12.....	.....	0	.....	6	.....	34	2	.....	80	0	76	.....
13.....	.....	.....	17	141	0	.....	266	.....	4	71	44	.....
14.....	.....	.....	6	2	24	4	102	.....	.....	3	3	.....
15.....	.....	.....	31	15	0	.....	190	.....	.....	.....	5	.....
16.....	.....	.....	17	133	137	.....	280	.....	.....	.....	5	.....
17.....	.....	0	2	191	.....	5	75	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
18.....	.....	.....	1	427	57	.....	384	.....	29	.....	.....	.....
19.....	26	.....	.....	.....	253	.....	290	.....	5	.....	.....	.....
20.....	.....	5	.....	.....	45	.....	185	17	20	2	.....	.....
21.....	.....	21	.....	27	10	.....	14	10	.....	396	5	.....
22.....	.....	.....	0	57	3	.....	.....	.....	44	264	16	.....
23.....	49	.....	0	17	.....	.....	53	.....	4	276	4	.....
24.....	15	.....	54	3	4	.....	12	115	.....	1	2.15	.....
25.....	.....	.....	7	12	4	.....	1	187	62	.....	.....	.....
26.....	.....	.....	44	1	9	.....	.....	7	2	.....	.....	.....
27.....	.....	.....	12	3	109	.....	.....	106	.....	.....	.....	.....
28.....	102	.....	36	60	3	.....	.....	33	.....	.....	.....	.....
29.....	6	.....	6	125	.....	.....	.....	10	34	.....	.....	.....
30.....	11	.....	237	4	.....	.....	.....	29	.....	32	.....	.....
31.....	75	.....	94	.....	.....	.....	.....	15	.....	5	.....	.....
Total...	2.91	5.13	7.70	14.29	10.05	0.61	19.85	20.24	3.25	10.50	.....	.....
Days	11	9	24	23	22	6	18	16	12	10	11.23	.....

Total rainfall from 1st January to 23rd November, 1889, 96.68 inches, falling on 162 days.

The average rainfall for three previous years—85.41 inches.

The above is a true record.

FRED. VAL. WAREHAM,
Observer.

[To Evidence of Mr. E. Shields.]

F.

Sir, When I was giving evidence before you the other day I was not prepared. I intended to wait upon you on Saturday, and would have arranged my ideas accordingly, but your coming to Lawrence unexpectedly took me before I was prepared, and I forgot a few items that I deem important, and with your kind permission will supply them now.

Lawrence, 2 December, 1889.

- 1st. The route from here *via* Coraki to Byron would be a saving of 48 miles, as compared with the present surveyed route, and there will be no resumption of improved land, and very little of any kind.
- 2nd. The surveyed line comes within 8 miles of Lawrence, at a place known as the "Yellow Pinch," and from that point to Grafton by the surveyed line is 28 miles, whereas the distance between Lawrence and Grafton is 17 miles; with 8 to the Yellow Pinch makes 25 miles; here is a saving of 3 miles, and the land to be traversed the best in Australia between Lawrence and Grafton, and by the present line it is the very worst.
- 3rd. If it is objected to cross the river at Cowper, then follow the river back to Grafton; the 3 miles before stated will be saved, the train will traverse a country that will supply freight, and the terminus will be at permanent deep water.
- 4th. If Byron Bay becomes a port for foreign shipping in the future, the Clarence would be a good customer to the railway, provided the shortest possible route is taken between the two places; and you will see by looking at the map of the Colony that the route from Lawrence *via* Coraki to Byron Bay is about as direct as a sunbeam.

I will be glad if you will add the above to my evidence, which is as much upon oath, as the former portion, my object being to further the good of the Colony at large, and not any isolated spot like Lawrence or Grafton.

Yours, &c.,
E. SHIELDS.

To the Chairman of the Public Works Committee.

G.

STATEMENT READ BY MR. T. C. LODGE, TO SECTIONAL COMMITTEE AT LISMORE ON 26TH NOVEMBER, 1889.

The Australian Joint Stock Bank,
Lismore, 20 December, 1889.

Sir, In compliance with a request made by the Sectional Committee when they were here, I now send you herewith a statement which was read to them at the inquiry held here *re* Grafton Tweed Railway on 26th ultimo.

As suggested by the Committee, the statement contains all recent available information about this electorate, and I trust it will meet the requirements of the Committee; should it not do so, I will be glad if you will kindly return it.

I have, &c.,
T. C. LODGE.

The Secretary, Public Works Committee, Sydney.

I also send you for comparison original statements marked by the Chairman.—T.C.L.

In coming before you to give evidence with regard to the proposal to construct a railway from Grafton to the Tweed River *via* Lismore, I wish to place before you some reliable information with regard to the Richmond River Electoral District that will serve to indicate to you its past progress, under great disadvantages in the way of internal communication, and its future prospects under the more favourable conditions that will follow the work in view.

In the first place, I desire to mention that the Land Districts of Casino, Lismore, and the Tweed represent a total area of about 3,000,000 acres. The total area of freehold land is about 250,000 acres, of conditionally purchased land 600,000 acres, and of land still available for settlement about 2,150,000 acres; the total extent of holdings is say 850,000 acres, and the average of each holding 318 acres.

The rapid advancement of the district during the past few years is made evident by the fact that the population has increased by about 20,000 since 1879, and the area under cultivation by about 33,200 acres. In 1879 the Richmond and the Tweed Rivers formed a part of the Clarence Electorate; now they are a separate electorate, with three members, and the Murrumbidgee is the only agricultural constituency in the Colony with a larger number of voters, and it is shown that we are rapidly overtaking that district in the way of population.

In 1879 the town of Lismore was a small village, with no formed road or streets, and very few houses, but it now has a municipality, with gas-works and water supply. Unimproved town land considered dear at £2 per foot in 1879 is now worth £30 per foot. Although a hamlet ten years ago Lismore has now a population of over 3,000, and a corresponding rate of progress is shown throughout the electorate. There are municipalities in Casino and Ballina, with populations of 2,000 and 1,000 respectively, and flourishing townships at Coraki, South Woodburn, North Woodburn, Broadwater, Wardell, Gundurimba, Wyrallah, Brunswick, Murwillumbah, Tumbulgum, and Tweed Heads, while there are settlements at Swan Bay, Byron Bay, Cudgen, Alstonville, Rous, Clunes, Eureka, Bexhill, Tatham, Tintenbar and Blakebrook. All these places are directly or indirectly concerned in the matter of railway communication, the effect of which will be to make them important centres of population.

The railway line as at present surveyed, runs through at least 60 miles of rich soil between Lismore and the Tweed, the capabilities of which for agricultural and grazing purposes cannot be over-estimated. Almost every inch of this land available for selection, and not reserved, has been taken up, and the industrious and enterprising owners are working hard, clearing and otherwise improving their holdings, so as to be ready when the opportunity comes to get their products to market. At present a great many of them produce very little beyond what is required for their own consumption, owing to the ruinous cost of carriage to the nearest port. Ordinary roads will not meet their requirements, because of the nature of the soil and the distance of cartage.

Mr. Campbell, of the Mines Department, in a report to the Head of his Department writes of the Richmond River as follows:—"The district is simply magnificent, and its natural fertility almost unequalled. It is blessed with beautiful undulating land for the most part, and rich flats along the river and creeks, an annual rainfall second to none in the Colony, a wonderfully temperate climate, absolutely free from malaria and extremely healthy, an absence of hot winds, and watercourses every few miles, fresh and ever-flowing even in the most severe drought."

Apart from the watercourses referred to by Mr. Campbell, which are simply numberless, the north and south arms of the river (from their confluence with the main river at Coraki), and Leicester and Wilson's Creeks—navigable for steamers for about 100 miles altogether—contain fresh water. Even if the rainfall, therefore, was less satisfactory than it is, the practicability of a cheap and convenient system of irrigation is beyond all doubt.

Possessing therefore such unusual natural advantages, the district must become a great agricultural centre. No place in Australia seems so suited to support as dense a population if the facilities for the transport of produce were provided. With such a diversity of fruitful land, such a favourable climate, and such a splendid water supply, we can grow nearly every product of agricultural wealth, as well as all the tropical and semi-tropical fruits, and many of those indigenous to the more temperate zone—for instance, sugar, maize, barley, oats, potatoes, rye, lucerne, linseed, jute, tea, coffee, cotton, rice, arrowroot, ginger, tapioca, yams, tobacco, pumpkins, squashes, grammas, melons, beans, and vegetables of all sorts; mangoes, pineapples, bananas, nuts, gooseberries, figs, plums, guavas, dates, olives, almonds, peaches, apples, apricots, nectarines, quinces, oranges, lemons, limes, citrons, shaddock, grenadillas, pomegranates, loquats, and varieties of grapes.

Cane and maize growing and, dairying, are however the principal industries. In 1887, about 8,947 tons of sugar were manufactured, which represented a value of fully £200,000. The value of the sugar manufactured in 1888 amounted to about the same sum, but the returns for this year and next year will probably be the largest yet known in the district. The maize crop in 1887 came to about 234,000 bushels; and in 1888 to about 362,803 bushels. The dairy produce made in 1887 consisted of 259,422 lb. of butter, and 88,431 lb. of cheese; and in 1888, 1,056,542 lb. of butter (or an increase of 797,120 lb.) 65,922 lb. of cheese, and 214,815 lb. of bacon.

Until

Until recently it was thought that the climate was unfavourable to the making of butter and cheese; but this notion has now been completely dispelled. In January last, one of the hottest months in the year, 32,500 lb. of butter were exported from Lismore alone. Probably an equal, if not a larger, quantity was shipped during the same month from the various townships lower down the river. The result is that dairy-farmers from older and more settled parts of the Colony—as for instance, Shoalhaven, Wollongong, and Kiama—are coming here in considerable numbers, and are purchasing scrub farms for dairying purposes. It is principally in this way that the population has increased so rapidly of late. These men, who have had long experience in the occupation, are spending large sums of money in clearing their properties, and planting artificial grasses, and in importing a good class of dairy cattle. Already several factories have been established, on the lines of those now working so successfully in the South Coast, and they are under the management of men well grounded in the general and technical knowledge of their business. The Richmond is quickly becoming the chief dairying place in the Colony.

Another important industry that will be greatly benefited by the railway is the timber trade. There are now in the electorate thirteen saw-mills, turning out sawn timber of the annual value of £100,000. The value of log timber exported from the Richmond River alone last year amounted to somewhere about £65,000. Unfortunately I have no returns showing the quantity sent away from the Brunswick and Tweed Rivers, but it must have been considerable. The proposed line passes through a stretch of country thickly studded with various kinds of scrub and forest woods, suitable for building and cabinet-making purposes, or for the construction of piers, bridges, ships, railway-carriages, trucks, waggons, sleepers, felloes, spokes, wood-paving, &c. Among these may be mentioned cedar (two varieties), pine (two varieties), bean (three varieties), cudgaree, long jack, rosewood, bogonion, beach, sycamore, teak, white myrtle, blue fig, silky oak, sassafras, ironbark, gum, (several varieties), peppermint, turpentine, blackbutt, tallow-wood, bloodwood, box, mahogany, &c. Millions of feet of these valuable timbers, which are well known and appreciated in the other colonies, and some of which were greatly admired at the recent Melbourne Exhibition, are being destroyed every year in clearing land for cultivation, because the difficulties and cost of carriage to the nearest port are so great. A railway will afford the required means of conveyance to the outside markets of the world, and the trade already established between certain other parts of the district (having easier access to water-carriage) and Queensland, Victoria, and New Zealand will become more general.

Among the minerals known to exist in the district is coal, which is found in numerous outcrops. When more pressing demands arise, and easier access to shipping ports is available, these seams will be opened up, and no doubt profitably worked.

With regard to the subject of the cost of the proposed railway and the probability of its paying, I desire to point out how this district differs from other places where railways have been taken, or are likely to be taken. Nearly the whole of the proposed line passes through productive land and marketable timber. The produce to be grown and the timber locked up must be carried on the line on their way to market, because there is no other means of carriage for them. The Tweed River Bar blocks shipping communication there, except with very small boats, and the Brunswick Bar is equally unsatisfactory and unreliable. Within 6 miles of each side of the line there are fully 350,000 acres suitable for sugarcane, maize, or dairying, and capable of producing 350,000 tons of sugar, or 10,000,000 bushels of maize per annum, and maintaining an agricultural population of fully 50,000 people. Over 5,000,000 tons of cane can be grown along the line annually, and this must find its way to the mills through the agency of the railway, which will become to our inland settlements what the droghers now are to our river. The sugar business here is no dead force, but a strong and vital one. The companies have difficulty in providing machinery equal to the supply of cane, and no one can foresee to what state of importance the industry will yet attain. In no other part of the Southern Hemisphere is the outlook for it more cheering. Every branch of the business is worked on scientific principles, and with European labour. The manufacturers and planters find employment for many people, and more agricultural labourers are employed here than in any other district in the Colony.

Independent, however, of all these considerations which tend to show the traffic that must follow the construction of this line, the question should be considered as to how far a railway will improve the value of the Crown lands in close proximity to it. Only recently the Government placed reserves of £15 and £30 per acre on a special area thrown open for selection, a great part of which was taken up and keenly competed for; and is it not reasonable to conclude that if such prices are fair value, proportionate prices will be obtained for the extensive areas of equally productive land along the route of the line, and now reserved from sale, or for some of the 300,000 acres awaiting selection and occupation on the Tweed. In no other district in the Colony does the Government value agricultural land so highly as in this.

In conclusion, let me say that I do not urge the construction of this railway on local grounds only, but on the broad ground of State policy. It is for the good of the Colony generally that agricultural settlement should be encouraged, and that every facility should be offered for the development of our agricultural lands by placing them within practical reach of natural markets. "The surest foundations of progress rest in the earth." We have land sufficient in extent and richness to grow most of the principal necessities of life for the rest of our fellow-colonists, and all we ask is that the means should be put in our way of turning our resources to practical account. The Richmond, Brunswick, and Tweed Rivers, under more liberal treatment, will yet provide comfortable homes for fully half a million people, and will be an important and prosperous part of our future Empire. Nature has lavished all her best gifts upon us in the shape of soil, climate, timber, and rainfall, and railway communication will enable us to reap the full advantage of our splendid inheritance.

I will now place before you some further statistics (compiled chiefly from official returns), which will also help you to form a correct estimate of the position and future prospects of our agricultural, pastoral, and commercial interests.

Number of Electors.

In 1881-2, 2,673; 1887-8, 5,439; 1888-9, 5,930; 1889-90, 6,250.

Area of Electorate, also Land taken up and to be taken up.

About 3,000,000 acres. Freehold land, say, 250,000 acres; conditionally-purchased land, say, 600,000 acres; Crown land, say, 2,150,000 acres.

Holdings—Year 1888.

1 acre to 500 acres, 1,775, area cultivated.....	32,113 acres.
500 acres to 1,000 acres, 159,	7,815 "
1,000 " 10,000 " 54,	6,765 "
10,000 acres and upwards, 8,	323 "

Total number of holdings, 1,996 (largest of any country electorate in the Colony). Average area of each holding, 318 acres.

Conditional Purchases made in 1888.

Number of applications, 245.

Area applied for, 29,865 acres 2 roods 32 perches.

Deposits paid, £3,637 17s. 11d.

Total deposits paid in various land districts in Eastern Division of Colony, £43,130 15s.

Land Revenue received from 1st January to 24th November, 1889.

	£	s.	d.
Revenue received at Lismore Land Office between 1st January and 24th November, 1889, inclusive	19,786	8	8
Tweed River	6,495	0	0
Casino, same period, about	12,000	0	0
	38,281	8	8

Area under Cultivation (in acres)—Year ended 31st March, 1889.

Maize, 11,323; oats, 695; potatoes, 224; sorghum and imphee, 231; sugar-cane, 8,835; artificial grasses and lucerne, 24,969; grapes, 37; oranges, 55; orchards, 172; market-gardens, 64; barley, 121; wheat, tobacco, rye, and other crops, 285. Total area cultivated, 47,061 acres.

In the year ending 31st March, 1881, there were only 13,790 acres under artificial grasses and other cultivation; in eight years, therefore, the area under cultivation has increased by 33,271 acres.

Area

Area Enclosed (uncultivated)—Year ending 31st March, 1889.

Area enclosed but not cultivated, 391,737 acres.

Principal Productions.—Year ended 31st March, 1889.

Maize, 362,803 bushels; sugar, 7,764 tons; wine, 755 gallons; potatoes, 533 tons; barley and rye, 1,695 bushels; butter, 1,056,542 lb.; cheese, 65,922 lb.; bacon and hams, 214,815 lb.

Only four districts in the Colony produce larger quantities of dairy produce, viz.:—Camden, Eden, Kiama, and Shoalhaven.

Soils.

The land in the district is composed of the various productive soils known in Australia, which may be grouped into the following classes:—

- 1st. Alluvial scrub soils.
- 2nd. Forest soils.
- 3rd. Chocolate-coloured scrub soils.
- 4th. Black stiff wheat soils.

Rainfall from 1st January, 1885, to 15th November, 1889.

January 1st to December 31st, 1885	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	29.22
Do do 1886	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	53.72
Do do 1887	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	67.34
Do do 1888	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	36.22
Do November 15th, 1889	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	59.96
									246.46.

or an average of 49.29.

Total number of wet days this year, 149.

The greatest rainfall during this year occurred on 19th July, viz.:—5.80.

Principal Agricultural Implements in use—Year ending 31st March, 1889.

Carts, 1,314; chaffcutters, 326; cheese presses and machines, 62; corn-crushers, 340; corn-shellers, 575; harrows, 1,090; ploughs, 1,496 (only three districts in Colony with more, viz.:—Macleay, 2,011; Clarence, 1,673; Murrumbidgee, 1,561); scarifiers and scufflers, 685; steam-engines, 34.

Manufactories—Year ending 31st March, 1889.

Number of works, 64; approximate power of plant and machinery, 1,586 horse-power; approximate value of machinery, £344,665; approximate value of land and buildings, £80,065.

Employment—Year ending 31st March, 1889.

In manufactories, 1,438; in agricultural pursuits, 3,368 (largest in Colony for one district); in pastoral pursuits, 148.

Live Stock.—Year ending 31st March, 1889.

Horses, 13,309; cattle, 131,341. More than a twelfth of total number in Colony, and more than double the number held by any other district.

Municipalities—Year 1888.

		£	s.	d.
BALLINA.				
Total Receipts, exclusive of loans	...	801	0	0
„ Expenditure	...	984	0	0
„ Capital value, ratable property	...	108,800	0	0
„ Annual value	...	5,286	0	0
CASINO.				
Total Receipts, exclusive of loans	...	1,090	0	0
„ Expenditure	...	2,537	0	0
„ Capital value of ratable property	...	120,000	0	0
„ Annual value	...	9,851	0	0
LISMORE.				
Total Receipts, exclusive of loans	...	3,310	0	0
„ Expenditure	...	6,634	0	0
„ Capital value of ratable property	...	299,151	0	0
„ Annual value	...	19,096	0	0

GRAND TOTALS.

Receipts, £5,201. Expenditure, £10,155. Capital value, £527,951. Annual value, £34,233.

Postal and Telegraphic.

Revenue received at the various Post and Telegraph Offices in the district during the year 1888.

Alstonville, £45; Ballina, £897; Bexhill, £18; Blakebrook, £3; Broadwater, £349; Brunswick, £192; Byron Bay, £22; Casino, £1,196; Clunes, £39; Coraki, £458; Cudgen, £63; East Wardell, £39; Eureka, £12; German Creek, £30; Gundurimba, £18; Jiggi, £7; Lismore, £2,245; Murwillumbah, £537; North Tumbulgum, £32; Pearce's Creek, £12; Rous, £66; South Woodburn, £359; Swan Bay, £26; Tatham, £21; Tintinbar, £60; Tumbulgum, £241; Tabulum, £113; Tweed Heads, £131; Wardell, £316; Woodburn, £188; Wyrallah, £213. Total, £7,948.

Two additional post offices will be opened at the commencement of the coming year, and the question of opening two additional telegraph offices and two telephone offices is under consideration.

There are about 300 miles of telegraph lines in the district, and 1,000 miles of mail line are travelled every week.

Justice.

Revenue received by Clerk of Petty Sessions between 1st January and 24th November, 1889 £2,075 8 4

Banks at present time.

- 2 branches Bank of New South Wales.
- 1 branch English, Scottish, and Australian Chartered Bank.
- 7 branches Commercial Bank.
- 7 branches Australian Joint Stock Bank.

Total, 17

Hotels—

Hotels—Year 1888.

Total number in electorate 78

Hospitals—Year 1888.

CASINO.

Patients... .. 31 Beds 13

LISMORE.

Patients... .. 65 Beds 11

Private Schools—Year 1888.

Number of schools 14 Number of scholars 526

Public Schools—Year 1888.

Number of schools of all classes at the beginning of the year 85
 Number of schools of all classes at the end of year 92
 New buildings erected during the year 9
 Average number of schools opened every year 5
 Schools at present in course of construction, or about to be constructed... .. 5

Total school accommodation at end of year, 5,240 children; attendance, about 5,000 children.

Applications for new schools are being received constantly from outside places.

Schools are now thriving in localities which were five years ago uninhabited wildernesses.

Judging from Inspectors' reports and results of University examinations, the schools in the district bear favourable comparison in the matter of efficiency to those in any other electorate in the Colony.

There are now 437 children on the rolls of the Lismore Public School, and the attendance in the school has doubled within the past five years, notwithstanding the fact that convent schools have since been established and have a large attendance.

Richmond River Shipping Trade, between 1st October, 1883, and 30th September, 1889, inclusive.

Arrivals seaward.—Steamers, 199; sailing vessels, 140. Departures seaward: Steamers, 203; sailing vessels, 142: Total trips, 634. Passengers inwards: Saloon, 1,237; steerage, 830. Passengers outwards: Saloon, 1,137; steerage, 879. Total number of passengers, 4,132. Coal imported, 15,809 tons.

List of Exports.

Timber unspecified, 7,156,900 feet; 183 logs; pine, 2,055 logs; pine, 236,554 feet; cedar, 1,511 logs; cedar, 33,000 feet; box material, 1,307 bundles; box material, 19,200 feet; beech, 78 logs; 146 fitches; 23,000 feet; piles, 1,100; sleepers, 9,743; hardwood, 10,000 feet; maize, 40,658 bags; sugar, 16,707 bags, 8,549 mats—3,617 tons; butter, 15,703 kegs; cheese, 466 packages; hides, 9,649, 7 bags; pigs, 7,625; tallow, 330 casks; eggs, 2,815 cases; molasses, 5,852 casks; poultry, 497 coops; bones and horns, 579 bags; skins, 166 bales; calves, 130 head; cattle, 19 head; horses, 27 head; potatoes, 893 bags; fish, 170 cases; oysters, 879 bags; grass-seed, 33 bags; hay, 360 bales; soap, 60 boxes; bark, 126 packages; wool, 30 bales; honey, 6 packages; beeswax, 2 packages; chaff, 10 bags; fruit, 80 cases; pumpkins, 120 bags; wild ducks, 51 pairs; machinery, 15 tons; ore, 20 bags; bacon, 11 packages; pea-nuts, 9 bags; sun-try cargo, 4,054 packages.

No proper record has been kept of the imports and particulars of the shipping trade of Byron Bay, and Brunswick and Tweed Rivers are not available.

The approximate value of the yearly export trade of the whole electorate is between £400,000 and £450,000.

T. C. LODGE

H.

LETTER FROM THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE TO THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS ON THE RESERVATION OF CROWN LANDS IN THE LAND DISTRICTS OF LISMORE, CASINO, AND THE TWEED RIVER.

Sir,

Department of Public Works, Lismore, November 26, 1889.

The Sectional Committee of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works appointed to inquire into the proposal to construct a railway from Grafton to the Tweed River, and of a breakwater at Byron Bay, have travelled from the Tweed River to the Richmond River, a distance of 60 miles, and have taken a great deal of evidence at various points on the route. From our own observation and from a great deal of the evidence tendered to us, we have come to the conclusion that it would be to the advantage of the country that all the Crown lands at present reserved in the land districts of Lismore, Casino, and the Tweed River, should be retained as at present reserved, until such time as it may be determined by Parliament whether the proposed railway and harbour works are to be carried out or not. It appears also that in the districts mentioned there are at the present time large areas of Crown land which have not been reserved from sale. Our own observation and the evidence given in the districts mentioned leads us to strongly recommend that all these lands should be reserved from sale, pending the determination of Parliament in regard to the works referred to. The value of the bulk of the reserved lands is, we are informed, at least £2 an acre, and the same lands in their present state will bring more than double should the works referred to be carried out; in fact we are inclined to believe that the increased value given to the Crown lands and to the reserves referred to would largely repay the cost, and possibly the whole cost of constructing these public works. We have been informed that at Byron Bay there are 4,000 acres of reserved land, which, if the works proposed are carried out, will realise at the least £80,000.

Again, the present holders of land, having borne the heat and burden of the day (living, as we have been told, from hand to mouth for years), are clearly entitled to some consideration, and new-comers should not get the benefit of the hardship of those who have gone before.

We venture to address you upon the subject in the interest of the Colony at large.

We have, &c.,

J. P. ABBOTT.

G. H. COX.

C. A. LEE.

JACOB GARRARD.

The Honorable the Secretary for Lands.

[Nine plans.]

1890.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

GRAFTON TO THE TWEED RAILWAY BILL.

(MESSAGE No. 14.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 2 July, 1890.

By Deputation from the Governor,
ALFRED STEPHEN,
Lieutenant-Governor.

Message No. 14.

In accordance with the provisions contained in the 54th section of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends, for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly, the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses in connection with a Bill to sanction the construction of a line of railway from Grafton to the Tweed.

Government House,
Sydney, 25th June, 1890.

1890.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDICES, AND PLANS,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

MARRICKVILLE TO THE BURWOOD ROAD.

Presented to Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act,
51 Vic. No. 37, section 8.

SYDNEY : CHARLES POTTER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable JOHN LACKEY, Vice-Chairman.

The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN.

The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Honorable GEORGE HENRY COX.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esquire, Chairman.

JACOB GARRARD, Esquire.

HENRY COPELAND, Esquire.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esquire.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esquire.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esquire.

JOHN HURLEY, Esquire.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esquire.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM MARRICKVILLE TO THE BURWOOD ROAD.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, and the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road, a distance of 4 miles 40 chains," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the railway should be constructed; and, in accordance with the provision of sub-section IV, of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

1. The proposed railway is 4 miles 40 chains in length, commencing at the southern end of the Marrickville railway station on the Illawarra line, and going almost due west through the Municipalities of Marrickville and Canterbury to a point near what is called the Burwood Road. It crosses the Illawarra Road at a point 4 miles from Sydney; Cook's River, after passing through Canterbury, at 6 miles 11 chains; and the Canterbury Road at 6 miles 27 chains; terminating near the Burwood Road at 8 miles 3 chains. Virtually, it is part of the suggested line known as the St. Peters to Liverpool line, but it is not put forward as such. It is placed before the Committee as, in itself, a suburban line, the object of which is to open up a new residential suburb, but it is pointed out that as population gathers around the new line the necessity for extending it will be considered, and possibly, in time, the whole length of the suggested line to Liverpool will be constructed.

Description of the proposed railway.

2. In their inquiry concerning this proposed railway the Committee examined a large number of witnesses, and, accompanied by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, personally investigated the route and the localities in its immediate vicinity. In every direction which appeared desirable, evidence has been sought, and the larger scheme of the loopline to Liverpool, so far as it relates to the question of providing railway accommodation for the population west of the Illawarra line and towards Liverpool, and so far as it may eventually include the Marrickville to Burwood line, received attention as well as the proposal actually before the Committee.

Conduct of the Committee's Inquiry.

3. The estimated cost of the proposed line, for a single line of rails and exclusive of land and compensation, is £90,250, or £19,000 per mile. A cheaper line, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, in his evidence explains, could be laid out if the original object of saving distance and of having very good grades were not adhered to. The steepest gradient on the line as proposed is 1 in 90, and with a view to shortness the line has been laid out as straight as possible. A close study of the contour of the country, however, shows, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief says, that some slight deviations from the straight line would result in a considerable saving of expense, and after going carefully into the question he estimates that, by altering the grades and doing away with the necessity for bridges over George's River, a saving of something like £78,000 could be effected on the whole cost of the line to Liverpool, and a proportionate amount (about £8,000) on the length from Marrickville to the Burwood Road. With these alterations the line would be half-a-mile longer

Estimated cost of the proposed railway.

longer in the whole distance to Liverpool, and 10 chains longer in the length from Marrickville to Burwood Road, with a ruling grade of 1 in 66. By adopting a grade of 1 in 100, and increasing the length of the line as stated, a saving of about £40,000 could be effected on the complete line to Liverpool, and on the $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the Burwood Road about the same amount as in the other case—£8,000. The £78,000 would include the saving of the expense of bridges over George's River by taking the line round the bend of the river by Landsdown Creek. If the proposed alterations were made, 30-chain curves would have to be reduced to curves of 20 chains; but that radius is not regarded as objectionable, and the line would be an easy one to work, and would be better graded than the existing line from Liverpool to Sydney. Only one bridge of importance occurs on the railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road, and that would be made suitable for a double line of rails, though the proposal in connection with the railway is for only a single line.

Opinions of
the Railway
Commis-
sioners.

4. From the documents published with the evidence it will be seen that the Railway Commissioners have reported upon both the proposal immediately before the Committee and the whole length of the suggested loop-line from St. Peters to Liverpool. With regard to the latter, their report represents an annual loss on the line, if constructed, of £19,137, and they state that the theory that the construction of the line would avoid the necessity for increasing the carrying capacity of the existing line from Liverpool to Sydney should not have any weight in the consideration of the question, as the construction of the line would only relieve the parent line to the extent of about four trains per day in each direction. But they go on to say, that "if a branch line were constructed from St. Peters through to Canterbury, to a point 8 miles from Sydney (that is, 4 miles from the present Illawarra line), it would accommodate Canterbury, and a fairly good district for residential traffic; and at the suggested terminus of the line we observe that two large properties have been laid out for the purpose of encouraging a suburban population." The construction of a branch line to the point indicated, they state, is the only course they could recommend. It would, in their opinion, have the effect of giving another suburban outlet for Sydney, and if this were done the traffic created would probably pay working expenses, and in a few years would doubtless be a good investment. The line, they further say, should take the exact route laid down for the proposed through line, so that when the proper time arrives an extension may be made, and probably the line ultimately carried through to Liverpool. Their report upon the proposed railway actually under inquiry by the Committee also shows a loss in the comparison between the working expenses, interest, &c., and the probable traffic returns, but the Commissioners consider that by giving a frequent service and taking other matters into account, one of which is the probable speedy development of the district, the working expenses would within two years be more than recouped. They give it as their opinion, however, that the line should be a double line, as otherwise a most unsatisfactory service for residential purposes would be afforded.

Division of
opinion on
the part of
the Com-
mittee.

5. The Committee are very evenly divided on the question of the expediency or otherwise of constructing the proposed railway. On the 19th December, 1889, a resolution was passed by a majority of six to five that it was not expedient the railway should be carried out, and on the 18th February, 1890, the question having subsequent to the first decision been reopened, it was resolved by a majority of seven to six that it was expedient the railway should be constructed.

Reasons in
favour of the
proposed rail-
way.

6. The reasons advanced in favour of the proposed railway may be summarized as follows:—

- (1.) The railway would be a suburban line which would open up a new residential suburb, where land would be available at prices considerably below those at which it can be obtained in the suburbs already served by railways, and the new suburb would become another outlet for the overcrowded population of the city.
- (2.) There is a considerable population about Marrickville, Undercliff, Canterbury, and some of the districts beyond Canterbury, who are not directly benefited by any railway or tramway in existence, and who, with the increased number of residents which the proposed new railway would bring to the locality, would make the railway very profitable.

(3.)

- (3.) A large quantity of land in the districts which the railway would serve has been sold in allotments, and the purchasers are waiting for railway communication before building and taking up their residence there.
 - (4.) The attendance of the public at the Canterbury Park racecourse at different times through the year would of itself be a large item in the earnings of the railway.
 - (5.) There will be no great engineering difficulty in connection with the line.
 - (6.) The line, if constructed, may eventually form a part of a complete loop railway from Marrickville to Liverpool, and for this purpose the route is the best of the different routes which at various times have been under consideration.
 - (7.) If the railway were constructed right through to Liverpool it would materially shorten the journey from Liverpool to Sydney, and the loop-line would therefore be very largely patronised.
 - (8.) The probable traffic upon the proposed railway is very much underestimated by the Railway Commissioners.
 - (9.) The formation of new residential suburbs by the establishment of railway communication between the districts to be served by the proposed line and the Metropolis is justified by the success which has attended the Illawarra Railway as a suburban line, and by the experience gained from the construction of a system of suburban railways at Melbourne, Victoria, which, in the matter of suburban railways and the accommodation afforded by them to the population, is far ahead of Sydney.
 - (10.) No extension of any existing tramway, and no branch tramway from any existing railway station, would adequately meet the prospective wants of the district.
7. The reasons urged against the proposed railway are the following :—
- (1.) The construction of the line will cost £19,000 per mile.
 - (2.) The complete loop-line to Liverpool, according to the Report of the Railway Commissioners, would not to any appreciable extent relieve the traffic on the Great Southern Railway.
 - (3.) The line from Marrickville to the Burwood Road will run for about a mile almost parallel to, and within a short space of, the Dulwich Hill Tramway.
 - (4.) A portion of the district through which the proposed line will go is already served to a certain extent by the extension of the tramway to Dulwich Hill, and by the railway to the Western Suburbs.
 - (5.) The construction of branch tramways connected with the railway at Ashfield or Burwood might be made sufficient to meet the requirements of the residents for some time to come. A single tram-line could be constructed for about £5,000, as compared with £19,000 for the railway, per mile, and a double tram-line for about £8,500 or £9,000 per mile; and in the case of a tram-line there would be no resumption of land required, except, perhaps, at some of the corners, which would be only a small item.
 - (6.) There are no large industries in the locality which would be likely to bring traffic to the line.
 - (7.) The Department of Public Works and the Railway Commissioners do not agree upon a very important point in relation to the proposed railway. The proposal before the Committee is for a single line. The Railway Commissioners say the line must be a double line, as "otherwise a most unsatisfactory service for residential purposes would be afforded." A double line would cost considerably more than the estimate for the single line—fully £20,000 more than the present estimate.
 - (8.) The proposed railway, unless extended beyond the Burwood Road, will not meet the views of the residents of Bankstown and the residents of other localities in that direction.
 - (9.) Even with the proposed railway, Canterbury Racecourse, which is put forward in the evidence as a certain source of large revenue, will still be some distance from railway communication.
- (9.)
- Reasons unfavourable to the proposed railway.

The decision arrived at by the Committee.

8. The decision arrived at by the Committee is shown in the following extracts from the minutes of proceedings :—

On the 19th December, 1889 :—

Mr. Dowel moved—

“That the Committee proceed to consider the evidence with reference to the proposed railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road, with a view to reporting on the subject to the Legislative Assembly.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Tonkin, and passed.

Mr. Dowel moved—

“That the Committee approve of the construction of the proposed railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road, as referred to them by the Legislative Assembly.”

Mr. Tonkin seconded the motion.

The motion was negatived on the following division :—

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 6.
Dr. Garran,	Mr. Abbott,
Mr. Humphery,	Mr. Lackey,
Mr. Trickett,	Mr. Cox,
Mr. Tonkin,	Mr. Copeland,
Mr. Dowel.	Mr. O'Sullivan,
	Mr. Lee.

Mr. Lackey moved—

“That the Committee do not consider it expedient that the proposed railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out.”

Mr. Copeland seconded the motion.

The motion was passed on the following division :—

Ayes, 6.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Abbott,	Dr. Garran,
Mr. Lackey,	Mr. Humphery,
Mr. Cox,	Mr. Trickett,
Mr. Copeland,	Mr. Tonkin,
Mr. O'Sullivan,	Mr. Dowel.
Mr. Lee.	

On the 15th January, 1890 :—

Mr. Hurley moved—

“That this Committee are of opinion that the vote arrived at in regard to the proposed railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road, on 19th December, be rescinded with a view to its reconsideration.”

Mr. Garrard seconded the motion.

The motion was passed on the following division :—

Ayes, 7.	Noes, 6.
Dr. Garran,	Mr. Abbott,
Mr. Humphery,	Mr. Lackey,
Mr. Trickett,	Mr. Cox,
Mr. Garrard,	Mr. Copeland,
Mr. Tonkin,	Mr. O'Sullivan,
Mr. Dowel,	Mr. Lee.
Mr. Hurley.	

On Tuesday, 18th February, 1890 :—

Mr. Hurley moved—

“That the Committee proceed to consider the evidence on the proposed railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road, with a view to reporting on the subject to the Legislative Assembly.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Dowel, and passed.

Mr. Hurley moved—

“That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Dowel, and passed on the following division :—

Ayes, 7.	Noes, 6.
Dr. Garran,	Mr. Abbott,
Mr. Humphery,	Mr. Lackey,
Mr. Trickett,	Mr. Cox,
Mr. Garrard,	Mr. Copeland,
Mr. Tonkin,	Mr. O'Sullivan,
Mr. Dowel,	Mr. Lee.
Mr. Hurley.	

Published with this Report will be found the evidence given by the various witnesses examined, together with some appendices, and copies of the plans which were before the Committee during the inquiry.

J. P. ABBOTT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 2 April, 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM MARRICKVILLE TO THE BURWOOD ROAD.

TUESDAY, 19 NOVEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| The HONORABLE JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN). | |
| The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN. | JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. |
| The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY. | WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq. |
| The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX. | EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq. |
| The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT. | JOHN HURLEY, Esq. |

The Committee proceeded to consider the proposed railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

Joseph Barling, Esq., Under-Secretary for Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Vice-Chairman.*] You are the Under-Secretary for Public Works? Yes.
 2. You are aware of the project to construct a railway between Sydney and Liverpool duplicating the line? Yes.
 3. Are you acquainted with the proposed line between Marrickville and Burwood Road? Yes; and with the permission of the Committee I will give an account of the proposal:—The proposition before the Committee is for the construction of a length of railway of 4 miles 60 chains from Marrickville to the Burwood Road, and is part of a proposed line known as the St. Peters to Liverpool loop-line. I hand in a *précis* of the papers, which will give details I need not trouble the Committee with. The earliest reference to this proposal, so far as I can ascertain, occurs in the annual report of the Commissioner for Railways for the year 1882, in which is the following passage:—"I have called the attention of successive Ministers of Works for the last two years to the desirability of providing for the increased traffic on the southern line, and creating and developing additional suburban traffic by the construction of a line from Liverpool to meet the Illawarra line within the neighbourhood of Newtown. Such a line would open up a large area of country capable of cultivation, and would give an additional outlet for the overcrowded population of the city." From that time to the present a number of deputations have waited upon successive Ministers in support of the proposal, and, as the papers will show, a large amount of correspondence upon the subject has taken place. The present proposal, however, is limited to that portion I have already named, viz., 4 miles 60 chains. In other words, whatever may be done in the future, at present it is considered purely as a suburban line for the purpose of opening up a new residential suburb. I may mention that I am authorized by the Minister to say that it is not looked upon as the terminal point, but that, as population gathers round the new line, the necessity for extending it will be considered, and possibly, in time, the whole length of the line will be constructed. I think it is estimated that the cost of the line will be £30,000 per mile. Seeing that the land beyond is only sparsely populated, and can only be put down as agricultural land, the Minister does not think he is justified in proposing any further extension until the increase of population along the line has shown the necessity for it. The Minister also is not insensible to the argument which has been put forth, that the carrying out of the loop-line in its entirety will shorten the distance by 6 or 7 miles to Sydney. He thinks that that is an important point, although not of sufficient importance at present to justify the carrying out of the whole proposal.
- 3½. *Mr Trickett.*] This line is not to join the southern line, is it? Not at present; but ultimately it may be continued to Liverpool where it would join that line. The description of the line is as follows:—

J. Barling, Esq.
19 Nov., 1889.

MARRICKVILLE TOWARDS LIVERPOOL.

Portion—Marrickville to Burwood Road: Length, 4 miles 60 chains.

Estimated cost, £90,250, or £19,000 per mile, for a single line, exclusive of land and Compensation.

THIS proposed railway leaves the Illawarra line at 3 miles 23 chains 5 links at the southern end of the Marrickville Station, and proceeds almost due west through the municipalities of Marrickville and Canterbury. It crosses Illawarra Road at 4 miles; Cook's River, after passing through Canterbury, at 6 miles 11 chains; crosses the Canterbury Road at 6 miles 27 chains, and terminates near the Burwood Road at 8 miles 3 chains.

The cost of land and compensation will be a very important item of expenditure.

The following is the report of the Railway Commissioners on the proposed line:—

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, 29 December, 1888.

Proposed Loop-line of Railway—St. Peters to Liverpool—14 miles.

In accordance with the provisions of the "Public Works Act, 1888," section 13, we beg to report as under:—

Cost of Construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief estimates the cost of construction of the railway, with a double line of rails, exclusive of land and compensation,	£349,324
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J. Barling,
Esq.
19 Nov., 1889

<i>Annual Cost—</i>	
Interest on cost of construction, at 3½ per cent.	£12,226
Estimated cost of maintaining the permanent-way, per annum.....	£3,500
For first two years an additional cost of	800
Traffic Department expenses	1,820
Locomotive expenses	3,000
	9,120
Total annual cost	£21,346

Traffic Estimate—

The new passenger traffic which will accrue to the line will, for a long time, be very small, and would probably not exceed	£3,300
The goods traffic also would not exceed	1,900
	£5,200

As the bulk of the population is located within 5 miles of Sydney the marketing would be done in Sydney and carted direct. Bricks and firewood would to some extent be carted also.

The shortening of the route to and from Liverpool and places south thereof by 5 miles would cause an annual loss of	£17,423
And it is estimated that traffic would be diverted from Petersham and Ashfield to the extent of	1,714
	£19,137

The theory which has been put forth, that the construction of this line would avoid the necessity for increasing the carrying capacity of the existing line from Liverpool to Sydney, should not have any weight in the consideration of the question, as the construction of the line would only relieve the parent line to the extent of about four trains per day in each direction; and the quadrupling of the line out of Sydney to Homebush is required to accommodate the increasing purely residential service of trains; and the doubling of the line from Granville to Liverpool will be required for the development of the country along that route, which is being fairly rapidly settled.

If a branch line were constructed from St. Peters through Canterbury to a point 8 miles from Sydney (*i.e.*, 4 miles of new line), it would accommodate Canterbury and a fairly good district for residential traffic; and at the suggested terminus of the line we observe that two large properties have been laid out for the purpose of encouraging a suburban population.

The construction of a branch line to the point indicated is the only course we could recommend, which would have the effect of giving another suburban outlet for Sydney; and we believe if this were done the traffic created would probably pay working expenses, and in a few years it would doubtless be a good investment.

The line should take the exact route laid down for the proposed through line, so that when the proper time arrived an extension might be made, and probably the line ultimately carried through to Liverpool.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales has been hereunto affixed by the Railway Commissioners in the presence of,—	}	E. M. G. EDDY, (L.S.) Chief Commissioner.
		W. M. FEHON, (L.S.) Commissioner.
		CHARLES OLIVER, (L.S.) Commissioner.
		D. VERNON.

With regard to the necessity for forming new suburbs connected by railway with the metropolis, I should like to place before the Committee a comparison of the railway accommodation, which we have at present for Sydney and suburbs, with that of Melbourne, taking a radius of 10 miles from the centre of each city. Mr. Hayter, the Victorian Statistician, has very kindly furnished me with the present population of Melbourne and Suburbs. His letter I will hand in. He gives the population at 437,735. The present population of Sydney and suburbs is given as 366,684. Melbourne has a system of Suburban Railways (within the radius named) comprising a length of 74¼ miles with stations or calling places. This gives a population of 5,896 per mile of railway. Sydney and suburbs within the same radius is served by only 23 miles of railway with twenty-seven stations, which gives a population of 15,543 per mile. In other words Melbourne has more than three times the length of Suburban Railway than Sydney, and about three times the accommodation per 1,000 of the population. I venture to think this shows conclusively how very far we are behind the sister metropolis in this very essential adjunct of modern civilization, *viz.*, railway accommodation. Since that was written I have received a telegram from the Secretary of the Victorian Railways, with whom I have communicated as I wished to verify my figures. The telegram was put into my hands just as I was coming to give my evidence before the Committee, and it is as follows:—"Melbourne, November 19:—Your telegram only reached me this morning.—Miles of suburban line open 103; number of stations 95; number of platforms 175.—P. P. Labertouche." There is a discrepancy between the figures given by Mr. Labertouche and those which I have placed before the Committee. The difference is probably due to the fact that Mr. Labertouche has given me the whole length of the suburban line, whereas I have restricted my comparison to the 10-mile radius. To deal now with another branch of the argument, namely, the direct one as to whether the line is likely to pay, I will with the permission of the Committee read a report from Mr. Thompson, land valuer, as to the prospects of the line. I think his remarks are very suggestive, and to the point. He says:—

In compliance with your verbal instructions of the 18th instant, I have now the honor to submit the following report on the proposed railway extension from Marrickville, at 3 miles 23 chains on the Illawarra line, to the 8-mile mark, near Canterbury. The country through which this extension passes, is mostly poor as regards soil, timber, and grass, but notwithstanding these disadvantages, and the fact that it is at present rather sparsely populated, most of it is well adapted for building purposes.

The point of divergence of this extension from the Illawarra Railway is 72 chains north of Cook's River, and as it proceeds westerly it rapidly approaches that stream, crossing it in the old settlement of Canterbury 2 miles 68 chains from the point mentioned, and thence a further distance of 1½ miles to the proposed terminus at the Burwood Road, and about 60 chains south of Cook's River.

The country between the river crossing at Canterbury and the proposed terminus is much superior to that between Marrickville and that crossing. The former comprises several large subdivisions, notably Bridgewater, Golden Park, Silver Park, Campsie Park, and Harcourt, most of which appear to be lying dormant, probably awaiting the approach of the railway, or at least the certainty of its construction.

With a few conspicuous exceptions, the buildings in the vicinity of the line throughout are small and not numerous. The land from Marrickville to Meeks' Road is low and swampy, and occupied by Chinese gardeners; thence to Livingstone Road it is of better quality and improved by enclosure, clearing, and a few small buildings; thence to Canterbury, excepting Wm. Starkey's property, which is highly improved, the land is poor and barren, and but little of it has been enclosed. In the settlement of Canterbury some good land is taken, and west of the river the country is of much better quality, being good undulating open forest, with patches of fairly good orchard land. This improvement in the character of the country I believe continues as far as Liverpool.

The

The sparse population and large proportion of unimproved land on this line is in view of the creation of new suburbs, which will naturally follow railway communication, one of its principal advantages, as thereon thrifty mechanics, and men of moderate means will find an opportunity for investment, which is practically denied them on the existing lines by reason of the exorbitant price of land.

The cost of the land is not likely to exceed an average of £100 per acre, probably much less, but I have not had time to satisfy myself on this point.

J. B. THOMPSON,
Land Valuer.

J. Barling,
Esq.
19 Nov., 1889.

I may, perhaps, also be permitted to take as an argument the development of traffic which has taken place in connection with the Illawarra suburbs since the railway was open. The Commissioners for Railways have kindly supplied me with statistics, which I will hand in, and from which the following statement has been compiled.

At the Rockdale station the number of season tickets has increased from 16 in the year of the opening of the line, to 824 for the present year. In the same period the coaching receipts have increased from £44 4s. 11d. per mensem to £434 17s. 8d. The item of workmen's tickets issued at this station exhibits in a marked degree the progress of settlement. In the nine months ending 31 October, 1888, 5,496 of these tickets were issued, while in the corresponding months of the current year 7,873 have been issued, showing an increase in one year of 2,377 tickets.

At the Kogarah station the figures stand thus:—Season tickets issued in the opening year, 14; in the current year, 483. The coaching receipts at this station have increased during the same time from £46 4s. 4d. per mensem to £393 9s. 8d.; and the issue of workmen's tickets from 3,605 in 1888, to 5,605 in the current year.

At Hurstville the issue of season tickets has increased from 4 in the opening year, to 441 in 1889. In the same period the coaching receipts have increased from £138 8s. 4d., to £324 17s. 2d. per mensem; and the issue of workmen's tickets for 1889 shows an increase of £612, as compared with the previous year.

It appears also by returns furnished by the Town Clerks of the respective places, that at Rockdale the number of houses has increased from 199 at the time of the opening, to 972 in the present year. The number of the inhabitants at the time of the opening was 995, and the population is now estimated at 4,960. Hurstville also shows an important increase in the number of houses and in the population, but not in so marked a degree.

At Kogarah, at the time of the opening of the line, the population was under 1,000. It is now considerably over 2,000. In the interval over 200 new houses have been erected.

I am aware that it may be said, in reply to this argument, that there are at present a large number of empty houses in the existing suburbs, and further that we are not likely to repeat so soon in the suggested new line the rapid development which has taken place in the instances quoted. I think, however, a sufficient answer to this may be found in the present high value of land which obtains both in the Illawarra and Western suburbs.

I have received the following valuation from Messrs. Hardie and Gorman:—

1. Petersham	... ..	£5 to £20 per foot.
2. Ashfield	... ..	£5 to £25 "
3. Croydon	... ..	£3 to £15 "
4. Burwood	... ..	£4 to £50 "
5. Strathfield	... ..	£3 to £20 "

Higher prices, of course, are business sites close to stations. Building sites for "homes" are becoming more and more difficult to obtain, at even the minimum prices put down, except by going a distance away from railway communication.

I have also received from Messrs. Mills, Pile, and Wilson the following letter in reference to the value of land in that district.

Sir,—

"Sydney, November 19, 1889.

Referring to your request that we should furnish you with our ideas of the approximate values of Suburban Lands within a radius, say, of a quarter of a mile of the Railway, we beg to state them as under:—

Macdonaldtown	£2,000 per acre.	Strathfield	£1,500 per acre.
Newtown	£2,500 "	Homebush	£1,000 "
Stanmore	£2,000 "	St. Peters	£2,000 "
Petersham	£2,000 "	Marrickville	£1,000 "
Lewisham	£1,000 "	Tempe	£1,000 "
Summer Hill	£1,500 "	Arncliffe	£700 "
Ashfield	£1,500 "	Rockdale	£1,200 "
Croydon	£1,000 "	Kogarah	£1,200 "
Burwood	£2,000 "	Hurstville	£1,500 "

These are averages over a considerable area, immediately at the stations; in some of the localities mentioned land cannot be bought in the business spots under £25 to £40 per foot. Yours, &c.,

The Under Secretary, Department of Public Works.

MILLS, PILE, & WILSON."

It is clear, therefore, that the price is becoming too high to admit of the working classes and those with limited means getting away from Sydney, or living at places far distant from their work, and it must be admitted that the opening up of fresh land for residential purposes will be the means of reducing the average value of the land for a time, at all events, and thus enable the poorer classes to leave the crowded parts of the city to seek healthier and better surroundings in the suburbs. The Minister thinks this is a very important aspect of the case, and it is considered that the opening up of this new suburb will certainly, for the reasons I have given, be as successful as has followed similar action with other suburbs. The statistics I have given have been collected by direction of the Minister since he delivered his speech in Parliament in August last, when the proposal was referred to this Honorable Committee on his motion.

4. *Vice-Chairman.*] I take it that this work is now submitted to the Committee as a suburban line? At the present moment, with a view of eventually, perhaps, of carrying out the whole.

5. The Commissioners, I suppose, are opposed to the duplicate line, and in favour of the construction of this 4 miles of railway as a suburban line? Yes.

6. That is the report of the Committee to the Department? Yes; although the Minister thinks it a matter of importance that it will effect a saving of 7 miles as regards the through trains from Melbourne.

7. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is the reason of the abandonment of the proposed line from St. Peters? There are reasons which will be better given by the engineer.

8. *Mr. Trickett.*] In the *précis* there is a reference to one route the owners along which have offered to give the land free if a railway is constructed;—does that apply to this proposal? I should speak with some reserve on that point. The promise was on condition that the line was carried through to Liverpool. I see that that is mentioned again and again in the papers.

9. Have you any definite information? I could hand you in the papers so that the promises can be analysed.

10. Do they apply to this or to the St. Peters route? They would apply to the route then proposed. Mr. Deane, will show the various routes on the plan.

- J. Barling, Esq.
19 Nov., 1889.
11. *Dr. Garran.*] Were the promises made as to the other route exclusively? I have read a great number, and I see that it was a loop-line from St. Peters to Liverpool that was referred to.
12. Then the promises would not apply to this route? I think there would certainly be room for reconsideration in the matter. I would point out that it is really not so important now as it was then. Since that time the Public Works Act has been passed, and it provides that in estimating the value of the land taken for Public Works the increased value given by the works to the adjoining land must be taken as a set off against it. The Act was not in force when those promises were made. There was therefore, then, far greater reason to be careful on that point than there is at present. If the land has been cut up and sold in small allotments we cannot expect the small holders to give land for a railway.
13. You mean that you do not care about the promises now that that Act has been passed? No; I say that they are not of so much importance.
14. *Mr. Cox.*] Is any portion of the line between Marrickville and Burwood land, the owners of which promise to give their land if a railway was made? I think so; but I am not certain.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

- H. Deane, Esq.
19 Nov., 1889.
15. *Vice-Chairman.*] What are you? Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways.
16. Where is the point in the Burwood Road which this line crosses? About 8 miles from Sydney. The line—which was proposed as a loop, was to start from St. Peters, but Marrickville was found to be a better junction. That is why Marrickville has been substituted.
17. How many lines have there been surveyed? Taking all the deviations into account, about six, independent of a survey that was made from Arncliffe.
18. Was that made by the Department? No; outside of the Department.
19. Then the proposal to construct a line to Burwood Road is one which the Department recommends as the best? Yes. The first line that was surveyed by an officer of the Department was a line going through Belmore.
20. Have you traversed that line yourself? I have been over most of it—not over the whole length.
21. By whom was the survey carried out? I think that the surveyor was Mr. Kennedy, junior. Mr. Cumming improved the line afterwards.
22. Have you examined the proposed line between Marrickville and Burwood Road? Yes; all except a small portion of it.
23. Are you in a position to give any estimate of the cost of the land? No.
24. You could not give it approximately? No; but I understand that the land valuer has been over the line.
25. Are the engineering difficulties great on the proposed line? No; there is no great engineering difficulty. There will be a bridge over Cook's River at Canterbury. The country between Marrickville and Canterbury is rather rough, so that it could not be made a cheap line.
26. Being a suburban line, I suppose it would not be desirable to make it a cheap line? The object is to make it as direct a line as possible. A much cheaper line could be laid out if the original object of saving distance, and of having very good grades, were not adhered to. On this line which has been staked out the steepest gradient is 1 in 90. We tried to get a gradient of 1 in 100, but found it impossible without increasing the cost of the line enormously.
27. The estimate of £19,000 a mile for the construction of the line—by whom was that fixed? By the Department.
28. You think that the actual work could be done at a cost of £19,000 per mile? Yes.
29. That is without the compensation for the land? Yes.
30. Are the bridges intended to accommodate a double or a single line? A double line. There is only one large bridge on that portion—the bridge over Cook's River.
31. What is the estimate for that bridge? £9,274; and then there is immediately after that one over the Canterbury Road, which will cost £3,000.
32. *Mr. Trickett.*] The proposed line is part of the direct line to Liverpool? Yes.
33. And it is the straightest line procurable? Yes.
34. It appears almost a straight line from Marrickville to Liverpool? Yes.
35. Is this line from Marrickville to Burwood road recommended to us as a line by itself, or only as part of a through line to Liverpool? It is really part of the proposed through line to Liverpool.
36. Do you consider that it would be undesirable to construct a line only from Marrickville to Burwood road? I consider that it is a good proposal for a suburban line. The country there is very good country for residential purposes, and I believe that the line, if constructed, would, in a very short time, pay.
37. Even from Marrickville to Burwood road? Yes, or a little beyond. It must be remembered that on the other side of Cook's River there is a very small population indeed, and until very recently nearly the whole of the land there was bush land. A good deal of it has, within the last two or three years, been cleared and subdivided.
38. Then you look upon this proposal as a desirable line, even if it should go only to Burwood road? Yes.
39. Looking at it as a large question—as a proposal to construct a line which will ultimately form a duplicate line to Liverpool—do you think this is the best way to reach Liverpool? Yes, undoubtedly.
40. You think that the line is the most direct and the most easily constructed? Yes. It may be worth while to consider whether it could not be deviated slightly; but, practically, it would be the same line.
41. I ask that because I see from the plan that there are several rival routes through to Liverpool—do you distinctly state that of all those routes the one from Marrickville to Burwood road is the best to adopt in view of the ultimate construction of a line to Liverpool? I do.
42. You think that, besides being the best line to Burwood road, it will be the best commencement of a duplicate line to Liverpool? Yes. I think I might give a short history of these different routes, showing why they have not been carried out. The first line laid out was the one going through Belmore, and the Belmore residents were among those who first agitated for the line; that line followed up the continuation of the Canterbury Road, passed over the hill at Belmore, then dropped into the flat, then pursued a direct line, crossing George's River in two places, and on to Liverpool. There is a deviation from that line to the

H. Deane,
Esq.
19 Nov., 1889.

the north, to serve Bankstown. There is a proposal to avoid the crossing of George's River, and bring the line down to the Landsdown Creek, going round the back of George's River, to avoid a bridge. The southern route still remains the shortest. In 1885 I went over the southern line with Mr. Whitton. It goes by the name of Bell's line; and Mr. Whitton proposed afterwards that a practically straight line should be made between Canterbury and Liverpool, and this is the result. The first line was laid out almost a straight line, but it was improved and cheapened by putting in two curves.

43. How did that cheapen it? It made it conform more to the configuration of the country.
44. I think that a more northerly line was surveyed? Yes, the line passing through Lower Bankstown; but this permanently-staked line is the one which is being considered by the Department.
45. Of all these rival lines the department have come to the conclusion that the permanently staked line is the best? That is the best.
46. Is that only from an engineering point of view? It is the best for the principal object of the loop-line. It is the most direct, and has the best gradient. If a cheaper line is wanted it will be better to deviate it slightly.
47. How will that serve the various centres of population between Marrickville and Liverpool? There are no centres of population except Canterbury at present.
48. Is not Bankstown one? It is almost too far away. There is a proposal for a tram-way to go to Bankstown.
49. Then there are no centres of population between Marrickville and Liverpool where it would be desirable to diverge the line to serve? No. The only places where there is any population at all are Belmore and Bankstown.
50. Therefore this line will take a middle course between the two? Yes.
51. Can you give the Committee any information as to the owners of the property along the route of this permanently staked line, being willing to give the land for the railway free of cost? They were, in the first instance, but I am not aware that they would give it now.
52. I suppose there are documents in the office that would give us that information—are there any written promises? Latterly there have been no arrangements made.
53. As far as you are aware the land owners along the route are not willing to give the land free of cost? I do not think the residents on the permanently staked line have proposed to give it.
54. Have you any fixed opinion as to the desirability of constructing the line right through from Marrickville to Liverpool, apart from the engineering aspect of the question, for purposes of traffic or otherwise? I should say that the Commissioners would be better able to give information on that point than I am. I understand from the report of the Commissioners that they are not favourable to this line, as a loop-line, as affording any relief to the traffic, because only four trains a day each way would be saved. What is really wanted is the quadruplication of the existing line, so as to run the suburban traffic on different rails from those on which the main line traffic is carried.
55. *Dr. Garran.*] Can you tell me what is the objection to the most northerly of the routes that avoided the two bridges? It does not save the same distance.
56. It is a little longer between the two termini? One of the objects of the promoters was to save distance between Sydney and Liverpool? The more direct the line of course the shorter the distance. If you try to save expense and make curves in the line you will lengthen the distance.
57. How much longer was the more northerly line than the one you have staked? There is a distance of about a mile.
58. And against that you have the expense of two bridges? Yes.
59. What is the greatest elevation that your staked line gets above high water mark? 148 feet above high water.
60. What is the greatest elevation between Sydney and Parramatta? I could not say from memory.
61. Is the summit level of this line lower than that of Petersham? No; it is higher.
62. And the traffic from Liverpool would have to attain a greater elevation? Yes; but that I believe is held out as one of the inducements to construct the line, owing to the elevation being more favourable to settlement.
63. But although you have to get a higher summit level you have easier gradients all through? Easier gradients taking the whole line to Liverpool; but between Sydney and Parramatta the ruling gradient is 1 in 100.
64. All the way? Yes, between Sydney and Granville. There are two portions near Cabramatta with gradients of 1 in 66, but between Sydney and Granville the gradient is 1 in 100.
65. Is it 1 in 100 between Newtown and Petersham? Yes.
66. I understood you to say you were quite clear that this is the best line for the through route? Yes.
67. But you are not so clear that it is necessarily the best for the suburbs through which it passes? If I laid it out as a suburban line merely, and there was no object in saving distance, and no object in having the very best grades, some slight deviation might be adopted with the result of economy.
68. You could make a cheaper line? Yes.
69. Does this line best serve the intervening district? Yes; I think the general direction of the line is a good one.
70. But although it comes before us as a purely suburban line, you keep your eye fixed on the fact that it will ultimately become part of the proposed through line? I think that it is probable that it will.
71. You think that the Committee should keep that in view? Yes.
72. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] From your evidence, and the opinion of the Commissioners, it is apparent this line will not serve to any great extent to relieve the traffic on the southern line? No.
73. It has been said by the Commissioners that it will only take off four trains a day? Yes.
74. That being so do you think it is wise for the Commissioners to sanction a line 4 miles in length merely for its own traffic? I believe it to be the best thing for Sydney to have lines radiating in all directions, but, if possible, to make them economically, so as to allow population to settle in other places than those now available.
75. But could that not be done by tram-ways in a much cheaper way? It could be done perhaps much more cheaply, but the district would not be served in the same way—a tram-way running 8 miles into Sydney would be a very slow affair indeed.
76. But as it will be purely passenger traffic could it not be accommodated by a tramway? We have nothing so long as 8 miles in tram-ways.

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77. Does not a tram-way line run out to Dulwich Hill in this direction? Yes.
78. How long is that tram-way? That line stops short of what would be on this line the 5-mile point.
79. What length is the Dulwich line from Sydney? I do not remember exactly.
80. Considering that a portion of the route is largely served by the Dulwich Hill tram-way, would not the tram-way be sufficient? Only a small portion is served by the Dulwich Hill tram-way. The parts on the Cook's River side are not served by it.
81. I notice in this report that the cost of the Landsdown Creek route is the lowest;—even lower than that of the permanently staked line? The length is 14 miles 4 chains, and the estimated cost £346,393? Yes.
82. And the estimated cost of the permanently staked line now before us is £349,344? Yes.
83. And that is 14 miles long;—only 4 chains shorter than the Landsdown Creek line? To go round by Landsdown Creek would be more economical than to go straight across George's River.
84. Still you think the advantages of the direct route outweigh the extra cost? Certainly; if the line is taken on to Liverpool.
85. If the line is taken on to Liverpool by the permanently staked line it will still have to cross the George's River twice? Yes. If you go round the bend of George's River, you will certainly add a mile to the length of the line.
86. So that in crossing the George's River twice, you would have to erect two expensive bridges to reach Liverpool? Yes. There is a question with regard to the estimate of this line, in regard to which I would like to read a report which I wrote to the Minister of Public Works. There was a deputation complaining that the estimate was such a large one. The members of the deputation stated that they were quite sure that the line could be made for £200,000. This is a report I wrote to the Minister of Public Works on the 27th September, 1889. I promised to look into the matter and furnish the Minister with some *data*. I pointed out at the time, that if it were not necessary to save as much as possible in distance, and not necessary to have the good grades we had laid down, the line could be very much cheapened. I will read the report:—

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch,
Sydney, 27 September, 1889.

Marrickville (St. Peters) to Liverpool.

When this railway was first proposed, one of the main arguments put forth by the promoters, was the saving of distance between Sydney and Liverpool, and the advantage that would thus arise in conducting the traffic between Sydney and Melbourne.

In order that this advantage might be realised to the fullest extent, it was clear that the railway should be made for a double line of rails, follow the most direct course, and have easy grades for working the express traffic. With this end in view a route was ultimately selected, giving a saving in distance of $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and a ruling grade of 1 in 90; it involved, however, very heavy earthworks and two crossings of George's River. The estimated cost, exclusive of land and compensation, was £393,870. Some modifications were afterwards introduced, and a new estimate was made (dated 21st December, 1888), amounting to £349,343.

As I had reason to believe that the estimate could be still further reduced, I had it carefully revised, with the result that it now stands at £308,546.

This is for the line as at present laid out for a double line of rails, with heavy earthworks, a ruling grade of 1 in 90, and two crossings at George's River, and I do not believe that a line could be found which, under the same conditions, will cost appreciably less.

If, however, the saving in distance is not an object, I will undertake to lay out a line which will cost very much less, but will answer all the purposes of suburban traffic.

I have examined carefully this question, and am prepared to state that a reduction to the extent of about £78,000 can easily be effected, leaving the estimate standing at, say, £230,000.

Acting Engineer-in-Chief to Under-Secretary for Works.

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87. In face of the fact that the main line between Sydney and Liverpool is to be quadrupled, and in face of the opinion of the Commissioners that only four trains a day can be accommodated by this loop line, do you think it is probable that this proposed line will be taken on from the Burwood Road to Liverpool? The way I look at it is this—that this proposed portion to the Burwood Road makes a good suburban line, and when population increases in the district it may be carried for 2 or 3 miles further, and so it will gradually approach Liverpool. When the gap is very much reduced it would seem to be a very natural thing to bridge it over, and those would be the circumstances under which the whole line, I think, would be completed.

88. Then you consider the line would not be justified at the present time in going right through to Liverpool? No, I do not.

89. But it may be justified if population increases between Burwood Road and Liverpool? Yes. If, as a suburban line, this line were continued, and population sprang up, and it were worked into Sydney, and there only remained the gap I speak of, it would be a very natural step to complete the line between those two points.

90. *Mr. Humphrey.*] Is it intended that this shall be a suburban branch line? Yes, at present.

91. Engines and carriages will connect at Liverpool? No, they will run right through from Sydney.

92. You spoke of some deviations which would lessen the cost of construction—will you state what the difference in length will be if those deviations are adopted? To Burwood Road it would be practically the same—it would not make more than 5 or 6 chains difference at the most.

93. Then there would be no appreciable reduction of cost? Yes, there would be some reduction.

94. What will be the cost of the line between Marrickville and Burwood Road as staked—the cost of construction without resumption? The estimate is £90,250.

95. How much a mile is that? About £19,000.

96. Why is the construction so costly? It is by no means level country. That part crossing the George's River* is the worst of the whole route.

97. But this is not the George's River—this is the Cook's River? Well it is the roughest part of the country.

98. After leaving Marrickville how does the proposed line pass? It crosses the Illawarra Road at the $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles peg, then it strikes for a point a little to the right of the bend of Cook's River. At 5 miles it strikes to the north of the bend at Cook's River. After leaving the 5-mile peg it twists around a bend.

99. Do you come into Canterbury near the river? Yes, close to the river.

100. Where will the 7-mile peg be? About three-quarters of a mile beyond the bridge.

101. Then your line is to the north of the Belmore Road? Yes.

102.

* NOTE (on revision):—I should have said Cook's River.

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102. Could a less expensive route than that be found? No, it would be practically the same route, but some slight deviation might be made with sharper curves, but it would be chiefly in altering the gradients that a saving could be effected.
103. Where will there be heavy cuttings along that line? At about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles there would be a cutting 32 feet deep, and another one 34 feet.
104. That is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Sydney? Yes.
105. That will be very near Marrickville then? Rather more than a mile from Marrickville. After crossing over the flat at Marrickville, on low ground, you begin to rise, and there are two spurs which run up as prominent features in the landscape, and which there is no means of avoiding. They are too sharp to get round, and they are high, and the depression in between involves a bank of 40 feet in depth. The line winds round by the river, and you cannot avoid a considerable amount of earthworks.
106. Then, it is owing to the costly earthworks that this route will be expensive? Yes; beyond the crossing of Cook's River there is a large cutting.
107. The cost of working the railway will be considerably less than the working expenses of a tramway? Yes.
108. I think we have evidence here that the tram expenses were £4,000 a mile, against £19,000 per mile of railway;—do you not think that is a strong reason for constructing a railway instead of recommending the construction of a tram? Yes; but I think apart from the question of working, the distance is too great to work a tram-line for the convenience of the public. You can run trains much more expeditiously.
109. If a tram-line were constructed the distance would only be 4 or 5 miles from Burwood to Marrickville Road? Yes. I understand you mean you would not propose it as an extension of the Dulwich Hill tram.
110. *Mr. Hurley.*] Is it your province to estimate the revenue in relation to the cost of construction? No.
111. Do you know the estimated cost of the line right through? Yes.
112. Will it be as laid down by the Railway Commissioners—£349,000? That was an estimate furnished to them by the Construction Department, and which I referred to as having been made at the end of last year, but I have had that revised since then, and have cut out about £40,000.
113. And the cost of the two bridges—an estimate was submitted to the Minister that the bridges would cost £100,000 to £150,000? They would not cost that. That was for the original position of the crossings, but we found very much better crossings after that, with very much less flooded land.
114. You have not taken the payable results of the line into consideration? No.
115. That rests with the Traffic Department? Yes.
116. But in the construction of this portion of the road, you have had in view an ultimate extension to Liverpool? I think the best way of putting it is that this is a portion of the line laid out to connect Liverpool.
117. And the object of that was to relieve the present heavy strain on the Southern line, as well as to accommodate the large numbers residing on the proposed construction? I believe the late Commissioner considered that it was.
118. That was the inducement for the construction of the line? Yes.
119. You have only to see that the line is constructed on the route selected? Yes.
120. You don't take into consideration the payable results of the line, or as to whether a more favourable route could be secured? Certainly, as to a more favourable route.
121. Looking at the map would it not be to the interests of the country to save the expense of those two bridges of £100,000 to £150,000, and have a detour? In my report to the Minister I pointed out that if the line were carried round and avoided the bend, we should save £78,000 on the newer estimate.
122. Then you recommend that, do you? If a cheap line is required.
123. But you recognise that the cheapest is not always the best? Yes.
124. But taking into consideration the vast amount of money which could be saved by that detour, would it not be advisable to put down a first class line, considering that the distance by means of the detour is so little more? It makes a mile difference.
125. If you can save £70,000 by a detour of a mile do you not think you would be justified in recommending it? Yes.
126. Therefore you are favourable to that detour as it will only increase the length by a mile? I may say that I am, certainly. I will give you the estimated cost of the bridges, because I should like very much to correct that statement. That was made when the line was originally thought of, and when as good a crossing of the river had not been found. The first crossing of the river is estimated at £24,838, and the second crossing of the river, which is a much shorter one, is only £10,706, or a total, the two together, of about £35,000. Flooded land is almost entirely avoided there. The bridges altogether, including the Cook's River Bridge, and some other openings which would be necessary, amount to £52,597.
127. And that may be saved by an additional mile being added to the length of line by that detour? £35,000 may be saved.
128. Looking at this document which has been laid on the table in regard to the proposed loop line—St. Peters to Liverpool—can you remember when you received instructions with regard to those surveys, what those instructions were—the inducements which led the Government to submit the instructions to you—whether it was as laid down in the statement on the third page, to the effect that large industries had been established in the locality, and would bring traffic on to the line, and that the construction, moreover, would give work to the unemployed? That was the statement of the deputation, I suppose.
129. Do you remember when you received your instructions whether those were the reasons assigned why those surveys should be carried out? There were no reasons given.
130. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do I understand you to say that by making this detour you save the construction of those two bridges—one to cost £24,813, and the other to cost £10,706? Yes.
131. And by so doing you lengthen the construction by 1 mile? Yes.
132. If you lengthen the construction by a mile it costs £19,000, and you have to deduct that from the £35,000, so that you only actually save £16,000? Yes, but a line through that portion of the country would not cost £19,000 a mile.

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133. It would cost less? Yes. The portion under consideration is, as regards earthworks, the most costly portion of the whole line. The end part is, comparatively, through flat country, and would not cost so very much.
134. Could you give us an idea of what the remainder of the line would cost after getting over this difficult part—from the Burwood Road to Liverpool? Yes. Deducting the bridges, I do not think it would make very much difference.
135. Then there would only be a saving of something like £16,000 or £17,000? Yes.*
136. Under those circumstances would you prefer going round that mile than going direct? Not if the present line with the gradients is adopted. Supposing we make a cheaper suburban line it would be desirable, but if the present line is adopted, with the view to quick running of express trains, and good grades, it would be better to go straight across the rivers, and not avoid the bridges.
137. Do you not think, although at the present time, the traffic would not warrant this loop line being constructed, it will only be a short time before it will do so? I believe it would prove to be a benefit in the future. If not a necessity, it would be a convenience.
138. Taking that into consideration, don't you think it would be advisable to have a direct route across the bridges? Yes; I do under the circumstances.
139. With regard to the first part of the line under consideration—do you believe, without taking into consideration the remainder of the line from Burwood Road to Liverpool—that that portion, if constructed, is warranted by population, and that it will in all probability pay working expenses and interest on capital? I am quite sure that it would in a very short time. I am sure that as far as Canterbury, very good returns would be obtained, and I am sure in a few years time, the piece beyond would prove a very good investment.
140. This estimate, of course, is for a double and not a single line? No, a single line.
141. Do you think £19,000 a mile is a very high estimate for a single line? I cannot help it—it is just how the country happens to lie.
142. What would be the difference in the cost of a single and a double line? If you made the excavation for a double line, it would perhaps cost from £8,000 to £10,000 more. The permanent way and ballasting, which would also be affected, would be £10,000—that is to say, you can make a double line for about £20,000 more than the present estimate. That would be £110,000 on 4 miles and 16 chains.
143. The estimated cost is £90,000 now? Yes, £90,250. There can be no doubt about what is required. These quantities have been taken out from actual survey. There are approximately 240,000 cubic yards of cuttings taken to embankment; and if tenders were called for, the price of tenders put in might be lower than what we have here, in which case that sum of money would not be required, but the quantities approximately would be the same.
144. Supposing this line were constructed as a single line, would there be any material difference in making it into a double line afterwards? No; I do not think it would make very much difference.
145. *Mr. Douel.*] When was the survey of the line from Marrickville to Burwood Road staked and completed? *Mr. Kennedy's* survey was completed in 1886 to the best of my recollection. *Mr. Cumming's* improvement of the line with deviations was made last year.
146. The length of the whole line to Liverpool you estimate at 16 miles and some chains? No; it terminates at 16 miles and some chains from Sydney, but the whole length of the line to be constructed would be about 13½ miles.
147. Have you any information about the line which was surveyed by *Mr. Sanderson*? I believe we have had some in the office, but I have not seen it.
148. You could not say what length of construction that would involve;—about 6 miles, and that would give you this connection straight to Liverpool? Yes.
149. Have you any idea of what the estimated cost of that particular portion would be? I do not believe it was estimated.
150. The Department has no information on the subject? I have not seen any.
151. *Mr. O'Sullivan* has asked you some questions in reference to the construction of a tram-line—do you think that the public convenience would be served by the construction of a line from Marrickville to Burwood Road? No, I am decidedly against a tram-line. It would be 5 miles in length, and that would mean 50 minutes travelling, apart from the railway journey, whereas if you run the trains direct out you would run into Sydney in half that time.
152. But if a tram-way were constructed would not the public convenience be better served, and more facilities afforded for the residents of that particular district, not taking into consideration the speed? I do not see how they would.
153. Are there any engineering difficulties in the construction of a tram-line from Marrickville to Burwood? I have not considered the question. I expect there would be some steep hills, but I have no doubt they could be got over. I believe there are some steep hills in Canterbury which might be trouble some.
154. You estimate the cost of the construction of this railway at about £19,000 per mile? Yes.
155. What would the cost of a single tram-line be? I daresay, making allowances for cutting down the roads where the gradients are too steep, it could be done for about £5,000 per mile.
156. What would be the cost of a double tram-line? It would cost about £8,500 or £9,000 per mile.
157. A tram-line could be constructed for half the money which would be required to construct a railway? Yes.
158. Would that involve any resumption of land, or would no resumption be required? It might at some of the corners.
159. But the resumptions would not be a large item? No.
160. In your proposed railway are there any level crossings? Yes. It is impossible to avoid them.
161. Do you not, as a professional man, consider level crossings very objectionable in railway construction? If they can be avoided they ought to be avoided.
162. Are they not objectionable on the score of danger, and also on the score of cost involved in looking after them? Yes, they may be objectionable on the score of danger where the road traffic is large, or where there is not proper supervision, but of course, proper supervision can be provided.
163. You are aware that the Commissioners have stated that if a line is constructed to Liverpool, they do not anticipate more than four trains going over that particular length in one day? Yes. 164.

* NOTE (on revision):—The estimate for the Burwood section is for a single line; that for the complete loop line to Liverpool is for a double line.

164. Therefore they could have no intention of diverting the main traffic from the line for the purpose of easing the traffic on the existing line? Really, I do not quite understand their report in that particular.
165. Supposing that is to be the railway policy carried out by the Commissioners, and that no portion of the main traffic is to be diverted upon this particular loop-line;—do you not think the interests of the public generally would be better served by the construction of a tram-line than by the construction of a railway-line—both on the score of cost and general convenience? No; I do not think so. In considering whether this line should be made or not, I should leave out of consideration altogether the question of connecting with Liverpool. I believe, as a suburban line, it is a good one. I believe that tramways for long distances are altogether inadequate to carry the traffic.
166. This would be only 4 miles, would it not? But there is the extra distance from Marrickville into Sydney.
167. That is already provided for by the existing lines? Yes; but still there is that distance to travel over, and then you have to break at Marrickville, and again when you get into the tramway at Redfern.
168. Have you been over the whole of the line from Burwood Road to Liverpool? I have not walked over every inch of the road.
169. But you are familiar with the proposed route? I think I may say I am.
170. Are you aware whether any surveys and subdivisions have lately been made on that particular route? I believe they have.
171. If the line should be constructed from Marrickville direct to Liverpool at some future time, do you think it desirable that the Government should take steps to immediately resume what land would be necessary, before it changes to smaller holders? I think the Government should, if possible, get an undertaking from the residents along the line to give the land.
172. With regard to those who would not give the land free of cost to the Government—would you recommend that any other land which was intervening should be resumed? Do you mean beyond the Burwood Road?
173. Yes; having in view the probable construction of the line to Liverpool, which you say you recommend? If the Government make up their mind eventually to continue the line to Liverpool it would be a very wise step to take.
174. *Mr. Cox.*] You only advocate this line as a suburban line as far as Burwood Road? Yes.
175. How far is Burwood Road from the Burwood station on the Western line? The term is very misleading. Burwood Road is merely a local appellation. The Burwood Road in Burwood does not connect with the Burwood Road, which this particular proposed line of railway crosses.
176. How far are they apart? It would be nearly 3 miles from Burwood Station.
177. You have expressed yourself that you are altogether against the construction of tramways for public convenience? I think I hardly expressed myself in that way.
178. Would it not be possible to meet all the wants of the people upon this proposed route from St. Peters to Burwood Road, by giving them one, two, or more lines, and connecting them with the main Western line? The people who are resident at present along the line, I have no doubt, would be served well enough by a branch tramway from one or other of the railways, but in view of future settlement I am sure that a railway would be the best and most paying thing. A much larger and better population would spring up where a railway is constructed, and they could get rapidly into town without changing.
179. Are you aware that when the tramway was constructed to Waverley it caused an enormous influx of people into that neighbourhood? Yes; but of course there are no changes, and there is not the distance.
180. You are aware that there is a tram from Kogarah to Lady Robinson's Beach? Yes; the whole length of the tram is only a mile.
181. It is only 3 miles from Bridge Road to Burwood? That is a deal of difference.
182. Then we have such a thing as a tram-feeder to the Southern line from Campbelltown to Camden, and the people seem to be content with it? I expect they would like a railway if they could get it.
183. In calculating the expense, you have only taken the actual cost of construction—£19,000 a mile—irrespective of resumption, which might cost as much more? I do not think so, from what I have heard. The land valuer would be able to give you information about that. The resumption on the railway would not be such a very large amount.
184. *Mr. Humphery.*] Could you avoid the construction of a bridge over Cook's River by starting a line below instead of on the Sydney side of the present bridge? —
185. That would save £10,000 in a bridge, would it not? It would not serve the same district; it would be a different line altogether.
186. What is the next station to Marrickville—St. Peters? St. Peters is on this side of Marrickville.
187. What is the first station? Erskineville. Tempe is on this side of Cook's River, and Arncliffe on the other.
188. It would not be necessary to start as low down as Arncliffe? Yes; you would have to start on this side of Arncliffe, a little beyond Cook's River bridge on the river.
189. As a suburban line would that be suitable? What I say is that it would not be the same line. You could not look upon one as a substitute for the other.
190. Is there any particular reason for constructing the line from Marrickville to Burwood Road instead of from Arncliffe to Burwood Road? There is a considerable population at Canterbury which the present proposed line serves.
191. Would not the line from Arncliffe to Burwood Road serve Canterbury? No.
192. How close to Canterbury would it go? It would be about $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles from Canterbury. In fact it would be further off than Canterbury is from Ashfield station at the present time.
193. What would be the difference between Arncliffe and Liverpool? About 13 miles.
194. And by the proposed route? About the same distance. The proposed route is $13\frac{1}{4}$ miles.
195. So that the route will be shorter? I think it will be about the same, but I have not the exact distance.
196. Is it your opinion that, for a suburban line, it will be better to start as you propose from Marrickville, instead of from any other point? I believe so.
197. Of course you know Marrickville is at present served by tram and railway? Yes. There is a consideration, which I think I should point out, with regard to the substitution of a tramway to the Burwood Road.

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- Road. It could not be so well extended as a railway. Supposing it were desirable to make 5, or even 3 miles of a branch tram line, it would make a very long tram line indeed if you wanted to carry it on, and it would be objectionable on that account.
198. But treating it in regard to the subsequent extension to Liverpool? Not merely to Liverpool, but the subsequent extension to serve the population which may spring up between Belmore and Bankstown before you get to the crossing of the George's River, where a good deal of it is good country for settlement.
199. Have you any doubt that Marrickville is the best starting point for this proposed line? No; Marrickville is the best, I believe.
200. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] If the Dulwich Hill tramway were extended out to the Burwood Road, the streets or roads could be utilised, and there would therefore be no cause for resumption? No, except at some sharp corners.
201. And the same remark would apply to a tramway taken from Burwood, and running over in the direction where the terminus would be? Yes.
202. *Mr. Dowel.*] How many stations or stopping-places do you propose to erect between Marrickville and Burwood Road? I think that has been decided; I should say three.
203. Taking into consideration the great depth of the cuttings and the heavy embankments, would there be any great difficulty of access by the residents who are settled now, and who will in all probability settle on the land between Marrickville and Burwood Road? No.
204. Would it not be much more convenient for the residents of this particular district to be able to step into a tram, than to have to go some considerable distance to get to these three stopping-places which you refer to? I think you might look at it in this way: Supposing the present suburban line were taken up and the tramway put down, would the residents like it. Go where you will a railway is always preferred to a tram line. Is not that a fair way of putting it?
205. I think not. Referring to the question put to you by Mr. Humphery, in reference to the construction of the tramway to Waverley, do you, as a railway engineer, think the people would be as well served by the construction of a railway from Waverley to Sydney as they are at present? I am sure a great many of the Waverley residents would prefer a railway, and they have told me so.
206. They would have to have a great number of stopping-places, and I do not think the public would be so well served as now? A tramway serves a different purpose. A tramway has many advantages. It has the advantage that you can stop at any street corner, or where you like; but you cannot stop a railway except at recognized stopping-places.

Joseph Graham, Esq., Mayor of Marrickville, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Graham, Esq.
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207. *Vice-Chairman.*] You are Mayor of Marrickville? Yes.
208. Have you been a resident of Marrickville for a number of years? About twenty-six years.
209. You are residing there still? I have been living there over twenty years.
210. You were there before there was a tramway or railway? Yes; or 'bus.
211. Now you have both railway and tramway communication? We have.
212. Are you cognizant of the route of the proposed railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road? Yes.
213. What is the Burwood Road? I am not quite certain about it. I know Chapel Road better.
214. That is not what used to be called the Punch Bowl Road? No; I am not quite so well versed in the locality after leaving Canterbury. I was over the line with the late Hon. John Sutherland exclusively. He would not go with anyone else for the reason that I owned no land, and was not interested in it in any way.
215. Then you have no land beyond where you reside yourself? None whatever.
216. Nor are you interested in land? None whatever.
217. Were you made aware of the different routes proposed by the authorities for the construction of the line from Marrickville, or from the Illawarra line to Liverpool? There is not much until you get across Cook's River at Canterbury, and then there is what is known as Bell's line, diverging in a sort of small circle, and another is known as Kennedy's line, which runs in a perfect straight line.
218. Population has increased very rapidly about there since your time? Very much.
219. And there is a large population there now? Very large.
220. The population extends towards Punch Bowl and Burwood Road? Yes.
221. And Dulwich Hill? Dulwich Hill has become quite a town.
222. And they have a tramway to Dulwich Hill now? They have an extension to the upper part of Dulwich Hill.
223. Was there an agitation for a tramway service from the Ashfield station towards Druiitt Town? Not that I am aware of. There was a hint that if a railway were made to Cook's River a branch line would run through Croydon.
224. Is it your opinion that the population, and the traffic which would belikely to arise would be sufficient to justify the Government in constructing this line to Burwood Road? Most undoubtedly.
225. You are aware that it is a rather expensive locality through which to construct a railway owing to the configuration of the earth, and the heavy nature of the country? Yes; until you cross Cook's River, but not more than the one to Hurstville, and there is a very great deal more encouragement on this line in the shape of population, and the suitability of the soil for settlement.
226. Is land there very valuable? Not particularly valuable. The ground is nicely undulating for drainage purposes. It is not too abrupt, but there is plenty of fall.
227. Is it your opinion that a railway would be necessary, or that a tramway would provide the necessary means of communication for the travelling public? My idea of the trams is that they will never pay. The wear and tear is so great that the railway is the cheapest and most suitable, and will be the best for the people and the Government. Motor tramways will never pay on account of the wear and tear. Cable trams might pay, because there is not so much wear and tear.
228. You are aware that the tramways in one sense give more accommodation than the railways—they stop at street corners, and in many places where a railway would not? There is no doubt of that; but judging from Petersham, when I knew it first, there were about two passengers to each train. Now there are nearer 500.
229. Have you ever seen the tramway between Campbelltown and Camden? I have been upon it.

230. Are you aware it is paying well? I think it is an abortion of a thing. Like all cheap things I think it will never pay.
231. But the evidence is that it is paying? The gradients to my mind are very steep, and the wear and tear must be very great.
232. Do you know the estimated cost of the railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road? I have heard it.
233. Have you heard the engineer's estimate of the cost? I have heard the former one, but that is some years ago.
234. The estimate of this single line is £19,000 a mile? I have no doubt that until it crosses Cook's River, it will be very expensive.
235. And this is without compensation for land? Yes.
236. I suppose the people there are not philanthropic enough to give land for the purposes of the line? They are on the other side, I understand, but you could hardly expect it in Marrickville, because the divisions there are smaller.
237. Do you think they would give the land if the railway were extended on towards Liverpool? They have offered to do so.
238. But some of them have withdrawn their offers, I think? That I cannot say, but I know they were very free at one time, and I don't see any reason why they should not be free now.
239. Would the terminus be nearer Ashfield or Burwood Station? I think it would be nearer Croydon.
240. How far would it be from there? About $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 miles.
241. How far would it be from the point the tramway reaches at Dulwich Hill? That I could hardly tell, I think it would be pretty well on to 5 miles.
242. Would it be so much? Yes; it is over one mile from Dulwich Hill to the Cook's River, and I think it would be 3 or $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles more to that part; I may be mistaken.
243. Then you think, judging from the present population, and the probability of further population springing up there, it would be desirable thing to construct this line? I am almost sure of it.
244. And you would be strongly in favour of a railway instead of a tramway? Decidedly.
245. *Mr O'Sullivan.*] Are you aware that if this line is constructed from St. Peters to Liverpool, which is virtually the same starting place, it will cost £349,324, without land resumption? This is a question I can hardly answer, because both ends of this line unfortunately are where the heavy expenses will be—over George's and Cook's Rivers.
246. Are you aware that is the estimate of the Railway Commissioners? I am not aware of the estimate.
247. Are you aware that the Commissioners estimate that the total annual cost of working it will be £21,346? No; I am not.
248. Are you aware that the traffic estimate for the line from St. Peters to Liverpool is only £5,200 per annum? No; I am not.
249. If these figures are correct, they would show a loss of £16,140 on the annual working of the line? That may be; but I understood it was only to be a suburban railway.
250. I am treating this as the line from St. Peters to Liverpool, which it may become. We bear this fact in view in recommending or disapproving of the line—I am treating it upon the estimate formed by the Commissioners as to the cost of the line from St. Peters to Liverpool;—are you aware it would show a loss of £16,140 per annum? If the line is constructed to Liverpool it will carry the whole suburban traffic.
251. The total annual cost, as you are aware from this estimate, would be £21,346 per annum. The total income would be £5,200, leaving a loss of £16,146. Then we have these other losses, including the shortening of the route to Liverpool and places further south—£17,423, and it is estimated that traffic would be diverted from Petersham and Ashfield to the extent of £1,714, making a total of £19,137. If that be added to the £16,140 loss on the annual working, it gives you a total loss of £35,277? Of course these figures are gone into by gentlemen who know about them, but I am speaking of the line going to Burwood Road or Chapel Road, and making it a suburban line—I have no doubt whatever about its being a financial success. The question of its going on to Liverpool is a different one, and I have nothing to do with that. Liverpool is provided with a good railway and ought to be satisfied.
252. Under the circumstances, and with the Railway Commissioners figures before you, do you think it would be wise to recommend this line? I should not say so to Liverpool, but as a suburban line.
253. Treating it as a suburban line, you have a tramway to Dulwich Hill? Yes.
254. That is part of the railway to Burwood Road? Yes.
255. As a suburban line it could only be a passenger line—do you not think passengers could be served materially well by a tramway line that would not cost anything like the railway, and could be worked more cheaply? I am not engineer enough to go into that question—the undulation of the ground would make it very expensive to go even up and down through Canterbury.
256. Do you think, under the circumstances, we would be justified in recommending a suburban railway to a district that is already to be served by a tramway line? But this district would not be served by the present line, because it goes from half a mile to a mile from the tramway.
257. But still a portion of the district would be served? A very small portion.
258. And the other could be served by a tramway from Burwood to the end of the Burwood Road? In the meantime Canterbury would be just where it is now.
259. Supposing you take tramway on from Dulwich Hill through Canterbury to Burwood Road? That would give them a better access than they have now.
260. Do you not think that would be sufficient for the people, in view of the enormous loss that must ensue from a railway? I cannot say. If they went as far as the Commissioners have resolved on to Burwood Road, there would not be that loss. There are about 5,000 people in Marrickville alone who would use it.
261. These figures would not apply to the line to go to Burwood Road—I only apply them from St. Peters to Liverpool, to show the enormous loss every year, and no doubt a portion of the loss would apply to the line as far as Burwood Road. Bearing that in mind would we be justified in recommending that line of railway? I cannot say if the Commissioners could possibly have known the populations there, and the probable advantages to be derived from such a fine fresh water stream as exists there. There is a racecourse there, and at the last races there were 8,000 people there, and they have races every fortnight. There would be an enormous passenger traffic, and there is some of the finest brickmaking earth there to be had in the Colony. There would be a great deal of building also going on if the Committee recommended and Parliament approved of this line.

J. Graham,
Esq.
19 Nov., 1889.

WEDNESDAY, 20 NOVEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

The HONORABLE JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN.)

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

The Hon. J. H. Carruthers, Esq., M.P., Minister of Public Instruction, sworn, and examined:—

- Hon. J. H. Carruthers, Esq., M.P.
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- 262-3. *Vice-Chairman.*] You are one of the members for Canterbury, and at the present Minister of Public Instruction? Yes.
264. The proposed railway will be in your electorate? Yes; entirely.
265. In the early part of the project you took some interest in it? Yes; up to the present time I have taken interest on behalf of my constituents.
266. You know the locality very well? Very well indeed.
267. You know the route that it is proposed to take? Yes; and also two or three routes which have been proposed in times gone by as alternative routes.
268. You are aware that originally there were two or three projects to connect Liverpool and Sydney? Yes.
269. And that the project now before the Committee is simply a suburban railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road? Yes.
270. Which may form in time a portion of the duplicate line to Liverpool? A portion of what they call the loop-line to Liverpool.
271. Is the population pretty large about there? There is a fairly large population between Marrickville and Cook's River, and then when you cross the river it diminishes considerably, though it is not what you would call sparse.
272. Is the population sufficiently numerous to justify the Government in constructing this line? If you will allow me I will give an instance on which I base my experience and my evidence. I have been living for a considerable time on the Illawarra line. I went to live there seven or eight years ago. At that time at Kogarah the population was far more sparse than it is now, at even the extreme portion of this line, in the proportion of about one to three; that is to say, the proposed line at its worst portion, as far as population is concerned, is now three times as thick as it was on the Illawarra line when I went to reside there. The whole traffic of that district was conducted by two omnibuses, which ran once a day, coming into Sydney at 8 o'clock in the morning, and going out again at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The day the Illawarra line was opened they had to put on thirteen trains to accommodate the traffic, and that has increased up to something like thirty trains. These trains are crowded each trip sometimes by from 300 to 500 passengers. A similar development, I anticipate, will take place in this locality, because there is no point of vantage the Illawarra line possesses over this portion of the country, and on that assumption I consider that you can form a fairly good conclusion that if the Illawarra line, as far as Hurstville, by its suburban traffic has justified its construction, then there is just as much data with regard to the proposed extension as there was with regard to that, and as there now exists.
273. You think that the extension to Burwood Road would receive an amount of traffic equal to that which is now accommodated by the suburban line towards George's River? I think it would be almost as popular. It would not be quite so popular, because George's River is a holiday resort, but against that we have the Canterbury Park racecourse close to the terminus, which attracts large numbers of racegoers. And even admitting that it would be hardly as popular perhaps as the Illawarra line there would be very little distinction between the two as regards settlement. The country there is very good; it is held by small owners chiefly, and the tide of settlement would go there just as quickly as it did on the Illawarra line, and many people prefer it because there is the objection to the Illawarra line that people suffering from bronchial affections cannot stand the sea air. They would be removed from the sea air by a ridge at the back, and a great number would sooner go there than to the Illawarra line. As inducing settlement it would be just as popular as the Illawarra line.
274. How far would the Canterbury Park racecourse be from the proposed line? From $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile to $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile.
275. Sufficiently close for the traffic to the racecourse to go by this means? Yes. I believe that if the proprietors of the racecourse were examined, they would state that they intend to lay down at their own expense a short branch of a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile to connect with this line.
276. How far is the proposed terminus at Burwood Road from the southern line? About 4 or 5 miles.
277. How far from Dulwich Hill? At one point the line would be about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the nearest point of the Dulwich Hill tram-way, but it immediately diverges at an obtuse angle.
278. *Mr. Trickett.*] Do you regard this line from Marrickville to Burwood Road as desirable in itself, or desirable only as a part of a projected line to Liverpool? I think in itself. It would be a wonderfully good paying line. If you look at the paying capacity of the other suburban lines you will find that it affords a great argument for this as a suburban line. It would be very largely patronised as a suburban line, because the country through which it is to go is good.
279. Can you mention any centres of population at the present time which the line would serve? At Canterbury itself there is a large centre of population. I was there about four months ago at the opening of the new Town Hall. I gave permission for the school children in the Canterbury municipality to attend the ceremony, and we had 1,100 scholars in the building on that day. These children represented the children of parents who resided in the immediate vicinity of the line at Canterbury.
280. How are these people situated at the present time with regard to access to Sydney? They have five omnibuses I think.
281. No other means of conveyance? No.
282. How far are they from the nearest railway station? Most of them are from 3 to 5 miles. This line is almost equi-distant between the Illawarra line and the western line. The Illawarra line is about 5 miles and the western line is about the same distance, it may be more or less at different points, but that is the general average distance. The Dulwich Hill tram-way is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the nearest point,

point, but that is just near the Illawarra line itself, and then the tram-way runs away from this line and does not meet the traffic at all which the railway will meet. The tram-way, if it robs any line of traffic, robs the western line.

283. Would any other places be served by the railway? Moorefields, which lies between the Canterbury Road and the Illawarra line. It is rather closer to the Illawarra line than to the Canterbury Road, but it is prevented from getting access to the Illawarra line by what is known as the Woolli Creek where a deep gully renders it impossible to construct roads or bridges with the limited means at the disposal of the municipality. The people all take their produce to market, and otherwise do their business through Canterbury which will always be the centre of traffic for them. At Moorefields there is a considerable old settled population.

284. Have you any idea of the number? The attendance at the Public School there is fairly considerable. I cannot say what the population is; but I should think that at Moorefields there are 200 or 300 families who are chiefly engaged in orchards, market gardens, small farms, and the general work of the neighbourhood.

285. Are there any other places? Then there is Belmore, which is a little distance beyond the terminus. I suppose Belmore church, which may be taken as the centre, is about a mile beyond the terminus. There is a fairly good settlement there. It is scattered—consisting chiefly of farmers and settlers. Towards Canterbury again, in the lower parts of Enfield, there is settlement of a tolerable extent; but at Marrickville itself—the portion of Marrickville lying towards Cook's River, called Undercliff—there is a good large population, extending from Undercliff to Canterbury. It is in the Municipality of Marrickville, though it is really part of the Canterbury district. That is the most thickly-settled portion of the whole of the line, and it is chiefly held by allotment holders. I think there is hardly one large landed proprietor in the whole distance. The settlement there is no doubt larger than on the northern line at Ryde or Hornsby, or any of those places, and as large as the settlement at the present time between Homebush and Burwood.

286. Is not Marrickville already served by a tram-way? Not that portion of Marrickville, because they are two or three miles from any tram service.

287. Could not the tram-way be extended to these suburbs easily? You could extend the tram-way there; but the tram-way running through Marrickville at the present time is paying very well. The cost of working a tram-way is very great, and the inconvenience of a tram service to the people is very great. I look on a tram-way as only a make-shift for meeting the convenience of the people.

288. How long does the train take to run from Marrickville in to Sydney? It runs in in ten or eleven minutes.

289. How long does the tram-way take to run from the present Marrickville terminus into Sydney? Between thirty and forty-five minutes, and sometimes an hour.

290. Then if the tram-line were extended to Undercliff it would take people an hour to get into Sydney by tram? It would take from three-quarters of an hour to an hour.

291. Whereas by train it could be done in about twenty minutes? By train it takes twenty minutes: it takes ten minutes to Redfern, two minutes for shifting, and eight minutes from the railway station to King-st.

292. You have not mentioned Bankstown? That is another suburb, it is beyond the terminus. As Belmore lies to the eastern side, so Bankstown lies to the western side. It is also an old settled place; but it has not made much progress.

293. Why? There have been no means of communication.

294. Can you mention any other established places? There is part of what they call Peakhurst. The western portion of Peakhurst would be inconvenienced somewhat by the extension of the railway to Burwood Road. It would bring the people of that place within 3 miles of railway communication, whereas they are now 8 or 9 miles away. Then there is settlement at a place called Beaconsfield. It is only of recent origin; but the people would be brought within 5 miles of the railway, whereas they are now something like 15 miles away. These places would all be inconvenienced by the extension of the line to Liverpool. It would bring them within a mile or 2 miles of the line.

294½. This line has been referred to in former evidence as the "staked line"—do you know it by that term? Yes. It is what they call the "lock-spitted" line.

295. There is a surveyed line to the north as well as to the south of that line? Yes.

296. And it is the middle line we are referring to now? Yes.

297. Which do you think is the best of the three surveyed lines? I have long since made up my mind to abide by the decision of the Department, and I have come to the conclusion that this is the best. The line which is lock-spitted is one which the people have brought themselves to be satisfied with. It has got rid of all agitation. The people have accepted it as a fair compromise, and no reason has been offered against its adoption. I think it is one which most fairly meets with the requirements of the public. I have some land about 3 miles beyond its terminus. The line to the south-east passes through my property, so that it would be to my personal interest to have that line constructed. But although the lock-spitted line is a couple of miles away from my property, and will not benefit me to any appreciable extent, still, in the interests of the whole of the people, and for the sake of getting a line running through the centres of population, and running through good land for engineering purposes, I think it is the best and most direct.

298. You think it will serve the places you have mentioned best? It would not serve Belmore so well.

299. But taking them altogether? It would serve Belmore fairly well. It would serve Bankstown very well, but nobody could really grumble at that line. It is a fair direct line without favouring anybody. It is the best engineering line that could be proposed.

300. The line marked blue on the map is the line now under consideration? Yes.

301. That is the line which you think would serve all parties best? Yes.

302. I see that on the 15th July, 1887, you introduced a deputation to the Minister, with regard to what was then called the Liverpool loop-line, and in the *précis* which is laid before the Committee these words occur,—“ Mr. Carruthers intimated that he was getting an undertaking, giving the land free, signed by nearly every owner on the route.” Did you succeed in that effort? I got the undertaking, and handed it in. It is in the records of the Public Works Office. It was pointed out that you could not ask an allotment holder to give up all his land, and the country from Marrickville

to

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to Cook's River is chiefly held by allotment holders. One proprietor of some few acres—Mr. Moyes—signed to give his land without any hesitation. I believe he is a very liberal, generous man; he is an old resident, and not a land speculator, and would, I believe, give his land freely. When we crossed Cook's River we got the land, except in two cases—one being the case of a trust estate, where it was difficult to get the trustees to sign, as they were scattered over the world; and the other being the case of an old individual, who, try whatever persuasion you liked, could not see that it was a good thing to give his land when other people had been paid for theirs. You could not shift him from that determination, but the Public Works Act meets his case, because the railway would so improve his property that he would get no compensation. It was signed by nearly every owner on the route.

303. Those are the only exceptions you have mentioned? They are the only important exceptions.

304. Most of the others signed? Yes.

305. Was that right up to Liverpool? I believe it is right into Liverpool. The last estate, Moorebank, then owned by the Bishop of Sydney, is now sold I believe, but the owners of that estate made some provision for this line too. There was Mr. Forester's estate, where the racecourse is, and he also made provision for the line.

306. I understand that between Marrickville and Burwood Road there are a good many persons whose consents you have obtained? No, they are nearly all allotment holders, but the larger proprietors gave their land. I think they would give it to-morrow. I know that Mr. Tidswell, who owns the sugar-mills, will give his land. I believe that all who own to any considerable extent will give their land.

307. You believe that all the large land-holders between Marrickville and Burwood Road will give their land free? I am sure of it.

308. I asked the question because one of the Departmental officers said he thought the offer only applied in case the line were taken right on to Liverpool; but as far as you can ascertain the feelings of people, you think they would give their land free if the line were made only to the Burwood Road? The people protected themselves as far as they could by making the offer conditional on the line being constructed or commenced to be constructed within a couple of years. They did not like to permanently encumber their property with conditions which might interfere with them in selling it hereafter. You will find the same spirit pervading the people now. They recognise the great convenience and the great value to themselves of having railway communication, and if they can fairly give the land they will do so.

309. Have you considered this proposal in connection with its possible extension to Liverpool? Yes.

310. What are your views on that head? My views on that head differ entirely from the views of the Railway Commissioners, because I believe that a saving of 5 miles in construction will be an immense gain to all the people who travel along the southern line to Sydney. It will remove the congestion on the present western line. It must remove that congestion very materially—just as much as the quadrupling of the line, because it will make four lines on which to run the traffic. It will also diminish the working expenses by having 5 miles less to run the rolling stock. It will bring larger settlement in the neighbourhood of Liverpool and all that country by making it 13 instead of 18 miles from Sydney, and the increasing of settlement will increase the local traffic from Liverpool to Sydney. At Liverpool there is the Warwick Farm racecourse, which is now patronised by a considerable number of people, but which would be patronised by a much larger number if it were brought 5 miles nearer to Sydney. As it is now, they are continually blocked coming from the racecourse. There is not half the patronage now that there would be if the line were constructed. There is also the racecourse at Canterbury Park. Altogether I think as an alternative line, saving passengers from the southern districts 5 miles travelling and leaving them an unimpeded traffic, it must be profitable, economical, and convenient. It has been saddled with the expense of some bridges across George's River. You have to cross the river twice. The expense charged for the bridges has been most exorbitant and extravagant compared with the actual outlay incurred in constructing bridges for railways elsewhere. The bridge over George's River at Como cost something like £70,000 or £80,000. You will find that the estimate for the bridges over this neck of land is very large and very extravagant.

311. The railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road is estimated to cost £90,250. Having regard to the traffic which you anticipate will take place, do you think it would pay interest and working expenses on that outlay within a reasonable time? I think so. The Illawarra line, which had to bear the cost of bridges and overcome engineering difficulties, and which was diverted out of its true course, in order to run through the properties of some Members of Parliament, and other land jobbers like them, paid in its first year, and according to Mr. Goodchap's estimates which have been adopted, it paid in the second or third year between 6 and 7 per cent. It was constructed through country which was a howling wilderness compared with the country through which this line will go. The suburban line to Granville has been paying working expenses and good interest too, and this line will pay the same within a year or two. There is another route which has been suggested. An alternative line from Arncliffe has been advocated by Mr. Myles M'Rae. It would perhaps save a bridge over Cook's River. It would run through property of mine; it would benefit me to the extent of £20,000 or £30,000, but it is not a line which ought to be considered or constructed, because it will not meet the requirements of suburban traffic. It will leave all the suburban traffic. It will go through country which is not fit for suburban population on account of its broken nature, and it will by no means make any saving of distance between Sydney and Liverpool. I mention the matter, because in the discussion in the House Mr. M'Rae advocated the adoption of the route, and it may be that the Committee will have evidence offered by the larger land-holders there, but I unhesitatingly condemn it as being a proposal which can in no way be brought into consideration with this line. I may say that I have no land which may be benefited by this proposal, and that the part of the line which the Cabinet rejected—its further extension to Liverpool—does not go nearer than a mile or 2 miles of my property. That is the only portion which could benefit me in any way. It will not benefit me largely by adopting this route. Despite that fact, I say it is the best route which could be got to suit the convenience of the people, and to adequately recompense the Government which undertook its construction.

312. *Dr. Garran.*] You have spoken of the expensiveness of these two bridges;—do you think it would be wise to avoid that by taking the more northern of these three lines? No; I think it would be penny wise and pound foolish. It is better to go by that straight line and avoid the distance, and convenience the traffic, even by a little more outlay than to go winding round. The expense could be very considerably reduced in the extravagant estimate which has been formed.

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313. You think the superiority of the middle line is such as to be worth the extra expense of the two bridges? I do.
314. Does the middle line run through land suitable for suburban residential purposes? Almost every bit of it. The only part that is at all low is a very little portion of Canterbury, which is already settled. The village of Canterbury though it is low, is already settled. The other part which is a little bit low is at the banks of George's River, and it is settled by people who go in for farming. Otherwise the whole of the land is beautifully situated for residential settlement. There is Dr. Tucker's model farm, which consists of beautiful rich soil going up to the summit of a hill, with splendid views all round. The rest of the country is all similar to that—good elevated land, well drained, and in good positions.
315. Is not a good deal of St. Peters and Canterbury rather low? For about 300 yards—only the Marrickville flats.
316. All the rest is good residential land? Yes.
317. Do you think this line goes far enough to give a full and fair development to this fresh locality—it is rather a short line? It is rather a short line. My own opinion is that the line ought to go on to Liverpool.
318. You have given us a reference to the line to George's River, the line to Hurstville is much longer than this line is to be—it gave much greater scope for settlement? Hurstville is 9 miles from Sydney, Burwood Road will be 8 miles.
319. You would not recommend that it should go further on—say to Bankstown, as a fair test of the district? No; I think that if you were to take it further on without taking it to Liverpool, you would saddle it with an unremunerative portion.
320. You think we go as far as we ought to go as an experiment? Yes.
321. You think that this extension of about 4 miles will be a fair test of the capabilities of the district? Yes.
322. You are willing to test the chances of its extension to Liverpool by that length? I am certain of the result of that piece.
323. You have known the district west of Sydney for some years? All my life.
324. You have seen the gradual growth of population along the Western line? Yes.
325. Do you think there is an increasing demand for land on that side of Sydney? The land all round has got above its value, and that has stopped the increasing demand. I do not believe that this railway will raise the value of land along the route one penny, for the simple reason that it has already been forced above its value.
326. You think the value of land has been already discounted? The improvement has been already discounted.
327. The utmost the railway can do, will be to bring the land into use? Yes.
328. And people will be willing to sell at present prices without asking for anything more? Yes. It is owned to a very large extent by allotment holders. I have heard the line spoken of as a land speculators' line, but the whole of the estates through which it passes were subdivided long ago. The present holders are persons who cannot speculate with their allotments, they will go and reside on them.
329. There are already a very large number of landholders to be accommodated? Yes.
330. It will not depend on merely one or two owners? Not to that point. Further on the land is locked up in the hands of people who own from 5 to 10 and 30 acres.
331. That is a very good reason for stopping at that point for the present? I do not know about that. There is no prospect of settlement along there, unless they choose to sell their land for settlement.
332. If you had the control over the railway policy of the country would you go right through to Liverpool at once? I would, in the interests of the southern traffic, and of the western traffic.
333. You think that this extension of 4 miles will, of necessity, drag the full line with it some day or other? It is bound to do so.
334. Looking at the fact that the line to Hurstville has already given accommodation to a large suburban population, do you think it is reasonable to expect an equally rapid development on this line? Oh, yes; just as quickly. The development going on at Hurstville and at other places is greater to-day than it ever was. Almost every day, as I walk from my house up to the station, I see the foundation of a new residence being put in. A few days before the railway station was opened, I lost myself in the bush within 400 yards of the station, but now the whole of the place is built upon. There are churches, schools, public halls, rows of shops, and streets in every direction, all showing the wonderful development which is going on.
335. Looking at the rapid growth of Sydney, and comparing it with that of Melbourne, and seeing the very successful development of suburban railway traffic there, do you think that we, as a country, can go wrong in our policy by multiplying our suburban lines? I do not think we can. I think we have gone very wrong in the other direction. On one side of Sydney, the south-east, the whole of the extension of the city is blocked. We have 4,000 acres of Church and School lands which are, as it were, locked up against the people. The Randwick racecourse, the Centennial Park, the Quarantine reserve, the reserve on which the Little Bay Hospital is situated, and all that part of the country should be opened for settlement; but it is locked up against settlement, and will be so for a few years to come. Where is the extension of the city to go? The extension is to go out to the Illawarra line, and between there and the Western line. If you go to the north it is almost blocked by the waterway. It is blocked except at one or two points, and this is one of the points where there is an outlet for the development of the city.
336. You think we have done rather too little than too much in the way of suburban railways? Too little. I think they have rescued our railways from financial ruin. Our suburban railways have paid us so handsomely that they have brought the returns for the whole of the railways up to a reasonable figure. But if you took away the returns from the suburban lines they would not pay 1 per cent. I hazard that opinion, and if it is looked into it will be found to be correct.
337. You think the best railway speculation is to increase the suburban railways? Most decidedly. I think it is a boon to the working classes. At the present time they are tossed and turned about in every direction by the re-building of the city. The Railway Commissioners are offering them facilities to travel on cheap workman's tickets, and every morning along the suburban lines, at 5 or 6 o'clock, you will see workmen hustled and jostled together in crowded cars. The Department cannot find standing room for them in the trains.

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338. You are quite clear that we are not over-supplied with suburban railways? We are under-supplied.
339. You think this line is a fair experiment on that ground alone? Yes.
340. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Will you please point out on the map the position of Belmore, Undercliff, Warwick Farm, and Peakhurst? Belmore lies at about the 9½ miles peg, and to the south of the proposed line; Undercliff lies close up to Cook's River.
341. The proposed line would run through Undercliff? Yes. Peakhurst abuts on Belmore; it lies in a southerly direction. Warwick Farm is between the 15-mile and the 16-mile peg. It is about 1½ mile from Liverpool.
342. You said the proposed line is equi-distant between the line to the western suburbs and the Illawarra line? Yes.
343. And that the district has a tramway running to Dulwich Hill? Yes.
344. And another tramway running to Marrickville? It is the same tramway.
345. They are served by tram as well as by train? Yes.
346. Do you not think the people in that region are pretty well served? The tramway does not serve more than twenty or thirty individuals who will be served by this railway. The tramway runs within half a mile of the Illawarra line for three-quarters of a mile, and then it suddenly turns round and goes in a southerly direction. The tram to Dulwich Hill branches off at a right angle in a southerly direction, and the proposed railway branches off the Illawarra line at an obtuse angle.
347. Does not the tramway to Marrickville compete with the railway for passenger traffic? It must compete with it. People do not care about travelling by tram when they can travel by train in a third of the time. Although there is that competition the tramway pays 8 per cent. to Marrickville, and the railway is paying the same.
348. The trams run more often than the trains? No; about the same.
349. Would not the Dulwich Hill tram compete to a considerable extent with this proposed line? I do not believe it would.
350. You admit that there is competition now between the Marrickville tram and the Marrickville railway? The tramway already competes with the Illawarra line, but it will not compete with a line which every yard it goes gets farther away from it.
351. It competes so much so that it pays 8 per cent.? It does not pay 8 per cent. simply on account of the traffic which comes from the portion which competes, because that portion runs along what they call the Marrickville flats, where there is no population to speak of, and where there will never be any population to speak of. It is not fit for human population.
352. Are you under the impression that the line, if carried out, will not compete at all with the Dulwich Hill tramway? Not to the extent of a penny. It will rather add to the traffic on the Dulwich Hill tramway, because it will induce settlement, and these people, if they happen to miss a train, or want to go to Newtown or Enmore, will walk a mile or so and catch the tram. It will improve the traffic on the tramway.
353. Do you think it wise to run two lines just for the people who may happen to be a minute or two late? Oh, no; I do not think it is.
354. Can the district carry two state passenger lines, one being a tram line and the other a railway? Yes; but there are not two lines, one a tramway and the other a railway, because these happen to come to one point within three-quarters of a mile of each other, and then they run along getting a distance 2 or 3 miles apart. The Dulwich Hill tram is only three-quarters of a mile in extent, and every inch of that line runs at an obtuse angle from the proposed line.
355. Suppose you were to extend the tram line to Burwood Road, would not that serve the passenger traffic? No; because the large and thick population at Undercliff, who are now 3 miles away from a railway or tramway, would still be left out in the cold. There is a large traffic there which is absolutely lost to the railway now.
356. These people left out in the cold could be brought in by tram as well as by train? No; the extension to Dulwich Hill does not go in that direction at all.
357. A tramway could be taken in that direction as well as a railway? No. If you were to run a branch down there you would have to put on a separate locomotive and have all the expense of a branch line instead of an extension.
358. You know that the tramway serves Paddington, Woollahra, Waverley, and Bondi, where, I suppose there are five times as many people as would possibly be served by this railway? Yes. If you were to put a railway there you would find it would give five times as much profit as the tramway gives.
359. Up to the present time the tramway has been a very great boon to those districts, and, undoubtedly it has helped a good deal to take people out there? I do not know what the opinion of the people is, but my opinion is that it has been a curse to the community. I had my mother killed with one of them, and perhaps that is the reason I have such a horror of them.
360. How will the proposed line serve the Warwick Farm racecourse? It will not serve it at all.
361. You mentioned the racecourse as being a likely source of traffic? Not to this line, but to an extension to Liverpool.
362. Canterbury Park at present is served from Petersham? No. It is not served at all. People go to Ashfield and there they have to take the omnibus, but the omnibus people charge them a shilling or 1s. 6d. to carry them a distance of 2 or 3 miles. The omnibus traffic is totally inadequate to meet the requirements of visitors to the racecourse.
363. How many people do you think will be served by this line if it is carried out? Taking in Peakhurst and Belmore I should say from 15,000 to 20,000 persons.
364. Settled there already or to be settled there? Taking in Marrickville, I think there must be from 15,000 to 20,000 people.
365. It is hardly fair to take in Marrickville, considering that it is already served by a railway as well as by a tramway? I am sure there are fully 10,000 persons living near the Undercliff section of the line. You can have no conception of the population in this part of Marrickville. It is thickly populated.
366. *Mr. Humphery.*] The extension of the tramway from Marrickville to Undercliff would simply be a branch; going down the hill past the old Warren lodge? Yes.
367. The construction of this railway would be a least a mile or a mile and a half from the present tram station? Yes.

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368. You expressed the opinion that the line should be continued to Liverpool? Most decidedly.
369. Before arriving at that opinion had you seen the report that the construction of that line would involve the country in an annual loss of £35,000? Not before I arrived at that opinion. I arrived at my opinion as the result of a long conference with Mr. Goodchap, who was the founder of this line, as well as the founder of the proposed line. He showed me the profit and the saving to the department; and, seeing the country to be opened, and taking it for granted that his estimate was correct, I formed a favourable opinion. That opinion was very much shaken afterwards when I saw Mr. Whitton's estimate of the cost, and subsequently when the railway Commissioners formed their estimate of loss. But I have analysed the question since, and I have come to the conclusion that the Commissioners and their officers have not given credit for the wonderful expansion which always takes place in suburban traffic where a new suburb is opened up, if it is fit for suburban settlement. I do not think their estimate is one to which I should give any weight at all. The estimate of loss is I think an estimate of exaggeration.
370. Would you regard the suburban traffic as extending beyond the point to which it is proposed to carry the railway? It might be a mile further.
371. Having in view the fact that we shall have passed through the suburban area, do you not think the Commissioners are quite justified in recommending that the line should not be carried through to Liverpool? I think it would be right to recommend it right through, though not for suburban traffic.
372. Would not all the suburban traffic be secured by making the extension to Burwood Road, a distance of 8 miles? Yes; I think you would secure all the suburban traffic which would pay at present. It may go a mile further, but that mile would not be a remunerative portion of the line.
373. What advantage would it be in that case to extend the railway to Liverpool, the cost of extension appearing to be about £19,000 a mile, and the Commissioners being of opinion that it would entail an annual loss of about £35,000? I should not like to say what I would do in the face of that evidence; I should analyse the evidence, and I fancy there would be sufficient adduced to show me that it is not a fair estimate at all.
374. Would not the whole of Kingsgrove be served by the proposed line? Yes; I call it Moorefields; they adjoin one another.
375. You spoke of Dr. Tucker's farm,—would not that be quite a mile or a mile and a half beyond the terminus? It would be a mile away, but the line would bring the farm into settlement. The people would be only a mile away from the terminus, which is not an excessive distance to walk.
376. *Mr. Tonkin.*] You seem perfectly satisfied in your own mind that if this line is constructed it will be a payable one? Yes.
377. Are you so satisfied that you would be inclined yourself to form one of a syndicate to construct the line as a private line if you had permission from the Government? I think you would get fifty syndicates formed, and the money taken up; and I would go in for any one of them, if it were consistent with my position to do so.
378. These gentlemen you speak about forming syndicates are commercial men of common sense, who know perfectly well they would have a good return for their investment? Yes.
379. There is not a shadow of a doubt about it? No; the people have asked over and over again for permission to do it.
380. The men who would form the syndicate are not men interested in land about there, but would go merely for the construction of this line for the purpose of a revenue return from it? I do not know of any syndicates of that character, but I am sure you could get proposals from people to construct the line merely in view of the return it would give them, without any concern as to land at all.
381. You are satisfied about that? Yes.
382. You have been led to believe that these two railway bridges were to cost something like £100,000? It is a very large sum.
383. Allow me to tell you that the price is £35,000 for the two; and taking that into consideration, and that by the deviation to avoid these bridges it would make a mile difference in the length of the line, which would cost £19,000 more;—under those circumstances would you advocate the deviation instead of going across the rivers? No, I would not. I would go across the rivers and get the straight line, because if you go round you at once lengthen the line, which is to be avoided.
384. There would be only £16,000 difference in the cost of going direct across the bridges and going round;—you think it would be preferable to go direct and save the mile? Decidedly.
385. You have been asked questions about the Dulwich Hill tramway. In the event of that tramway being extended to the Burwood Road, would that serve the people in the district which the construction of this line would serve? No, it would not serve the people at all, because it goes a different route; it goes along a route where settlement is to a great extent avoided. You would have to go along the whole of the Canterbury Road, and the settlement there is not nearly so great as cutting along by Cook's River and Undercliff; and further than that—the cost of the tramway along a road is a large thing. Directly the track goes on the road the municipalities refuse to spend money to keep it in repair, and the Government has to do it.
386. Then you think it is no use suggesting a tramway in lieu of this railway? No, I do not think it would be a matter of public economy to do so. A tramway costs far more to maintain; its working expenses are greater, and the public are never inconvenienced.
387. And they would not be served as they would by a railway? No.
388. If this tramway were constructed to Burwood Road would that serve the Canterbury Park race club? Of course if the tramway went there it would be good to them; but it would not serve them anything like a railway. You will recognise that you will have to take 8,000 or 10,000 people to the race-course, and these people on a race-day would impede the whole of the traffic of the city on the trams.
389. Are there any large centres of population through which the tramway would not pass, and which the railway would pass? Between the terminus of the Dulwich Hill tramway and down to Canterbury there is a large quantity of open fields and lands, and that would be the route the tramway would have to take along the main road. You would not serve anything like the population the railway would serve except when you got to Canterbury itself. It would serve the people there in the same way as a railway in that particular spot.
390. *Mr. Dowel.*] Has there been any expression of opinion, by public meeting or otherwise, in reference to this particular line and the rival routes? There have been several opinions with regard to these proposed routes, and at every meeting for the last few years the agreement has been arrived at by the people that

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- that whatever route the Government engineer, acting impartially in the best interests of the Government, should decide upon, that should be loyally accepted by the people, and that has never been, to my knowledge, departed from.
391. Having a large knowledge of this particular district through which these rival routes pass, are you of opinion that the one selected by the Government engineers is the best? I believe it is.
392. Are you aware that upon this particular route there are very deep cuttings and heavy embankments? There is bound to be when you have to go through a country broken up by two rivers; but there is nothing very great.
393. You do not think these deep cuttings and heavy embankments would be any difficulty to people having access to the railway station or stopping places? I do not think that the cuttings and embankments will be any larger, if as large, as on the Illawarra line.
394. Some of them are 30 feet deep? The same thing occurs elsewhere, and they have never impeded the access to and from stations at all.
395. Are you aware of the number of blocks of land which would have to be resumed for this particular portion? I am not.
396. There being 155—do you anticipate any difficulty about the cost of resumption? The allotment owners could not be asked to give up their land. They are bound to claim compensation.
397. But do you anticipate any large amount which would have to be paid in consequence of such a large number of persons having land? There would have to be a fairly large amount.
398. Are there many empty houses in the locality to which we are referring? There are a good many empty houses just about Marrickville Station, but they are empty on account of the mud flats. The low-lying land is constantly being flooded. Two hours of rain floods the land. But that is the only part where there is any number of empty houses.
399. But upon the proposed route? There is nothing to speak of at all.
400. And you are strongly of opinion that settlement would take place, and a large number of houses would be erected if the line were constructed? Decidedly.
401. Are you aware that the Commissioners, in their report, have stated that if this line were constructed to Liverpool there would only be about four trains per day running on the line to relieve the parent line? I was not aware of that.
402. I ask this question, because you said that if the line was constructed to Liverpool, it would be the means of relieving the parent line of traffic? Yes, so it would.
403. In spite of what the Commissioners say? If they like they can only run four trains a day. They could run one if they liked, and if they liked to relieve the parent line, and save five miles in the journey they could run twenty.
404. This is what the Commissioners say:—
“The theory which has been put forth, that the construction of this line would avoid the necessity for increasing the carrying capacity of the existing line from Liverpool to Sydney, should not have any weight in the consideration of the question, as the construction of the line would only relieve the parent line to the extent of about four trains per day in each direction.”
- Do you think that statement is correct? I would not like to say it is correct or incorrect, but I say that any reasonable man would, if asked his opinion at the end of the journey, say he ought to have gone the shorter line. It is a monstrous thing to imagine they will run twenty trains a distance over 5 miles longer than they ought to, in order to get to their journey's end. It stands to reason they would send them the shorter distance.
405. Then you are clearly convinced that that is the best line that can be constructed, and you think that it would pay a short time after construction? Yes.

Joseph Graham, Esq., Mayor of Marrickville, sworn, and further examined,—

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406. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] I referred you yesterday to the report by the Commissioners on the line from St. Peters to Liverpool, and gave you a copy of the same. Have you read that report? I have not. I attended a meeting last night until 11:30. I do not think that report was the question before you.
407. In the absence of that report it might be as well for you to make any statement you like about the matter? I do not know that I can throw any further light upon it. As the Committee are intending to have a look at the place it would be better perhaps to say something afterwards. I would like to point out to you personally the advantages which might arise for making this short suburban railway.
408. Would you prefer to do it after we have visited the place? Yes.
409. *Vice-Chairman.*] I think you said yesterday you were fully impressed with the necessity of constructing the railway to Burwood Road, and you thought the population there would be large enough to warrant the construction of these suburban railways? I did.
410. And you adhere to that principal that the railway is the proper means of communication? I do.
411. Do you think it would meet the requirements of any portion of a suburban population which might grow up further on, say towards Bankstown? Certainly.
412. How far would the terminus from Burwood Road be from Bankstown? About 4 miles.
413. You know the country about Bankstown? Only superficially.
414. There is some good whinstone land on the north side of the river? All round there is capital land for cultivation and building.
415. And it suffers very much from want of communication? It is not further forward than it was 60 years ago. There is only one 'bus, and that is an apology for communication.
416. You feel sure that the present railway system on the western line and on the Illawarra line is not sufficient to give accommodation to the population about the Burwood Road? Certainly not. The distance is very great. I am sure when you go there you will be impressed with the fertility of the soil, and the suitability of the district for residences, garden purposes, and brick-making.
417. *Mr. Trickett.*] Can you tell us the names of the present centres of population which would be served by this proposed railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road? It would be the southern portion of the borough of Marrickville, and the portion known as Undercliffe. Then there is Canterbury. Then Croydon would be partly served, together with Belmore, and Bankstown and many of these places.

418. Would King's Road be served? That line is more towards Hurstville, which is a sort of equi-distance. Moorefield is about the same, and lies further on than the railway is contemplated. J. Graham,
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419. What do you think would be the present population served by this railway? I could give you a rough idea of Marrickville.
420. I mean all the places you have named? I could hardly find the total. If I were to meet you again after visiting the place I could hunt up the information, and give it to you.
421. *Mr. Hurley.*] The question has often been raised as to the probable payable nature of this line as a national investment? Yes.
422. Has it always been looked upon by the majority as a good investment on the part of the country? It has always been looked upon as becoming one of the best payable lines; but there are a good many people beyond the river who would like to have it near their own door. I think now, however, they are pretty unanimous in saying the Government should make the line. They have been eight years trying for it.
423. Have you had a vote in your Council in regard to it? No; it has been more of a combination. Marrickville is partly interested in it, Canterbury also, and Belmore. We have been helping them all. We have the Marrickville and Petersham railway, and also the tram, so that we are pretty well provided for. It will accommodate a portion of the southern side of Marrickville and Undercliff. Canterbury has no communication short of $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile from Ashfield station.
424. Has there been any antagonism to the project? No; excepting diversity of opinion as to where the line should go.
425. Has the matter been raised in regard to the land being given free for the construction of the line? I understand that where the land is in blocks it would be given free. There have been many subdivisions right through to Canterbury.
426. You do not think the people will recede from the proposals made? I have no knowledge that they would, because if they do not get the railway the land is of very little value, comparatively speaking. The railway would open up one of the finest suburbs, and when you see the district you will express yourselves highly pleased with the surroundings and the advantages which will accrue to the Government as well as the people from the construction of a railway.
427. Do you know whether any of the proposed lines pass through any properties belonging to Members of Parliament? I do not know.
428. Not to your knowledge? None whatever to my knowledge.
429. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you any knowledge of the rival routes? I know some of them.
430. Are you of opinion that the people will be best served by the construction of the line coloured blue on the plan? I hardly know how to answer that. A large number of people are living on that line, and the Government having selected it, they say that, as they cannot get all they want, they must take what they can get.
431. From your knowledge of the district, do you think the interest of the people will be best served by the construction of the line as indicated by the Government staked line? As far as the general public are concerned they would be served by the shorter route. That line goes through splendid building land.
432. But taking all the surrounding circumstances into consideration, you are of opinion that the line as surveyed will be the best? I will not go as far as that, because a large number of people who have made their homes think that the railway ought to go near them.
433. Would you advocate any other route? No; I would leave it with the Government. I have told the people that whilst they dispute the Government will leave them at it.
434. Has there been any public meeting about this particular matter? Very many of them, and the resolution was unanimous to leave it in the hands of the Government.

James Slocombe, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

435. *Vice-Chairman.*] Are you a resident of Marrickville? Canterbury. J. Slocombe,
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436. Have you long resided there? I was born there.
437. And you are living there still? Yes.
438. Do you travel backwards and forwards between there and Sydney? Yes.
439. What is your means of conveyance now? Omnibus.
440. How far are you from the nearest railway station? About 2 miles.
441. And which is your nearest railway station? Ashfield.
442. Do you come right to Sydney by omnibus? Yes.
443. How far is your residence from the proposed site of the railway terminus at Burwood Road? About 2 miles.
444. And if the railway were constructed with the terminus at Burwood Road, I suppose you would use that means of conveyance to Sydney? Certainly.
445. Do you think if the railway were constructed there is population about there to make it a remunerative one? I think there is quite sufficient.
446. Have you any idea of the population about there now within a radius of 2 miles of the proposed terminus? The population between Marrickville and Burwood Road would be about 6,000 at present.
447. And do you think that would be likely to increase if there were facilities for communication between there and Sydney? Certainly.
448. Does the country present favourable openings for settlement and for suburban residences and villas? I think it is the best suburban district for villa residences.
449. Is that from the quality of the soil? From the undulating land and quality of the soil.
450. Is the land good? Some of it is very good.
451. Do you think it would be a means of convenience to the people living beyond there—to Bankstown, —would they be able to use it. How far is it from the terminus? Some part of it would be about a mile.
452. Do you know much of the Bankstown district? Yes, fairly well.
453. There is good land about there? Very good.
454. What means of conveyance have they now? I think a coach runs along the Liverpool Road, and they get to Burwood station.
455. You know the tramway between Sydney and Marrickville? Yes. 456.

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456. Is that regarded as a source of convenience to the population there? Do you mean to Dulwich Hill.
457. Marrickville and Dulwich Hill? The people along there can use it, but it is not of much use to us.
458. You don't use it in fact yourself? I used it to-day coming in, but had to walk 2 miles to it. It is a long distance round. We come quicker by going to Ashfield and coming to town by train.
459. Would you favour the construction of a railway in preference to a tramway? Yes, I think so.
460. Through passengers of course would get to town much quicker by railway? Yes.
461. But it is a fact the tramway stops and gives conveniences to many people on the line which the railway does not? It will not when this railway is constructed. The Dulwich Hill tramway does not meet the requirements of the people in any way, living along where the line is surveyed.
462. But where the tramway is, does it meet the requirements of the people and their convenience? It meets those who live where the tramway is.
463. *Mr. Trickett.*] What is your ordinary means of coming to town? Omnibus.
464. All the way? Yes.
465. What time does it take? One hour and a quarter each way.
466. Have you any land along the proposed line of railway? I have allotments where I live.
467. Does the line pass through them? No; I do not think it does.
468. Are there any large blocks of land the line would pass through which have not been subdivided between Marrickville and Burwood Road? I do not think there are. I think it is all pretty well subdivided.
469. And you think the Government would have to pay for nearly all the land along this line;—there are no people there who would give the land? There is one estate—Campbell's. They promised to give the land, and I think they are still of the same mind. I saw a gentleman—Mr. Scroggy—this last week, and he said he had no reason to doubt but that they would do the same. It is a valuable piece of land.
470. Are the people pretty well agreed as to the route. I think so. As far as I know we are agreeable to the permanently staked line.
471. What do you think yourself;—do you think that is the best line? I think it is.
472. Would the tramway, if extended between Dulwich Hill and Marrickville, serve the people that this line is intended to serve? No.
473. Why? It would take too long to get to town.
474. And to travel along the road would be a very circuitous route? Yes; we could come quicker from Dulwich Hill by coach than tram.
475. Along the same line? No; the tram goes away from Canterbury Road through Marrickville.
476. You have stated you think there would be about 6,000 people benefited by this line; does this mean adults only, or men, women, and children? Men, women, and children. I speak from the opinions I have received from municipal councils.
477. A former witness said he thought there were from 10,000 to 20,000 people;—do you think that a high estimate? There might be more towards Marrickville whom I do not know of.
478. I mean the whole population who would be benefited residing between Marrickville and Burwood Road; what would be the estimate of the population there who would avail themselves of the railway? I dare say about 10,000.
479. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you know how much of the land belonging to the Campbell family it would be necessary to resume in connection with this railway? I think there is about half a mile which the line would pass through that is not sold.
480. The railway would go 2 miles beyond Canterbury? Yes; beyond where I live.
481. As a matter of fact, you will be close to the station where you are living in Canterbury? I do not know where the station will be.
482. Are you not living in the heart of Canterbury at present? Yes.
483. Do you think the proposed line starts from the best starting point on the Illawarra line? I think it does.
484. And you think the terminus should remain where it is proposed it should remain—about 8 miles from Sydney and 2 miles from Belmore? I think it should go right on to Liverpool.
485. Do you think there would be any suburban population to support the line beyond that point at which it is proposed to stop? There is not a great population beyond there now, but I think there would be if the line were constructed.
486. Do you not think the distance would be too great to hope for settlement beyond the 8 miles peg? I don't think so. We have population further along the Parramatta line, there is no reason why they should not extend right to Liverpool.
487. You have not seen the estimate of the Commissioners as to the cost, and probable loss on the line if constructed through to Liverpool? I have heard of it.
488. Have you heard that in the event of the line being formed there will be an annual loss of £35,000? I have heard there would be a loss.
489. Do you know anything about settlement near to Kingsgrove—is there much settlement there? Yes, fair.
490. Is there much settlement near Belmore? It is fairly settled right through to Belmore.
491. The people of Belmore would be served by this railway? Yes.
492. They would make use of it to come to Sydney instead of travelling as at present? Yes.
493. How long are you coming to Sydney by tram? I was an hour coming in this morning from Dulwich Hill.
494. How many miles is it? From Dulwich Hill to Sydney about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles, but the tram has to go to Marrickville to get here. When we are at Dulwich Hill we are nearer Petersham than Marrickville.
495. Do you get into the tram at Dulwich Hill and go to Marrickville, Newtown, and Enmore? Yes.
496. And you were an hour coming in? Yes, the time is 50 minutes, but we were an hour.
497. And the same distance by rail would occupy not more than 15 minutes? No.
498. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What industries are established on the proposed line of railway? There are nothing but brickyards and stone quarries. We had an iron foundry there, but it is closed.
499. Whose iron foundry? Blacket's.
500. I suppose this line would be chiefly a passenger line? It would be used for luggage as well, or anything required in the district.
501. What is the nearest point on the western suburbs line to Canterbury? Ashfield, I think.
502. How far distant will that be? About 2 miles.

J. Slocombe,
Esq.
20 Nov., 1889.

503. How far would it be from the nearest point on the western suburbs line to the end of Burwood road? About 4 miles—it might not be quite so much.
504. How far would it be from Belmore to the Illawarra line? About the same distance.
505. You see by the diagram that the district you propose to serve is about equi-distant from the Illawarra line on the one side, and the western suburbs line on the other side? Yes.
506. And this is already partially served by a tramway to Dulwich Hill? The Dulwich Hill tramway does not serve the district at all. It serves Dulwich Hill, but not Canterbury.
507. But it serves a portion of the district which would be served by this line? A very small portion indeed.
508. Do you think the State would be justified in recommending a line of railway equi-distant from two other lines, and which already has one tramway running into it, and which could be served by a tramway from Ashfield to Canterbury 2 miles long, or from Burwood to the end of Burwood Road, 4 miles long. Do you think this tramway, if carried out, would serve the passenger traffic in the district? No, people would not use them. They would prefer the coach to come straight in. We have seven coaches a day running now.
509. Do you think they would prefer to go in by coach than by tapping the western suburbs with a railway? Yes, because it would take longer to do it. They would have to shift into the western suburbs train, and then they would have to get out of the train into a tram at Sydney.
510. You have resided there from birth? Yes—forty-five years.
511. What progress has this district made in late years—in population—say in twenty years? It has increased wonderfully in that time. In fact, there is a population right out there. Twenty years ago there was a great blank between the city and those places.
512. What class of people reside there? The industrial classes principally, who go into town every day to their employment.
513. Have you opened up any gardens? There are gardens there further out.
514. And the district is still progressing in population? Certainly.
515. You said just now you thought, including Marrickville, 10,000 people would be served by this proposed railway? I think so.
516. Do you think that number would justify the construction of a line to be run mainly for passengers a distance of 8 miles? Yes, I think population will increase very fast. 2,000 allotments have been sold and people are only waiting to build upon it.
517. You are aware there is a population of about 40,000 between Darlinghurst and Bondi who are served by tramways? I know it is so.
518. And these tramways are largely patronised? Yes.
519. Do you not think the people would be glad to patronise a tram in preference to 'buses or coaches? The people between Darlinghurst and Bondi cannot help themselves. They have to use the trams.
520. They have the same convenience as you have—omnibuses and coaches? And they use them too.
521. It is a fact they use them when the trams are crowded;—is it not a fact that the trams to Waverley and Bondi are the best paying in the whole system? I daresay. They are very good for street traffic, but to bring people in from districts I do not think they are suitable.
522. Then you hold the opinion that a line of railway to Burwood Road—8 miles—would be justifiable to serve the passenger traffic of that district? I think so.
523. *Mr. Tonkin.*] What is the population of Canterbury proper? Between 3,000 and 4,000.
524. What means have you of communication with Sydney at the present time? Only by 'bus.
525. Is it your opinion that if this line is constructed through Canterbury the population would materially increase? Decidedly, in Canterbury and surroundings.
526. Have you any doubt that if this line were constructed it would pay? Not the slightest.
527. Are you in business as a commercial man? Yes.
528. You have had experience in different matters of this kind? Yes.
529. And you have no doubt that if the line were constructed it would be a good paying line? I have every reason to believe it would.
530. Is the Dulwich Hill tram of any use to the Canterbury people? No; we might just as well go to Ashfield as Dulwich Hill, and get the train.
531. Do you know the line right through to Liverpool? Yes.
532. What kind of country is it right through to Liverpool. Is it likely to be built upon? It is very good country.
533. Suitable for country residences? Yes.
534. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know Randell's subdivision, and Golden Park Estate, through which this line will go? I know Golden Park Estate, but never heard of Randell's subdivision.
535. Can you inform the Committee the value of those allotments; or has any of that land been recently sold on the Golden Park Estate? A sale took place on the Golden Park about seven years ago, and it brought about from £3 to 15s. per foot.
536. Only small prices? Yes; it is now worth considerably more.
537. You do not know anything about Randell's subdivision? I think you mean Redmond's subdivision.
538. Can you give any information about the value of that land? Yes. There is a great lot of Redmond's subdivision there.
539. I mean through which the line would pass? There is one called Kempsey Park—that may be the one.
540. The one I mean is subdivided by Mills and Pile. Can you inform the Committee what that land fetched, or what is about its value? The line does not pass through that subdivision—the Bridgewater Estate.
541. Yes; it is pegged out through the estate; you cannot say what the value of that land is? I could if I knew which it was.
542. Supposing it was Redmond's estate? I think it is worth about £2 a foot—that is further on than Golden Park.
543. Do you know a man named John Coleman occupying some land belonging to you? Not belonging to me, but to my brother, John Slocombe.

- J. Slocombe, Esq.
20 Nov., 1889.
544. Is that a valuable property through which the line would pass? I do not think the line passes through it.
545. It does? I was not aware of it. I thought it passed close to it.
546. Is it a valuable property? I do not think it is of great value at present. I do not know what the value would be at present.
547. Is there a stone house upon it? There is some little place upon it.
548. The buildings are not large and expensive? No; of no value whatever.
549. Do you anticipate any goods traffic upon the line? There are brickyards upon the line.
550. There is good brick earth about there? Yes.
551. In all probability there may be some goods traffic as well as passenger traffic? I think so.

THURSDAY, 21 NOVEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

The HONORABLE JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

William Lovell Davis, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

- W. L. Davis, Esq.
21 Nov., 1889.
552. *Vice-Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Petersham.
553. Do you know the proposed line? I know it very well.
554. You are connected, I think, with the Canterbury racecourse? I am one of the proprietors of it.
555. And do you consider that the proposed line would be a convenience to those who go to the races at Canterbury Park? It would be a very great convenience indeed. At present those who visit the racecourse have to go to Ashfield, and then to travel about a mile and a half. Some walk and some ride.
556. How are they accommodated—by omnibuses and carriages? By omnibuses and cabs.
557. You usually have a fairly large attendance there? Yes; I have had a list compiled by our secretary, giving an account of the last twenty meetings held there. The attendance amounted to 46,365 persons altogether, giving an average of 2,318 per meeting. I calculate that that number at 1s. a head would give a revenue to the Railway Department of £2,500 a year. That is according to the present attendance, but I am confident that if we had railway facilities we could rely on the number being increased by at least one-third, if not by 50 per cent. At our last races held on the Eight-hours Demonstration Day, some 2,000 people wanted to go to Canterbury Park, and could not get there, and they were left on the platform at Redfern. [*See Appendix A.*]
558. Do most of the metropolitan visitors go by Ashfield? Yes.
559. Do any go by Marrickville? None by the trams. It would take too long.
560. How far is Dulwich Hill from Canterbury Park? About $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile.
561. How far would the racecourse be from the proposed line? It would be about half a mile.
562. Would that be at Burwood Road or at some nearer site? In the village of Canterbury. The racecourse is about a quarter of a mile from the village of Canterbury. I do not know the exact site of the proposed station. I imagine that it would be something like about half a mile from the course. People would not mind walking that distance.
563. How long is it since the course was first established? Five years.
564. How many meetings do you hold each year? Twenty-one. I have a list of fixtures for next year, giving all the dates. [*See Appendix B.*]
565. How many does that amount to? The legitimate racing fixtures, that is for horse-races, number eleven. These are appointed by the Australian Jockey Club. Then there are ten supplementary meetings—trotting races, and races for ponies and galloways.
566. Your racecourse is owned by a club, is it not, or a syndicate? We call ourselves a Company. There are only seven interested in it.
567. Your project is sufficiently successful to justify you in anticipating that it will be continued? I think we are the most prosperous racing company in New South Wales.
568. And if the railway were constructed you would consider it not only a convenience to the racing club, but also that the race club would be a means of contributing to the success of the railway? We could, of course, have greater success than we have had so far if we had the railway, and the public would be better able to attend the races.
569. You know that part of the country pretty well? I think I know every inch of it.
570. Has it increased in population during the last few years? Yes; very fast.
571. Do you think the railway would cause increased settlement in that locality? I am sure of it. There is no better land round Sydney for building purposes. It is undulating country, and if a railway is made there the land will soon be covered with houses. No better land for building sites could be got.
572. And the land is tolerably good for other purposes? Yes; as good as any land about Sydney.
573. *Mr. Trickett.*] Do you know the permanently staked line marked blue on the plan? I do.
574. Do you think that is the best of the three that have been surveyed? Yes; most decidedly. It is equi-distant between the other two lines. It is the straightest line you could get, and it has the best levels.
575. Have you considered the proposal to construct a railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road in connection with its future extension? I have.
576. What do you think of it? I think it would relieve the present line from Liverpool to Sydney and save an immense amount of haulage. It would save $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles between Sydney and Liverpool. Instead of 22 miles the distance would be 16 miles.

577. Is the land beyond Burwood Road land which would also be suitable for residential purposes? Yes; it would be fairly suitable, but it would not be so suitable as the land within 6 or 7 miles of Sydney. I believe that the whole of the land beyond where it is proposed to construct the line would be given free of cost. I do not think it could be given at Marrickville, because you could not expect men who own small allotments to give their land.

W. L. Davis,
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578. How far is the line from your racecourse? About half a mile.

579. Is the racecourse easily approachable from the line? Oh, yes; it would be all down-hill to the racecourse.

580. Have you made any calculations as to the present population that would be served by a railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road? At a rough estimate I should say from 12,000 to 15,000.

581. 12,000 to 15,000 residents there at present who would use the line if it were constructed in preference to any other route? Yes. I may mention that there is a very large estate near where the terminus would be. The proprietors have spent about £20,000 on that one estate. They have laid it out in magnificent building sites.

582. What is the name of the place? It is called Harcourt.

583. Does the railway go through the estate? It does not quite touch it, but it passes it.

584. Have you any land through which the proposed line will pass? No; I have land that would be very close to it, but not any large blocks.

585. I suppose you are in frequent conversation with the persons through whose land the railway would pass? Yes; I often meet them.

586. When this line was suggested in 1887 it was a *sine qua non* that all the landowners should give the property free of charge that was required for the railway;—do you know if they are of the same opinion now? I think they would give it with the exceptions that I have stated. I do not think that all were of that opinion at any time. You could not expect a man in the middle of Marrickville, close to the junction of the Illawarra line, to give his allotment, but anyone who had a large block through which the line would pass might give the land. Miss Campbell's estate lies on the route of the proposed railway, and I believe that the agent would now give the land which he promised to do then.

587. Are there any other owners of large blocks who would give their land? I do not think there are any owners of large blocks along the route until you get to Cook's River—then you get amongst blocks, the owners of which would give the land.

588. Is that on the line? It is $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile this side of the terminus.

589. Do you think Marrickville is the best place from which the line should go? I do. I think it is the best both for population and as regards the expense. If you start before that point you will have more land resumed, and it will be more expensive as it is nearer Sydney.

590. And do you think it is also a good starting point, supposing the line were to be carried on to Liverpool? I do. The line will be almost straight.

591. What about the tramway to Dulwich Hill;—would not this railway line, if constructed, come into competition with that line? Not in the least. It would not rob that line of a single passenger. The Dulwich Hill tram cuts at right angles to the Illawarra line, and this line will come right away from it straight to Canterbury.

592. How are the people now served as regards communication with Sydney? They must travel by omnibuses or walk to Ashfield, or to the Dulwich Hill tram.

593. Do they mostly travel by 'bus? Yes.

594. What time does that take? The journey occupies an hour.

595. How many miles is the village of Canterbury from Sydney? About $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

596. Do you think that if this line were constructed it would largely tend to increase the suburban population there? I am confident of it.

597. Have you ever heard expressions of opinion in that direction: that the present holders would build if they had better means of communication? I know that there are hundreds of allotments which have been sold, and that the purchasers are only waiting for railway communication before commencing to build. A friend of mine and myself had one subdivision, and we sold every allotment, the area being 20 acres, and nine-tenths of that land, were railway communication afforded with the city, would be built on.

598. They are not speculators? No simply buyers of building allotments.

599. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you know the point where the railway stops at Burwood Road? I do.

600. Is it a good temporary stopping place? I think it is one of the best that could be obtained.

601. I notice by the map that a little beyond the 9-mile point there is a cross-road, and it looks as if that point would, in some respects, make a better terminus of the line? I think not; you reach the greatest population at Burwood Road.

602. You do not think that the population would follow the line if we put the terminus a mile further on? Yes.

603. You think it would be best to stop at the 8-mile point? The line could not stop at a better place.

604. You think that as far as the present and the prospective traffic are concerned, that is as far as it is wise to go at present? Yes, unless you construct the whole line.

605. Do you know the country beyond the 8-mile point, as far as Bankstown? I know every inch of the route.

606. And is it good residential country between the 8-mile point and Bankstown? Very good; but as I said before, it is not so good as the undulating land within a radius of 6 miles of Sydney. For about 2 miles after you reach Cook's River, at Canterbury, it is beautiful land for building purposes.

607. Between the 8-miles and George's River you think it is not as good for residential purposes as the first part of the line? It would be very good for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles further. Then it would be flatter country until you come to George's River.

608. That would be a good reason for continuing the line further? But there is not such a large population.

609. But this is rather for a prospective than for the present population? I should take it so; but the population is there at the present terminus.

610. You would not undertake to say that the traffic afforded by the present population would pay interest on the outlay? I would guarantee that it would in two years. There is double the population there that there was at Hurstville when the line to that place was constructed.

611.

- W. L. Davis, Esq.
21 Nov., 1889.
611. But that population came after the railway was made? Yes, and the same rule would apply here. But there is a greater population than there was on the Illawarra line when it was constructed.
612. There was a *bonâ fide* demand for suburban land at the time when the Illawarra line was constructed? Yes.
613. Is there the same demand now? I cannot say that there is; but a very large amount of land has been sold on this line.
614. In the expectation of a railway? Yes. We have been agitating for this line for ten years.
615. Is it in your knowledge that a large number intend to build? I am certain of it. The land has been bought for that purpose.
616. Do you think that the line should ultimately go through to Liverpool? I do.
617. Are you of opinion that it would relieve the main trunk line? I believe it will relieve the main line of the whole of the southern traffic, if that is wished.
618. Have you any personal knowledge of the traffic that passes through Liverpool station? I have not.
619. You do not know how many trains a day pass through that station? I should say about thirty trains a day.
620. We have it from the Commissioners that it would only take from the other line four trains a day each way if the proposed loop-line were made? Then, of course, they would not divert the main southern traffic; but if they did that, a person coming from Melbourne would save $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
621. But it would afford no convenience as regards cattle going to Homebush? No.
622. Only to through traffic? Yes.
623. Are there more than four trains each day going through? Yes, most decidedly.
624. Taking it as a whole, you think it is wise to have the terminus at the 8-mile point? I should be very pleased to see it go right through. I am sure that it would pay in two or three years.
625. You think it more prudent for it to stop at Burwood Road? No; I am in favour of its going through. I believe in an extensive system of suburban railways. We are far behind our neighbours in this respect; and in Melbourne, I believe, the suburban railways pay.
626. If you could control the policy of the country, you would make the line right through to Liverpool at once? Yes. I could get a syndicate to take it up in an hour.
627. From your knowledge of the district, you think it would be judicious to make this line? I am perfectly certain.
628. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] We have before us an estimate of the Commissioners with regard to this line, and they state that the total annual cost will be £9,558 a year, and they estimate the annual revenue at £3,000, showing a loss of £6,558 a year. What is your opinion? I think that the revenue is under-estimated. We will guarantee to find a revenue, if they wish it, of £2,500 a year.
629. You said that last year you had 46,365 visitors to the Canterbury racecourse—what do you think would be a fair charge per head for taking them to Canterbury and back? One shilling return.
630. And that for 46,000 would be £2,300? Yes.
631. Do you think that is likely to be sustained? I think it is likely to be increased by a very great deal.
632. You think that the Canterbury racecourse traffic would amount to very nearly the estimate of the Commissioners? I am almost positive. The attendance at the racecourse is a very large increase.
633. You were formerly Member of Parliament for Canterbury? Yes I was.
634. I presume that you are thoroughly acquainted with the district? I am.
635. You estimate that the population to be served will be from 12,000 to 14,000? Yes.
636. What centres of population do you take in? I should take all the further part of Marrickville through which the line passes, and the lower part of Marrickville, the whole of Canterbury, Rosedale, Enfield, part of Bankstown, Kingsgrove, Belmore, and the whole of the district beyond where the terminus will be.
637. You say you would take a portion of Marrickville. In doing that would you not take the portion of the passenger traffic already going to Marrickville? Yes; but you get the extra fares. Instead of walking a mile and a half they would ride and pay.
638. Would it not take the traffic from the Dulwich Hill tram? It would not take one passenger.
639. Does it not go near the route? No.
640. But the line will go through a portion of country that will be served by the tram? You could number by units the passengers that the line would rob the tram of.
641. On which side of the line is the Canterbury racecourse? Going from Sydney it is on the right hand side.
642. If the racecourse is on the right hand side of the line, would it not be better served by the more northerly route—the one to Bankstown? No; I think it does not deviate until it gets beyond Canterbury.
643. Your racecourse is a mile and a half from Ashfield? Yes.
644. Would not a tramway from Ashfield to the racecourse carry your passengers? I am not studying the interests of the racecourse proprietors alone. We agitated for the railway before there was a racecourse.
645. I regard the traffic to the Canterbury racecourse as a most important factor in the argument. No doubt it is larger than the Commissioners have estimated it to be; but I ask whether a tramway from Ashfield would not carry the passengers? No; because if you run a special train, it will bring from 300 to 500 passengers, and how could they be accommodated in tram-cars. They would require about twelve cars.
646. I might reply by asking you another question: If 500 passengers leave the train half a mile away from the course, how are they to reach the racecourse? They would walk, and enjoy it.
647. I ask whether a tram running from Ashfield would not best accommodate the passengers? It would be quite useless.
648. Could not the tram-cars carry 200 at each trip? Each car would carry fifty or sixty passengers, and at least ten cars would be necessary.
649. You mentioned an estate called the Harcourt Estate. Is that along the route of the proposed line? Yes; near the end of the proposed line.
650. Who are the proprietors of the Harcourt Estate? Messrs. Phillips and Co.
651. Has that estate been sold? Some portions have been sold, but not very many. If you visit that estate you will see that it is the best laid-out property about Sydney.

652. Were there any purchasers for it? It has not been offered at auction—only for private sale. The building conditions are very stringent; the buildings being of a certain value and in a certain style. W. L. Davis,
Esq.
21 Nov., 1889.
653. *Mr. Humphrey.*] Have you been living long in Canterbury? I have lived in the district twenty-one years—ever since I have been in the Colony.
654. Do you know it well? Yes.
655. You say that you began to agitate for this railway ten years ago? Yes.
656. Do you remember what was the value of the land about Canterbury then? Much less than it is now. Ten years ago you could buy land there at from £70 to £100 an acre.
657. Considerably less than that could you not? Not ten years ago.
658. Do you know Kingsgrove? Yes.
659. What could you buy land for there? I do not call that Canterbury.
660. It will be touched by the railway? Yes.
661. What could you buy land for there? From £15 to £10 an acre.
662. At present, without a railway, what is the value of the land there? About £50 or £60 an acre.
663. Can you remember how many houses there were at Canterbury ten or twelve years ago? There was only a very small population.
664. Has there been a great increase since? There has, and had there been railway facilities the population would have increased much faster.
665. Have there been many houses built on the Campbell estate? Yes, a great many. There is quite a large settlement on the left of the new Canterbury Road, down near the river.
666. Is there not considerable settlement a little beyond Canterbury? Yes; there is an estate called the Golden Park estate. It is all sold to *bona fide* purchasers.
667. Is there a large quantity of elevated land close to Kingsgrove? Yes; all suitable for building purposes.
668. Is the Harcourt estate near Kingsgrove? It is on the left,—and the Harcourt estate on the right. The Harcourt estate was known as Redman's land.
669. Is there any settlement there? Some houses have been built and some portions of the land are sold, but it has not been offered yet. I suppose that they are waiting for the result of the railway agitation.
670. Is the Redman estate between the river and Burwood? On the left of the river, and on the right of the Canterbury Road. Between the proposed line and the river.
671. Are you of opinion that this railway, if it starts at Marrickville and stops at the 8-mile point, will go far enough for all the purposes of suburban settlement? Yes; for the present.
672. Settlement is not likely to go beyond 8 miles from Sydney? Not at present, but if the railway is carried to that point it will push the population ahead again.
673. You said that £2,500 was a fair estimate of the probable revenue? Yes.
674. This traffic to produce £2,500 in connection with the racecourse would have to pass over the line between Sydney and Marrickville, and your estimate would include that? Yes. I am calculating the fares at one shilling return. In going to Randwick by tram you pay one shilling each way. If you go to Redfern you take a ticket to Canterbury and back.
675. The Commissioners would have to take into consideration that the traffic would have to pass over an already constructed line? I am confident that the public would pay 1s. 6d. as readily as they would pay 1s.
676. I daresay that the Railway Commissioners have taken into consideration that by constructing the railway we shall divert the present traffic by way of Ashfield from the existing line; it is proposed to make a single line only;—do you think that will be sufficient for the present and the prospective traffic? I do not think it will be sufficient very long. I think the construction of a single line a very unwise policy.
677. Do you think that a double line should be made at once, or should we first make a single line and afterwards have it duplicated? I think it would be best to make a double line at once.
678. You are of opinion that the increased traffic will justify the immediate construction of a double line? I am.
679. That railway will create traffic enough to cover the working expenses of the line? I am certain that it will in a couple of years.
680. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you feel confident that that return of £2,500 a year would not decrease? I think it would increase. The club is becoming more popular every day. We have been very successful ever since we started.
681. The Commissioners' estimate of revenue is £3,000, do you think that they have omitted the Canterbury racecourse altogether? I think they must have done.
682. Do you think that the returns, without including those in connection with the racecourse, would amount to £3,000 per annum? I think they would exceed that, independently of the racecourse.
683. Then you are of opinion that the Commissioners' estimate is less than it ought to be? I am.
684. If you could get permission to construct the line would you be prepared to form a syndicate to construct it on a thoroughly commercial basis? We should only be too pleased. I would guarantee to form it in one hour. I know a gentleman who would put £25,000 in it at once.
685. You have no doubt that it would be a payable line? I am certain of it.
686. Independently of having any interest in a land syndicate? Quite independently of that.
687. Does it show favourably in comparison with the Illawarra line, before that was constructed, as far as population is concerned? Yes.
688. On that line to Hurstville was there as large a population, or any indication of it, before the line was constructed as there is on this line now? There is a far larger population on this line than there was on the Hurstville route before the Illawarra railway was made.
689. How much more population? I should say 33 per cent. at least.
690. Are the facilities for building along this route equal to the facilities on the Illawarra route? Quite equal, and I think that the soil, if anything, is better.
691. You have no hesitation in saying that the extension of the tram from Dulwich Hill to Burwood Road would not meet the requirements of the district? It would not meet the requirements of the district, and the public would not patronize it. By tram it would take at least an hour to get into Sydney.
692. Then you think the Government will be justified in constructing the line to Burwood Road? I do.
693. *Mr. Dowd.*] You say you consider that the Railway Commissioners' estimate of the revenue from the railway—£3,000—is not a correct one? I think it is an under-estimate.

- W. L. Davis, Esq.
21 Nov., 1889.
694. You have also stated that there are 10,000 or 12,000 people who would probably avail themselves of the railway. Is it likely that 500 persons are likely to travel each way by the railway every day from the start? I would not say that they would do that from the very start, but I would guarantee that they would do it in less than two years.
695. That would give £9,490 revenue, independent of the Canterbury races; taking that as a calculation, would you consider that that justifies your opinion as to the incorrectness of the Commissioners' estimate? I am confident that within two years the traffic would exceed 500 passengers a day.
696. From your knowledge of the district, do you think it is likely that in addition to this passenger traffic there would be some goods traffic? Oh, yes; there are several brickyards on the line, as well as a good deal of timber, and of course there would be a great deal of produce as the population increased.
697. You anticipate, in addition to the passenger revenue, revenue from goods traffic? Yes.
698. And a considerable portion of the land that would be reached is good agricultural land? Yes.
699. Are you aware that in making the line some deep cuttings would have to be made—cuttings about 30 feet deep, with heavy embankments? I daresay. You go through the worst part of the work in making this portion of the proposed line.
700. Do you think that the cuttings and embankments would involve any difficulties in regard to the approaches? No; I think they would not be long cuttings.
701. They would not prevent people from having access to the line? No. I do not think they would be any worse than those on the main line from Sydney to Parramatta.
702. Having a thorough knowledge of the country as far as Liverpool, I understand you to say that you strongly recommend that a double of line of railway be constructed along the whole length of the proposed route? I do. I think it ought to be done. At the same time, if the inhabitants cannot get a whole loaf they must take half a loaf. I am convinced that this portion of the line will pay within two years; and that may induce the Commissioners to recommend the construction of the whole line.
703. You do not agree with the Commissioners when they say that the construction of a line to Liverpool would only relieve the main line of about four trains a day in each direction? I cannot understand that at all.
704. Do you think it is a mistake to make the public travel $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles further than there is any necessity for? I do. It means a great deal in the year.
705. Has there been much discussion in reference to the rival routes? There has in years gone by, and I think that that has been greatly to the detriment of this proposed line. Every man wants the railway against his own door. During the last two or three years, however, the inhabitants have been very unanimous; ninety-nine out of 100 believing that the proposed route will be the best.
706. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] In the event of this line being constructed, are the Canterbury Park Racing Company likely to construct a branch line to connect it with the railway? They will take into consideration how far the railway is from the course, and if they think it desirable to have a branch line I have not the slightest doubt that we shall apply to have one, and no doubt we shall have to guarantee the interest on the cost of its construction. If the railway is within half a mile of the course probably no action will be taken, but if it is a greater distance away, I think we shall ask for a branch line to be constructed.

Mr. James McBean, Mayor of Canterbury, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. McBean.
21 Nov., 1889.
707. *Vice-Chairman.*] Are you the Mayor of Canterbury? I am.
708. How long have you resided at Canterbury? About thirty-three years.
709. You know that part of the country tolerably well then? Yes.
710. Do you know the route of the proposed line from Marrickville to Burwood Road? Yes.
711. How long has Burwood Road had that name? Five or six years. We used to call it the Old George's River Road.
712. Does it come near the Punch Bowl Road? Yes; it comes on to it.
713. Do you reside at Canterbury? Yes.
714. And of course you have watch the growth of the population there since you first went there? Yes. It has increased to a very large extent.
715. Are there many large estates in the neighbourhood now? No, there are very few. They are being subdivided.
716. Is the Campbell estate subdivided? It has been sold in blocks of several acres each.
717. Do you think the Government would be justified in constructing a railway between Marrickville and Burwood Road? I do.
718. How far will the terminus be from the nearest points of the Great Western and Southern lines? About four miles.
719. And what distance would it be from the tramway or railway at Dulwich Hill? I suppose between four and five miles.
720. Has the population increased along the route of the proposed line during the last few years? Yes; it has largely increased.
721. The locality affords good facilities for residents? Yes; very good.
722. And the land is fairly good? Yes; it is dry and good soil for any purpose.
723. Do you know anything of the route to Liverpool? Yes.
724. Do you think the line would be any advantage to a future population towards Bankstown? Yes.
725. Is the land fairly good there? Yes.
726. What communication have they along the old Liverpool Road? Only the coach from Bankstown to Burwood station.
727. Is there much population about Drutt Town? Yes; considerable population.
728. How far would the proposed terminus be from Drutt Town—say from the old Bark Huts? About two miles I think.
729. Then if this line were constructed would the population about the old Bark Huts go this line, or to Burwood or Ashfield? Most of the people would use this line. Part of the Bark Huts runs to the Punch Bowl Road—that is not half a mile off. But to the Bark Huts proper would be about two miles.
730. *Mr. Trickett.*] What is the population of Canterbury? About 3,000.
731. Can you tell us the value of the rateable property in the Borough of Canterbury? I could not tell you exactly. The Clerk of the Council could tell you.

Mr.
J. M'Bean.

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732. What is the amount of your annual rate? About £2,000.
733. That is for 1888 and 1889? Yes.
734. Is there any increase as compared with the previous years? Yes; the amount increases by about £200 a year.
735. How long has Canterbury been incorporated? Eight or nine years.
736. And there has been a gradual increase in the value of the property? Yes.
737. Is it by residences being erected, or only an increase in the value of the land? Residences have greatly increased, as well as the value of the land.
738. You know the permanently staked line? Yes.
739. Do you think that is the best of those which have been projected? I do.
740. You think that that would suit all parties the best? I do.
741. From having been in communication with a great number of the local residents, are you of opinion that they are in favour of this route? At meetings which we have had they were unanimously in favour of the line. There might be one or two exceptions; persons who want the line to go through their own land.
742. Were those meetings well attended? Yes.
743. Are there many people travelling between Canterbury and Sydney daily? Yes, a great number; there are seven coaches running.
744. Are they all doing well? Yes, or they would not continue, I suppose.
745. They are well patronised? Yes; the other night I saw over forty in one coach.
746. Are there complaints that the means of communication are unsatisfactory? Yes.
747. Is there a Public School in Canterbury? Yes.
748. What is the attendance? About 300.
749. And that I suppose has been increased during the last two or three years? Yes.
750. Do you know the course of the line from Marrickville to Burwood Road? Yes.
751. What are your views as to the present population of those districts which would be served by the railway? I suppose it would serve a population of between 6,000 and 10,000.
752. Would they be a class of people to frequently come into Sydney? Yes.
753. Do you know the owners of the property the railway passes through in your Municipality? Yes.
754. Are they large or small holders? Some large and some small. There is a lot of allotments, and some large land owners.
755. Have you heard them say whether they would be willing to give their land free for the purposes of this railway? Yes.
756. Can you give the names of any one of those whom you have recently heard state that? It was I who obtained the signatures for this line some years ago, and there were then only two exceptions who refused.
757. Is that document in the Department? It was handed to the Department at that time.
758. Have you seen these people lately? I have never heard anyone say other than that they would adhere to their former promise.
759. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What industry is carried on between Marrickville and Canterbury? The principal industries were brickworks, an iron foundry, quarries, and such like, but the iron foundry closed up through the cost of carriage.
760. Was that the only reason? I believe so. The brick-kilns are most of them closed up too, and I think it is through the same reason. They had to cart wood from the station, a considerable distance. There were six or seven kilns altogether, and I estimate they would use about 15 trucks a week of wood and coal. That is a considerable item if you have to cart it three or four miles, and load and unload. I have heard several of the brick-kiln proprietors complain this was a great drawback. In my own case I had a quarry there some time ago, and got some large grindstones for Hudson Brothers and Vale and Sons, and it cost me £1 to get each stone to Ashfield station, and I lost a day loading and unloading besides.
761. Have you heard that one of the reasons for the stoppage of the brick-kilns, is that they produce too many bricks? I do not know about that, but of course it may be due to the state of the market.
762. What class of people live out on the proposed line of railway? Some are market gardeners, others work on the roads, and take in wood to Sydney, and quarrymen.
763. Have you noticed any evidence of a desire on the part of a set of people to build residential homes there? Yes. I know several friends myself who have allotments there, and who would come out and build, and who would go backwards and forwards to business, but it takes three hours time every day to get in and out by coach now.
764. *Dr. Garran.*] You know the locality where it is proposed to stop at Burwood Road? Yes.
765. Is that a good place for a terminal station? Yes.
766. Would any object be gained by going a mile further? I do not know. I think it would be far better to go right on to Liverpool.
767. Short of going to Liverpool it is best to stop where it is proposed? I believe so, because it is a main road, and goes right across country from George's River to Burwood station.
768. Do I understand that the Burwood Road goes to Tom Ugly's Point? Yes.
769. So does the road at the 9 miles point, where the Punch Bowl Road crosses? I mean the old George's River Road. What is called the Burwood Road now, we used to call the Burwood lane, and that does not go to Tom Ugly's Point.
770. But still it makes a good stopping place? Yes.
771. And is the land between St. Peter's and that point north all good for building? I do not think you could beat it.
772. It is as good as anything on the western line? As good as anywhere I have seen within miles of Sydney.
773. Is there any of it as high as Petersham? Yes.
774. And none of it very low? None.
775. Do you know of any opposition to this line? No.
776. You have not heard of any? No.
777. The feeling of the district is pretty unanimous? Yes.
778. And they are contented with this route? They are content to leave it in the hands of the Government.

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J. M. Bean.
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779. If this line were recommended there would be no opposition on the ground that rival routes would be preferable? I do not think there would.
780. *Mr. Humphery.*] You said there were 7 coaches leaving Canterbury for Sydney? Yes.
781. How many trips? Seven from Canterbury to Sydney.
782. Have you any idea how many passengers are carried by coach? There were over forty on one the other night.
783. What is the average? From twenty to thirty, I suppose, each way.
784. How many passengers do you think travel by coach from Canterbury to Sydney daily? They generally carry twenty to thirty a load.
785. But every coach would not be full? No.
786. Do you think there would be 100 going in from Canterbury to Sydney daily? Yes; that is between Canterbury and the Burwood Road.
787. What is the fare? Is. from Burwood Road and 9d. from Canterbury each way.
788. *Mr. Tonkin.*] You think you could average each coach twenty-five passengers? Yes.
789. That would be 175? Yes.
790. Would that include all the passenger traffic which would be served by the railway? I do not think so.
791. What other places would passengers come from to town? Some of the passengers walk to the tram; they will not wait for the coaches, as they do not run often enough. Some of them would come further across to the train.
792. Are there any centres of population where the people are not served by these coaches? Parts of the adjoining boroughs would be served. Some have their own vehicles, and such like.
793. Do some drive in? A great number.
794. Could you give an estimate of the other passenger traffic in addition to that which you have given already? I could hardly do that because there are so many outlets;—some drive in through Marrickville, and come through Undercliff way down to Tempe.
795. But there are no other licensed vehicles except the seven coaches? No.
796. If your statement is correct it gives £4,360 a year for those passengers;—what would you think of the Commissioners saying that the total revenue would only be £3,000 a year? I believe the passenger traffic would be close on what I say.
797. Can you give an idea of what the goods traffic would be? I am prepared to swear that there are six brick-kilns which are closed, which use fuel at the rate of fifteen trucks a day.
798. Is it likely they would open again if the railway were constructed? I have every reason to believe so.
799. Are there any brick-yards now working? Yes.
800. How many brick-kilns are there at work now which are consuming coal and wood? Only two.
801. Do you know how much they use daily? They would use what I have stated—about two trucks a day.
802. Between the two? Yes.
803. Where do they get it from? From Ashfield and Petersham.
804. What cartage do they pay from Ashfield? 2s. 6d. or 3s. a ton.
805. Then freight would be a large item in the revenue returns? Yes.
806. Is there any other freight besides coal and wood used;—where do the flour and other provisions come from? They are sent out on trollies and drays.
807. Then there is a large amount used which would go by train? Yes.
808. You have no doubt that the estimate of the Commissioners is under what it should be? No doubt at all.
809. Your estimate of the passenger traffic alone gives a revenue of over £4,000. In addition, the race-course traffic has been sworn to as £2,500—that makes £7,000, without any goods traffic at all;—you cannot therefore understand why the Commissioners should say the revenue would only be £3,000? I cannot understand it.
810. You are sure the figures you have stated are correct? To the best of my belief.
811. *Mr. Dowel.*] You say you know the whole of the country which this line would traverse? Yes.
812. You referred to certain centres of population—will you inform the Committee their names? It would tap part of Hurstville and Ashfield. It would benefit part of Enfield and Parkestown in the Municipality of Canterbury, and Kingsgrove, Moorefield, and Belmore.
- 812½. Can you estimate what the traffic would be from all these places? From 6,000 to 10,000 people—that is with Marrickville as well.
813. Do you think the traffic would run into some hundreds a day? Yes.
814. That is judging from your calculation of the coach traffic? Yes.
815. Do you anticipate, if the line is constructed, considerable additional settlement would take place? I am satisfied of it. If I had the means I would make one in a company, if I were privileged to do so, to construct a line myself.
816. Do you think a traffic of 500 passengers a day would be likely to rise in two years time, independent of such special occasions, such as Canterbury racecourse proceedings? I do, and more.
817. You also anticipate considerable revenue from goods traffic? Yes.
818. Are the brickworks in the locality good or bad? Good.
819. What is the character of the stone in the quarries you refer to? It is equal to anything you can get. The two lodge gates at the University were supplied from that material by myself. It will compare with anything in the town.
820. If the line is constructed on the proposed route, will it serve these quarries? Yes. They are not above 300 or 400 yards from the line.
821. In all probability some revenue will be derived from the quarries? Decidedly.
822. Is it the opinion of the people that this is the best line to be constructed? According to the meetings held the people are unanimous.
823. And it is your own opinion? Yes.

Walter D'Arrietta, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

824. *Vice-Chairman.*] You have lived for a considerable time in the neighbourhood of Canterbury? Eight or nine years.

825. Do you live at Canterbury or Belmore? Belmore.

826. How far is that from Canterbury? $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

827. Were you acquainted with that part of the country before you went to live there? No, I have been in and out for the last ten or twelve years, and have been residing there permanently for the last three years.

828. You know the country where the railway line is proposed to be constructed? Yes.

829. Have they a railway committee or league? Not at Canterbury. The league is for the through line to Liverpool.

830. Is the league which has been advocating the construction of the line from Marrickville to Liverpool in accord with the proposal to construct the line from Marrickville to Burwood Road? The league is agreeable to accept that as an instalment of the through line. They believe it will go through ultimately.

831. At present they are in favour of this proposed extension? Yes.

832. Do you know the different routes which have been proposed? Fairly well.

833. Is it the case that the residents there concur that this lock-spitted line is the most desirable one? The majority of the league are in favour of leaving the choice of the line to the Government.

834. Has the locality about there increased in population of late years? It has increased fairly well, but the great drawback has been the difficulty of access to the city. The land in the locality is very favourably situated. It is undulating and easily drained and very healthy, and is suitable for the settlement of a suburban population.

835. The soil is fairly good? It is.

836. Are there many gardens around there? There are several on the river, but there is not a great deal of land under cultivation.

837. Not many orchards? Not many.

838. *Mr. Trickett.*] What is the population of Belmore? About 400.

839. Do they come in and out of town daily? Several come in to business from Belmore.

840. What is the means of communication? 'Bus.

841. Is there a direct 'bus? Yes, to Belmore and the city.

842. How many 'buses a day? Three each way.

843. And that is the only means of communication? The only public means.

844. What is the distance from Sydney to Belmore? $9\frac{1}{2}$ or 10 miles.

845. How long does it take to come in, by 'bus? One hour and a half to come in, and two hours and a half to go out—they don't hurry back.

846. What is the fare each way? One shilling.

847. I suppose the 'bus service is not very good? It is fairly good, but it is a long journey.

848. Is the land cut up in small holdings about Belmore? After you leave Burwood Road they are nearly all large. There are very few small holdings.

849. Do you know the owners of the property through which this line will pass at Belmore? Yes.

850. Are they large or small holders? Nearly all large holders.

851. Would they be willing to give their land free? From the Burwood Road I think nearly everyone has promised to do so, with very few exceptions.

852. Do you know the country between Marrickville and Burwood Road? I know the line after passing Canterbury, but not so well between Marrickville and Canterbury.

853. Is it suitable for suburban population from Canterbury to Burwood Road? Eminently suitable. I think it reaches an elevation after passing the Burwood Road of 190 feet.

854. Would the people there be well served by tramways from the station on the Western Line? A tramway would not suit the convenience of the people at all. It would be suitable for street traffic up to a distance of 5 miles from where goods would have to be carried—and a large quantity would be required for the district—it would not be suitable.

855. A tramway could not be made to serve the various districts as well as a railway? I think not. It is too slow for one thing.

856. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is your occupation? None. I am a Civil Service pensioner.

857. You were formerly in the Government Printing Office? Yes.

858. And are now living on your pension at Belmore? Yes.

859. What is the general character of the occupation of the people who live out there? It is the usual mixed population. There are some commercial men and some professional men there, and there is also the working class.

860. What are the callings of the working class who obtain employment in the district? Various;—market-gardeners, wood-cutters, poultry-farmers, &c.

861. How far is Belmore from the Illawarra Line? $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the nearest point.

862. Why do not the 'buses run to that line instead of Sydney? It would be rather an expensive journey. Hurstville is the most central station, and the fare would be 7d., and if you add $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles by 'bus to that you make the fare expensive.

863. What is the 'bus fare from Belmore to Sydney? 1s.

864. Do you think they would charge more than 6d. to go to the Illawarra Line? I think they would charge 6d., but you must take into consideration it is a very bad road. In ordinary weather it is difficult to get along it, and in bad weather it is almost impassable.

865. If the line were constructed to Burwood Road would it serve the people of Belmore? It would serve them to a certain extent. If it were to run through to Liverpool it would serve them better.

866. But it will not go through Belmore? No; it only touches Belmore.

867. And you would still have a 'bus ride to reach the railway? Yes, of $1\frac{1}{4}$ or 2 miles.

868. Then you would be very little better off than now in regard to the Illawarra railway if you had a good road to the Illawarra Line? Yes, we would. It is across country there.

869. Have you noticed that a number of brickworks have stopped operations out towards Canterbury? I believe some towards Croydon have stopped work.

870. What is the reason for the stoppage? Dullness in trade—buildings are not going on to such an extent—and competition with large factories on the different railway lines.

W.
D'Arrietta,
Esq.
21 Nov., 1889.

- W. D'Arrietta, Esq.
21 Nov., 1889.
871. What is the population which will be served by this line of railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road? 6,000, and it would increase to a great extent in a very short time.
872. *Dr. Garran.*] If the railway were taken to the 9-mile point instead of stopping at the 8-mile point, it would suit Belmore much better? Certainly; and it would suit the pumping station for the Hurstville and the southern suburbs water supply, which will be at Belmore, as it would save the Government haulage in fuel.
873. Would the 9-mile point be a good place for stopping? Yes; it is fairly level land. I would not advocate putting it a mile further on. I would rather see it go through the whole distance or stop at Burwood Road.
874. Do you think there would be any advantage in the 9-mile over the 8-mile? It would suit the Belmore district, which has a population of 400.

Mr. Charles Moyes, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. C. Moyes.
21 Nov., 1889.
875. *Vice-Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Marrickville.
876. How long have you lived there? Between twenty-nine and thirty years.
877. You must be one of the early residents? Yes; one of the originals.
878. You have seen the progress of the district during the time you have lived there? Yes.
879. What was the land worth an acre when you first went there? I have bought land at £40, £80, and £400 an acre at that time, and I have seen land sold at £5 and £10 an acre. It realizes now £900 and £1,000 an acre.
880. What is the ordinary price of land in the district now? About £700 or £800 an acre.
881. Do you know the course of the proposed line to Burwood Road? Yes.
882. Do you think it would be a desirable route to take for a railway? Yes; as far as I know. I do not suppose there is anything else but the land which has been marked.
883. Do you think the population there and the trade would be sufficient to justify the Government in constructing a railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road? I think so.
884. Is the country well suited for residences? It is. There are many residences now going up in anticipation of this line. Within half a mile of my own place there are over thirty new houses going up, and they are not small places, but nice villas.
885. Do you live in the thickly populated part of Marrickville or further on—how near the tramway terminus? I live about half a mile from the late terminus.
886. You think population would increase largely with additional railway accommodation? There is not the least doubt of it. It is increasing now in anticipation of it. I do not know what it will be afterwards.
887. Do you think it would be likely for any industries to spring up which would give employment to numbers of people? Possibly on the banks of the Cook's River. I do not think there would be many on the higher lands.
888. Are there any tanneries out there? Not at present.
889. Have there been any? No.
890. There were several brick-yards? Yes.
891. Any other industries? No.
892. Any market-gardens? Yes; market-gardens, and dairies, and the like of that.
893. Poultry-farms? Yes.
894. A great number of people attend the Canterbury races? Yes.
895. And this proposed line would give great facilities for them to go backwards and forwards? Certainly, and much cheaper. It is very expensive to get from Sydney to Ashfield, and then from Ashfield to the racecourse.
896. It is regarded as a sort of inconvenience that you have no better communication? Certainly.
897. Where you reside is some distance from the tramway? Half a mile.
898. Would you sooner have railway than tramway communication? Certainly, the tramways are not suited for long distances.
899. They stop too frequently I suppose? Yes.
900. They give accommodation to the people along the tramway as well as at both ends? Yes.
901. When a tram is actually going it travels almost as fast as the railway? Yes; the 'buses will compete with the tramway. You can go straight in from Canterbury Road to Sydney sooner by a 'bus than you can come round by Marrickville in a tram.
902. The tram stops at the corner of every street? Yes.
903. The intermediate traffic would not be met by a tramway the same as by a railway? Certainly.
904. *Mr. Trickett.*] What part of Marrickville do you live in? What is called the Green Bank estate.
905. Is the tram service of no use to that portion of Marrickville? It is, because people have to come across from Arncliffe and take the tram. That is a mile beyond where I live. There are no 'buses now. They have given up running from the place; therefore the people have to come a long distance to get into Sydney.
906. I understand this railway is not to serve Marrickville so much as the district further on? Yes; the district further on. Of course it would be a great advantage to the western portion of Marrickville. Half of Marrickville would be served by the railway. Marrickville consists of about 2,000 acres, with a population, according to the last municipal list, of over 10,000. There will be close on 11,000 at the present.
907. Would these people walk to the Marrickville station or expect to get in somewhere else? They would go to the nearest station. Of course there will be stations every mile, I suppose, along the route.
908. How far is that part of Marrickville which the tram does not serve from the present Marrickville station. About a mile from where I live. Then there is another mile through to the boundary of Canterbury. All that district would fall in with the proposed railway.
909. Do not you think a train would compete with the tramway and reduce the revenue of the tramway? I do not think it. The tramway turns more to the right. The proposed line would branch off to the west, so that I do not think it would compete, unless for a very short distance, where it branches off.
910. Then you think that the proposed line would add to the revenue of the railway without decreasing the present tramway revenue? Certainly.
- 911.

911. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Your objection to the tramways appears to be that they lose so much time in stopping at every street? That is one of the objections.

912. Do you think a system of through trams, which would save a large amount of time, would serve the districts to which it is proposed this railway should be taken? No; it would be a great mistake to put on tramways at all along our streets out to the suburbs. You must begin to give some better accommodation than tramways, which might suit a few passengers. In a district like this, you must expect there would be a large amount of produce to carry. As soon as you go to Canterbury you come to what ought to be a manufacturing district.

913. What manufactures are carried on there? A large manufactory has been stopped simply because they could not pay carriage to town. I have been informed of a syndicate ready to start a large brick factory and pottery works if it were not for the cost of carriage. As soon as this line is decided upon there will be large companies that will start pottery works in that district.

914. You are aware that a number of brick-kilns have stopped? Mostly all. They are what we call hand-manufacturing brick-works.

915. Why have they stopped? Because they cannot compete with the present process of making bricks by machinery.

916. One of the arguments raised in favour of the line is that it will take a residential population out there; it will therefore be a passenger line? Yes, to a great extent; but why should there not be factories established along Cook's River as well as other places.

917. But this line will not serve the banks of Cook's River beyond where it crosses? It will, where it crosses.

918. But it will only serve one point? Yes; but still a large company would soon run a branch to their place of business from this line.

919. Between Sydney and Bondi there is a population of over 40,000 and that is entirely served by tramway? Yes; because they have nothing else. It is a great improvement on omnibuses, but still that would not serve this place you have mentioned like a railway.

920. You will understand you are already served on each side by railways; you have the western suburbs line on the one side and the Illawarra line on the other? Yes; if you walk 6 miles to each of them.

921. Supposing a tramway ran from Marrickville up to Belmore on one side, or a tramway from Ashfield to Canterbury Park,—would not this serve the greater portion of the passenger traffic? It might assist the passenger traffic, but it would give no encouragement to industries to settle along there. Even then, people would not be satisfied; they are not satisfied now with the tramway.

922. You understand we have already made a mistake in running a tramway to Marrickville and Dulwich Hill which competes with the railway line? No; it does not compete with it.

923. Does not it compete as far as Marrickville with the Illawarra line? It might as far as Marrickville station, because that is on the borders of St. Peter's. The Marrickville line is on the west of it.

924. At what do you estimate the population in the district to be served by the proposed line of railway? In the Canterbury and Marrickville districts, I should say there will be about 11,000 who would benefit specially by the railway.

925. Do you think the State would be justified in constructing this line of railway, notwithstanding that the people are to a certain extent served by the Illawarra line on the one side and the western suburbs on the other? Certainly; I do not think there is a better district for settlement than that round by Canterbury and the western portions of Marrickville, which are lying in wild bush at the present time.

926. What was the population from Marrickville up to Burwood Road twelve years ago? Twelve years ago I think there were 500 or 600 or 1,000. I know that twenty-five years ago there were only 500 or 600 inhabitants in Marrickville.

927. Including Canterbury and Belmore and the country along the proposed line of railway, you say there were only 500 people there twelve years ago? Between that and twenty years ago, I do not think there were more than between 500 and 1,000.

928. And you say that population has increased in thirteen years to about 12,000? I believe it has. The increase in Marrickville alone has been very great, and there has been very great settlement in the Canterbury district.

929. And that leads you to believe that there will be a still greater increase if the railway is constructed there? I am certain of it from the amount of land that has been sold. A great many have bought there for the purpose of building. The scheme has been going on for eight years, and people have been waiting for it.

Mr. Joseph James Cooper sworn and examined:—

930. *Vice-Chairman.*] You live on the other side of the Burwood Road? Beyond the Burwood Road.

931. What is the name of your place? Starland.

932. How far is that from the proposed terminus at the Burwood Road? About 4 miles.

933. Do you know the routes which have been proposed between Sydney and Liverpool? Some portions of them.

934. Do you know this line which is now accepted as the most desirable one of the three or four submitted? Not the Sydney end.

935. Do you know the other end? Yes.

936. You think it is a desirable course for a line to take? I think it is a mistake. It is the first point of a line which will run into a bog.

937. And which is the one you think, more desirable? The one selected by Mr. Hindman, a resident engineer, and known to the Department as the Lansdown survey, up on the watershed.

938. That is the line that goes through Bankstown? They both go through Bankstown, but one is more central between the two lines of railway and the two rivers.

939. Would this line, if constructed to the Burwood Road, give much accommodation to the residents in the part of the country you reside in? None whatever.

940. You would not use this line? We could not, however desirous.

941. What means of communication have you now? Auburn railway station. That is 4 miles from my residence—Liverpool Road; some say it is 5 miles.

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- Mr. J. J. Cooper. 942. How far would it be from your place to the Burwood Road? Four miles as the crow flies; about 5 miles, I presume.
- 21 Nov., 1889. 943. Is there a direct road leading to it? Not from Bankstown.
944. Do you think it will be in the interests of the Government or the public to construct this lockspitted line from Marrickville to Burwood Road? So far as the other people are concerned, there is no doubt of it, but in the interests of Bankstown and Campbell Hill and outlying portions which require railway communication, none whatever.
945. They would still be as badly off as ever for communication? Every bit.
946. Is there a large population about Bankstown now? I sent into the Works Department some time ago a return of the estimate of the population; I think I made it 5,000.
947. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You are an old resident out Bankstown way? Not very old; I have been there about fifteen years.
948. How far do you reside from the proposed site of the terminus? About 5 miles.
949. The people in your vicinity will not be served by the Burwood Road railway? No.
950. Do you think the proposed line to Burwood Road would be the route best suited to the majority of the population? I am not prepared to say, so far as Marrickville or Canterbury is concerned. I do not know how the population stands to the east, or north, or south; but so far as the country behind this line is concerned, it would be better north.
951. You have been given to understand that the Railway Commissioners have reported adversely against the line between Marrickville and Liverpool? More is the pity, because the Commissioners' statement is far from being consistent. Their knowledge is far too limited to be able to report fairly on the railway.
952. That being so, do you think the State is justified in constructing the railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road? To answer that, I should need to state that, under some circumstances, it might, as far as population goes, serve the interests of the district; but when it is part of a project which has been agitated for for seven or eight years, it would be an injustice to the country to stop there.
953. Which line do you say would best suit the convenience of the people along that route? The Lansdown route would serve all the districts right through, and it would keep to the land where there is no fear of inundations.
954. Is that the most northerly of the proposed routes? It is the medium one.
955. How do you reach Sydney now—*via* Rookwood? Yes.
956. So far as you and the people round you are concerned, the main line would be quite as useful as this proposed line? Yes.
957. *Mr. Trickett.*] Do you object to the line from Marrickville to Burwood Road only because it does not go on further? I will not say I object to the line; because if the Government see fit to build it, by all means let them do so.
958. You think it would be a good thing to construct the line from Marrickville to the Burwood Road for the purpose of getting the traffic of that portion of the country? I should think there could be no two questions about that, so far as the traffic is concerned from Canterbury to Marrickville.
959. What is your opinion? Where there is a population I should say most decidedly take the railway; but as part of what we have been agitating for during seven years, I think it is a wrong thing to make a false start.
960. You say that Burwood Road—the terminus of this proposed line—is 5 miles to Bankstown;—that is by road I suppose, because on the plan it is shown, as the crow flies, to be only 3 miles? It is more than 3 miles; it is fully 5 miles.
961. In a straight line? I do believe it is, from Upper Bankstown.
962. Then if it is shown as 3 miles on the railway plan it is a mistake? Yes.
963. *Mr. Humphery.*] Have you followed the railway line as marked on the plan? No; I have a map I obtained from a Government officer.
964. Are we to understand that you have no objection to the line as portion of the Liverpool loop-line, but you object to it stopping short at Bankstown? It is my principal, but not my only reason.
965. You object to the route? Yes; in the interests of the localities and the country.
966. What is your objection to the route? It is a deviation from a more direct line, which can be made to better advantage, not only to the localities concerned, but to the Government.
967. Do you mean a more direct route to Liverpool can be obtained? Most decidedly, unless you are going to zig-zag about in the manner shown on these plans.
968. *Mr. Dowel.*] Are you fairly acquainted with the route from Marrickville to Burwood Road? Only on paper.
969. You have no knowledge of your own in regard to the population settled on that route from Marrickville to Burwood Road? No; beyond that I have travelled about it, and I see it is very thickly settled.
970. Do you know Canterbury? Sufficiently well to say yes. I drive through it occasionally.
971. Is there a considerable population? Yes. It is a great shame they have not had railways there long ago.
972. Do you know Parkestown? No.
973. Do you know Kingsgrove? I have been through it.
974. Is there a settled population there? Very fair and rising; it only wants a railway.
975. Do you know Moorefield? I know the outer parts.
976. Is it a settled district? I am not sufficiently acquainted with it to answer.
977. Do you know Belmore? Yes; I drive through Belmore Road occasionally.
978. Is there a considerable population? A scattered population.
979. From your knowledge of that particular country, is it likely the population would increase if it had railway communication? Without a doubt.
980. Do you think those places would be served by this particular line from Marrickville to Burwood Road? No.
981. None of those places would be served by the line? No.
982. Not Canterbury, where it passes right through? Canterbury would.
983. But none of the places to which I have referred? Belmore, Moorefield, and Kingsgrove would not be what I should consider sufficiently benefited.
984. What distance would they be from the railway? Portions of it 2 and 3 miles away.

985. And some much closer? Yes; and some further.
 986. Have you been over the staked-out road? I have, over the far portion.
 987. I mean between Burwood and Marrickville? No.
 988. Do I understand you to say that the places to which you have referred would be served if this particular line were constructed? I am not referring to Bankstown.
 989. But from your knowledge of the localities and the surroundings do you consider these places would be served—Canterbury, Bankstown, Kingsgrove, Moorefield and Belmore—by the construction of this line? Part would. As far as Canterbury is concerned it would, I should imagine, but these outlying parts—Belmore, Kingsgrove, and Moorefield—would not be served, because they are beyond it.
 990. Would they not be served better than they are at present? It would be somewhat nearer to them certainly than what it would be to Bankstown.
 991. What is the class of country between Marrickville and Burwood Road—is it fairly good for residential purposes? Yes; and good for agricultural purposes too.
 992. And in all probability a large population at some time will be settled upon it? As soon as ever the railway is there.

Mr.
 J. J. Cooper.
 21 Nov., 1889.

TUESDAY, 26 NOVEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

The HONORABLE JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN).	
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JOHN HURLEY, Esq.	

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

993. *Dr. Garran.*] I understood you, on a previous occasion, to say that the line as now staked, was laid out by Mr. Whitton as straight as possible, with the view of making it the shortest line between the two points? Yes.
 994. I presume the idea, then, to have a loop-line as a line for saving distance was the dominant consideration? It was a main consideration. I do not know about its being the dominant consideration.
 995. What I mean is, that the straightness of the line was determined on with a view to shortness, and not after a study of the contour of the country? It was with a view to shortness.
 996. And would a close study of the contour of the country show that slight deviations from that straight line would result in a considerable saving of works? Yes. I have gone into that question, and I find that it certainly would be so.
 997. Without increasing the whole distance by how much? I could not say exactly how much, but I should think it would not be more than 25 or 30 chains.
 998. On the whole distance between St. Peters and Liverpool? Yes; certainly not half a mile.
 999. How much saving in money do you think would result with the same grades? I estimated that, by altering the grades, a saving of something like £78,000 on the whole cost of the line to Liverpool could be effected; that is to say, a saving on the revised estimate of £308,000, but the line would cost £230,000. I should think, without further going into the matter, that if the same grades were preserved as we have at present, or even with 1 in 100, about half that amount would be saved—say £40,000.
 1000. On the $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles? Yes; that is to say, that a line half a mile longer, but twisted about slightly, with a ruling grade of 1 in 100, about £40,000 could be saved on the whole estimate.
 1001. That is to say, you put it thus: "Release me from the necessity of going quite straight, and I can make a line which will save £40,000, and not be half a mile longer"? Yes; with the same grades. If you allow me to put in steeper grades (say) 1 in 66, I am of opinion that £78,000 could be saved.
 1002. You are aware that the Commissioners of Railways rather disparage this line as a main traffic line? Yes.
 1003. And supposing their view be correct, and we have to regard it mainly as a suburban line, there is no such very great importance in running it quite straight? No.
 1004. And we might as well save the money in construction? That is my opinion.
 1005. Your modified line would be as easy to work? Yes.
 1006. And as convenient for the district? It would certainly be an easy line to work. In two cases where we have 30-chain curves, I would put in 20-chain curves, and that radius is by no means objectionable.
 1007. Would those curves be objectionable for heavy through traffic? No. They are not so good for running over as curves of a larger radius, but we have curves of very much smaller radius on the main line.
 1008. Have you any curves of smaller radius on the line between Liverpool and Sydney at present? I believe not.
 1009. Nor as small? I could not say without referring, but I should not think that there are any less than 30 or 40 chains.
 1010. If this is to be a loop-line to concentrate the general traffic, we ought not in any possible respect to have it worse than the existing line, either as regards gradients or curves? No; it would be well to adhere to the same conditions.
 1011. Therefore, if possible, we ought not to have any sharper curves or stiffer gradients? I think the gradients are of more importance than the curves. I do not think that 20 chains would be at all objectionable.
 1012. Not for the modern rolling stock? No.
 1013. I notice you have only one gradient of 1 in 90 on the whole of the line? Yes.
 1014. That is rising from Cook's River? Yes.
 1015. If that one could be cut out we should have nothing worse than 1 in 100 the whole way? Yes.
 1016. What expense would it be worth while to go to, in order to cut that out? I would cut it out without expense by lengthening the line slightly.

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1017. You think you could do that? Yes; I am sure.
1018. The last time you were here, or on a previous occasion, or in one of your papers, you stated it had been considered, but it was not thought that the expense would be justifiable? Yes; that is, preserving the same line.
1019. By an extra cutting? Yes.
1020. By a slight detour you could do that without an extra cutting? Yes. If the directness of the line is not such a consideration as hitherto, I believe it would be better to cross the Canterbury Road on the Sydney side of the bridge and cross the river in the bend here [*pointing to the map*]. There would be no valuable property to go through, and then we could start up in the direction of the point where the line cuts through the Burwood Road; we could keep lower down, and avoid the rather large cuttings there are about seven miles from Sydney, and we could utilize the whole, or nearly the whole, of that length for rising to the 8-mile summit.
1021. Would you be out of flood reach at the river banks? Yes.
1022. And would the bend be as good a crossing-place? I believe it would; in fact, it would be about square with the river, and therefore better in that respect. The line crosses the river on the skew.
1023. Then you take 2 miles to make your rise instead of 1? About $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles I should say. We should not rise till a quarter of a mile from the river.
1024. What you would lose in expense by a slight increase of length you would gain by diminution in cuttings and embankments? Yes.
1025. So the whole result would be no increase of cost on the capital account? No; it would be a saving. I have examined this line also on the plan. We have cross sections; the straight line being diverged a little to the left, between 8 and $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles, we could get a higher ground and make a better line. There are large and easy curves, which would make a slightly longer line.
1026. The further deviations would not be to avoid gradients, but simply to avoid cuttings? Yes.
1027. I understand that your revised line is a cheaper line and very slightly longer? Yes. I would like to make a correction: That £78,000 which I mentioned includes the saving of the bridge by going round the bend of George's River by Landsdown Creek. I think you will find it mentioned in my report that I propose by laying out the line in that way to save £78,000. That line would go round the bend of George's River, and avoid the crossing of the river itself and would cross the Landsdown Creek. Half of that saving would be due to earthworks and half of it to bridges, so that by no amount of alteration in the centre line do I consider you could effect a saving of more than £40,000. If you adhere to the same gradients as we have at present, instead of the 1 in 66, of course the saving would be considerably less. I do not think that it would be more than half, so that the figures I gave a short time ago should be divided by two.
1028. Then how much do you think we should save on the $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles we have now under consideration—how much of the £40,000? I think we should save about £8,000.
1029. And at the same time get an improved gradient? Yes.
1030. And so far as gradients are concerned—we would make this line, if it went through Liverpool, as good as the existing line from Granville to Sydney, and better than the line from Granville to Liverpool? Yes.
1031. Because I understand you that from Granville to Liverpool we have a grade of 1 in 66? Yes.
1032. Your revised line would have a better gradient for heavy traffic than there is on the existing line from Liverpool to Sydney? It would be a better graded line.
1033. And not worse for curves? Except the 20-chain curves. I do not think that there are any 20-chain curves on the existing line. But curves of 20-chain radius are by no means objectionable. You can run round without slackening speed.
1034. The curves would not be objectionable for through traffic? No.
1035. In one of your printed papers, you expressed your opinion that this line ought to go on to the 9-mile post? Yes, I believe that myself.
1036. You still hold that opinion? Yes, I do.
1037. At the 8-mile we do not very much accommodate the Belmore people do we? No.
1038. And they were really the first to start this railway movement I believe? Yes.
1039. And are rather left out in the cold? Yes. The extension of the line to the 9 miles would serve them.
1040. And would be a slight advantage I suppose to the Bankstown people? I should think it would.
1041. So far as existing population goes, Bankstown is really the most westerly point on the line where there is anything like settlement? There is no centre of population further west.
1042. If we do stop at 8 miles, I presume it is almost a matter of certainty that we shall have to extend to Bankstown within a very few years? Yes.
1043. You do not think it is worth while to do that at once? I would recommend to go as far as the Punch Bowl Road—that is about 9 miles.
1044. At once? Yes, to serve Belmore.
1045. Would that be a difficult mile—from 8 to 9? As the line is at present laid out there is one heavy cutting just at 9 miles, but by the slight windings I recommend a good deal of the earthworks could be cut out.
1046. Is there a good place for a terminal station near the 9-mile post? Yes. It would be just beyond the 9 miles—between what is called here Wiley's lane, and the Punch Bowl Road.
1047. In fact, at the junction of the Punch Bowl Road, and the road that goes to Tom Ugly's Point? I believe so.
1048. That would make as good a place for temporary terminal purposes as the one now marked? Yes.
1049. *Mr. Humphery.*] How far west of the lock-spitted line would be the proposed deviation between Canterbury and the 8-mile peg? Just beyond the crossing of the river, it would be 15 chains north. The line runs from east to west. From there it converges and joins again at 8 miles.
1050. What increase of length of the line would that give between Canterbury and the 8-mile peg? I could not tell you as the line of course is not determined. This is only a sketch. But it would not make very much difference.
1051. Can you say approximately? I do not think there would make more than 7 or 8 chains difference in the length.
1052. It would be inappreciable? Yes.

1053. Have you any estimate of the probable saving between those points; I presume the cost of the line between Marrickville and Cook's River will not be affected;—will it? Yes; I should adopt the same principle between Marrickville and Cook's River. I should alter the line slightly.

1054. What do you think the increase of length would be over the whole line between Marrickville and the 8-miles peg? Not more than 10 chains, I should think.

1055. Estimating the cost of the line at about £20,000 per mile, that would be an increase of cost of £5,000? No; £2,500.

1056. What do you estimate the saving would be between those points? £8,000, I think I said.

1057. That would be less £2,500? No; I would take the whole saving as £8,000.

1058. And the grade not greater than 1 in 100? Yes.

1059. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Would this deviation in any way affect the serving of the traffic? No; I do not think it would be any worse. I think you would serve the traffic equally well.

1060. Do you know whether there is any difference in the cost of construction of the three routes—that is to say, the line we inspected yesterday and the other two lines that have been surveyed—one to the north and the other to the south of this proposed line? The country is very much of the same character. I believe the one to the south would be the most expensive line if the same gradients were adopted. It was laid out with grades of 1 in 60.

1061. That is the one that would go through Belmore? Yes.

1062. That would be the most expensive line of the three? Yes, if 1 in 100 were adopted as the ruling gradient.

1063. What about the one to the north—the line that goes through Bankstown? It would be very much of the same character.

1064. It would be quite as costly as the proposed line—this lock-spitted line? Yes, it goes through the same kind of country.

1065. Then, if there has been a statement made by any witness that the line we are investigating would be the most expensive line in construction, that is not correct? No, that is not correct. Of course you understand that the line is laid out; but taking the route generally, it is not necessarily the most expensive route. If you take a straight line and put on certain grades you may have an expensive line. This is an expensive line rather, but with the same general directions as economical a line could be made as on any other route.

1066. Supposing your deviations are adopted, you say that will be quite as cheap a line, if not cheaper, than either of the other lines? Yes, it would; I feel pretty confident about that.

1067. *Mr. Humphery.*] And only 10 chains longer up to Burwood Road, and about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile longer from Burwood to Liverpool? Yes.

1068. *Vice-Chairman.*] Have you given any attention to the proposal to relieve the traffic of the main line by connection higher up the line towards Campbelltown? Not very much.

1069. There was such a project, was there not? Yes; I remember seeing a plan with a project, but I have not got it here. It ran parallel, I think, with the southern line some few miles beyond Campbelltown.

1070. Is it your own opinion that it would be advisable to have a duplicate line from Liverpool to Sydney? I do not think there is any necessity for it.

1071. If you were called upon to give an opinion as to the propriety of constructing the line we are now considering, would you make provision, or, in considering the matter, have in view the question of ultimately taking the line right through? Yes, I should; because, as I think I pointed out the other day, this line, if once commenced, will certainly be pushed on till it gets to George's River, and then the connection with the southern line across the river, I consider as a matter of course—only a question of time.

1072. With your information, would you feel that you were justified in recommending the line should cross the river twice, or would you go round the bend as you call it—north of the bend? I think I would cross the river twice, and make a direct line.

1073. You are aware of course that a considerable portion of that part of the George's River where the two branches meet—the southern branch and the branch coming from Prospect or Landsdown Creek—is subject to floods? Yes; it is subject to floods.

1074. Have you records in your office of the highest flood level? Yes; lately I sent a surveyor down there to examine the flood levels, because I was told that last May they had higher floods than ever before—during that very heavy rain in May.

1075. At what point was the flood level taken then, do you recollect? When I accompanied the Minister for Works up to Liverpool, the Mayor of Liverpool, Mr. Taylor, told me that the flood level in May last was higher than it had ever been before.

1076. Was that at Liverpool? Yes; and in further conversation I had with him, I asked him if he would go through this portion of the line with a surveyor whom I would send, and confirm or otherwise the previous flood marks, and he was good enough to undertake to do so. I sent the surveyor down there, and we have the best information about it.

1077. Have you ever been informed that the residents in the neighbourhood of Warwick Farm had been taken from the roofs of their houses in flood time by men in boats? I have heard very alarming accounts. Our present line keeps pretty well clear of floods; I mean the one crossing the river twice.

1078. Do you recollect what position the railway would take near the junction of the Landsdown Creek and George's River? The first line laid out went through a lot of flooded country. The line was laid out afresh, so as to avoid that. On the present line there is very little indeed.

1079. It is the case that, in the project now before the Committee, provision is made for a single line only? Yes.

1080. Do you recommend that as the best course? I went entirely by the advice of the Commissioners. I understood from Mr. Eddy that it would not be necessary to lay anything more than a single line, and so the estimate was reduced to that; but now I see that the Commissioners recommend a double line to be laid.

1081. Would that add to the expense very much? It would add about £20,000.

1082. Right through to Liverpool or only to the Burwood Road? The Burwood Road. The other estimate is an estimate for a double line right through. It is only this portion of the line which is limited to a single line.

1083.

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- H. Deane, Esq.
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1083. Do you think that under any circumstances it would not be well to build bridges and culverts to accommodate a double line of traffic? This £90,000 includes the double-line bridge over Cook's River, but everything else is for a single line. I should build any over-bridges for a double line. That would not make very much difference.
1084. *Mr. Hurley.*] What grade can you obtain on that line? 1 in 100. In that proposed saving, where I proposed to save £78,000 to make it as cheap a line as possible, the gradients would not be flatter than 1 in 66.
1085. *Dr. Garran.*] That is where you speak of £230,000? Yes.

W. G. Cameron, Esq., sworn, and examined :—

- W. G. Cameron, Esq.
26 Nov., 1889.
1086. *Mr. Trickett.*] You are acquainted, I believe, with the line known as the lock-spitted line from Marrickville to the Burwood Road? Yes.
1087. Are you in favour of or against that line? I am against the line.
1088. From beginning to end? From beginning to end.
1089. Would you give the Committee your reasons for your opposition to that proposal? I oppose the line for these reasons. I have no objection, and there appears to be no objection, as far as the line goes in the direction of Canterbury, until it comes to the Sugar-works.
1090. Then, up to the Sugar-works—from Marrickville to the Sugar-works you approve of the line;—is that so? I approve of the line so far. From there it makes a divergence in the form of a fork or angle. It takes two different directions in crossing the river. The line you are considering crosses over a very dangerous part of the river, and I have just copied from the *Sydney Morning Herald* a statement that at the crossing where it is proposed to carry over the lock-spitted line, the line crosses within a few feet of a bridge which was once entirely under water.
1091. We would rather have your own views, in preference to what you get from newspapers? I made a statement the other day when the Committee visited the site, and I was flatly contradicted, and I thought I had better get the statement which had been published in the *Herald*. If you like I will read it.
1092. You object to the proposed line, first of all because at the crossing it is proposed to take, the line itself, would be liable to be under water? Yes.
1093. What reason have you for stating that? I saw the district during the time the boy was drowned.
1094. When was that? On the 27th May, 1889. Some chains of lands on both sides of the river were under water.
1095. Was the portion of ground which the railway would occupy under water? Every inch—from I suppose about 3 chains on one side of the river to at least 2 or 3 chains on the other side.
1096. Did you see that yourself? Yes, with my own eyes.
1097. That was in the heavy rain in May last? Yes. There is another disadvantage. That portion of the line near where it crosses the river also crosses two roads, which appears to be very objectionable.
1098. What roads? The main road, and a road leading to the settlement called Parkestown. The line crosses those two roads within a distance of 2 or 3 chains. In 1860 there was a house there, or in the immediate vicinity, and it stood 14 feet high.
1099. Stood where? Within a few feet of the proposed crossing. That house was covered with water. You will find that corroborated in the *Herald* of the 1st May, 1860. It gives the height of the house. It says :—" At Canterbury there was a rise—"
1100. Is that a paragraph or a letter? A paragraph. The circumstance was related to me by an eye-witness, and in order to fortify myself I made a search, and I found that the statements made to me by word of mouth were borne out.
1101. What does that paper say? " At Canterbury there was a rise in the river of some 15 or 16 feet, the water reaching up to the roof of the round house—a building about 14 feet high. In all probability there would have been fatal results had it occurred at night."
1102. Was this house exactly on the same level as the railway, or was it lower? Where you proposed to carry the railway, I suppose the lower part of the house was about 3 feet lower than the present level of the road. I remember the house well. In passing the house an old resident pointed out the fact to me, and I wanted to make sure that there was truth connected with the statement, and I referred to the *Herald*, and found that the *Herald* corroborated the statement.
1103. That occurred in 1860? Yes.
1104. The last flood was in May, 1889? Yes.
1105. That was twenty-nine years afterwards? Yes.
1106. Did you ever hear of any flooding of that portion during that interval? No; I do not think I have.
1107. Those are the only two occasions when you heard of this line which the railway would traverse being flooded? Yes.
1108. What is your next objection to this line? My next objection is this: that it appears to be a land speculators' line, as there is no settlement after it crosses the dam at Canterbury.
1109. That is the part you have just been speaking of? Yes. There are certainly two or three houses; but within a mile of the line, I suppose there are not more than—well, there is very little settlement.
1110. Can you give us the names of any localities there are after passing the dam, and before you reach the Burwood Road? I do not know any localities actually. I know there are three or four very large estates that have been cleared, owned by large syndicates.
1111. Name one of them? There is the Silver Park Estate—that is one.
1112. To whom does that belong? I think it is advertised as the property of the Anglo-Australian Co.; and then there is another large estate, I suppose about half a mile to the east, called the Harcourt Estate; and there is another estate called the Kempsey Park Estate. I do not think that on all those large estates there are at the present time more than about a dozen persons.
1113. Where is Kingsgrove? That is on the other line altogether—on the other side of the Canterbury Road, going to Belmore.
1114. Would that not be served by this line? No.
1115. Why not? Because it is too far distant from this line.
1116. How far do you think it is? I have been over all the line, and I should think that the nearest point of Kingsgrove from it would be about 1½ miles.
- 1117.

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1117. What about Moorefields and Belmore? This line leaves out Moorefields and Belmore. It is $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Belmore township. In order to make thoroughly sure I walked the distance the other day. Belmore contains a church and a public school; Moorefields contains two churches and a public school. These places will be left out entirely if this proposed line be carried out.

1118. It will not benefit them at all in your estimation? I have no doubt it will indirectly, but will not confer on them any immediate benefit. The old settlement will be excluded from the benefits of this railway line, and a new form of settlement will have to arise on these large estates which are owned by these syndicates. The old settled districts have been entirely ignored; that is, Parkestown, Kingsgrove, Moorefields, and Belmore.

1119. Do they lie to the south or the north of this lock-spitted line? To the south—on the south side of the Canterbury Road. There is a church at Parkestown, two at Moorefields, one at Kingsgrove, one at Belmore, and there is one Public School being enlarged at Belmore, but there is nothing of that sort on the line now being surveyed.

1120. Then do I understand you to say that you approve of a line to the north of this proposed line? Speaking in the public interests I would not be prepared to state that a line would pay at the present time.

1121. Even if it were made through those centres of population you spoke of? It might have some chance of paying, but the present line appears to me to have no chance of paying for some years, until settlement has occurred round the place.

1122. Do you not think that the people of those places would avail themselves of the railway in preference to their present mode of getting to the city? There are many objections. The distance from the present railway is a very great objection. The road access is bad in the first place. Roads would have to be made to the railway, whereas on the other line roads run parallel with the other side of the line.

1123. I understand you are opposed to the line altogether—to the construction of this short length from Marrickville to Burwood Road? Yes. Another thing I ought to have pointed out is the succession of hills—the succession of cuttings and fillings up that would be necessary on this line. There appear to be none of these obstacles on the other line.

1124. Which line? On the line not lock-spitted.

1125. That is the southern line? Yes. The lock-spitted line is the northern line.

1126. Would you advocate a line being made to Burwood Road along this southward route at the present time? There would be more probability of the line paying. No doubt, as took place on the Hurstville line, settlement would increase.

1127. You think that the line if constructed to the south of the present lock-spitted line would have a better chance of paying than this line as marked out? Yes; because settlement has taken place there.

1128. Is the land more level and suitable for population? The land appears to me to be of very much the same character, but the route that Surveyor Bell made seemed to have got over the difficulties of the rise; there seemed to be a sort of gradual slope all the way. It seems to be a sort of flat. You do not encounter a succession of hills on Bell's line as on the other line.

1129. Have you any property out there? I have got some property on the extreme boundary between Hurstville and Belmore, on the boundary of Hurstville; I am just between the two districts.

1130. Then either line would serve your property, would it? It does not make very much difference to me which line is adopted. The only line that would serve me, but which would not be in the public interests, would be the Hurstville line. I have no idea of supporting that, for I cannot see any chance of its paying.

1131. But taking these two lines we have been discussing—the lock-spitted and the more southern line—either of them would be as serviceable to you as the other? No doubt Bell's line would come nearer the property I own, but I am nearer to Hurstville.

1132. Would the southern line benefit your property at all? Indirectly it would no doubt.

1133. Would the lock-spitted line benefit your property? No, not at all, except indirectly.

1134. We have been told that between Marrickville and the Burwood Road a very large population is there now who would be benefited by this railway—who would avail themselves of it;—can you tell us what your opinion is as to the number of people who would at the present time be benefited if a railway were constructed from Marrickville to the Burwood Road—who would avail themselves of the railway? Those that would be likely to avail themselves of the railway if it were constructed would be principally the people in the vicinity of Marrickville and Canterbury.

1135. Can you give us an idea of their number? I think I am right in stating that in the whole of the municipality of Canterbury there are not more than 2,000 inhabitants, and that goes as far as Belmore.

1136. That is men, women, and children? Yes.

1137. How many people would be benefited at Marrickville? A goodly number. A considerable portion of Marrickville would be benefited.

1138. Some thousands? Two thousand or three thousand, I suppose, but not more. They have now the tramway to Dulwich Hill and the railway passing through their district.

1139. Then going out from Canterbury to the Burwood Road, can you give us any idea how many people there would be benefited; there must be some? No doubt. I do not suppose there are within a radius of a mile more than 1,000.

1140. A mile on each side of the line? Yes. Well, perhaps 2,000 or 3,000. I do not really think more than that.

1140 $\frac{1}{2}$. Two thousand about Marrickville, 2,000 about Canterbury, and 2,000 or 3,000 between Canterbury and Burwood Road makes 6,000 or 7,000 people that would be benefited? Yes, as far as my judgment goes now. The northern portion of Canterbury is now served, and the northern portion of Dulwich Hill is now served by the existing suburban line. From the top of the hill at Canterbury you can walk conveniently to the Ashfield station in ten or twelve minutes.

1141. Do you think this district will be a progressive one if the railway is constructed? The district is a very fine district; there is no doubt about that.

1142. Suitable for residential purposes? Yes. Without regard to the rival routes I do not know of any district more suitable for settlement within a near distance of Sydney. The sites are good, and the ground is of a very good character on all the rival routes.

1143. You have seen the rapid growth of population along the Illawarra line? Yes.

1144.

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1144. Do you think that this would within three or four years rival that? I hardly think that, because in the Illawarra line—I was one of those who interested themselves in getting that line—they carried the line through the existing settled districts of Kogarah and Hurstville; but in this proposal you are leaving out the settled districts and running through a district in which no settlement has taken place so far. There is settlement certainly in the southern slopes of Ashfield, Croydon, and Burwood; but it would be far easier for people there to use the suburban line than the line you are dealing with.

1145. If the line were proposed to be constructed to the south of the lock-spitted line, would you be in favour of it? Well, I believe there would be more probability of the line paying.

1145½. I would sooner you gave me an answer if you can;—would you be inclined to favour the construction of that line? Yes; I would rather than the other. I am not very enthusiastic about either. But I think there is more probability of that than the present line paying.

1146. You think that would pay? I think that in the near future it would.

1147. A line to the south in the more settled districts you think would pay in the near future? Yes.

1148. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do I understand you to say you are not in favour of the construction of either of these lines? No. I oppose the other on grounds I have endeavoured to indicate, because I consider it presents obstacles, not only of a dangerous, but also of a costly character—that is the crossing of a bridge, and the fact that it leads out to unsettled districts, and the fact of the cuttings and fillings up that are to be encountered in the line now lock-spitted.

1149. Your objection then is from a scientific point of view? And a commercial one as well.

1150. A professional point of view—in opposition to the Government Engineer? No. I only wish to point out that, no matter how skilled an engineer may be in the science of engineering, natural contingencies may arise that the most skilled man may not be able to perceive. There is an enormous volume of water at the dam at Cook's River.

1151. Do you think that if the proposed line were constructed it would pay the Government working expenses? No; I do not think it would.

1152. Do you think that either of the other lines would—Bell's line, and the one to the north through Bankstown? I hardly think the Bankstown line would be likely to pay, and it is very questionable whether the line known as Bell's line would. But of the two rival routes, Bell's line would be more likely to pay, inasmuch as the old settled districts are to be found on that line.

1153. But you do not think that even that would pay? Judging from the experience we have had on the Illawarra railway, I think it might pay. I do not consider that the settlement on the Illawarra railway was very much more than would be found on that line.

1154. Do you know what the population of Belmore is? It is not very great. I do not suppose it would be more than 200 or 250 souls. I am not prepared to say.

1155. And Moorefields? The population of Moorefields and Kingsgrove would probably, I suppose, be close upon 600 or 700.

1156. And Parkestown? I do not suppose there are very many there. I do not suppose there are more than about 50 or 60 there. I am only giving you an approximation.

1157. Those are the four places that would be served by Bell's line, if that were constructed in preference to the proposed line? Yes. There is a settlement from there up to the main road which I have not included.

1158. Would not that settlement be served by the lock-spitted line? Indirectly, but not directly, as the people would have some distance to go to the line.

1159. From those places you mentioned—Belmore, Moorefields, Kingsgrove, and Parkestown—how do they get here? They come by 'bus.

1160. All by 'bus? I presume so.

1161. Does that 'bus go through Canterbury? It goes on the main Canterbury Road.

1162. Then that is the direct route from those places into the Metropolis—by a portion of the route along which this proposed line will run? This proposed line only passes over the lower portion of the Canterbury Road, near the bridge.

1163. Have they to come from those places, even by 'bus, along the same route as this line will take? They get on to the Canterbury Road higher up—a mile or two miles further along.

1164. The communication of those townships you have mentioned with the Metropolis is almost by the same route as that along which the proposed line would run—they have to tap that route somewhere, cross it somewhere? Yes, you are quite right.

1165. They could not get to town any other way? No.

1166. Then if this line is constructed, as proposed, it must serve them to some extent? No doubt, to a certain extent.

1167. But not so much as if it went by Bell's line? No, not so much.

1168. How far is it from Belmore to the nearest point of the proposed lock-spitted line direct? By road about a mile and a quarter. In order to thoroughly satisfy myself, I went over the road on Monday.

1169. That is the extreme distance of the outside populace that would be served by the construction of this line? That would be the distance to the settlement at Belmore.

1170. Is Moorefields farther away from the line? Yes, I think it would be about a mile and a quarter, or a little more. Kingsgrove would be a little nearer.

1171. And Parkestown? Both lines go very close to each other at Parkestown. It is not far from the crossing at the dam.

1172. Do you think that this line, if constructed, will be of any benefit as a line to relieve the traffic on the main line? That would be a question more likely to be answered to your satisfaction by the railway authorities, but I may state that that was one of the strong arguments used originally in favour of the construction of this line—that it would relieve the traffic on the Liverpool line, and shorten the distance to the southern stations if it were constructed to Liverpool.

1173. Is your property at Belmore? It is on the boundary between the Municipality of Canterbury and Belmore—between Belmore and Hurstville.

1174. What distance would the property be from the proposed line—the nearest point of it? About two and a half miles.

1175. Would it be nearer than to the Hurstville line? No. I generally go by Hurstville.

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1176. Yes, but this line is not yet constructed; if this line were constructed what would you do? I should go that way still.
1177. If this line to Belmore were constructed would that affect your property? Indirectly.
1178. How far would you be from it then? About a mile from Bell's line.
1179. Your opinion is, that there is not sufficient population there to warrant the Government in expending this amount of money in the construction of this line? That is my opinion.
1180. And you do not think that the construction of the line would induce a sufficient population to warrant its construction—immediately, I mean? Not at the present time, but no doubt it would ultimately.
1181. Do you think that the Dulwich Hill tramway would in any way serve instead of the line if it were extended? I believe the tramway would serve the immediate requirements.
1182. Have you any idea of the amount of traffic from the intermediate portions—between the proposed terminus and Marrickville—at the present time—traffic by 'bus? I have no conception—not to give you any basis to form a judgment.
1183. Do you know what is the Railway Department's estimate of traffic on this line if it were constructed? I cannot tell you. So far as my judgment goes I think the Department would have to look for returns principally from passenger traffic. There are no manufactures of any character up there to speak of. People that are settled in the little townships follow agricultural pursuits, but I do not think I know enough to justify me in making any statement in regard to traffic.
1184. You have no idea I suppose what the passenger traffic by 'bus now amounts to? I cannot give you any idea of that.
1185. *Mr. Hurley.* I suppose you have no other interest but the public interest when you say you are in antagonism to the construction of what is called the lock-spitted line? None at all.
1186. You favour the construction of a line via Parkestown, Kingsgrove, Moorefields, and Belmore because of the population? I look at the question this way: I believe there is a probability in the near future of that line paying simply because settlement has already taken place for many years past.
1187. On the principle that settlement has followed the construction of the Hurstville line is it not probable that the lock-spitted line will, after its construction, afford inducement to a large population to settle on the land you spoke of as belonging to syndicates? I am prepared to admit that it must ultimately bring a settled population where the railway is run, and no doubt it is a very fine district.
1188. Are not the lands more suitable for settlement on the lock-spitted route than on the Illawarra line; is not the land more favourable up to Belmore *en route* to Liverpool than it is on the Illawarra line? Well, it is quite as much so I think—in every sense of the word.
1189. More favourable for residential purposes? I do not say more favourable, but I think it is quite as favourable. On the Illawarra line you have a view of the ocean, which is an attraction, and which we have not on the other line, on which, however, you have landscape scenery, which counteracts that to some extent.
1190. Have you at any time advocated the construction of a line in that district? Yes, I have.
1191. Would you look at that map and point out what you advocated? [*Witness indicated that he had advocated the southernmost line of the three rival routes.*]
1192. Why did you advocate that line; I presume you advocated it at a time when you were a candidate for the electorate of Canterbury? You are quite right, I did. But I advocated it before then and I will tell you why I like it less before the Committee now. If my memory serves me correctly, the Commissioners of Railways have made a statement that they can relieve the traffic on the southern line, and that they intend to do so by constructing a double line of railway from Liverpool. I think I am right in stating so; and one of the strongest arguments put forward for the construction of this line was that it would relieve the traffic on the southern line to Liverpool. I understand, if it is not already completed, that it is the intention of the Commissioners of Railways to double the line from Liverpool to Parramatta, and that lessens one of the strongest arguments in favour of the construction of this line—that it would save very considerably not only in mileage but in wear and tear of material.
1193. Therefore, you forego your previous advocacy of that line in public because of the proposal to double the line from Liverpool to Sydney? I did not say a proposal; I think it is a fact.
1194. You forego your advocacy of that line? I do not forego any advocacy, but I admit that there is a remote probability of the line paying. But at that time, when these conditions did not exist—when there was a certainty of a considerable amount of wear and tear being saved on the Government railways—it had a greater claim to advocacy than it has now, although I must admit that there is a probability of the line paying, but not immediately; while there is less probability of the lock-spitted line paying.
1195. A short time ago you said, in answer to a question, that the line would serve land speculators who hold large areas of land;—do you know who they are? I know, but I do not think that I would be justified in mentioning any names.
1196. Are you in personal antagonism with any of them? Not at all; I bear ill-will to no man.
1197. That land is likely to be taken up by a number of persons; if these people had not seized on it that land now held by land syndicates or companies would be in the hands of a great number—is that not so; it is land which people would have been induced to take up? No, I do not think it is at all likely. No settlement was begun on that land until it was known that this line was to be constructed. The land was in a virgin state, so to speak, until it was known that the survey had been made—not on Bell's line, but on the other side of the road. Immediately that line was known to have been surveyed I know for a fact that certain large blocks of land were taken up. One was purchased by a certain building society of considerable proportions in Pitt-street, and it was rumoured that certain gentlemen in high political positions were interested, but you must not ask me to give the names.
1198. I shall want you to give us the names of those persons who occupied positions in high places. It is a matter of urgent necessity in the public interest that you should, if you are in possession of these facts, tell us who the persons are? You must really excuse me from doing that; I do not think it is fair to ask me. It was stated to me; I heard that certain land transactions had taken place. I did state as a fact that I knew the land was at that time in what I might term a virgin condition.
1199. Do you, of your own knowledge, know persons who occupy positions in political life who hold any interest in those syndicates? One gentleman, whose name I do not wish to mention, was connected with a certain building society, but whether he is now connected with it or whether he had any connection with the transaction, I am not prepared to say.

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1200. An ambiguous answer like that will not suit? I will give you any answer you wish.

1201. I want the name of any person or persons, who hold any distinguished position in connection with politics, who are interested in the land to which you referred? I am on oath, and would not be prepared to swear to any name, although I had heard it and have reasonable grounds for believing it. That is no reason why I should be prepared to swear to a thing as a fact. That would hardly be considered evidence in a court of law, it being a matter of hearsay, although I have in my own mind sufficient grounds for belief.

1202. Do you think that it is fair to insinuate against persons holding positions, and that when you are off your oath, you are going to whisper that there is a number of persons holding distinguished positions, influencing the construction of a railway for their personal benefit? You are drawing an inference from what I have said.

1203. If you will not give the names I have to draw an inference? I am sorry you have to look at it from that point. I will state again what I said before, and you will perhaps see it more clearly. I say that when Bell's line was originally surveyed a considerable amount of correspondence took place between those advocating it, and the Government Departments. Some time afterwards another survey, then known as Kennedy's line, and now known as the lock-spitted line, was made. A great portion of the land through which the line would go was in a virgin condition so to speak. I know that certain land syndicates purchased after that survey was made, and I heard it stated that certain gentlemen that occupied a considerable position in public life had an interest, but the fact of my having heard it stated is not evidence. Unless I am prepared to make a statement directly, if it comes from a second party it is not evidence, but I am simply stating what I believe to be true. I have sufficient grounds for believing that to be true. I cannot swear it is true although I believe it is true. There is a great difference between sources of information. I merely give it as hearsay evidence. But as to the land being in that condition I am prepared to declare that as a fact, and this I know is a fact, that certain land syndicates whose names were put up in large letters—

1204. *Vice-Chairman.*] The names of the syndicate? Yes.

1205. Where is that? There is a large board stating that allotments will be sold by the Anglo-Australian Company, and I think there are other Companies.

1206. *Mr. Hurley.*] Do you belong to a land syndicate yourself? I did.

1207. On that line, or anywhere near it? I do not belong to one. I have sold out.

1208. But anywhere in that vicinity? No.

1209. Anywhere in that district? No, not in the district through which the line has been surveyed.

1210. *Dr. Garran.*] I understand you to say that the whole of the district is suitable for settlement? Yes, every inch of it.

1211. Is it your opinion that the construction of any one of these three competing lines would have the effect of settling a large suburban population? In the future no doubt. There is no doubt about it.

1212. And so far as mere settlement is concerned for the future, one line has no particular advantage over the other? In the future—well yes, my experience is that where settlement has taken place, if means of access to and from the metropolis are increased the settlement is far more likely to increase there than in a new place—that is to say, with equal natural surroundings.

1213. With equal surroundings, do you think that any new purchaser who is going to put up a house cares whether there happens to be somebody in the neighbourhood or not? From my own experience I would rather go where there are a few people about.

1214. Do you not think that elevation, drainage, soil, and so forth are the determining considerations? No doubt they are, and this is a very fine district, having every one of those advantages.

1215. Still the construction of any one of those three lines would have the effect of settling a population? In the future no doubt about it.

1216. Ten years hence I suppose that if either of the three lines were made the population would be ten times what it is now? Not ten times, but a considerable increase.

1217. It is in evidence that this line was selected by Mr. Whitton and made by him as straight as possible; with the view of its being a loop line, so the line before us comes recommended by the Department as Mr. Whitton's line, and as the shortest line;—do you think that that is an advantage—to have the shortest line to Liverpool? No, I do not; that is to say, the difference in the distance is of a very fractional character, and that would be more than counteracted by the obstacles to be encountered. That is to say, I believe the other line possesses fewer obstacles to construction than this does. I think the difference is only about $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile between the two routes.

1218. We are given to understand that Mr. Whitton's view was that any line would be good for a suburban line, and therefore that it would be best to make the line as straight as possible for a loop line, and to combine the two; do you think it is possible to combine the two? The most direct route of all would be from Arncliffe, if that is the question the Government have in view.

1219. But there were engineering difficulties on the Arncliffe line that led to that being thrown aside? Quite so.

1220. This we are told is a direct line, and it is a good suburban line is it not? No doubt. It is a very fine district all through.

1221. If in ten years' time the population will be ten-fold what it is now, should we not be right in looking rather to the prospective results than the number of inhabitants that are there at the present time? Yes, and I think the prospective results likely to increase as much on the one line as on the other.

1222. If we choose this line on the ground of its directness, and it is also a good suburban line, is its directness not a reason why we should prefer it? I should not do so, but of course you are the judges in the matter. It is a question of the cost of construction.

1223. I understand you to say you would determine the route out of regard to the present population? I would be very inclined to do so.

1224. Yet you admit that the present population is not one-tenth of what the population will be ten years hence? I am convinced of that.

1225. And ought we to disregard the nine-tenths out of consideration for the one-tenth? I do not understand you.

1226. Ought we not to consider the population of the future rather than the present few inhabitants? I am not prepared to give my opinion. Of course it is only a matter of opinion that it would be ten times as much in ten years.

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1227. Well, it will be a very great increase? I think it would be considerable.
1228. Is there justification for deviating from the directness which Mr. Whitton prefers, simply out of regard of the very limited population now existing in the district? I think so, because you have a revenue to begin with at once. In the other case, you would have to wait until a population had settled from whom revenue would be derived.
1229. You think it is national policy to sacrifice the future for the present? I think that the probability is that the future will be affected as much by one route as by the other.
1230. We have it in evidence that the Belmore line will cost less than the present line? I am not prepared to say it would, but am only taking what I think is a common-sense view of the situation—that a line going over level country would very likely be constructed more cheaply than a line going over a country with a succession of hills.
1231. But is not the level country lower country? No; it seems to be on the slope of the hill all the way up.
1232. What you call a succession of hills is good undulating country, is it not? It is very fine country all through.
1233. Undulating country is very good for residential purposes, naturally well drained, and easy to keep the roads in repair? Yes.
1234. Then it is not against a suburban line to go through undulating country? No. I am not saying it is against it, but it is a natural barrier, and expense must be incurred in overcoming those difficulties.
1235. We are told that the population of Belmore is about 400, is that your estimate? I hardly think it is 400. I gave it as less; but all witnesses are placed at a disadvantage unless one can say what is the population settled at a particular point. It all depends what radius you would include from that point. One might include a mile or two; another might include a mile, and so make a calculation. Unless you distinctly define what you refer to no doubt there will be a difference in the estimates of population.
1236. Well, taking 400 as the maximum population of Belmore, would you sacrifice the straightness of the line for all time for the convenience of those in the Belmore district? There are other districts—Moorefields, Kingsgrove, Parkestown. Those are all districts where settlement has taken place.
1237. But the population there is but a handful compared with what the population will be in ten years on any one of these lines? No doubt; but my opinion is that the population is far more likely to settle where it is centred now, because we are strangely constituted. We are of a social character, and like to go where people are, and where we can make purchases of the necessaries of life.
1238. Is not the population now between Sydney and Hurstville ten times what it was before the Illawarra line was made? I do not think it is.
1239. Well, how much increased? I can only at best give an opinion. It has increased very considerably.
1240. The new population is enormously greater than the old? There is no doubt about it.
1241. And in making a suburban line you do not think it is proper to consider the incoming population as much as the existing? No doubt about that.
1242. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? At Drummoyne, on the Parramatta River.
1243. You do not reside in this district now under consideration? No.
1244. You have a very intimate knowledge of the various routes proposed, and of the whole of the district which would be served by this particular railway now under consideration? I have been over all the surveyed lines.
1245. You advocate another route because at the present time a larger population exists at some other places you have named? Yes, I did advocate it.
1246. Would not this lock-spitted line pass through Canterbury? Yes. Both lines pass through Canterbury.
1247. Can you inform the Committee whether those other places to which you have referred would be likely to give anything like such large returns as might be expected from Canterbury and the surrounding district, and from visitors to the racecourse? Both lines would be equally accessible to the racecourse. The crossings at Canterbury are within a few chains of each other—one crosses on the low and the other on the high land. The distance from the racecourse at Canterbury is only a matter of a few chains difference between the one line and the other. As regards Canterbury, the one route is as likely to serve the whole of the intermediate district of Canterbury as the other. The greatest difference between the two lines at Canterbury is, I think, 4 or 5 chains; there might be 6 chains, but I think not more than that.
1248. What advantages do you claim for this southern line in preference to the lock-spitted line? Along this line the population is not only settled, but the land is of a better character and equally suitable for settlement.
1249. Are there any large estates cut up and surveyed for sale immediately between these two lines? Not that I am aware of.
1250. Do you know the Harcourt Estate? Not by name.
1251. Are there any large estates on the line known as Bell's line? I am not aware of any, but as to others there are large boards fronting the Canterbury Road which everybody must see in passing.
1252. Can you point out where the house was to which you referred as being submerged some 14 or 15 feet? Within a chain of the bridge.
1253. Are you aware that the engineers who designed the construction of the line have placed the level of the line 34 feet above the level of the banks, so as to take it entirely out of flood reach? I was not aware of that.
1254. Can you give the Committee any information as to the difference in compensation that would be likely to be charged on the route to which you referred? Yes, I am very glad you have pointed that out. The owners of land on the route known as Bell's route signed a document, and put it in the hands of the Government Solicitor—I think it was Mr. Williams—stating that they were prepared to give the land required for the construction of a railway to the Government free of cost, and that they were quite ready to sign a document when called upon to do so. I think I have some documents to corroborate that statement.
1255. *Vice-Chairman.*] Did not that apply to the through line? I am not quite sure. I know that was signed

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signed with regard to Bell's line. I think Mr. Wright was then Minister of Public Works. I saw the document, and I know that correspondence took place between the Government Solicitor and the Committee formed to advocate the construction of that line, and I know that a large number—I think, with one or two exceptions—signed a document promising to convey the land required for the construction of the railway to the Government, free of cost, if Bell's route were adopted.

1256. Did I understand you to say that there was scarcely any difference in the quality of the country through which any of the lines would pass? Making a general statement, I think the quality of the land in the district was equally good. It is very good land indeed on both routes. It is very fine land right on to George's River. It is a beautiful lovely district all through.

1257. Did I understand that your principal contention at the present time is that on the route you favour there is a larger population that would be better served than by the present staked-out line? Yes.

1258. *Mr. Humphery.*] What is the distance from the Burwood Road 8-mile peg to Belmore, on the lock-spitted line? I think about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

1259. What is the distance of Belmore from the 8-mile peg, on Bell's line—that is, south of the lock-spitted line? I should think that from Belmore it would not be more than 3 or 4 chains to Bell's line.

1260. I am speaking of the 8-mile peg;—is not the distance exactly the same? Excuse me. I don't comprehend.

1261. Is not the distance just the same from the 8-mile peg, south of the lock-spitted line, and on the lock-spitted line? No. The line now marked out at the 8-mile peg is, at least I should think, the best part of half a mile from the main Canterbury Road, and in going from Belmore there is no other means of access than going along the main road and turning up at the 8-mile peg.

1262. But taking a direct line, is not the distance of the 8-mile peg on Bell's line precisely similar to the distance on the lock-spitted line? I think the distance is about the same.

1263. What is the population between the 8-mile peg, on Bell's line, and Belmore—the surrounding district? The population is very very different. That is where the population is settled.

1264. And about what population would you think? I gave a very rough estimate when I stated it, and, at best, it is only an approximation. It has been stated there are about 400, and I said I thought rather less.

1265. Do you think that the settlement under the existing condition of things—the population now settled there under the existing inconveniences—would be likely to be lessened if the lock-spitted line were constructed? No doubt the inconvenience would be considerably lessened.

1266. And the settled population would not remove? I must admit that it would be a very great convenience to the settled population, but not as great as the other line. Of course the inconvenience would be considerably lessened.

1267. Did not the same thing occur between Sydney and Parramatta; were not the villages of Petersham and Burwood some distance from the railway, and all between the railway and those villages population is settled, gaps have closed up,—would not that occur here? Not necessarily. I am not prepared to say how far the settlements were from the line at Petersham and Ashfield, but from Kingsgrove and Moorefields to the 8-mile peg there is a big gap of country—I suppose the best part of the country—and it would be a long time before the gap was filled up. If it were within a radius of only a few chains it would no doubt quickly fill up. But there is a big difference, and it would take a long time to fill up. There are so many forces in operation now for suburban settlement.

THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

The HONORABLE JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

Hon. George Thornton, M.L.C., sworn, and examined:—

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1268. *Mr. Trickett.*] You are a Member of the Legislative Council? Yes.

1269. And a very old colonist? Well, I am a colonist—native born.

1270. Do you know the proposed Railway line from Marrickville to Burwood Road? There are three propositions.

1271. Do you know the line marked blue on that plan, and which is known as the lock-spitted line, and which is the one the Committee is considering? Yes.

1272. You are acquainted with that line? I know it particularly well, because it happens to be lock-spitted partly through my property.

1273. Where is that property? It is very near to George's River, in the southern part of Bankstown.

1274. Does this line go through your property? Partly.

1275. Between Marrickville and Burwood Road? Yes.

1276. Is that locality known as Bankstown? A part of Bankstown—Southern Bankstown.

1277. Have you known this district for very many years? Yes; I have known it—and have known it well—for more than forty years. I was going to say every foot of it, but I would say every portion of it, all about it, everywhere—Lower Bankstown, Salt Pan Creek, up George's River, north and south of Liverpool Road, particularly Bankstown—old Irishtown as it was formerly called—Lower Bankstown and Upper Bankstown. I particularly know those places. I have been acquainted with those localities for nearer fifty than forty years, and have held property there.

1278. What is about the population of Bankstown at the present time? It is sparse. The population is not what it ought to be, and it is scattered. But if I may be permitted to mention the cause it is this—that there is no means of access to and from the metropolis.

1279. What is the present means by which people get to and from Sydney? You can get to the railway by travelling a long distance.

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1280. To what station do the people go? Take my own present place which I have cultivated lately—that is at the 14 miles stone on the Liverpool Road—the nearest railway to me as the crow would fly is Rookwood, but it is a very bad road, and, practically, that is the longest distance, because in wet weather the roads are so bad that you cannot get there. The nearest practical way of getting to the railway is by going to Liverpool, 6 miles, or Cabramatta, which is about the same distance. But then Cabramatta is unsuitable, practically, because the train does not stop there except about once a day.

1281. But, as a matter of fact, how do the people come in now? They come by the omnibus generally from Bankstown, a sort of very inferior conveyance which carries the mail from Bankstown—Upper and Lower—and that district, to Burwood Railway Station.

1282. How far is that? An average of 7 or 8 miles; or, perhaps, 7 would be the more correct average—a minimum of 7 miles.

1283. Those people, if they want to come into town by rail, have to drive about 7 miles, by Burwood Railway Station? Yes; or they can drive to Homebush, which is a little nearer, but which is very difficult of access, because there is no proper road to Homebush, whereas there is to Burwood all the way.

1284. With regard to this Bankstown district do you think it is suitable for a suburban population? I hold decided opinions upon that matter, and have done so for many years. I think the district of Bankstown, which includes a very large tract of country, is eminently situated and adapted for a thriving industrious, respectable population, because it has natural advantages—its healthfulness, the quality of its soil, and everything else that could make it a suitable place. A more favourable place we have not anywhere. It is nicely undulating country. The land in most places is cleared—nearly all cleared by the old people who composed the first settlers—the old Irish people who settled there in '98. It is called Irishtown for that reason. The land is mostly cleared and the soil is very good. It has been lying idle for 30 or 40 years, because if people cultivated anything they could not get the produce to the metropolis. For instance, I have a large orchard and vineyard under cultivation there, and the cost of getting the things to the metropolis is as much as they are worth—the distance is in fact prohibitory.

1285. How would this railway we are now considering serve the district of which you speak? As a matter of opinion only—and of course I speak with deference here—I hold strongly that the line marked blue on that plan, although it goes through my property and would favour me very much indeed—for I hold a great deal of land there—the construction of that line would give me a good railway frontage, and I should receive compensation and many advantages, but I think that that is for many reasons the wrong route. One reason is that it goes too far south. It gives Bankstown proper the go-by. The Liverpool Road runs, say, east and west. The line would run in an easterly and westerly direction, perhaps a little northern and a little eastern.

1286. You say generally with regard to the line that it runs a little too far south? Yes.

1287. Bankstown is situated north and south of Liverpool Road? Yes, and it is a large district. This would give all persons who settled on those properties the go-by. Another reason why I object to it, because its length is too great, its gradients too severe, and the crossing of the river in the broadest part would make the bridge a most expensive one.

1288. Where at? It crosses over just above Mr. Johnston's place—George's Hall—south of that. As well as I can recollect that is, I think, about the broadest part of the river, and, therefore, the most expensive for a bridge. I think the line would cross the river twice.

1289. But that is all towards Liverpool that you are speaking of now? At any rate, it crosses George's River twice.

1290. I would rather you confined yourself to Burwood Road, for the railway we are considering will not go beyond that at present? I can say nothing about that. I know nothing of the Burwood Road except to give an opinion generally, that it is folly to take the railway to the Burwood Road unless you intend to take it right through, for whilst it would benefit the people of Burwood—who are already supplied with a railway and tramway—it would not be a bit of good to the people higher up.

1291. The project the Committee are considering is to construct a line $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, starting at Marrickville railway station, and going along that blue line on the plan to what is called the Burwood Road? The Burwood Road is a very long road.

1292. The spot where the line crosses the Burwood Road is $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Marrickville, and consequently it stops considerably short of what you have been referring to at Bankstown? Precisely so; but it would be an enormously advantageous step in the right direction—that is, having in view an ultimate extension of the railway in the direction of Liverpool. It would be an enormously grand step in the right direction.

1293. Do I understand you that if the railway stopped at $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Marrickville it would be of little or no benefit at present to the people at Bankstown? None whatever, because they can get by the old Liverpool Road to Burwood as easily as they could get to Burwood Road.

1294. Do you know the locality called Belmore? I know it very well.

1295. Would that district be served by this railway we are now considering? By a line indicated by the blue line on the map it would.

1296. Bring it within about a mile? It would.

1297. Do you know the district between this spot marked on the map here as Burwood Road and the Marrickville Road? Yes.

1298. Thoroughly? I cannot say thoroughly. I know it pretty well. It belonged to an old friend of mine, and families I knew very well. I have been over it many times.

1299. Having regard to that line you see there—the blue line—can you tell us which is the best line? I am not able to give you any opinion about that.

1300. Then I understand that the evidence you can give the Committee is in reference to a place further on—called Bankstown? Distinctly so.

1301. And you are of opinion that the railway going the way it is proposed would not benefit Bankstown at all? Except in so far as I have said. It would be an enormously valuable step in the right direction, because once you take it to Burwood I have no doubt in the world you must take it on to make it of any ultimate use.

1302. *Mr. Copeland.*] I understand that you are in favour of a line being constructed so far as the Burwood Road? Yes, distinctly so—emphatically so.

1303. Well, so far as the Burwood Road, do you particularly favour the blue line as against this line marked "Bankstown trial survey"? I may say, in answer to that, that I remember this one called the trial survey, and I very much prefer that to the blue line (although I have spoken of that going to Burwood

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as being a great step in the right direction), for reasons I will give you if you will allow me. The most northerly surveyed line goes through Bankstown, and why I favour this is because, geographically considered, it has a lesser distance. That is one point in its favour.

1304. Lesser distance to construct? Yes; to construct to Liverpool. The next point in its favour is that there are fewer and far more convenient gradients. The gradients are on more level lines. By going round two hills near Bankstown they can have a level line nearly the whole distance. The other advantage is, that I do not think it crosses the river at all, but only Prospect Creek, whilst the blue line crosses the river in three places—one in the broadest part of the river, which would necessitate an enormous outlay.

1305. This northern line to which you refer crosses Landsdown Creek? Well, that is Prospect Creek, near Landsdown bridge.

1306. Supposing this northern line were constructed, you say it would be more favourable to the Bankstown people? Unquestionably; enormously.

1307. Would it not be less favourable to the Belmore people? Yes; it would be right away from Belmore, and more in favour of the Bankstown people, but I regard the Belmore interest as very inferior to that of Bankstown, because Belmore is of recent occupation. Whereas the people at Bankstown have been settled for seventy, eighty, or ninety years, and have established homes, and the soil is much better there.

1308. Better than the land about Belmore? I think it is.

1309. You think that the land about Belmore is not capable of cultivation? I cannot say that; but the land about Bankstown is very good indeed.

1310. Have you considered that this blue line—the staked line—runs about intermediate between Belmore and Bankstown, and would therefore give considerable advantages to the people in each settlement? Practically it is not so, though it appears to be so on the map. That blue line would give the Bankstown people the go-by. It would be of no use to them at all. By the map it does appear about equi-distant between Belmore and Bankstown, but it really is not.

1311. The scale of this map is 2 inches to the mile, and I take it that it would be very little more than a mile from Bankstown to the railway station on this blue line? If you make it a mile away, that is a long distance for people to travel.

1312. You cannot have a railway nearer than a mile to everybody's residence? True. I grant you that, and I think that if the people at Bankstown could get access to a railway within a mile they would have what they desire—all they require.

1313. Would not this blue line give them access within a mile? I do not think it would. An additional reason against that line is, that the cost of that blue line will be something enormous because of its crossing the river twice—once at the broadest part of the river, involving the outlay of an enormous sum of money for the bridge. And another reason against it—I speak slightly under correction, but I think I am correct in stating that the land in some seasons is under water 15, 16, and 20 feet, and a railway would have to be built which would avoid those flood waters.

1314. Which particular part of the line are you now alluding to? That would be between George's River and Saltpan Creek—about 2 miles from the Liverpool Road and very nearly, if not quite, on the line of that blue line. It might be on the other line, but it is somewhere about there. There is a natural fall, a natural dead hollow in which the water lies, in some seasons for six, eight, or nine months of the year, and makes the place impassable, except, perhaps, for steam-boats.

1315. Can you define that position on the map? No, I cannot, but I am inclined to think it is a little farther south than this blue line.

1316. How far back from George's River does this swamp extend? It extends back from George's River 2 or 3 miles. I intend to offer to the Chairman the names of some persons who were born there, and have lived there all their lives, who will be able to tell him what exactly this swamp is, where it is, and all about it.

1317. Are you quite sure that this blue line is marked through that swamp? No, I am not quite sure, but if it is not upon it, it is very close.

1318. And for 2 or 3 miles back from George's River there is a liability of having 16 or 17 feet of water? Yes. In time of flood unquestionably there would be somewhere about that blue line a swamp that would be impassable except for boats. In fact any engineer in forming a railway there would have to keep that in view, and make the railway high enough to avoid the flood water. It is a serious objection to it in my opinion, and I thought it was my duty to mention it to the Committee.

1319. Taking all these different questions into consideration, you strongly recommend the adoption of this northern line? Yes.

1320. From Bankstown? Yes. It is to the north of Bankstown. That, in my opinion, will benefit the general public, not only the people of Bankstown, but the general public of New South Wales, who might be interested in forming nice homesteads or small farms, small holdings, or places for a rural population.

1321. *Mr. Humphery.*] Were you not in error in stating to Mr. Trickett that you possessed property between Marrickville and the 8-mile peg at Burwood? I did not state that.

1322. Mr. Trickett, I think, asked you whether you owned any property between Marrickville and Burwood Road? No; he did not ask me that question; or, if he did, I did not hear the question properly, for I never did own property there. My property commences at the 14-mile stone on the Liverpool Road.

1323. If it should be decided eventually to extend the line to Liverpool, would not the extension take place from the 8 miles on to Bankstown to the north of the lock-spitted line? Undoubtedly.

1324. Therefore, your opposition to the present 4½ miles between Marrickville and Burwood would only arise in the event of the whole line being under consideration as lock-spitted? I answer the question in this way. I hold to it. I say that a line even to Burwood from Marrickville, as shown by that blue line, would be an enormous step in the right direction.

1325. If I am right there will be no error in making the line, as at present proposed, to the 8-mile peg, because from that point it could be extended to Liverpool in the direction of Bankstown? Undoubtedly. I would repeat that I approve very strongly of a line in the direction indicated to the 8-mile peg on the Burwood Road, because the other must follow as a necessary consequence. Whether it follows the line I have in view or the one other people have in view it is a big step in the right direction.

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1326. Although you would approve very strongly of the northern line being taken to the Burwood Road, still you are not opposed to the present extension under consideration—that is from Marrickville to the 8 miles peg marked in blue? No; on the contrary, I am very much in favour of it. I am delighted with it, and I am sure that every reasonable, right-minded man will be delighted with it for the reasons I have given. I think it is a big step in the right direction.

1327. It is a matter for after consideration whether the line shall be extended along the lock-spitted route or be taken north or south? Irrespective of all that, I am quite sure that all the people in that direction—between Liverpool and Burwood Road—would hail it as a great boon to get it even so far as Burwood Road, as contemplated by the blue line. I say so as an experienced man, wishing them all well in that respect.

1328. It is only in the event of any extension beyond that, taken beyond the lock-spitted line, that you think that it could be improved by deviation? I do, for reasons I have stated.

1329. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] If that line were taken on *via* Bankstown it would have to deviate before it came to Burwood Road, would it not? The blue line would have to deviate of course. You would have to take another angle entirely. The direction of that blue line is about west by south. The red line would go west by north almost, as well as I am able to judge. My idea is that it should go in this direction—west by north. There would have to be a deviation, or rather it would not be a deviation, but you would have to take the line that way, and then this way.

1330. Would it not be better to take the line to Bankstown on to Druitt Town, and serve that as well? Yes.

1331. But your deviation would not serve Druitt Town? Oh yes, it would.

1332. The proposed tramway to Druitt Town is marked on the plan? Yes; I see I am a little out. But that line would go much closer to Druitt Town than the blue line would.

1333. Would it not be preferable to follow the old survey, go through Lower Bankstown, and *via* Landsdown Creek? Yes.

1334. Then to carry out that line you would have to deviate about Canterbury? I am not prepared to answer that question, because I do not know much about Canterbury, although I have been there many a time. I have never had occasion to consider it with a view to a railway being constructed, and therefore could not give you any definite reply about that. I can only speak about Druitt Town and Bankstown with any authority, if I may use the term.

1335. But on the map you find there is a junction marked between the blue and the Lower Bankstown line? Yes.

1336. And that takes place at Canterbury? Yes.

1337. Then that appears to be the natural route to serve Druitt Town and Lower Bankstown? Unquestionably, and for the reasons I have mentioned the cost would be greatly decreased. I cannot estimate how much this line would cost less than the blue line would cost, in consequence of the natural difficulties in the way of that line—the swamp, river, and such things.

1338. The blue line to which you refer is the lock-spitted or permanently staked line? Yes; it goes through a part of my property, and, as you might judge, it would be of great benefit to me.

1339. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you believe that if this line, which is under investigation, from Marrickville to Burwood Road were constructed, it would pay working expenses and interest on the capital expended in its construction? Judging from my experience of the wonderful addition to population in those districts, seeing that which I have seen in my lifetime, and which appears to be almost incredible—the bush transferred almost momentarily, by magic as it were, into a place teeming with population—I have no hesitation in saying it would pay well in time.

1340. Is the land along the route proposed suitable for building purposes—I mean the whole of it? I am not able to speak with any accuracy of the land between Marrickville and Burwood. I know there is a great deal of good land about there, but I do not recollect it well enough to be able to answer that question with any authority.

1341. Have you any idea of the population that would be served by the construction of this line as proposed from Marrickville to Burwood? No; I am not able to give an answer, except that, judging from what I have seen the last few years, I have no doubt this place will be precipitated into a largely population-bearing place. For example, in places, where during some part of my life I used to go shooting—particularly in a forest of ironbark trees where not a creature was to be seen—there now stand beautiful towns. For example, Summer Hill, Petersham, and even Newtown. I remember the time when the boys went to Newtown to shoot parrots. We never thought there would be a population there. Look at that now, and look at Petersham. It used to be owned by one man, 2,226 acres being occupied by one person. Now there is Stanmore, Petersham, Lewisham, and Summer Hill. It is astonishing. The railway authorities know the extraordinary increase that has taken place in their receipts from those different places which, during a long portion of my life, I used to travel over and shoot parrots without any interruption.

1342. Do you think the railway has conduced to that wonderful alteration? Nothing else could have done it.

1343. Did you know a place called Hurstville before the railway went there? Not by the name of Hurstville. Kingsgrove, I think, we used to call it, or some such name as that.

1344. You know what a wonderful population is now settled there in consequence of the railway being constructed? I do.

1345. Do you think something similar would occur if this line were constructed? Much greater, for I think the land is more suitable in that northerly or north-westerly direction. It is a healthy district all about there. I speak of Bankstown and the district several miles near it—scores of thousands of acres in extent. No doctor could live there. People live to a great old age and do not die, or, at any rate, they do not want a doctor.

1346. You would prefer the northern surveyed line, but under any circumstances you think that the construction of any line as indicated would be a great benefit to the community? Unquestionably so.

1347. And also within a very short time be payable? Unquestionably so. I judge from the past, from what I have seen all around me, and from the anxiety of the people to have places out there to which they could get access. Land would sell at once at enormously increased prices, and people would be only too glad to get nice settlements—to buy land by the acre, instead of by the foot as they have to do now. I

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am speaking in the interests of the general public. I might serve myself very handsomely by advocating the blue line route. It would be an enormous advantage to me if the line went in that direction, but I should be false to my principles if I advocated it, and I am speaking in the interests of the general public. I have suggested in this letter, which I now hand in, the names of some persons who would give you some useful, if not valuable, information, particularly with regard to Bankstown.

David Kirkcaldie, Esq., Chief Traffic Manager, Railway Department, sworn, and examined:—

- D. Kirkcaldie, Esq.
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1348. *Mr. Copeland.*] You know the suggested new route from Marrickville for some 4 miles 60 chains in the direction of Liverpool? I do.
1349. Do you know the country personally? Yes.
1350. I want to get some information from you, more particularly with reference to the saving that would be likely to be effected supposing this line were extended beyond what is now submitted to us, that is the 4 miles 60 chains;—supposing that line were carried through to Liverpool, what saving would be effected on the short journey from Liverpool to Sydney by the proposed route as against the Parramatta route? In what respect do you mean?
1351. Do you know the different distances? Yes.
1352. The length of the two lines? About 17 miles against 22.
1353. That would be a saving of 5 miles? Yes.
1354. We have a report here from the Commissioners for Railways, and they say, "The theory which has been put forth, that the construction of this line would avoid the necessity for increasing the carrying capacity of the existing line from Liverpool to Sydney, should not have any weight in the consideration of the question, as the construction of the line would only relieve the parent line to the extent of about four trains per day in each direction; and the quadrupling of the line out of Sydney to Homebush is required to accommodate the increasing purely residential service of trains; and the doubling of the line from Granville to Liverpool will be required for the development of the country along that route, which is being fairly rapidly settled";—Supposing this line were constructed from Marrickville to Liverpool, what amount of through traffic do you think would go by that route, 5 miles shorter, instead of by the old route, *via* Granville;—Would the passenger traffic go that way? Oh, yes.
1355. You think the passengers would travel that way, and save 5 miles of trainage? Yes.
1356. Do you think that any of the through goods traffic to Sydney would go that way? Unquestionably. If the railway were constructed, all the traffic from Liverpool and beyond would go and come by that route—that being the shorter route.
1357. Except, I suppose, the live stock that goes to Homebush? Yes.
1358. That would still go by the old route? That would still go by Granville.
1359. You anticipate that the passenger traffic would go by the new route? Yes.
1360. And save 5 miles of trainage? I think so.
1361. You will notice that the Commissioners say it would only be used to the extent of about four trains a-day in each direction? Yes.
1362. I find, by referring to the Government time-table, that there are at the present time thirteen trains one way and twelve trains the other way in the day from Liverpool to Sydney and from beyond Liverpool to Sydney? Yes.
1363. Can you account for the Commissioners stating that there will be only four trains a day in each direction? Well, I cannot from memory exactly limit myself to four, but those trains to which you refer also supply the district between Granville and Liverpool—not only Liverpool and stations beyond. They supply Cabramatta, Fairfield, and the district generally between Granville and Liverpool. The passenger trains which go beyond Liverpool number about four each way per day. There is the morning train, the express, the 5-17, and the mail. I think those are about the only trains which run beyond Liverpool.
1364. But there are a number of trains in addition to those; there are several trains which go to Campbelltown? Yes.
1365. Would not the people in Campbelltown be likely to avail themselves of the shorter route in coming to Sydney? Undoubtedly through passengers would.
1366. And the passengers from Liverpool *en route* to Sydney would also be likely to do so? Yes; no doubt they would prefer that route.
1367. So that, in your opinion, there would be a much greater traffic from Liverpool and from beyond Liverpool than what is indicated by the Commissioners' Report, which says four trains per day each way? I could not specify exactly the number of trains.
1368. I have told you that as far as I can gather from the time-table here there are thirteen trains one way and twelve the other, which go to Liverpool and beyond Liverpool? Yes, but a great many of those trains only run from Granville. They do not come on to the suburban line at all. They run between Granville and Liverpool in connection with suburban trains.
1369. The whole of those trains run from Sydney to Liverpool and beyond Liverpool, and from beyond Liverpool and from Liverpool to Sydney? Yes; but they do not run from Sydney, you understand, as individual trains. Many of them run in connection with suburban trains from Granville to Liverpool and back. They are not run as trains from Sydney to Liverpool, but from Sydney to Parramatta, and then a train joins at Granville and runs the passengers up to Liverpool, and so when the trains are coming back again.
1370. Will you take the time-table and find the Campbelltown and Liverpool trains; I have here what I took from the time-table—the down trains from Sydney to Liverpool and beyond; this of course includes the express and the other morning trains; they all go beyond Liverpool; there are trains leaving Sydney at 6-30 a.m., 9, 9-30, 11-30, 1-30 p.m., 4-30 p.m., 5-17, 6-30, 9, 9-30, and 11-30? Yes.
1371. The whole of those trains leave Sydney and go to Liverpool and beyond Liverpool? Yes, in the way I say. All those trains which leave at the half-hour—for instance, the 6-30, the 9-30, 11-30, 1-30, 4-30, 6-30—are Parramatta trains, and they junction at Granville with the local train to Liverpool—with a train which simply runs between Liverpool and Granville.
1372. Supposing that passengers were leaving Sydney for Liverpool or beyond Liverpool, would not they be likely to travel by the shorter route, and save 5 miles of trainage and time? Yes, undoubtedly, if they had an equally good service.
- 1373.

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1373. Should not that additional traffic be taken into consideration in addition to those four trains each way to which the Commissioners refer? They would not get such a number of trains to Liverpool were it not for the local traffic between Granville and Liverpool. You have got to consider the stations—for instance, Merylands, Guildford, Fairfield, Canley Vale, and Cabramatta—which are all between Granville and Liverpool, and at which a considerable population is settled. For the Liverpool passengers alone it would never pay to run all those trains, but if you take the local traffic with the Liverpool traffic it is a different question.

1374. Still I suppose that if the suggested line were constructed, and the bulk of the passenger traffic came that way, other suburban towns would spring up? Yes, there might be.

1375. Towns would spring up on the new line? Yes.

1376. And traffic would increase on that line? Yes.

1377. Do you consider that if the proposed line were constructed the traffic coming from Liverpool and beyond Liverpool would materially assist in paying the working expenses of the new line? No, I do not, and I will tell you why. If we got the same rates from Liverpool and all stations beyond which we get at the present time I daresay it would be a very good thing.

1378. That is to say, if you were paid for 5 miles you did not run? Quite so. But if we are going to construct this line, and charge actual mileage rates, we shall lose far more money than we can possibly gain.

1379. Is not that a somewhat peculiar theory for the department to contemplate—to use a long route simply for the sake of enlarging the railway fares? I do not think so, seeing that a line already exists.

1380. Would you not be able to extend that principle considerably; you could make the line from Sydney to Parramatta 50 miles long, and have 50 miles of trainage? Of course there must be reason.

1381. Leaving out the interest of the department, would it not be in the interest of the public if they could be taken along a route 5 miles shorter, and be charged for 5 miles less, and be saved the time of travelling 5 miles? In the interest of the public it would, no doubt.

1382. Should not the interest of the public be the interest of the department? It is going to add a great deal more capital to the department, for which we are going to get no adequate compensation, as far as I can see, and without relieving the existing line to any appreciable extent.

1383. I am endeavouring to ascertain whether you would be likely to get sufficient traffic if the line were constructed through to Liverpool—whether you would get sufficient traffic *via* Liverpool, in addition to the suburban traffic—traffic inherent to the line itself—to make it a paying one? I do not think there is the slightest chance of it.

1384. Do you think there is a chance of its coming to pass within four or five years? Not within the next twenty years—that is my opinion.

1385. You do not think the line would be a paying one within the next twenty years? No, I do not.

1386. Do you think—supposing this line were constructed from Marrickville to the Burwood Road—there is sufficient settlement to make it a paying line, independent of its going through to Liverpool? Not at the present time, but I believe it would pay in the course of a very few years. There is not sufficient at the present time to make it pay.

1387. Do you think that the prospects are as favourable now for a paying traffic as on the Illawarra line when that line was commenced? I would not say quite so much, but I would say that it would come very near it. The Illawarra line was almost a remarkable line. The traffic developed at a wonderful rate from the time that line was opened.

1388. In estimating the probable traffic from the Burwood Road *via* Marrickville have you considered the fact that the Dulwich Hill tramway runs for about 1½ mile parallel with the proposed railway, and at only an average distance of about half a mile from it? Yes, we thought of it.

1389. Do you think that the suggested railway would be likely to take the traffic from the tramway? I do not think it would; but the tramway only runs to Dulwich Hill, and a railway out in the direction of Burwood road would create a traffic for itself.

1390. Yes; but so far as Dulwich Hill would not the traffic which would accrue to the railway be simply taken from the tramway to make the railway pay? To some extent it would, no doubt.

1391. From your knowledge of the district do you think there would be any necessity to maintain a tramway and railway too, seeing the two would run parallel for some distance? Well, it is pretty well the condition of Newtown over again. Of course the tramway to Newtown has robbed the railway revenue to a considerable extent; there is no doubt about that; but I think that if a railway were constructed out there the contour of the country is altogether so favourable that a railway would create a traffic in time.

1392. Do you not think that if it were extended beyond Burwood Road towards Liverpool it would create still more traffic? I do not think so, because the country becomes very poor after you get beyond there. I think that for suburban residence it would be of no use whatever.

1393. As traffic manager, do you think that if this line were constructed through to Liverpool, even supposing it did not pay immediately, it would not be of great benefit to the department in relieving the old line of such a large amount of traffic? No sir; very little. The suburban line must be quadrupled for a number of miles,—no matter whether you do or do not relieve it of the present southern traffic altogether.

1394. You are quadrupling it now as far as Strathfield? As far as Homebush it is being quadrupled. When that is done there will be no difficulty for a number of years to come in carrying the whole of the traffic of the main line without any assistance from a loop line.

1395. Then you do not look upon it as a departmental line at all? From a departmental point of view I do not consider it at all necessary.

1396. You think the line should rest on its own merits—on the question of accommodating the people in the locality? I do.

1397. At the present time you do not anticipate it will be a payable line? I am quite sure it would not be a payable line. It will not be a payable line for two or three years at any rate even for a short distance, but through to Liverpool it would not be a paying line for many years.

1398. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you know what the Commissioner's estimate of revenue from this line is, supposing it were constructed to the Burwood Road? Yes, I do; £3,000 for that particular length of line. Of course whatever we get there will add to the main line revenue as well.

1399. Do you think that that is a proper estimate of the returns? I do; I think it comes very near it.

1400. In what way did you calculate that return? We were guided to a considerable extent by our experience of some of the stations on the Illawarra line beyond Marrickville.

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1401. Do you know the number of 'buses there are daily coming into town through Canterbury from the district that would be served by a railway to Burwood Road? No; I do not.
1402. Do you not think that that would have been a better way of making a calculation than going to the Illawarra line? No; I would not pay attention to that. A railway would develop traffic, but a 'bus could not do it, except in an insignificant degree.
1403. Do you think more people would travel than by 'bus at the present time? Undoubtedly.
1404. Then if it can be shown that there is more revenue from the 'buses than what you estimate, don't you think that must be a mistake? It depends on what rates they charge by the 'buses.
1405. The rates are 6d. each way? We would not get that; our ordinary mileage rates would not give us that; and we are only going to get additional mileage from Marrickville. They get a through rate from Sydney. We would only get additional mileage from the terminus to the junction of the present line.
1406. In making your calculation, is that entirely for passenger traffic? The great bulk of it is.
1407. Have you allowed anything for goods traffic? Yes.
1408. Do you take into consideration the Canterbury race-course? Yes.
1409. And calculate that into it too? Yes.
1410. Do you know that that returns £2,500 a year? No.
1411. If that has been sworn to here, the figures brought here, that is not correct? I should say not. I should say that the Canterbury race traffic at the present time is worth about £700 a year to us. In the last four months the actual money that we have taken for passengers booked to Ashfield on the Canterbury race days was £215 12s. 1d.; that is on six race days. If you multiply that by three it gives about £650 a year, nearly. Of course we would simply get an extra mile. To Petersham the distance is 5 miles, and to Canterbury it is about 6—a little over 6.
1412. I suppose the Commissioner's estimate was compiled with your assistance? Yes, it was.
1413. And you have included not only the passengers to the race-course, but also the goods traffic? Yes; you understand that the traffic on that line would be considerably more, perhaps, than £3,000 a year if you included the whole of the race-course traffic, but we would only get an extra mile beyond what we are getting now. We get 5 miles to Ashfield. Consequently we would only get one-fifth more to Canterbury. No doubt we would get more passengers if we ran near the race-course. We took that into consideration. But what we would get on that line would be drawn from the main line.
1414. Do you think it would not be an advantage to you to have that traffic drawn from the main line on the race days? If we get the line quadrupled we can do a very much larger traffic than we are doing now. I do not regard the race-course traffic as being of such very great importance as that; but it would open up the country, and I think a branch line there would pay.
1415. You think you have not made a mistake in the calculation that the revenue from this railway would only be £3,000 a year? I do not think so. I think that is all you can add between the present main line and the terminus you propose.
1416. That, I understand, is the difference between what you receive now, and what you would receive from that line? Quite so.
1417. Have you allowed in this calculation anything for the extra haulage you would have on the main line? We allow double that amount—£3,000 more.
1418. If it were shown that these seven omnibuses were actually drawing now in fares £4,680 a year, would you still think that £3,000 is the proper estimate? Yes, I would. Of course the difference between the fare to Marrickville and the fare to the proposed terminus would be so little as compared with the 'bus fare that the £3,000 would be very nearly right. A very large bulk of the traffic would be drawn from the present main lines.
1419. Can you tell us what proportion of goods would be required for a population returning £3,000 per annum? No, I could not; and I do not attach a very great deal of importance to goods traffic out there, except such traffic as coal and heavy traffic, because we know from experience that goods to Canterbury would be taken generally by road. Carriers come in and deliver goods at Petersham and Leichhardt and all those places on the way.
1420. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you think it would be a proper step for the State to take to construct a line of railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road, in view of the fact that a great portion of the distance is already served by tramway, and the remainder might be served by tramway from Ashfield to Canterbury? There is just the awkwardness of repeated changes. There is no doubt, I consider, that if a tramway were constructed to Canterbury quite double the number of people would go there on race days as now. People will not go to Ashfield and then go to the expense of vehicles to Canterbury, neither will they walk. If you take a railway near to the race-course you will get double the number of people to go there, and you will also get a settled population along the line.
1421. Is it a wise step to construct a line of railway to compete with an existing line of tramway? No, I do not think it is.
1422. And considering the other portion of my question—that a tramway a mile and a half from Ashfield to Canterbury would carry passengers to the race-course,—would not residential and precarious traffic be well served? It might; but people will always object to repeated changes of conveyance. They have got to take the tramway to get to Redfern Station, then a train to Ashfield, and then they would have to take a tramway to Canterbury. They will not stand that.
1423. They already change from a tramway at Sydney to get into a train to go to Ashfield? Yes, but you would double it.
1424. You think that the fact of a man having to go across a platform would prevent him from going? It would; that is our experience.
1425. I presume that putting aside this objection to a second change, you could serve the traffic on race-days from Ashfield to Canterbury, by having a proper number of carriages? Yes, quite so; but that would serve Canterbury alone.
1426. The other portion of the district is pretty well served by tramway now to Dulwich Hill? To Dulwich Hill, it is.
1427. And Burwood Road is only a little more than a mile from Canterbury? Yes.
1428. Therefore the construction of a mile and a half of tramway would serve the entire district? It would, in an incomplete way; but it would not be very acceptable.
1429. I admit it would be an inferior way compared with a railway, but are we justified in undertaking this

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- this work, in view of the fact that we would have to compete with our own line, and we would give a fair amount of accommodation in the way of conveyances? I think so long as we can see a prospect of railways paying in a few years, the more accommodation we give people to induce them to live out of Sydney, the better. I do not think we can give too many facilities to enable people to live out of Sydney.
1430. Do you not give fair facilities by constructing a tramway, as in the case of Waverley and Bondi; have we not induced a large number of people to live out there? Yes.
1431. Do not the tramways in Melbourne serve the people well? The railways serve them far more.
1432. But I mean in the inside districts? Yes, they do.
1433. Along Richmond, Victoria Park, and Collingwood? Yes; but they have three intervening lines to Richmond.
1434. Then the tramways running to Clifton Hill and Brunswick serve the large suburbs out there well? Yes, they do.
1435. Could not tramways serve these suburbs equally well? Yes; they no doubt would; but you are going to apply them under different conditions. You are going to make people take the tramway to Dulwich Hill and then walk, or take a tram to Redfern Station, and then a train to Ashfield, and then another tram to Canterbury.
1436. We would be utilising a large link of our railway into Sydney? Yes, no doubt. Still you would have to supply Canterbury.
1437. The other portion would be pretty well supplied by the Dulwich Hill tramway? Yes.
1438. And if the remainder could be served by a mile and a half of tramway, what would be the necessity of making this line to Burwood Road? People will not walk such a long distance.
1439. Is it not a mistake now to run both a tramway and a railway to Marrickville, considering a railway would have done all the work and have given you the 10 per cent. you make on the tramway to add to the railway receipts? Yes.
1440. Do not those trains running to Campbelltown serve intervening places between Granville and Campbelltown? Yes.
1441. Then all that traffic would be lost if you ran the trains the other way? We would have to maintain a double service. We could not cut them off.
1442. If you were to run those trains from Campbelltown to Marrickville *via* Liverpool, you would have to supply the place of those trains that run to Campbelltown? Yes; or to Liverpool.
1443. So that it would be almost a useless expenditure to run those trains down there? Yes.
1444. You estimate that the Canterbury Park traffic would only be about £650 a year? Yes; under present conditions.
1445. You estimate that a tramway might double the attendance there, and of course a railway would do the same? Yes.
1446. We might fairly estimate that if a railway were constructed the receipts from Canterbury Park would be something like £2,000 a year? I should say about £1,300 or £1,400 a year.
1447. But looking five or six years ahead? I should say quite that.
1448. In your opinion, would this line pay in three years in view of the fact that it would compete with the tramway running to Dulwich Hill? I do think so, if we have anything like prosperity. If it has anything like the conditions that the Illawarra line had when it was open to Hurstville, it will more than pay.
1449. You do not think it will pay under the present conditions of the Colony? It will not pay as things are now.
1450. *Mr. Trickett.*] Which do you advocate, a single or a double line, if this line is constructed? Unmistakably a double line; you could not get a good service with a single line.
1451. You say that the soil beyond Burwood Road is not of a good character; does that apply to Bankstown? No; Bankstown is very nice, but when you get a mile or two beyond that, and towards Liverpool, the soil is very poor.
1452. Do you think then that it would be desirable shortly to extend this line on to Bankstown? I think it is very probable.
1453. Have you got any figures to show the population who would be served by this line? I have not.
1454. Have you not gone into that? No.
1455. Did you not ascertain the population of those places? Yes, I did, but I have not got it now. However, I do not attach a great deal of importance to it, because the change would be so great if they had a railway; I anticipate that in the course of a year or two present date figures would be pretty well useless.
1456. Would these places be served by the railway;—Marrickville, Canterbury, Kingsgrove, Moorefields, Belmore, and Bankstown? Marrickville would not, but beyond Marrickville would.
1457. If it has been stated that about 10,000 people are at the present time resident along this line, and would be benefited by, and use the line, do you think that is correct? No; I would not think so. I think that is excessive.
1458. Do you know about the attendance at the Canterbury race-course—whether a great many people do not go by road from Sydney? Yes; a good many drive.
1459. Have you estimated the number? No, I have not; but on an average 1,100 go on each day by train to Ashfield.
1460. The Commissioners state that the total annual cost of running this railway would be about £9,500, and the estimated revenue about £3,000 a year; do you think those figures are correct? Yes. Of course their estimate of £3,000 has also to be added to £3,000 from augmentation of present traffic on the main line.
1461. *Mr. Humphery.*] You spoke of the tramway service to Newtown coming into competition with the railway service? Yes.
1462. Does the traffic between Newtown and Redfern at the present time pay interest upon outlay—I mean the local traffic? No; I do not think it does.
1463. You think that the railway between Redfern and Newtown is running at a loss? Yes; as far as local traffic is concerned. The tramway to Marrickville and Newtown has probably taken 75 per cent. of the traffic we used to have between Sydney and Newtown.
1464. Is there not a 'bus service running in competition with the tram service? Yes.

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1465. Are you in a position to say whether the 'bus service pays? I cannot say.
1466. Is it not the custom to charge special fares for trams to the Randwick race-course? Yes.
1467. Have you taken into consideration the question whether the railway could charge special fares to Canterbury on race days? We calculated ordinary fares.
1468. Do you not think it part of the system to charge special fares? No; I think not.
1469. *Vice-Chairman.*] Do you know the Moorefields district? I do.
1470. Is there not a race-course there also? Yes.
1471. By what service is that served? By train to Kogarah.
1472. How far would the Moorefields race-course be from the Burwood Road, approximately? I could not tell.
1473. It would not be affected in any way by the construction of a line to Burwood Road? No.
1474. *Mr. Copeland.*] You are in the habit of charging special railway fares to races and other places? To Richmond we do—to the Windsor races.
1475. Do you not charge special fares to the Rosehill race-course on race days? They are special fares but not higher than the ordinary fares.
1476. Would you not be justified in charging a higher fare? Perhaps we would; but the higher the fare the greater number of people we should prevent from travelling. The lower the fare the more people will travel to these races.
1477. Do you know that there was a special railway fare charged last night in connection with the Mayor's ball? Yes.
1478. What was the fare? 2s.
1479. If you only went to Macdonaldtown, a mile or a mile and a half? Yes.
1480. And 2s. also if you went to Parramatta? Yes.
1481. All along the suburban line you charged the one fare of 2s.? Yes.
1482. Of course you approved of that being done and considered it beneficial? Yes.
1483. And I have no doubt that the public considered it was beneficial, and they were well served by being able to travel at that time of night? Quite so.
1484. Would not the same principle apply to race days? No; the circumstances are altogether different. The people who went to that ball would have paid 5s. to get home at that time in the morning.
1485. Do you not think that people who go to races would pay more to go? No; you would prevent them from going.
1486. But they went to the ball? Yes; they would go to the ball. The matter of 5s. would not make any difference in that case.
1487. But why do you continue the system of charging special fares to Randwick and Rosehill? We are not charging more except for some trams to Randwick.
1488. Would not the same principle apply to other race-courses on race days? No; it is a special thing altogether.
1489. Do you not think that the people who attend races are rather liberally inclined that way, and if they want to go to races do not stand at a shilling? Regular habitués of the race-course would spend money to get there, but many people would be deterred from going unless they could have cheap fares.
1490. Do you think an extra shilling would deter a man from going to the races if he had made up his mind to go? Perhaps not, but the lowness of the fares acts as a powerful incentive to casual visitors.
1491. Do you not think that people would be inclined to pay an extra fare if they could see the first race run? People who generally go to races would no doubt pay an extra fare to get there, but on the other hand many people would not go except they had cheap fares.
1492. You seem to have a principle applicable to some places and not to others? No; I do not think so.
1493. Take Randwick? I cannot tell you much about that, as the tramways are not in my department.
1494. Do you know what is the omnibus charge from Ashfield to Canterbury? I think it is a shilling, but I cannot be sure.
1495. People still travel by it all the same; that does not deter them from going to the races? They cannot help themselves; but I should expect a great many more to go if they could go at a cheaper rate.
1496. You think that the people of this Colony are so calculating in connection with their day's pleasure, contemplated days before, that they would deny themselves the pleasure of seeing a race rather than pay an extra shilling fare? No; I do not. People who calculate many days would go no matter what it cost them.
1497. If people on arriving at the station found that the fare was 2s. instead of 1s., would they be likely to give up their day's pleasure, do you think? No, I do not. But on the other hand when we advertise a very cheap train to Melbourne we get the train full, whereas if we charged the ordinary fares people would either not go at all, or they would go by sea.
1498. Do you not find in connection with the Melbourne trains that there are a number of people prepared to pay special rates for special accommodation? Yes; but a much larger number go if they get cheap fares.
1499. Do you find that trains for which higher rates are charged are patronised? Yes; but the special trains at cheap fares pay better than the express.
1500. Are there not three, four, five, or six times as many people, who travel by express to Melbourne; and pay the extra fare, than by the ordinary mail train? Yes.
1501. Showing that they are willing to pay special rates for special accommodation? Yes; but on the other hand, if we start a special train to Melbourne on the morning of the day we start an express, and take several hours more on the road, but charge a pound or two less, we can get that special train filled.
1502. But are they not rather the surplus people that may be tempted to travel;—if you had a special train free you would get a still larger number—there is always a surplus of people who can be induced to travel at cheap rates? That is what I mean in connection with the races.
1503. But the bulk of the people who have made up their minds to go a journey, are not in that impoverished state that they would be deterred from a day's pleasure by your charging a fair reasonable rate? The bulk of the people go by the cheap trains. They take advantage of the cheap trains.
1504. You think that if you had charged a cheaper rate to the people attending the ball last night there would have been a larger number of people who travelled by rail? No, I do not. That was a special thing altogether. Those who attended the ball were the invited guests of the Mayor, and they went home by train because the charge was very much less than could have been obtained by any other conveyance.

H. T. Sanderson, Esq., C.E., licensed surveyor, sworn, and examined:—

1505. *Mr. Copeland.*] Have you been employed in surveying any of these subdivisions on this route? Yes. I was employed on a line from Arncliffe to Liverpool.
1506. You are a surveyor, I believe? I am an engineer by profession, as well as a surveyor.
1507. You have been in the Public Service for some time? Yes, formerly.
1508. How many years were you there? Some five or six years, I think, altogether. I came here originally employed by the Government of New South Wales in 1855, as railway surveyor and engineer.
1509. You have been in the Government Service several years? Yes.
1510. How many years? I think, off and on, six or seven years, and on many subsequent occasions.
1511. Since that time you have been practising privately as a surveyor? Yes.
1512. You say you were engaged in making a survey of one of these projected lines of railway? Yes; in 1883 and 1884.
1513. May I ask who employed you on that survey? It was a private survey, and the gentlemen who appointed me were Mr. John M'Innes, of Cook's River, and Mr. Myles M'Rae.
1514. Is that Mr. Myles M'Rae, the present Member? Yes. Mr. Thomas Saywell and someone else—I forget his name now. But there were five or six of them altogether.
1515. I suppose the object of this private survey was to enable them to suggest a line to the Government? Quite so.
1516. In the direction of the land they held? No.
1517. I suppose this was a land syndicate? No. I do not think they were a land syndicate at all, but I think they were interested in a loop-line between the Illawarra railway and the Southern line.
1518. But what constituted their interest—was it pure philanthropy, or had they some land in that direction? I believe some of them had land. I know that Mr. M'Innes had land at this end—at Arncliffe,—but I do not think it interfered with any other portion of his land.
1519. Did you complete that survey? Yes.
1520. Which route was that; is it marked on that map? Yes.
1521. How is it described? I made a survey from a road on the Arncliffe side of Cook's River. I forget the name of the road.
1522. Your route, then, is marked on this map—"Mr. Sanderson's survey from Arncliffe to Liverpool"? Yes, that is my route. I provided a plan and section of the route, which I handed over to the Department of Works.
1523. Your survey junctioned on with the Government surveys? Yes, it junctioned on here. I did not take their line particularly, but ran in this direction to Liverpool. I junctioned at Belmore, I think at 8 or 9 miles, on Mr. Bell's survey.
1524. That route has not been adopted by the Government? No, it has not.
1525. Have you had any other employment in that district in the way of surveying lines of railway and suggested lines of railway? No, I merely gave a report on a suggested line of railway from Hurstville, and I believe the Government made a survey after that.
1526. Have you been employed as surveyor in cutting up any of these subdivisions? No.
1527. You have not done any land surveying? I have not had any interest in the affair at all, except that I made a survey for the purpose of showing that it is a shorter, better, and cheaper line than is proposed either from Marrickville or St. Peters.
1528. You know the line which has been lock-spitted from Marrickville? I do not know it latterly. I have not been over it.
1529. Did you volunteer to come here and make a statement? Yes; I volunteered to give the Committee any evidence they required in the interest of the country in regard to this railway.
1530. But you have no particular statement of your own to make? I have no particular statement, except to say this to the Committee: That the survey I made is a much better line, a shorter line, and a cheaper line than the line now proposed by the Government.
1531. What were the steepest gradients on that line? I have not the section, but I do not believe the steepest gradient is anything more than 1 in 90, or 1 in 100. It is a very easy line all through.
1532. Can you say what the distance was to Liverpool from where you branched off the Illawarra line? I cannot say now, because the original sections and plans are with the Government. I thought it would have been here to refer to, but not having the plan before me, I cannot say.
1533. Do you know the length of the suggested line—the blue line—the lock-spitted line? I know that my line was a mile and a half shorter when I joined Mr. Bell's survey from Arncliffe than the line from St. Peters.
1534. But had this present line, since adopted by the Government, been surveyed at that time? No; but I believe it would not make more than a quarter of a mile difference. I think the difference between my own survey and the present one would be about one mile and a quarter;—mine will be about a mile and a quarter shorter.
1535. Bell's survey had to cross George's River twice, had it not? Yes.
1536. And would necessitate two bridges? Yes.
1537. So that this line, of which your survey formed a part, would necessitate the erection of two bridges across George's River? Yes, or diverting the river. My line was nearly parallel with Bell's survey after leaving Belmore, and I did intend to have avoided crossing George's River, but at that time the owner of the property,—George's Hall,—stated that he would not give the property to the Government free of cost unless it was on the lower side of his house.
1538. Of course you know we are inquiring into this particular line submitted to us by the Government? Quite so.
1539. Can you give the Committee any information particularly with respect to this line? No; I cannot give the Committee any information with respect to this particular line on which they are now sitting; but I can only say this—that they could approach the terminus of the present line by taking that line of mine on the diagram, which I think would be all that would be required. It would be a cheaper line a great deal.
1540. How did you arrive at the conclusion that it would be a cheaper line, when you are not acquainted with the like suggested by the Government? I am acquainted with the country generally speaking on Bell's line.

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line. I know, of course, Cook's River, and that it must involve an expenditure of a large amount to build a bridge or viaduct across that river, and which I avoided by going up Woollli Creek.

1541. But at the present time it is only contemplated to construct 4 miles 60 chains to accommodate people some little distance away from Marrickville, in the direction of Belmore; your line would not travel in the same direction at all? No. My line is simply part of the loop-line between the Illawarra line and Liverpool.

1542. If we were inquiring which is the better route of all the routes which have been surveyed, your opinion might be valuable to the Committee, but what we want is information with respect to the particular line submitted to us by the Government? All I can say with regard to the line submitted by Government is that my opinion is that it will be a very expensive line, and I do not think it will pay. It will be a great pity to bring the line in that direction. It is too near to Ashfield, and I think also that if it were eventually decided to bring that line to Liverpool the people would not be treated justly out towards the east, in the direction that my line would go. I think the people in that part of the country up Woollli Creek—up that part of the country—would be left out. All the ground is alienated and sold, and it is likely to be a largely populated country, and I think they would lose the advantages which would be given to Canterbury.

1543. How would you accommodate the Bankstown people with that line? Well, it was not intended, except by making use of the Government line.

1544. The only peculiarity about your line is that it would branch off from the Illawarra line some mile or more farther towards Kogarah than the present suggested deviation? Quite so; and it avoids this (*pointing to the map*). It is very expensive country at Canterbury.

1545. But your line would not accommodate the people of Canterbury? It would accommodate the people on the southern side.

1546. Are not the people to whom you allude already accommodated by the present Illawarra line at Hurstville? They have a long way to go to Hurstville.

1547. But if you take the line of your suggested route would it not necessitate the Canterbury people having a longer way to go? They are within a very short distance of Ashfield and Petersham. They could have a tramway to the railway at very little expense. They could extend their tramway, and get to Sydney at far less expense than by this line.

1548. Then, as an engineer, you consider that your own line is the best of them all? I hope I have no egotism nor any desire to consider myself better than any other engineer, but I think that in the present instance it would be throwing a very large amount of money away when Canterbury can be supplied by a tramway from the existing terminus of the tramway at Dulwich Hill.

1549. You would extend that tramway? Yes; I think it could be extended for a very small sum in comparison with the cost of making a railway.

1550. Do you know how long it takes for a tramway to get to Dulwich Hill? I believe three-quarters of an hour.

1551. Do you know the distance? I think the distance is something like $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

1552. It is marked 6 miles on the map;—do you consider it a satisfactory mode of travelling in these days to take nearly an hour to travel 6 miles by steam? Of course travelling by tram would be very inferior to travelling by railway. Another thing I thought it necessary to point out to you was that, so long as the Committee is investigating the question of making a merely suburban line from Sydney to Burwood, it would not have the desired effect which was intended originally—to relieve the Southern line of the western traffic. If the line was to be made, or they proposed to make the line a loop line to Liverpool from the Illawarra railway it would be of very great benefit, but to stop short at Burwood, I think, would be throwing a great deal of money away.

1553. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You have heard of a system of through trams, have you not? Yes.

1554. They run much faster than ordinary trams? Yes.

1555. I suppose a through tram from Canterbury to Dulwich Hill would take about one-third of the time? I believe it would.

1556. You said in your evidence to Mr. Copeland that your line was a shorter line to Sydney than any other? Yes, the shortest line to Sydney, as shown on the diagram. It is the shortest between the Illawarra line and the Southern line, till you get to a place on the other side of Hurstville—that is the shortest line.

1557. The farther you are away from Sydney the more Illawarra line you have got to run over, and therefore the longer the distance between Liverpool and Sydney? Of course you utilize a great deal of the Illawarra line already made.

1558. Instead of constructing the Dulwich Hill tramway to Canterbury would it not be better to have a tramway from Marrickville to Canterbury? No doubt it could be done.

1559. By that means the Department would get a double traffic—the traffic on the railway and the shilling traffic on the tramway? Yes.

1560. *Mr. Hurley.*] Are you associated in any way with a Mr. Cameron of Canterbury? No, none whatever. I merely know him as a shop-keeper; that is all. I don't suppose I have spoken half a dozen words to him in my life.

1561. *Mr. Dowel.*] You are a professional engineer, I believe? Yes, I am.

1562. You have been employed in the Government service and also by contractors? Yes, I have.

1563. Were you employed on the Northern line? Yes.

1564. By whom? By Proudfoot & Co.

1565. And any other contractor? I have been employed by Peto, Brassey, & Co., years ago, upon the Queensland line.

1566. You consider yourself thoroughly competent to give an opinion on the various routes indicated on that chart? I do; from former experience, before I came to this country.

1567. Have you given any study or inquiry to the grades, the heights of the embankments, and the cuttings on the proposed line the Committee is now considering? No; I have not. I have not seen a section of the proposed line. I have not even seen the plan or section, and therefore I could not, but I know generally the country it travels over.

1568. Then you have formed your opinion that it would be an expensive line to construct from your knowledge locally of the country? From my knowledge locally of the country I consider the line I surveyed

is far superior, and if the estimated cost of constructing this line is £19,000 per mile, mine would not cost £10,000 per mile. The section of that line which I submitted to the Government shows a very easy line. There is only one cutting of considerable magnitude.

1569. When you were exploring the country and making your survey, and previous to it and afterwards, did you give any attention to the surrounding country? Yes; a great deal. I took levels from the point marked B to the point marked E on this map.

1570. You explored the whole of this intervening country? I did.

1571. And after making an exploration as an engineer—not as a surveyor—and considering the engineering difficulties, you came to the conclusion that that was the best route? I came to the conclusion that that was the best route.

1572. From an engineering point of view, not that of cost? From an engineering point of view. I looked upon it as the cheapest and shortest line.

1573. Having stated that you know all the intervening country thoroughly, and that you consider that the best line, would you be good enough to inform the Committee what class of country that intervening country is? From Woolli Creek the country to the east is not a country very fit for cultivation. It is ridgy, and in some places it is stony, but it could be utilised for building purposes and so forth, and I believe that since I made that survey it has been taken up and sold in building portions and so forth. I think the whole of that country has been taken up and sold by companies and so forth.

1574. That is, the whole of the country, as I understand you, is undulating, and suitable for residential sites? Yes.

1575. That description of the country would apply as much to one route as to another, would it not? Quite so.

1576. I presume you made yourself acquainted with the various centres of population that would be likely to be served by the construction of this line? My impression is there will be as big a population there as there will be on the other side of Cook's River and on the Belmore side. My impression is that the whole of this country will be taken up; in fact, it is being taken up. There are various properties along here; very valuable properties. In fact, the whole of this country has been taken up right to this point here, and is pretty well populated.

1577. What was the ruling grade of your survey? I think the average grade was 1 in 100.

1578. And the curves? They were nothing under 25 or 30 chains. I do not suppose I made a sharp curve. I think the sharpest curve was going from the Illawarra line—10 chains radius—and something like 20 chains, running into Belmore.

1579. What bridges? I think there would be three bridges in all.

1580. Any expensive earthworks? No. The only cutting of any consequence was one of 40 feet, and that might be brought down to a great deal less by altering the line a little bit.

1581. Supposing the line were constructed according to the blue line shown on that chart, would you say, from your intimate knowledge of the country, that the line would serve Canterbury South, Parkestown, Kingsgrove, Moorefields, and Belmore? It would serve this part of the country equally as well as the Southern line would.

1582. You are referring now to the intervening centres of population between your surveyed line and the Government line, marked blue? Yes.

TUESDAY, 3 DECEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

The HONORABLE JOHN LACKEY (VICE CHAIRMAN.)

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JACOB GARREARD, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

Mathias Hamburger, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

1583. *Vice-Chairman.*] You live where? I live at Strawberry Hills at present.

1584. You have sent in a statement to the Committee containing your opinions on the propriety of constructing a railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road? Yes. [*Vide Appendix.*]

1585. The contents of that paper are your true opinions with reference to the proposed work? Yes.

1586. Is there anything you would like to supplement your evidence by? No.

M.
Hamburger,
Esq.
3 Dec., 1889.

Owen Blacket, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

1587. *Vice-Chairman.*] You reside where? At Auburn.

1588. You know the proposal to construct a railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road? Yes.

1589. You know that country? Well.

1590. You know the route proposed? Yes; I know all of it.

1591. Do you know the other routes that have been proposed out in that direction—the other surveys, I mean? I have seen them, but have not taken so much notice of them as of this one.

1592. Do you think the proposed line from Marrickville to Burwood Road is a desirable one? Decidedly.

1593. You think it would be of value to the community? Of very great value.

1594. Of course you consider it would be of value to those who live in the neighbourhood? Yes, and to the country at large.

1595. You think it would give a sufficient return? Decidedly.

1596. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you know the three routes that have been marked out? Yes.

1597. Are you of opinion that this one before the Committee, taken as a whole, is the best of the three? Yes.

1598. On what ground have you formed that opinion? It is the shortest straight route.

1599. It is the best as a direct route? Yes.

1600. And also for local purposes? As far as I can see it is.

O. Blacket,
Esq.
3 Dec., 1889.

1601.

- O. Blacket, Esq.
3 Dec., 1889.
1601. It goes through ground as suitable for suburban residences as any of the others? Yes, all the same.
1602. And with such slight deviations as may be necessary for improving the gradients you think it is the best line we could take? That is my opinion.
1603. It has been stated here that this route has been determined by land syndicates—do you know if that is so or not? Not to my knowledge. As regards the property I am interested in, it was bought before we knew anything about a railway line being constructed. We intended to take our goods by the Illawarra line. Not till we had settled there did we know that there was a survey there at all.
1604. A line influenced by syndicates is very seldom a straight line? Not as a rule.
1605. Do you know a line influenced by syndicates which is a straight line? No.
1606. This is a straight line? Direct.
1607. And on the face of it, you do not think it would be influenced by land-owners? I should not think it is.
1608. We are told that it is Mr. Whitton's line—the line he told the surveyors to follow? That was what the surveyors told me, and they carried out his instructions.
1609. He is not one to be influenced by a land syndicate? I should not like to approach him.
1610. As far as you know it is free from any private influence—that is all I want to get at? Yes.
1611. *Mr. Hurley.*] You are interested in an industry up there—are you not? Yes.
1612. What is it? Manufacturing iron works.
1613. Would the construction of the line there very materially assist the development of your industry? Decidedly. It would be of all assistance to us.
1614. What difference would it make in freight compared with what you have to pay now? A railway would cost us 1s. 6d. and we have had to pay 7s. 6d. for cartage. The cartage costs us right through the year 7s. 6d. per ton.
1615. On your coal and pig iron? Yes, on our material.
1616. So a railway would assist to build up your industry? Decidedly. When we were in fair work we turned out 30 tons of castings a week. To each 30 tons of castings we required 8 tons of coke and 5 tons of coal. We had to cart all that, and also to cart the castings back to Sydney.
1617. Did you employ many men? We had about sixty hands at that time.
1618. In the event of this railway being constructed are you likely to continue those works? Before we developed it again we might look a little for assistance in the way of protection, but the works would be started if we could get any capitalist to put money into the concern. We have lost all our own money.
1619. If you could save 5s. 6d. a ton on your carting of coal and other material to and from Sydney? It would be a large saving to us.
1620. Would it not be equal to a protective tariff? No; we would have to pay on a wrong footing.
1621. If we gave you 5s. 6d. a ton, would not that be an advantage to you? Yes; we cannot make it pay now.
1622. You are at a stand-still, and are not likely to develop the industry unless some advantage is given to you? We cannot go on now.
1623. Are you interested in any land syndicates? No; not in any respect.
1624. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you think this proposed line takes the best route to serve the industrial population in that district? The population will follow the line. There is a very small population that would be affected one way more than another. The lines are a very little distance apart. A population would spring up as soon as the line was constructed.
1625. *Mr. Trickett.*] You know that it is proposed that the line should cross the river at Canterbury? Yes.
1626. It has been stated here that that part is very liable to floods, and that if the line were constructed there it would in all probability be washed away—what is your opinion? I have known it about twenty-five years, and I have never known a higher flood than the last flood; and the railway bridge will go about 30 feet higher than the top of the present bridge, so that I cannot see how, if the water went level with that bridge, it could flood the railway line.
1627. So you think that there is nothing at all in it? No.

Aaron Brown, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

- A. Brown, Esq.
3 Dec., 1889.
1628. *Vice-Chairman.*] You are an Alderman of the Municipality of Canterbury? Yes.
1629. How long have you resided there? About twenty-six years.
1630. You know the various lines that have been proposed to connect that district with Sydney by rail? Yes;—that is I know what are called "Bell's and Kennedy's lines." Those are the two popular lines that I know. I do not recognise any other lines.
1631. *Mr. Trickett.*] Do you know the lockspitted line? Yes, that is Kennedy's line.
1632. What is your opinion of that line compared with the other surveyed lines? My opinion of that line is, that it is not marked in an equitable position. It does not treat the district fairly. It is too much on one side. It does not go fairly through the district.
1633. Is it too much to the south or to the north? Too much to the north.
1634. What districts does it avoid which you think should be served? It avoids the districts which claim a priority of right to the railway—the originators of it—Moorefields, Kingsgrove, and Belmore. It was the people in those places who were called upon to give their land for the construction of a railway; but this line leaves them out in the cold.
1635. How far would the line be from those places? Some, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile; some, 1 mile; and some, $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile; and some people would have to go 2 miles in order to get to this line.
1636. By the construction of this line would they be any better off as regards communication with Sydney than they are at the present time? Some would be and some would not be.
1637. Can you tell us how you think the line should go. To begin with, do you think it starts at the right place—at Marrickville station? I am not so much acquainted with that locality, but I believe it does start in a very fair place.
1638. And until it gets to the river at Canterbury, do you think it is all right so far? I think there has been

been no objection to the line so far as Canterbury, but beyond Canterbury and Bankstown, is where objection has been taken all through.

1639. Until it reaches Canterbury you approve of it? Yes, thoroughly.

1640. Do you approve of the mode of crossing the river at Canterbury? I do not.

1641. How do you think it should cross the river? I think it should cross the river nearly opposite the sugar works where there is a spur coming down alongside the Cup-and-saucer Creek. The line could cross there on the high-level banks, and the difficulty of constructing a bridge would be considerably less; besides saving upwards of 300 yards of embankment, and it would then be a more intermediate line. There are 8 miles between the Illawarra and the Parramatta lines, and I think that in fairness the line should go as square as possible between the two—not within 2 miles of the one and 6 of the other.

1642. You think that at Canterbury it should cross the river more to the south? Yes.

1643. How much more to the south;—a quarter of a mile? About one-eighth of a mile.

1644. After passing the river at Canterbury it would take a more southerly course? Yes; in close proximity to Canterbury Road, and cross it at the 9-mile peg; where you would have no obstruction whatever.

1645. Is that line surveyed? It is partly. Of course the route by Belmore, which I have been suggesting, is a sort of deviation to meet the people half-way;—to make a compromise between Bell's line and Kennedy's line. It would serve Moorefields, Kingsgrove, and Belmore, and then junction on to the lock-spitted line at Bankstown.

1646. We do not get on so far with this line under consideration;—Burwood Road is our terminus? But of course the line will eventually go there.

1647. Would the line which you are describing, and which you think desirable, work in to come out at the Burwood Road somewhere about where this line is proposed to go? It would come out at Sharp-street. It was originally Burwood Road, but the Council has named it Sharp-street.

1648. That is where the Government have made it go? Yes. Bell's line is surveyed there. There is a 7 or 8 miles peg—8 miles and 7 chains, or something like that—at Sharp-street.

1649. By taking the line you suggest, would not other districts be deprived of railway communication? Not that I know of.

1650. Is it not a fact that the lock-spitted line is a kind of compromise line so as to suit all the locality there to the best advantage? I do not agree with you there.

1651. I am only asking you? I say no it does not, because it goes on what I call the verge of all the population, and avoids the centres—the centre of the population of the Canterbury locality.

1652. Would the line you suggest be a suitable place for a growing population? My opinion is it would be far better than the lock-spitted line, as it is on the ridge of the high ground the whole way, and therefore on more eligible ground for settlement.

1653. Would it be a more expensive line to construct? In my opinion it would not be nearly so difficult. I have travelled over both lines on foot, and there are no hills at all on it, whereas on the other line it is up-hill and down dale all the way.

1654. We have had it stated in evidence by several witnesses that the lock-spitted line is the result of public opinion—accepted as a compromise; have you heard that? I have never heard that before.

1655. Are you sure that there are many people of your way of thinking—that the line should take a more southerly course? I think it should go intermedially.

1656. Do you know other people of the same way of thinking as yourself? There are other people who think the same way as I do—a great many of them; in fact the people there, if they had a voice in the matter would be more for Bell's line than for Kennedy's, that is provided they were sure of getting a line; for they have been under the impression that by objecting they will get no line at all, and therefore were satisfied to take an outside line. If they were sure of getting a line they would very nearly all go for Bell's line. In fact, some of the people who are now going for Kennedy's line, say that my line would suit them the best, but "what is the use of going against the Government" is their cry.

1657. That is what we have been led to believe all along—that they look on the lock-spitted line as the best compromise to suit all parties? They have looked upon it in that way, as they say it is better to take that outside line than have none at all, but if the people who had a prior right in the matter were sure of getting a line, they would go for Bell's line.

1658. Have there been meetings to arrive at the opinion you express? There have been meetings at my residence.

1659. How many people attended those meetings? I suppose about 150 at one time, and perhaps 200 or 300 at another time. I have had two meetings at my place.

1660. Residents of the locality? So far as I knew.

1661. I suppose that was an out-door meeting? It was a public meeting announced by hand-bills. Of course my place was not big enough to hold the whole lot so they stood outside.

1662. Do you think it would be better to have the lock-spitted line than no line at all? I certainly would agree with you there, better to have the lock-spitted line than no line at all; but I am sure that Bell's line is far before the lock-spitted line, both from a national and local point of view. I have a letter in my pocket which I have written to the press, and have been congratulated upon, if the Chairman would like to look at it.

1663. I suppose you are aware that you are almost the only witness who has given evidence in the direction you have stated, that all the witnesses called up to the present time have accepted the lock-spitted line as the best compromised line? Yes; for reasons. They are frightened we will get no line at all, but I never was of that way of thinking, but always said we were sure to have a line, because the line would pay, and would be of a national, even more than local, benefit.

1664. Do you think that the tramway extended to Canterbury would answer as well as a railway? I do not recognise trams at all, and never did. They are an abominable nuisance wherever they go.

1665. What are your ideas as to the probability of the line from Marrickville to the Burwood Road paying the Government? I am sure it would pay. My belief is that any line 10 miles out of the city would be a paying line.

1666. Have you ever calculated the number of people that would be benefited at the present time by a railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road? I have. I should think from 10,000 to 12,000.

1667. Would that be by the route you advocate or by the lock-spitted line? Both alike, because there is very little difference between the two in that distance.

- A. Brown, Esq.
3 Dec., 1889.
1633. That is to say that in the part we are considering there is very little difference? It would not make much difference that I can see to the Burwood Road, but when you went further it would make a lot of difference.
1669. Then I understand that your chief objection is when it goes beyond the Burwood Road? My chief objection is, that it leaves the people who have a prior right to the line out in the cold—the originators of the line living at Moorefields, Kingsgrove, and Belmore.
1670. Are those places beyond the Burwood Road? With the exception of Kingsgrove.
1671. But do you object to the lock-spitted line from Marrickville to the Burwood Road? I am only objecting in this way—that I say it is not treating the people fairly and justly.
1672. Which people? The people of the district.
1673. What people? I say the people beyond Canterbury—that is the people who reside in Kingsgrove, Moorefields, and Belmore. Those are the people who were asked to give their land for the construction of this line, and now they are going to be left out in the cold.
1674. *Mr. Garrard.*] They will save their land won't they? No doubt they will, but they will not have the same convenience of transit in and out of the city.
1675. *Mr. Trickett.*] When this line reaches the Burwood Road is its position there suitable to its extension on to Bankstown? Most decidedly it is suitable.
1676. It might easily be extended on to Bankstown if thought advisable? Just the same sort of work to go through—cuttings and so on—as from Canterbury to the Burwood Road.
1677. I mean the line as marked out would be easy of extension to Bankstown? Quite so. It would not be any heavier work than between Marrickville and the Burwood Road.
1678. Then your chief objection to the line from Canterbury to the Burwood Road is that it does not come quite near enough to Moorefields, Kingsgrove, and Belmore? Yes, that is my objection. My objection is that the line is not a fair one for the whole district. It is only 2 miles from one existing line, and 5 or 6 miles from the other.
1679. Of which line does it come within 2 miles? The Great Southern and Western railway.
1680. *Mr. Hurley.*] You say there are persons that have a prior right to the line; will you state how they came to have any prior right? The original committee that was formed came along there and asked us to give our land for the construction of this line. We did so. They had a plan showing the line they wanted, and that line ran on the south side of Canterbury Road right away through to Liverpool. That line was surveyed by Mr. Surveyor Bell in 1884, the survey being completed, I suppose, somewhere about June or July in that year, pending the Stuart Government railway policy. They expected that the line would be included in that Government's railway policy, but we were left out in the cold. They held an indignation meeting because the line was omitted from that Government's railway policy.
1681. Shortly, it amounts to this, that because they were the first persons to move in the matter—agitate for a railway—they have a claim prior to that of any other person—that is the sum and substance of it? Yes. You would naturally think so when they were called upon to give their land.
1682. You were saying that they are not running the line equitably? No, they are not.
1683. They should go a certain distance to the south? Yes.
1684. One-eighth of a mile, I understand you? Yes, where they fork off, but as they go further on the distance increases. There is a length of 5 miles from where they fork off at Canterbury to where they join again at Bankstown.
1685. You say there is a difference of one-eighth of a mile? Yes, at that one spot.
1686. Would that materially interfere with the people resident in that district, they having to go 220 yards more to reach the railway? No. At that particular place it would not, certainly.
1687. So you raise an objection to the line because you think it should go farther south and will serve a larger number of people, with only a difference of 220 yards as regards its position? Yes, at that particular spot; but if you go along the lines farther on there is over a mile between, and that is where the people would suffer and not where there is only one-eighth of a mile between. Any sensible person would know the people there would not suffer, but it is at Moorefields and Kingsgrove where the people would suffer.
1688. You are smarting under a disappointment, are you not, because the Government have not adopted the route suggested by you? I am not smarting under any disappointment, but am only fighting for a just cause.
1689. That line will go through your land? Yes, and it is the proper place for it to go through. It must go through somebody's land.
1690. Does the lock-spitted line go through your land? No.
1691. But the original line did? Yes.
1692. And you think it ought to go through there now? That is if you want to make a fair and equitable distribution of advantages; but if you want to go on one side you can go where you like.

David Dunn Middleton, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

- D. D. Middleton, Esq.
3 Dec., 1889.
1693. *Vice-Chairman.*] Where do you reside? Peakhurst.
1694. Where is that? About 2½ miles from Hurstville Station.
1695. You have taken an interest in the proposed railway extension out in that direction? Well, both as to the district, and also with regard to the large area of Crown lands; that is within, I should say, about 3 or 4 miles of one of the proposed lines.
1696. *Mr. Humphery.*] You expressed a desire to give evidence, did you not, with regard to this proposed extension of the railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road? Yes.
1697. Would you be good enough to give the evidence you desire the Committee to have before them? I came here and examined those plans in connection with the locality and the location of the Crown lands, and also the different routes, and taking them into consideration, I think that Mr. Simpson's line is the best—that is the line into Arncliffe, or the line into Hurstville.
1698. You advocate the line that starts from Arncliffe? Yes.
1699. And then to take up Bell's line? Yes. With a deviation from the 11-mile peg into George's River slightly, as far as it could be taken, so as to make a direct communication with some 6,000 or 7,000 acres of Crown lands on the opposite side of George's River.
1700. What distance from Sydney? In a direct line as the crow would fly, within 10 miles of Sydney.
1701. By the proposed railway route you speak of? By the Hurstville route, about 16 miles.

D. D.
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1702. The line under consideration is between Marrickville and Burwood Road; that is a distance of 8 miles from Sydney? Yes.
1703. You say you are living at Peakhurst, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Hurstville Station? Yes.
1704. Are you living between Hurstville Station and Burwood Road, or between Hurstville Station and Bankstown? Hurstville and George's River. I am about a mile from Oakley's platform, or a mile and a quarter.
1705. As a suburban line, do you think a railway between Marrickville and Burwood Road would be inferior to the line you suggest between Arncliffe and Burwood Road? I do.
1706. What population would be served by a line between Arncliffe and (say) 4 miles distant? That I could not say.
1707. Are you not aware that the proposed line is less than 5 miles from Marrickville? Yes.
1708. To arrive at that point 8 miles from Sydney—from Arncliffe, what population would be served? That I could not state.
1709. Do you know the country between Arncliffe and there? Yes; very well.
1710. Is it not rough country? Parts of it.
1711. Would it serve Canterbury? No; it would not.
1712. Would it serve South Marrickville? No, it would not.
1713. Can you say whether it would serve any settled population at the present time? The principal settled population would be the population on the Canterbury Road. That would be from Belmore. Of course it would be more central, and more between the two lines than the proposed line.
1714. Would not that be beyond the 8 miles? Yes.
1715. Within 8 miles of Sydney would it serve any population at all? It would serve population.
1716. What population? Well, if it did not serve a very great population at the present time it would create a population, because the country from Arncliffe to Bell's line has got no communication at all.
1717. You think it would be a suitable line to make? Yes; if the line were carried through to Liverpool it would be suitable, but if carried only part of the way I don't think it would, nor that any other line would. For instance, take the Hurstville line. I think it pays 5 or 6 per cent.; but if it stopped at Hurstville I do not think it would pay 1 per cent. Hurstville would never have been what it is, and the line would never have paid, but the line being carried farther on, and the communication being so much more, there are a great number of trains.
1718. You are not aware, I suppose, of the returns between Hurstville and Sydney? I have had them.
1719. You have not got them? No.
1720. As a suburban line do you not think that the line as proposed between Marrickville and the 8-mile peg would be a better paying line in every respect than the one you suggest between Arncliffe and the same distance? It would be if only constructed to the 8-mile peg; but as far as Canterbury is concerned they have got a tramway within about a mile of Canterbury.
1721. Do you know the lock-spitted route? Yes.
1722. You see where it stops at the 8-mile peg? Yes.
1723. Would it not be possible by deviation either north or south to serve population beyond the 8-mile peg, as you desire if it were deemed advisable—by a deviation would it not serve the district you speak of and also give access to the Crown lands to which you refer? Yes; certainly.
1724. Therefore, no injury will be done by constructing the line from Marrickville to the Burwood Road—that is, it would be possible to repair any injury you think might be done by constructing a line which would not give access to the Crown lands? Yes; by constructing that line in that way it would require a great deal more line to be constructed, and there would be a greater distance to travel through taking those deviations.
1725. Are you quite sure of that? Yes; it would create a greater distance than the line marked blue on the present plan—a considerable distance more. By going from Arncliffe a great deal of bridge-making also would be saved, and also embankments on the low flats in going into Marrickville.
1726. Would there not be a difference in length between Marrickville and Arncliffe;—would not passengers have to travel beyond Marrickville to Arncliffe before starting on the proposed line from Arncliffe to Liverpool? They would have to travel a mile and a half further on the Illawarra line.
1727. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do I understand that the line you advocate is that surveyed by Mr. Sanderson, from Arncliffe to Bell's line? Yes.
1728. How do you propose to serve the Canterbury race-course? The Canterbury race-course would be served by the Dulwich Hill tramway, or by people being carried by tramway to Ashfield Railway Station.
1729. As far as this proposed line is concerned—the permanently-staked line, the one under consideration—all that country could be served by tramways? As far as the Canterbury race-course is concerned. That is the question you have asked me.
1730. That is almost the end of the proposed line to Burwood Road, is it not? Yes.
1731. And the Dulwich Hill tramway serves a large proportion of the remaining country—the country between Marrickville and Burwood Road; that is served now, to a large extent, by the Dulwich Hill tramway, is it not? To a certain extent it is, but not as far as Canterbury. But you put a question to me with regard to the Canterbury race-course.
1732. The main portion of that country being already served by the Dulwich Hill tramway, the remaining portion would be served by tramway from Ashfield to Canterbury? Not to the Burwood Road, but only Canterbury.
1733. Almost to Burwood Road? Yes.
1734. How far is Canterbury from Burwood Road? I should say about 2 miles.
1735. About $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile, is it not? I should say it is 2 miles to the 8-mile peg.
1736. If the line were taken past Canterbury, it would serve the Belmore country as well? Yes.
1737. So the entire route could be served by the construction of a short line of tramway from Ashfield to the 8-mile peg, through Canterbury? Yes.
1738. So there is no necessity for this line at all? Not to the 8-mile peg, if you stop there.
1739. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Are you interested in any land in that district? I have my homestead at about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Oakley's.
1740. Is that near the line you are proposing now? I think it would bring me about the same distance from the railway.
1741. How much land have you got there? Fourteen to 15 acres.

- D. D. Middleton, Esq.
3 Dec., 1889.
1742. I suppose if the line were constructed to Arncliffe it would materially enhance the value of that land? Not more than Bell's line, running through Canterbury.
1743. Would this line that is proposed—the line from Marrickville to the Burwood Road—enhance the value of your property in any way whatever? No.
1744. Would the line you suggest from Arncliffe increase the value of your property in any way? It might slightly.
1745. Do you think you are not influenced to a certain extent by the fact that that line would increase the value of your property in suggesting this railway? Not at all.
1746. Then why do you choose a railway where there is no population at present in preference to a railway which you must know would go through a populated district? My reason for choosing that is that I am employed in the Surveyor-General's Department, and am supposed, and am paid to look to the interests of the Crown lands; and that is one motive that has brought me here to-day and making a deviation, as I say, as near George's River as practicable, would increase the value of that land to the value of similar land an equal distance from Sydney harbour—that is to £200, or £250 per acre.
1747. Would a line from Arncliffe increase the value of the Government lands more than the proposed line would? No; it would not, if constructed only to the 8-mile peg.
1748. That is the only line we have got under consideration—at least an extension to Liverpool is not before the Committee? Yes. But if that line is constructed to the 8-mile peg, it is two to one if it is not constructed right through, and I wish to draw attention to the fact that there are Crown lands there to that extent. Within the population area of Sydney—that is a distance of 10 miles from Sydney in a direct line—there are between 5,000 and 6,000 acres of Crown lands, and on this side of George's River there must be something like 50,000 or 60,000 acres.

Myles McRae, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

- M. McRae, Esq., M.P.
3 Dec., 1889.
1749. *Vice-Chairman.*] You are a member of the Legislative Assembly? Yes.
1750. For the Electorate of Morpeth? Yes.
1751. You know the proposed route? Yes; I was the originator of the loop-line.
1752. The loop-line to Liverpool? Between St. Peters and Liverpool. I advocated the loop-line. I believed that when the northern traffic would be junctioned on to the southern and western it would be incumbent on the Government to relieve the northern and western of the southern traffic, and that a loop-line between St. Peters and Liverpool would have that effect.
1753. Two or three different lines have been recommended, I think? Yes.
1754. Which of these do you recommend? We formed ourselves into a working committee of twelve, and we recommended a line from St. Peters by Cup-and-Saucer Creek, Moorefields, Belmore, and direct to Liverpool. Advocates of other routes condemned our route on account of the costliness of three bridges—one across Cook's River, and two across George's River. The Committee recognizing the objection, by resolution shifted to Arncliffe, thereby getting rid of one of the obnoxious bridges, and a mile and a half of railway construction, and the resumptions between Canterbury and St. Peters, and Marrickville all totalling up to about £100,000. I may say that the resumptions now between Canterbury and St. Peters will be far greater, because development has taken place there in the building of houses.
1755. It appears that the Government have abandoned the project of connecting the line between Marrickville, Cook's River or Arncliffe, or any of those places, and Liverpool, and the work submitted to this Committee now, is a line from Marrickville to Burwood Road? Yes.
1756. You know that line? Yes.
1757. You know the country? Yes. I may say in reference to this proposal before the Committee that we failed to enlist the sympathy of the residents of St. Peters. They objected to sign a petition which we presented to the then Minister of Works. I think it was Mr. Wright. They said "we already have railway communication and Marrickville is pierced by the tramway." They refused to co-operate with us. I myself think that the railway is required to relieve the northern and western railway of the southern traffic—a loop line is required to Liverpool or not required at all, but this section is only a sop to gratify the assumptions of ratepayers.
1758. It is hardly our business to inquire into. We are just to take evidence as to the propriety of constructing this line without reference to the other at all? I do not think it is required at all.
1759. Do you think that if it were constructed it would not pay? I think that were the Government to construct the line along the route which you are considering and which hugs the western railway and the southern railway they would be in the anomalous position of constructing a railway to make the present railway a dead letter. I can understand an opposition company constructing a railway to compete against the Government, but I cannot understand the Government constructing such a railway.
1760. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you think that if this line to Burwood Road were constructed it would lead to the settlement of a large suburban population along the line? The settlement has already taken place there because the inhabitants are the recipients of tramway communication and railway communication—the Illawarra railway on the one side and the Great Western on the other and the tramway between. So that of itself encourages settlement and any other expenditure that would detract from that would have a detrimental effect so far as the revenue of existing lines is concerned.
1761. Do you think that if this railway were made to Burwood Road, in ten years' time the population carried by that railway would be ten times what it is now? It all depends upon the increased population that the country is susceptible of—the metropolis.
1762. Do you think that as a suburban line it would be a dead failure? Yes; because the cost of resumptions would be too great.
1763. You think it could not possibly pay? I do not think it could. It would be at the expense of the tramway if it did.
1764. You think it would be a national loss? I think so.
1765. You are prepared to commit yourself to that as a public man? Yes; I have opposed the construction of a railway from Marrickville, because it is a low-lying country. To begin with it is a hot-bed of disease and the whole of that land should be resumed by the Government in the interests of public health. The Government should do nothing to increase settlement on a country that is not adapted for settlement.

1766. But we have it in evidence that that is a very short piece of about three quarters of a mile, and that as soon as the railway is over that flat all the rest of the land is good suburban land;—do you dispute that fact? No doubt all the country beyond is good suburban country. M. McRae,
Esq., M.P.
1767. We are told that on the whole the Marrickville Station is the best to start from? I dispute that. 3 Dec., 1889.
No junction on the Illawarra railway will bear favourable comparison with a junction at Arncliffe; since the Government are making Cook's River a navigable commercial centre. You get the inland traffic with the ocean traffic, and consequently no other junction would bear any comparison with one at Arncliffe. As regards settlement take the Illawarra railway between Cook's River and George's River. Before the construction of that line there was hardly a dozen tenements, but now you can count them by the thousand. Settlement will follow, and the distance between Arncliffe and Liverpool is only $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and by going direct it is over comparatively level country, you distribute your favours equally between the Southern Railway, the Western Railway, and the Illawarra Railway.
1768. You say that if a line is made from Arncliffe it will serve a large suburban population, but if made from St. Peters it will not? Not so great. That is taking everything into consideration. I may say that most of the landed proprietors between Arncliffe and Liverpool have agreed to give so much land as will be required, free of charge to the Government, and on account of the development not being so great as it is between Marrickville and the village of Canterbury, the State will be exempted from expense of resumptions.
1769. But you are aware as a Member of Parliament that under the Public Works Act, the Government when dealing with a fair sized estate can always take into account the benefit given to the residue of the estate by the improvement and recoup itself? I was not aware of that fact. I thought the Government had to resume land for railway purposes and pay the market value.
1770. But if there is any residue of the estate to a considerable amount, the Government can take into consideration the benefit given to that residue? That is a new departure. Most people have generally looked on the Government as a good milch cow, and have wanted double instead of making concessions.
1771. Under these circumstances—seeing the Government can always get justice for itself—do you think it is supreme importance to ask people to give their land? Giving the land reduces the cost considerably.
1772. I understand you to say you were one of the early advocates of a direct line to Liverpool;—that is a loop-line? Yes.
1773. Did I understand you to say that as a justification for the loop-line you laid great stress on the fact that it would give relief to the Southern and Western Railways? My opinion is that the only justification for the construction of the loop-line is that it would relieve the Western line of the southern traffic.
1774. If there is to be a loop-line, the shorter the distance between Liverpool and Sydney the better, is it not? The Arncliffe route is a little shorter than any other route, and that was a great consideration with us. One of the "planks" that we adopted was that this railway should be constructed to bring the southern traffic the shortest distance to the metropolis, and Arncliffe is the starting point for that purpose.
1775. When you say the shortest distance, do you mean the shortest amount of new line to make? And the shortest distance as well.
1776. Do you mean that going from Arncliffe to Liverpool is a shorter distance than striking off from Marrickville? Yes. From Arncliffe to Liverpool is about 11 miles, and to Sydney about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles making 15. I think the other route is 17 miles.
1777. Does not the line from Arncliffe go between Woollli Creek and Cook's River? A survey has been made, and I think the steepest grade is 1 in 100 or 1 in 120. By going on one side of Woollli Creek you avoid a rise of undulating country, but the whole of the distance is comparatively level country, and then if Canterbury is required to be served a deviation could take place so that the line could go along to the south-eastern side of Canterbury and up Cup-and-saucer Creek.
1778. But we have it in evidence that if the line is pinched between Woollli Creek and Cook's River it will not be so easy of access from the other side as by the route it takes now;—can you dispute that? The Undercliff estate which is on one side was sold twelve months ago by the Permanent Building Society for something like £250 an acre, and the land on the other side, while the land mania existed, sold as high as £400. It is better adapted for suburban purposes than any other on account of the good drainage that exists there. The elevation is, I suppose, about 100 or 150 feet above sea-level.
1779. Do you dispute the statement that by running a line on the ridge between Woollli Creek and Cook's River the line is not so accessible 2 or 3 miles from each side of the line as the proposed line;—do you think it is as accessible? All that country is accessible because the elevation is not of that character that would make it inaccessible. It is only 100 feet above sea-level, and any person who is not a cripple could get up that height.
1780. It is not a question so much of elevation as the crossing of water courses? You avoid crossing Cook's River by starting from Arncliffe, and you follow Woollli Creek on the western side. It runs parallel with the proposed route.
1781. It crosses Woollli Creek, does it not? I think it runs on one side.
1782. But it crosses it? It may eventually cross it. Woollli Creek starts near Salt Pan Creek or perhaps a mile this side, and runs into Cook's River in a direct southerly direction, I think.
1783. I understood you to say that although you proposed to start from Arncliffe, you proposed to work north again to connect with Canterbury? I would not do anything of the kind because the valley of Canterbury is within a mile and a-half of the Great Western Railway, and the village of Canterbury has no cause of complaint. The tramway reaches to Dulwich Hill, and by continuing that another mile you could connect with the racecourse. Therefore Canterbury has no cause of complaint at all for want of railway communication.
1784. So you throw Canterbury out? Decidedly.
1785. And you go from Arncliffe to Belmore? Yes, and direct to Liverpool. To accommodate the southern traffic I would take a straight line between Arncliffe and Liverpool, so that the southern traffic would be brought near the city and save the enormous haulage which extra distance would involve through all time. I would not consider one paltry village in a work of this character. I should go direct. I would not consider a few villages or humpies.
1786. Your line is practically Mr. Sanderson's line? Not necessarily. This would not be a loop-line at all, but the whole of the southern traffic would go over it on account of the saving of distance, and I think that any line to be constructed for that purpose should go direct irrespective of the consideration of any person on either side or any settlement, because the settlement will follow immediately, as was the case on the Illawarra line.

- M. McRae,
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1787. You would rather consider the settlement of the future than the settlement of to-day? There is settlement right through, but not to the extent that there is on the low land at Marrickville where there are houses that should be pulled down if we had regard to public health. There are 4 or 5 feet of water there every flood.
1788. Do you think we ought to deviate this line out of consideration for the little townships there are now? No; I would not deviate at all.
1789. You disregard Belmore and Bankstown and the whole lot of them? Yes. Belmore extends right across the country for miles; they call perhaps 4 or 5 miles of the country there Belmore—north, south, east, and west. You go through Belmore no matter what route you adopt.
1790. But you do not go through the heart of the population? There is very little population at Belmore. There are only a few houses there. At Kingsgrove and at Moorfields there are almost as many houses as at Belmore, but the people there do not sing out so loudly.
1791. Then practically you advocate what is here called the Belmore route, except that you start from Arncliffe? Yes; I advocate a direct route. The Government have Crown lands on the southern side of George's River which would be enhanced in value. I believe the Government intend to construct a bridge across George's River at Liverpool, and that bridge would be available for railway as well as for vehicular traffic.
1792. But so far as the bridge at Liverpool is concerned, the Belmore route and the lockspitted route are very much the same? Yes. There is a great reason why a junction should not take place at Liverpool. Because Liverpool is situated on the banks of George's River—the present station is on the banks of George's River, and there is hardly room to swing a cat there at the present time. I think that a junction beyond Liverpool—on towards Minto—would be much better, for it would go right through Government land.
1793. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Why do you suggest this line should be taken to Arncliffe? Well the Working Committee, of which I was one, decided after mature consideration, that Arncliffe would be far preferable as a junction to Marrickville, and we, in figuring the matter out, saw there would be a saving to the State of £100,000, which is a big consideration in railway expenditure. The Marrickville authorities, in fact the Municipality, are up in arms and want the Government to resume land not fit for settlement, and for that reason no junction should take place there.
1794. I understood that one of your reasons for suggesting a junction at Arncliffe, was that the Government are making Cook's River navigable? Yes.
1795. Do you think it is likely that traffic brought down by railway would be shipped upon Cook's River? Yes.
1796. Where would it go to? It would go for consumption the same as any other produce.
1797. Do you mean to say that large vessels could enter Botany Bay, go to Cook's River, load heavy cargo and get out again? There is a steamer on Cook's River belonging to Mr. Cass, which takes cargoes of blue metal and coal and lands it on the Government wharf.
1798. Do you think that Botany Bay and Cook's River would compete against Sydney? I believe Cook's River will be a second Darling Harbour within twenty years, and as soon as Cook's River is navigable produce from north and south will come in as freely as in Darling Harbour now.
1799. Do you know the depth of Botany Bay? It varies to a considerable extent. I suppose there is 15 feet of water there. Steamers that trade to navigable rivers can enter Botany heads now.
1800. Do you refer to intercolonial steamers? No; I do not.
1801. How could Cook's River become a *dépôt*, the same as Darling Harbour is now? The traffic at Darling Harbour is so great that persons sending drays to load there have to wait two and three hours before they can get their turn. At the present time produce from the north and south coast—agricultural produce, and timber—can be delivered from Cook's River to St. Peters, Newtown, Marrickville, Petersham, Ashfield, and Burwood, within a shorter distance than it is delivered from Darling Harbour, and there are no disabilities at Cook's River—no extra charges,—and coasters, in bringing their produce, will land it where they will be submitted to the least expenditure.
1802. I understand you to imply it will be an import trade? There will be the trade that is required for the consumption of the metropolis—the same as the trade of Darling Harbour supplies that want at the present time.
1803. You mean that the coastal vessels, instead of coming into Port Jackson, will go up Botany Bay, and land produce near Arncliffe, and it will be distributed by railway to the intervening suburbs towards Sydney? Well, it could be sent. The produce would come by ocean, would be landed at Cook's River, and sent by rail up country, as it is now from Redfern. You could junction the water carriage with the land carriage. Drays would distribute the produce to the different centres.
1804. So far as the intervening suburbs are concerned, between Arncliffe and Sydney, could not that be done at the present time by the Illawarra railway? But you were speaking about the produce that came up the open roadstead; and I say the produce could be distributed to the centres I mention from a shorter distance than by bringing it from Darling Harbour as they have to bring it now. The drays bring it out as far as Burwood.
1805. Admitting all that, and also that produce could be brought from the coast of Botany Bay, and into Cook's River, will not the present Illawarra and Western Railway do all you want without another line of railway being built? There is no doubt it will.
1806. How can the loop-line help this import trade to Marrickville, Newtown, Petersham, and Ashfield? I do not think the loop-line was considered to benefit the importation of produce.
1807. But I understood you to say that one of the reasons for suggesting Arncliffe was that it was likely to become a port? Yes; and so it will. I believe that in twenty years Cook's River will be a second Darling Harbour if the population increases.
1808. But now you suggest that Arncliffe will be a receptacle for the imports from the coast, to be distributed to Marrickville, Petersham, and Ashfield? Yes, by drays and trollies.
1809. That being so, you do not require a railway running west for imports that go to the east? No; you do not. But this loop-line will accommodate the people of the southern district. They will save 6 or 7 miles of haulage through all time by this loop-line being constructed.
1810. But they would not use the port? I do not see why they should not. Port Jackson is used by those parties now. When we have droughts, produce that comes by the ocean goes up the country in thousands of tons, and it could go from Cook's River.
- 1811.

M. M. Rae,
Esq., M.P.

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1811. You say that the Marrickville and Dulwich tramway runs parallel with the Illawarra line for a certain distance, and then parallel with the proposed line;—do you consider the country between Marrickville and the end of Dulwich Hill is served at the present time by that tramway? I do.
1812. You say that Canterbury is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile or 2 miles farther on;—do you think that if a tramway were laid down from Ashfield to Canterbury it would serve Canterbury and the race-course? Decidedly.
1813. And that being so do you think it is necessary to construct this line between Marrickville and Burwood Road? No; I am opposed to it.
1814. *Mr. Hurley.*] You own some land near Arncliffe, do you not? Yes.
1815. Is that anywhere in close proximity to the route you propose for any line? It is about equidistant, or perhaps a little nearer than the junction at Marrickville; but I do not think that bears on the question at all, because any railway expenditure will benefit all the land the line runs through. I have got no land at Arncliffe this line would run through, if that is what you are aiming at.
1816. Had you anything to do with the survey, or did you pay the cost of a survey of what is called Sanderson's line? Yes; I agreed to pay Mr. Sanderson a certain sum which I did pay—£10, I think, for a flying survey.
1817. Was that with a view of securing a better route than the one proposed? The Committee were very anxious about this loop-line. We presented a petition signed by 14,000 people. Of course you can get people to sign a petition for anything.
1818. Was that signed by those persons connected with the Marrickville flats? No; St. Peters absolutely refused to have anything at all to do with the petition, but we thought that the loop-line would be required when the northern traffic would be junctioned on to the western, and we knew also that it would open up a suburban country and would benefit all the land it passed through belonging to Brown, Jones, or Smith, or anybody else.
1819. So, practically you paid for the survey of that line by Mr. Sanderson? Well, there were two or three others as well—some of the Committee and myself.
1820. Was that done with the view of getting the Government to construct that line? We recognised the objection that was made to the Marrickville route, because it involved the construction of three bridges, and we wanted to get rid of one of the bridges. The bridge that carries the Illawarra railway now was in course of construction then, and that would carry the loop-line as well, so we got rid of a bridge and a mile and a half of railway construction and resumptions that would cost £100,000.
1821. From a national stand-point you believe that route is the most advantageous? Yes; I do. There is no junction that would bear any comparison with the Arncliffe junction.
1822. You believe it is a necessity? If the country believes this loop-line is required to relieve the northern line I say that the loop-line to Liverpool is either required to be constructed or it is not. I don't care whether it is constructed or not.
1823. Do you believe now it is not a necessity? I believe that a loop-line from Arncliffe to Liverpool, or beyond Liverpool, would have a beneficial effect. It would reduce the distance between here and Melbourne 6 or 7 miles, open up country, and prove remunerative to the State.
1824. We are dealing with the line only to the Burwood Road? Yes.
1825. You are in favour of the construction of that railway? I have been for the last six or seven years opposed to it. It is no use persons sticking bull-headed to one proposal. If you want to gain your point you must make concessions; and when we saw the opposition had fatal objections to Marrickville, and that the cost would be £100,000 greater, we, as wise men, shifted to Arncliffe; and I may tell you that one of the gentlemen who would be eulged in consequence of our shifting wanted the railway to go through his land.
1826. But the lock-spitted line held the "joker" all the time? I am telling you that I am opposed to the construction of this line, and have written to every Minister for Works, except the present, for many years.
1827. Have you not written and advocated the construction of a line through that country, and spoken about the health-invigorating power of eucalyptus? No.
1828. And told the people it reminded you very much of the sunny clime of Italy? Nothing of the kind,—you are dreaming—romancing.
1829. Have you not, when a candidate for parliamentary honors, advocated the construction of a line through that district—through Canterbury—through that portion of the district? I do not think I did. My connection with this loop-line was after I was a candidate.
1830. I am merely asking you for the purpose of clearing you from assertions made against you? I am in favour of this loop-line on national grounds, and am opposed to every loop-line that will not confer the greatest good on the greatest number.
1831. You believe that Sanderson's line would have that effect? I am certain of it. I know every inch of the country.
1832. You paid all the money out of your own pocket? No.
1833. Don't you think you should look to the Government for reimbursement? I leave that for you. I think you are being reimbursed now.
1834. Don't be impertinent? Well, you introduced it.
1835. Are you not in close proximity to the line you propose? What do you mean?
1836. Have you not land immediately adjacent to the line you advocate? I have not. My land is about three-quarters of a mile from it, and about a mile and a half from the present proposed junction of Marrickville. I have no land along there.
1837. *Mr. Dowel.*] Are you aware that the proposed line at Burwood Road is about equidistant from the Illawarra and the Western lines? I think it is nearly double as far from the Illawarra as it is from the Western until it comes to Burwood Road; then it is nearer the Western line at Burwood Road than it is to the Illawarra.
1838. You know the whole of the country through which the permanently-staked or lock-spitted line travels well? Yes. There are three lines.
1839. But the line marked blue is the one the Committee is considering—you know the whole of the country surrounding it? I have been over the whole of that country.
1840. What is the character of the country within a radius of 2 or 3 miles of the proposed line? It is very good country for suburban purposes.
1841. And for residential sites? Yes.

- M. McRae, Esq., M.P.
3 Dec., 1889.
1842. The whole of it? No; There are a few hundreds of acres of low land at Marrickville, joining the Illawarra railway.
1843. But the general character of the country from Marrickville to Burwood Road is exceedingly good for residential sites for purposes of settlement. Yes; it is not as good as the North Shore, excepting the low land.
1844. But in your opinion from your knowledge of the country, it is good for residential purposes—for building purposes? Well, gentlemen would prefer living on higher land—on the Lane Cove Road—rather than there; but no doubt it would suit the working and middle classes to live along there. I do not think it is as good as the Illawarra line, because the elevation is greater there.
1845. Would Canterbury, Parkestown, Moorefields, Kingsgrove, and Belmore be served by the construction of this loop-line? No doubt they would.
1846. The whole of those localities? Well, it only extends 2 or 3 miles.
1847. But those centres of population would be served? Oh yes.
1848. You spoke about the residents of Canterbury being served by tramway at the present time? Yes.
1849. Are you aware that a number of omnibuses and coaches are running from Canterbury into Sydney now? Only two or three. I know there is a coachman at Belmore who had a bill of sale over his coaches. It did not do at Belmore. They had to subsidise the coaches at Belmore.
1850. But from Canterbury do not buses run direct into the city? Oh, yes, of course they do; and there are omnibuses running on the Cook's River Road, although they have got a railway there; but they only eke out a miserable existence.
1851. From your knowledge of settlement in the immediate neighbourhood of Sydney are you of opinion that if the line were constructed settlement would take place upon it, and that in all probability within a short time it would be a paying line? No doubt, with any line constructed out there the development would be rapid—this or any other line—that is when the times get better. Lately the development has not been very much; but with a return of prosperity, I suppose a development will take place.
1852. You referred to a gentleman who was annoyed because a railway was not taken through his land? Yes.
1853. Be good enough to name him? It was Mr. Lane, of Belmore; he was Chairman of the Committee.

WEDNESDAY, 18 DECEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

W. G. Cameron, Esq., sworn, and further examined:—

- W. G. Cameron, Esq.
18 Dec., 1889.
1854. *Mr. Hurley.*] When you were under examination a few weeks ago, in regard to the construction of a railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road, you made certain statements concerning persons who were interested in land along the route, and you emphasized the statement that certain persons who were representatives of the House, and connected with political life, were shareholders in the syndicates along the proposed line of railway. If you remember rightly, I endeavoured to get the information from you as to who the persons were, and you hesitated about giving the names. Hence you are called back to give the names of the persons—to whom you alluded,—whether they belong to either branch of the legislature,—and to give any information in your possession as to their holdings and their position in connection with the land on the route referred to? Pardon me, but your statement is somewhat incorrect. I made no reference to any gentleman in the Assembly or in the Upper House,—none whatever. Here is my evidence, and there is nothing in it to justify you in making that statement.
1855. Did you insinuate that there were persons, holding high positions in political life, interested in the line of railway referred to? No, I did not insinuate anything of the kind. I should like to draw attention to question 1203,—that is what Mr. Hurley is driving at.
1856. Refer to question 1199 as follows:
Do you of your own knowledge know persons, who occupy positions in political life, who hold any interest in those syndicates?
Look at your answer to that question? Yes, the answer is
One gentleman, whose name I do not wish to mention, was connected with a certain building society, but whether he is now connected with it, or whether he had any connection with the transaction, I am not prepared to say.
1857. I want you to give us the name of the person whose name you suppressed? I appeal to the Chairman that my answer has no reference to the Legislative Assembly, nor to the Legislative Council.
1858. Look at question 1197—There you say:
Immediately that line was known to have been surveyed, I know for a fact that certain large blocks of land were taken up. One was purchased by a certain building society of considerable proportions, in Pitt-street, and it was rumoured that certain gentlemen in high political positions were interested, but you must not ask me to give the names.”
I want you to give the names of those persons in high political positions? What I stated was that it was rumoured. I did not say that I knew the names, and I should have thought it very hard, when endeavouring to give the Committee a hint, to be compelled to give names. No names were mentioned, and there is nothing in the evidence from one end to the other to show that I knew the names.
- 1858½. *Chairman.*] Then you decline to give the names? I do.
1859. *Mr. Hurley.*] Then you now state that you made those assertions upon a scandal which you had gathered up in the city. Is it not a fact that you made the assertion upon statements made outside, and upon which you were not warranted in relying? That is a question with myself whether I was warranted in relying upon the statements made or not. I desire to point out that a considerable agitation existed for

for a line to this district. The people of Parkestown, Belmore, Moorefields, and Kingsgrove, commenced an agitation as far back as the year 1883, and they promised to give the land necessary for the construction of the line, free of charge. Mr. Secretary Wright, the then Minister for Public Works, promised that if the people over the districts, known as Bell's line, would give the land to the Government free of charge, it would be a strong reason why the line should be constructed. After this line was surveyed, by the instructions of Mr. Wright, another survey of a line was made, and that is the line before the Committee. After this other survey was made, large tracts of land, which were then in a virgin state, were purchased, and that gave rise to the statement I have made. We thought it very hard that a settled district should be left out, and that a line should be carried through an unsettled district which had been bought by land speculators. Eventually these speculators sold their land to a building society.

W. G.
Cameron, Esq.
18 Dec., 1889.

1860. Refer to question 1201 as follows:—

“I want the name of any person or persons who hold any distinguished position in connection with politics, who are interested in the land to which you referred.”

Your answer to that is—

“I am on oath, and would not be prepared to swear any name although I have heard it, and have reasonable grounds for believing it. That is no reason why I should be prepared to swear to a thing as a fact—that would hardly be considered evidence in a court of law, it being a matter of hearsay, although I have in my own mind sufficient grounds for belief.”

It is in the interests of the purity of political life that we are endeavouring to find out if any person, occupying a distinguished position, either as a Minister of the Crown, or as a private member of Parliament, is in any way interested in this line of railway. The matter is not one of contention with yourself, but a matter in connection with which we desire to get at the facts of the case. Kindly tell us the ground upon which you made that statement? I have stated that a rumour existed. A statement might be made to me without the informant giving the names. There is nothing in the evidence to show that I knew the names, and I never stated that I did know them.

1861. You have heard it then? I stated it was rumoured.

1862. You stated, “I have heard it and have reasonable grounds for believing it?” I do believe it.

1863. Give us the names of the persons? I cannot give you the names. It was told to me as I have told it to you.

1864. Have you not stated yourself that a Minister of the Crown, in the person of Mr. Carruthers, is interested largely in the land along the railway? This is the first time I have heard of it.

1865. You have not stated it? I most distinctly deny it.

1866. Then any statement you have made as to persons in political life having an interest in this line of railway, is merely from what you have casually heard in the city? You have got hold of a wrong impression. The statement made before the Committee on my last appearance here had reference to a period of three or four years ago, when this deviation was made. I am not speaking of the present time.

1867. Have you not made statements that persons holding high positions——? I made no statements. They were made to me.

1868. And you repeated them? I repeated them here in the public interest.

1869. I ask you for the names referred to? How can I give them when I have not got them.

1870. You said you had reasonable grounds for believing what you had heard? Yes.

1871. Then you do not know any Member of Parliament, or any man occupying a position as a Minister of the Crown, who is interested in the land along this line of railway? I did not know the names of any one connected with the matter at the time I made the statement.

1872. And at the present time you do not know them? I have not identified myself with the movement for a long time.

1873. Any statement you have made, which would bear that construction, is from what you have heard outside? Yes, from hearsay. I stated so in my evidence.

1874. Then you have heard nothing which would warrant the assertion being made? I believed the statement which was made to me, and I believe it still.

1875. You do not know any Member of Parliament interested in the land along that route? No, I do not at the present time; but I am not certain.

1876. *Dr. Garran.*] It is in evidence by Mr. Deane that Mr. Whitton, after viewing the ground, ordered this line to be surveyed as the most direct line between Marrickville and Liverpool. Are you prepared to dispute that? No, I am prepared to admit it.

1877. Do you believe Mr. Whitton, in so ordering that line, was influenced by any person in high position, or any land speculator? I am not prepared to say that.

1878. So far as you know, was Mr. Whitton free from the influences you speak of or not? I have not the remotest idea of forming a judgment in regard to Mr. Whitton.

1879. Had you in your mind—whether from hearsay or otherwise—any suspicion that Mr. Whitton was so influenced? No, I do not think Mr. Whitton has got anything at all to do with it.

1880. Then you believe that the line, as now laid out,—and part of which is before the Committee,—was determined on Departmentally, and entirely free from outside influence? Do you mean as far as the Government are concerned?

1881. Yes; as far as the Government are concerned? Yes; I do sincerely believe that.

1882. You say that after this line was surveyed, land syndicates and speculators took up blocks along the surveyed line? I do.

1883. But that does not imply that they influenced the selection of that line? I made no implication. I only made a statement to assist the Committee to come to a determination.

1884. But when you say that land speculators observe these blocks, and go and buy where they think the railway is going to be, do you mean to say they have previously used influence for the line to be taken in a certain direction? I do not mean to say anything.

1885. Do you yourself believe that those who took up land, after the line had been surveyed, had previously used influence to get it surveyed in that direction? I am not prepared to say what I believe in regard to that matter. I may have my own opinion.

1886. Is it usual for persons who wish to make speculations of this kind to wait until the line is surveyed, before using their influence, or do they use their influence before the line is surveyed? I should think before.

1887. You have said that these land speculators entered into their speculations after the line was marked and pegged? After the survey was made.

1888.

- W. G. Cameron, Esq.
18 Dec., 1889.
1888. Yes, after the survey was made? I will tell you how that was. Mr. Wright, when requisitioned in regard to this survey of which we are speaking, stated that it was not a survey at all. This is where the mysterious part of the business comes in. He stated that it was not a survey at all, but simply a cross-section, and the Committee, of which I was at that time a member, pointed out to Mr. Wright that he was breaking his promise—that he would construct the Bell's line of railway if the people gave the land for nothing. I have that on record before me. It was a funny thing for a Minister of the Crown to have a survey made, and then for it to be said that it was simply a cross-section.
1889. Your statements raise a suspicion in my mind, and I want to know whether you think these speculators bought the land after the survey was made, or before? A purchase of the lands might have been made some time before I or others became acquainted of the fact. That is where the difficulty comes in.
1890. But you have already stated that they made speculative purchases after the survey; and you put that forward as a sort of charge against certain persons of distinction? I did. It is impossible for me to state when the land was purchased. It might have been purchased before the survey was made, and the fact may not have been known until after the survey was made. I did not know it until after the survey was made.
1891. Is that not a purely hypothetical suspicion on your part. You know nothing about it? I do know something about it. Supposing I purchased that land, I might have had it in my possession some time before it was known that I purchased it.
1892. When previously before the Committee, you did not go beyond the statement that after the survey was made certain persons bought the land. Are you prepared to go beyond that to-day, and to state that these persons bought the land before the survey was made? I am not prepared to say that.
1893. You have implied it just now? I have my own opinion, but I have no proof. I believe it possible that the land was purchased before the survey was made.
1894. I am trying to find out whether you can refute Mr. Deane's statement that this line was a purely departmental line. If the line were determined by syndicates, it could not have been determined by Mr. Whitton? I am not prepared to say that; but if the question were one of directness of route, the most direct would be the Arneliffe route.
1895. We have sworn evidence from a departmental officer of high character that this almost straight line was ruled on a map in obedience to Mr. Whitton's orders. The tendency of your evidence is to show that this line has been selected under the influence of politicians and capitalists? I did not say politicians.
1896. Persons in distinguished positions? Yes; it was stated to me in the same way as it might have been stated to you. The Committee is at liberty to take what I stated for what it is worth.
1897. You are not prepared to refute Mr. Deane's statement? No.
1898. And you are not prepared to give any justification whatever to your suspicion? Yes; I think I have given a fair justification for the suspicion from the fact that whilst it was generally known that the Government intended to carry the line of railway along Bell's route, which was said to be simply a cross-section, large tracts of land were taken up by speculators, and, I believe, subsequently sold to building societies.
1899. I suppose you know that land speculators look where land surveys go? I am not finding fault with it.
1900. Is it not the commonest thing in the world to do? I do not find fault with it; but I thought it was very unfair to take the line from the present population which had made the place valuable, through land on which no population has settled.
1901. Whilst you think it unfair, we have it in evidence that the reason was a departmental one. You say that it could not have been a departmental reason exclusively, and that it must have been biased by influential people? I made no reference to departmental matters at all. I stated, and I state now that it looked very suspicious that after the Government had promised to construct Bell's line of railway, this survey should be made under the plea that that was a cross-section. After the survey was made, these lands were seized hold of, and improved, and cleared. No settlement had taken place upon them, and a lock-spitted line was carried through.
1902. But that does not alter the question as to whether this is Mr. Whitton's line or not. Are you prepared to swear it is not? No.
1903. Are you prepared to swear he was influenced in any way by any person? I state that I believe Mr. Whitton was not influenced in any way.
1904. You are simply arguing that it was unfair to shift the original Bell's line to the present one? Yes, unfair to the population.
1905. We have it in evidence that Mr. Whitton altered it for surveying and engineering reasons—is that true or not? I must accept Mr. Whitton's statement; but I would point out that the difference in regard to straightness is so fractional, that the cost of constructing the other line would more than compensate for that difference, and would benefit a greater number.
1906. I want to know whether the selection of this route was influenced by political persons and speculators or not? I think, Dr. Garran, you drew an inference.
1907. You do not give straight answers to straight questions?—
1908. *Mr. Tonkin.*] You have mentioned that Mr. Wright stated to you that this survey was a cross-section? Not to me.
1909. To some deputation or other? Yes.
1910. You are sure that Mr. Wright made the statement to a deputation or in answer to a question in the House, that the survey was a cross-section and not the main survey? Yes.
1911. And at the same time that survey was actually the present line under discussion? Yes.
1912. Do you believe that Mr. Wright, at the time he made that statement, knew he was not stating what was a fact? I am not prepared to say that.
1913. Do you think he made that statement knowing that it was not a fact? I do not think he did. I am sure he would not.
1914. Have you any idea whether he would have any motive for a statement of that kind? I could not impute any motive, but I know he made that statement.
1915. Mr. Wright at that time was Minister for Public Works? Yes.
1916. Do you think a Minister could possibly make such a mistake as to make a survey of a main line into a cross-section? I hardly think so.
- 1917.

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1917. Are you sure you are not making a mistake? No, I am not.

1918. I see from the Appendix that Mr. Secretary Wright was asked to name a day on which to receive a deputation, but he declined to receive a deputation on the ground that he was in possession of all the facts which could be urged. Is that the deputation to which you refer? I do not think it was a deputation. It was a correspondence which was being carried on between the Committee and the Secretary for Public Works.

1919. But if that statement was made by Mr. Wright would it not deter many people from purchasing land on that line? I do not know whether the statement was made public. It was a communication between the Department and the St. Peters to Liverpool Railway League.

1920. But is not all the correspondence between the League and Mr. Wright public property? No doubt.

1921. Then the statement of Mr. Wright that it was a cross-section must have been a public one? I have no doubt it was. I am not prepared to say that all the statements are public.

1922. If such a statement were made would it not be misleading to the general public? No doubt about it.

1923. You have no doubt you are correct when you say that Mr. Wright made that statement? I am prepared to state that he did say so.*

1924. *Mr. Copeland.*] Can you give the names of any men in political life who are connected with land which this railway would benefit? No, I cannot.

1925. Do you consider you have good grounds for believing that any member of Parliament or Minister of the Crown has improperly used his public position to influence the Department in submitting this line of railway? I am not prepared to say that.

1926. Then you cannot give the Committee any definite information on the matter? No; I simply gave it as a cue in order that it might be of some service.

1927. You gave it as what you heard as a rumour? Yes, and I stated so in the evidence.

1928. But you have no information with which to support that rumour? None whatever. I simply stated it as hearsay and rumour.

1929. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What are the names of the land syndicates to which you refer in your evidence? As far as my memory serves me I did not refer to any syndicates specially. I stated that it was a land speculator's line, and I believed those large tracts were bought by large speculators, and subsequently sold to building societies.

1930. Can you tell me the names of any societies which have land out there, or which have bought property along the line? One society has a large board on the Canterbury Road. No one can go along the road without seeing it.

1931. What society is that? I believe it is the Anglo-Australian.

1932. Are any politicians connected with that society as directors? I am not aware of any.

1933. Do you know a society called the Land Reform Society? No.

1934. You do not know of any society of that name which has bought land along this line? No, not of that name.

1935. Or any name of that kind—the Land Reform Investment Society? No; I only noticed that board with large letters upon it fronting the main Canterbury Road.

* NOTE (on revision):—The following remarks will probably clear up any doubt arising from answer given to question 1923. I wish to add in answer to question 1910, asked by Mr. Tonkin, that which I was unable to furnish when requested to do so:—

“Department of Public Works,

Sydney, 31st January, 1885.

Dear Sir,—I have your letter of the 30th, re the proposed railway from St. Peters to Liverpool. Your committee need not be in any alarm about this. I have in no way changed my views, and the surveyor has received instructions to stake the line out; but before doing so, he is making the necessary cross-sections.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) F. A. WRIGHT.

J. H. Legge, Esq., Chairman of Committee, proposed railway, St. Peters to Liverpool, 112, Pitt street, Sydney.”

This communication refers to Bell's line.

Also I desire to add to question 1912, asked by Mr. Tonkin, that the survey was not ordered by Mr. Wright—but by Mr. Whitton at the urgent request of certain interested parties—during a temporary absence of Mr. Wright.

A suitable reply was at once despatched to the foregoing intimation from the Minister that he had, at this date, selected the route of the proposed railway, and he was informed that 97 (ninety-seven) property holders along such route, were then prepared to make free grants of land, and to execute conveyances to the Government for that purpose immediately they were called upon to do so. Your committee believing that the time had arrived in which the areas of the respective portions of the lands required to be transferred, should be ascertained and described, also offered to render any assistance which the Minister might suggest, and which lay in their power towards that object, and likewise undertook to have all requisite conveyances duly executed if so desired.

On January 30, 1885, your committee wrote stating that they were unable to find that the line was being “staked out” in compliance with the last-mentioned assurance received, and pointing out that notwithstanding the Minister's announcement to a deputation advocating a different route that “there must be an end to these incessant trial surveys,” they ascertained that a fresh trial survey was being made, which would leave aside all the populated neighbourhoods, and which was quite divergent from the route proposed and already decided upon, as intimated by the Minister.

TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.	JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

C. A. Goodchap, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

- C. A. Goodchap, Esq., M.P.
21 Jan., 1890.
1936. *Mr. Trickett.*] You are at present one of the Members for Redfern? Yes.
1937. You were formerly the Commissioner for Railways? Yes.
1938. The Committee are at present considering a proposal to extend the Railway from Marrickville to a point on the Burwood Road. Are you cognisant of that proposed line? Yes.
1939. Have you been over it? I have.
1940. Do you know the length of the line? It is about 4 miles 60 chains from Marrickville to Burwood Road. I think the construction of the line would cost about £90,000.
1941. Are you in favour of the proposed line? Yes, I am decidedly in favour of it.
1942. Are you in favour of it as a line by itself, or as part of a possible extension further on? Well I think that as a line by itself it would be a remunerative undertaking.
1943. Would you give us your reasons for coming to that conclusion? I think that it offers great facilities for the location of a large population on the line; the land is admirably situated for residential purposes, and I believe it will be largely availed of by the public, the more so as it has this advantage over other suburbs that the value of the land there is very much smaller than it is on any other suburban line.
1944. The value of the land to be resumed? No; the land for residential purposes. I consider that the high value placed on land in many of our suburbs is a deterrent to a great number of poor people who might seek habitations there; I think that the land in the vicinity of this line will offer a great temptation to a large number of people to go and reside there.
1945. Do you think that the construction of the line would be a benefit in the way of promoting manufactures of any kind? I think that a great number of manufactories would start where there are water facilities, and at Cook's River there are great facilities for that purpose.
1946. You are aware that on either side of what is called the lock-spitted line there have been rival routes? There have been three lines proposed.
1947. This is the centre one? Yes.
1948. Do you think it the best of the three? That is my clear opinion.
1949. On what ground do you base that opinion? It will tap the most population.
1950. Can it be as easily constructed as any of the others? I do not know about that. I think that the cost of constructing this line may be comparatively greater than the cost of the other projected lines. A line was suggested from just beyond the river—Arneliffe—and of course that line might be cheaper to construct than any of the others, for the reason that it would not necessitate the construction of a bridge over Cook's River. I should decidedly say that the lock-spitted line would be the best of those proposed, as tapping the largest population.
1951. Then if the line started at Arneliffe it would avoid that population? Yes; I think it would.
1952. In some papers before me I find the following:—"Mr. Myles M'Rae drew the attention of the Minister to a scheme which he had propounded some years before for resuming land on an extensive scale along the course of the proposed line, and after the construction of the line disposing of the surplus land, which he maintained could be done at an enormous profit." Then there is a side-note which says:—"This was Mr. Commissioner Goodchap's scheme." Since then have you changed or modified your opinion in reference to the proposed line? When I was Commissioner for Railways I suggested to the Minister for Works that agents should be employed for the purpose of acquiring land at least a mile in width from the neighbourhood of St. Peters or Marrickville to Liverpool. It was then understood that the land was held in large estates, and it was thought that by employing agents outside the Government service, and getting that area of land under offer for six months, the Government would be enabled to submit a Bill to Parliament for availing themselves of the contracts which would have been made, to take up the land, form townships, construct a railway, and pay the cost of the acquisition of the land by the sale of the surplus, which I am sure we should have been able to do. The Minister of the day so far agreed with me that an agent was employed for the purpose of getting the land under offer; but, whether by the views of the Department becoming known, or by a singular coincidence, almost immediately afterwards an agitation was got up for the purpose of inducing the Government to construct the line. Of course the proposal to acquire the land in the way that I had proposed then became inoperative, and I suggested to the Minister that under no circumstances should the Government consent to construct the line unless the owners of the land through which it would pass would give free the land required for the line.
1953. This proposal to connect the Southern line with the Illawarra line somewhere about Newtown is no new idea of yours? I have had that idea for many years.
1954. You are still of opinion that it is a desirable thing to carry out? I am not so convinced of the desirableness of carrying the railway from Sydney to Liverpool as I was in those days, because at that time it was the alternative scheme to the doubling of the line from Campbelltown to Liverpool, and the quadrupling of the line between Sydney and Homebush. Now I believe that both those measures have been provided for; therefore the necessity for this line on the score of its meeting a congestion of the traffic is in a large measure removed. I may say that it is altogether removed. There is the other ground that it would save the public 5 miles of running, and that is the only ground on which the construction of the line to Liverpool can be advocated.
1955. The difficulty of relieving the traffic on the Southern line will shortly be removed by the quadrupling of one line and the duplication of another? Yes.
- 1956.

1956. Therefore that phase of the question is much modified? Yes, in my opinion.

1957. I ask that because the Railway Commissioners state that as a means of relieving the traffic of the Southern line the railway, if carried to Liverpool, will be of very little utility;—do you agree with that? I do; with the facilities that are to be afforded it would be of very little utility.

1958. Have you gone into details so as to ascertain what would be the main benefits accruing from its construction from Marrickville to Burwood Road? Yes; I have formed an opinion on the subject from my knowledge of the district; the population already there, and the population which would immediately follow, if the line were constructed.

1959. Can you tell us what opinion you have arrived at as to the probable result? I consider that the line for the first twelve months would realise £8,000 or £10,000. That is for the whole length, from Burwood Road right into Sydney.

1960. Do you look upon the Canterbury Racecourse as an important factor as regards the earning capabilities of the line? Yes; a very important factor.

1961. You think that it would be largely availed of by people going to the racecourse? I think that if the line were made a greater number of people would attend the racecourse than do now attend it. I think the returns would show a revenue from that source of £2,000 or £3,000 a year at least.

1962. You think that the probable revenue of the line from Burwood Road into Sydney would be £10,000 a year? £10,000 for the first year, and a continually increasing revenue afterwards.

1963. I suppose you could not separate the earnings on the first portion of the line from those on the line from Marrickville to Burwood Road? It would be a matter of proportion. It is 4 miles 60 chains from Marrickville to Burwood Road, and 3 miles 20 chains from Sydney to the Junction. I do not know that the 3 miles 20 chains should be altogether credited with an equal proportion of revenue. I think that the new line should have the benefit of that to a very large extent. Only the actual cost of running the traffic from the junction into Sydney should be credited to that portion of the line.

1964. The Railway Commissioners tell us they think that the revenue from this portion of the line will be about £3,000 a year? I have no hesitation in saying that it is altogether an under-estimate.

1965. Marrickville and Dulwich Hill are already served by a tramway? Some portion of Marrickville but not the western portion of it.

1966. Do you think that the making of this railway would be like robbing Peter to pay Paul, take traffic from the tramway to the railway? I think it would not do that in any material degree.

1967. For what reason? Because the traffic to be served—which I calculate is altogether beyond the province of the Illawarra line, or the Marrickville tramway to carry—is independent traffic at present carried by omnibuses.

1968. It has been suggested to the Committee that a tramway from the Ashfield Railway Station would carry the traffic to the Canterbury racecourse? I am clearly of opinion that it would do no such thing. The number of people to be carried on race days would necessitate a larger service than the Department could possibly supply, and I do not think that a tramway would be sufficiently attractive to the public.

1969. Has your experience been that where suburban railways have been made a rapid increase in population, and the railway revenues has accrued? Our experience has been entirely to that effect.

1970. And you think this a most desirable line to construct at the present time? I think so. If I had a voice in the matter I would certainly carry it beyond the 8-mile mark.

1971. You said that if the line were taken on to Liverpool the landowners ought to give the land required for it, but considering that the estates have been cut up into small areas do you think that condition ought to be imposed now? I do not, as regards owners of small allotments. It would be an absurdity to ask the owner of a small allotment to give his land free; but if the line should pass through any large areas—

1972. What is your idea of large areas? Areas of 600 acres or 700 acres.

1973. Then it would be only fair? Yes. Under the present Railway Act the necessity for demanding a free gift of the land required for a railway is not so great as it was at the time when I advocated it, because the compensation to be paid is to abate in proportion to the value given by the railway to the residue of the land.

1974. *Mr. Lackey.*] Have you given much attention to providing railways for suburban traffic? Yes.

1975. And supposing that this accommodation were to be provided, do you think that it ought to be on some definite system, or commenced in the way that this project is to be? I think that the locality through which this railway will pass offers special facilities for the location of a large number of people on the land, and I think for the reasons which I have already given, viz., that the value of the land there is so very much less than the value of other suburban lands that the people would go and locate themselves there to a much larger extent than they have settled on the other suburban lines. In fact the prices of land on the other suburban lines are prohibitory in a large measure to the poorer classes of the people who might desire to reside on these routes.

1976. When the project was first submitted, of which this line form a part, it was one to extend from Liverpool to Sydney? Yes.

1977. When you were in office did you receive applications for the construction of lines to other suburban districts, such as Saltpan Creek and Druitt Town? There were numerous petitions for the construction of lines in that direction to get settlement on the land.

1978. But nothing has been done to give effect to them? No.

1979. Supposing this project were carried out, do you think it would go a certain distance towards meeting the requirements of those residing further on? I have no doubt of it. I should advocate the construction of the line as far as the 11th mile. That would take it to the immediate vicinity of Bankstown.

1980. There is a settled population about Bankstown? Yes; Upper and Lower Bankstown.

1981. Is there good land? Excellent land, and excellent sites for residences up to within 2 miles of George's River. I think the ground is admirably situated for residential purposes. It is elevated land.

1982. Are you as strongly in favour of the construction of this part of the line as you were formerly in favour of the construction of the whole line? In advocating a through line to Liverpool I had in view the advantage of affording a suburban line to Bankstown. I think I stated in my report that it was an admirable line for curtailing the distance for the through traffic, and that it would take off the congestion of the traffic on the main line, and also afford a means by which the poorer classes of the people could obtain residences in the country instead of being cooped up in the town.

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1983. Do you think it would not be practicable to give the residents in those districts adequate accommodation by extending the tramways? I think not. I think the distance is too great for trams, and time being the essence of all arrangements of that kind, the time occupied in coming into town by a tram service would lessen very much the advantages to be obtained by rapid communication.
1984. That is supposing the tram service were conducted on a single line? It would not matter whether it were a single or a double line, the time occupied would be too great for people engaged in business in the town, and it would be that class who would reside in the localities to be provided for.
1985. Do you know at what rate the trams travel? Yes; the average, including stops, is about 6 miles an hour.
1986. Stopping at the corner of every street? No; at the recognised stopping places.
1987. Could we not have alternative services, one stopping at one place and the other stopping at another place? I think that that would cause the greatest possible inconvenience to the public. They would not know where the trams were going to stop, and they would always be in the wrong ones. The system, though good in theory, is practically inadmissible.
1988. Do you not think that in connection with a system of suburban railways a well thought-out system of that kind ought to be adopted? That plan is adopted now. There are through suburban trains and stopping suburban trains.
1989. I mean for the suburbs generally, such as Botany, Randwick, and others;—it has been said by those opposed to the tramways that some system of suburban railways ought to be introduced? Yes; I believe so.
1990. You are of opinion that a large tramway system would be incapable of performing the service between the metropolis and populous suburban districts? Yes.
1991. Suppose that this project were carried out, do you think it is desirable to commence in this way by making an isolated suburban railway, or ought some system to be adopted by which suburban tramways could be carried out? There is this distinction between the two. On a railway there are certain stations well marked stopping places, and it is possible on a suburban railway to run through trains and stopping trains, but I do not think that that could be made to apply to the tramway service.
1992. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You are aware, I presume, that this proposed line will run parallel within a mile and a-half of the line to Parramatta? No, I am not aware of that.
1993. Are you aware that the Canterbury race-course is only a mile and a-half from the Ashfield Station? It is about that distance.
1994. This line will almost touch the Canterbury race-course, will it not? I believe it will. At that point it is about a mile and a-half from the railway.
1995. As a matter of fact it gets a little closer to the line to Parramatta the nearer it approaches Marrickville, judging from the diagram? I am not sure of that. I know that as it leaves Canterbury, towards Burwood Road, it gets farther away.
1996. I am talking now about the greater length of the line from Marrickville to the terminus at the Burwood Road; would you say that it is within 2 miles of the line to Parramatta? I do not think that at Belmore it is within 3 miles.
1997. But this line does not touch Belmore? It is to the right of Belmore—to the north of Belmore. I think that the terminus at Burwood Road would not be within 3 miles of any station on the main suburban railway.
1998. As a matter of fact we know that the line at some points is within 2 miles of the line to Parramatta? Of the line to Parramatta, yes, but of no station. It is no use reaching a line unless you can reach a station.
1999. I give you one station—Ashfield—which, we have evidence to show, is between a mile and a mile and a half from the Canterbury race-course, and this line would go very close to that race-course; therefore the line could not be more than 2 miles distant from the Parramatta line? It is not at that point.
2000. Bearing in mind also that this district is to a large extent served by tramway from Dulwich Hill, which tramway runs parallel partly with the Marrickville line and then parallel with the proposed line, do you not consider that the district is already pretty well served by railway communication? In the first place I must, with great deference, correct your statement that the Dulwich Hill tramway at all attracts the traffic that will be attracted by this railway. Separating the traffic which avails itself of the Dulwich Hill tramway, I estimate that all that traffic which lies towards the river will be benefited by this railway, and the railway will not in any way interfere with the traffic which at present makes use of the Dulwich Hill tramline.
2001. Taking your statement now, supposing this line were not constructed at all, the people living in that district to be served by this proposed line must utilize the Dulwich Hill tramway if they want to go into Sydney speedily, or else must go on to the Parramatta line? The people I am considering now—the people who reside in western Marrickville—a large number of them would make towards the Tempe station on the Illawarra line.
2002. How far would those people be distant from Tempe? A mile and a quarter or a mile and a half.
2003. Do you not think that they are pretty well served as matters stand, in having railway communication only a mile and a half away? I should say that looking at the demand for facile communication, they would be considerably disappointed if they had permanently to rely upon those means.
2004. Of course in the future when there is a large population out there, that argument, I admit, might be of great importance, but does it not strike you that this is a work that might very well stand over for a while till that population is about there? I do not think that the population will be about there till the railway is there; the population will follow the railway.
2005. What do you consider the population out there really to be served by this railway? In course of time 20,000, 30,000, or 40,000 people; at the present time, I should say from 12,000 to 14,000, taking in western Marrickville.
2006. Including places already served by railways? Served inadequately by railways.
2007. You said in your evidence just now that you expected that this line would yield from £8,000 to £10,000 the first year? Yes.
2008. And that that would include 3½ miles of traffic on the Illawarra line? Yes.
2009. Will not that rob the Illawarra line of that 3½ miles' traffic? No; it will be new traffic. I meant 3½ miles from Marrickville to Sydney. All this new traffic will be brought on to that line.
2010. How does this traffic come now? It is coming by Bankstown, Canterbury and Belmore; it is being conducted by omnibuses.
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2011. I understand you to say that in your estimate of £8,000 or £10,000 you include $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of line from Marrickville to Redfern? Over which this line will run. I am not including in that statement the ordinary traffic which now comes on that line—not the present Illawarra line traffic.

2012. Will not these trains interfere with that ordinary traffic? No.

2013. Will they not pick up passengers from Marrickville to Redfern? No doubt of it.

2014. By so doing would they not rob the Illawarra line? If they do that the revenue will be very much larger. As a matter of convenience they will pick up traffic, no doubt.

2015. If it is larger for this proposed line it must be smaller for the other line? I do not think so.

2016. If you rob the Illawarra line of 5,000 passengers a year they will be taken off by this proposed line? Although these trains may pick up this traffic it will be credited to the Illawarra line, as properly speaking it is that line's traffic.

2017. As a matter of fact, then, you can only rely on traffic between Marrickville and the end of this line as legitimate traffic for this line? That is all.

2018. Do I understand you to say that that would bring in from £8,000 to £10,000 a year? Yes, into Sydney.

2019. In the first twelve months? Yes; I am quite certain of it. I said in reply to Mr. Trickett that I thought it a very undesirable apportionment of the revenue to credit the Illawarra line with its proportion on a mileage basis. This is new traffic brought on to that line in consequence of the construction of a line from the junction to Burwood Road, and if we followed the English practice, and if it were a separate Company, it would take running powers over the portion from the junction to Sydney and pay a certain amount for that privilege, but it would not give up all the revenue derivable from that traffic.

2020. Still, you admit there would be a danger of this line robbing the Illawarra line? Not a bit.

2021. Not of passengers it would pick up, who generally go by the Illawarra line? Though picked up by these trains they would be credited to the Illawarra line. It would not rob them of a single passenger.

2022. Then your estimate of £8,000 or £10,000 is altogether outside that? Yes, altogether outside the Illawarra traffic.

2023. You appear to rely a good deal on the traffic to the Canterbury race-course; what do you estimate that at per year? From £2,000 to £3,000.

2024. Do you know the number of persons who have attended there? I am informed that in the last twelve months 46,000 people have gone there.

2025. Are all those people likely to go by railway? Certainly; with immaterial exceptions, I think they would all go by this line if it went near the race-course.

2026. Do you not think that a large proportion would consist of residents who live near the race-course, while another proportion might go in their buggies? I think that the facilities offered by railway are so great as to be sufficient inducement to people to travel by it rather than employ their own vehicles.

2027. In reply to Mr. Lackey, I think you said that a tramway from Ashfield to Canterbury could not carry the traffic to the racecourse? I am quite certain it would be altogether impossible. A train would go out with at least 600 or 700 passengers—perhaps a thousand passengers—in a special train for the races, and it would be quite impossible for any tram service to remove those persons from the railway station to the racecourse; it would necessitate the people being kept there—any desiring to go by the tramway—until the tram went and returned for them; and that inconvenience, I think, would be too much for the public.

2028. Could not provision be made to meet this to a large extent in a case of emergency? I think that the inconvenience and expense of it would be too great. Certainly, eight or nine tram-cars, or even a larger number than that, would be required to be at the station.

2029. Of course you know the tramway serves the Randwick racecourse? That is a very different thing.

2030. If the tramway there can be made to carry that large traffic, surely it could meet a case of emergency at Canterbury Park? The trams to Randwick fill up gradually; they are not brought to a large centre all at once and have to be dispatched from that centre; they get out to the racecourse during several hours in the day, and do not all go at once.

2031. In this case the people would arrive by railway at Ashfield? Yes.

2032. Could you not have enough tram-cars there to run them out to the Canterbury racecourse in half-an-hour? I think it would be possible to provide for that, but it would be very inconvenient and expensive to do so.

2033. If that would do, it would serve a large portion of the traffic that might be served by this line? I do not think that it would increase the traffic very much, and the inconvenience would be so severely felt by the public that they would abstain from going by it.

2034. Were you in office when this line was first proposed? Yes—not Burwood only; as far as the line to Liverpool.

2035. Then you did not have anything to do with the gathering of the data on which to establish the proposal? No—not as far as Burwood Road.

2036. How do you arrive at your estimate of £8,000 or £10,000 per annum? By my knowledge of the district, the number of people in my opinion located there, and by the fact—I believe it is a fact—that seven omnibuses are now employed in conducting that traffic daily.

2037. Those seven omnibuses do not all go from this district, do they; some go from the other side of Belmore and some go to Bankstown? Yes, some from Belmore and some go to Bankstown.

2038. The Bankstown traffic would not be served by this line? I think it would.

2039. Some of the Bankstown witnesses complain bitterly about this proposal? No doubt they would like it to go farther, and I would like to see it go farther.

2040. Is it not 3 miles from Bankstown? To some parts of Bankstown it is nearer than 3 miles; 3 miles would go almost to the other side of Bankstown.

2041. Do you think there are people living in that district now unserved by railways who would give £8,000 or £10,000 a year? No, I did not say that. I said in the first twelve months. I believe there will be a large influx of people to that district directly the line is authorized.

2042. You consider there would be some freightage? There would be some freightage.

2043. Building materials? Yes; they make bricks in the district, and I think that timber and other building material will be sent. There are some large quarries out there, the stone of which is sought after, and a large quantity of loam, I understand, is being carried into Eveleigh on this side, and to Parramatta on the other.

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2044. Do you think this line is likely to prove to be in the way of any proposal for a thorough system of suburban railways—one for the eastern and another for the western; do you think this is likely to affect any future proposal? I do not know that it is a scheme that would be affected in connection with any other scheme, unless, of course, the railway were constructed to Liverpool. Then I think it would be availed of very largely by the Liverpool people, and in fact by all the through traffic. They would save 5 miles of traffic.

2045. We have evidence from the Commissioners that they would utilise it only to the extent of four trains a day? Then I do not think they would utilise it to the best possible advantage. I should think that all the goods trains would go by that route. I think the public would insist on their going that way. By that way they would save 5 miles of freightage.

3046. Do you not think that in the future we shall have a proposal for a circular line of railway to serve the western suburbs and another to serve the eastern suburbs? I do not know that any circular line would go into the district to which you are referring now.

2047. Of course you know the suburban system of Melbourne? Yes.

2048. It runs round certain districts? Yes.

2049. Are we not likely to have something like that—one line to serve the western and another the eastern suburbs? I do not think so; not in the immediate future.

2050. If we should, then this direct line would simply be in the way of those lines? I do not know that it would. It would be a shorter route for the people to go, and they would avail themselves of it.

2051. *Mr. Hurley.*] I suppose that during your experience as Railway Commissioner you heard various schemes propounded—trams as against a railway; that trams would serve in lieu of a railway? I have never heard the public say that; the public have generally been the other way, and preferred a railway to trams.

2052. Do you not remember the time when a public man advocated a horse tram instead of a railway over the Blue Mountains? No; Mr. Arnold advocated a horse tram from Blacktown to Richmond.

2053. Do you remember the present Premier saying that a double line to Parramatta would be a very serious mistake on the part of the Works Department? I do not.

2054. In going through other parts of the world have you taken notice of the tram services; in the city of New York the tram service runs parallel with the railway line? They run right under it.

2055. Have you not noticed that the people avail themselves of the more expeditious train service in lieu of the tram which is underneath? Yes.

2056. And, when they know there are certain places to stop at, that a larger number of persons avail themselves of the railway than of the tramway? I have no doubt of it—a very much larger number.*

2057. Therefore looking at the tram service referred to by Mr. O'Sullivan you are of opinion that that is only a very inadequate supply for the general public? Yes. I think a tramway service for the district to which we are now referring would be most objectionable—would not in any way meet the requirements of the public.

2058. Is there any comparison to be made between the supplying of the Randwick race-course and Canterbury? No proper comparison can be made.

2059. The one would have to pass over a very heavy grade whereas the other is a very light one; is that not so? Yes.

2060. Would the haulage power be 50 per cent. more than on the Randwick line? If you followed the roads it would. You would have to make a line, I think, of itself. You would not be able to follow the main roads without altering the levels in some way or other.

2061. You have noticed the wonderful progress of suburban places such as Ashfield, Stanmore, Petersham, and other places along the line; has not that been caused chiefly by the construction of the line through those suburbs? I should say that it has almost exclusively.

2062. Looking at that and having your eyes open in regard to your visits to other parts of the world, and viewing what has been done for the suburban traffic of Melbourne, you base your calculations chiefly, I presume, on the returns they have made? I am quite certain that where you can get a population of from 15,000 to 20,000 the best thing you can do is to make a railway to them. It will accommodate the public, and it will make a proper return on the capital invested in such an undertaking.

2063. Then the construction of this line will, you think, bring a population if there is not sufficient population there at present to pay for the railway? I think there is not at present. If it were to remain in *statu quo ante*—no improvements, no accession to the population, no manufactories, no industries, I should certainly say “don't make the railway;” but as our experience contradicts such an aspect of the case, and there seems to be special reasons why an extension of the railway to this district would produce the very opposite effect, I should say there is offered the very best possible reason for constructing the line.

2064. You have noticed that Mr. O'Sullivan wanted to pin you down to an expression of opinion that there was only a distance of 2 miles between Ashfield and the projected line of railway; you noticed that? I did not observe Mr. O'Sullivan's object in asking his questions.

2065. Does not this extension, the farther it goes towards Liverpool, go farther from instead of closer to Parramatta? Yes.

2066. The farther you go towards Liverpool the more the distance is increased, and therefore it would not be actually a parallel service? No, it would not. Nearing Liverpool it would be actually running at right angles nearly.

2067. Have you noticed the country beyond George's River towards Campbelltown? Yes; I know the country.

2068. Have you ever had under your consideration a project for a line to cross George's River at some point here (pointing to the map), and leading up to within a few miles of Campbelltown? Yes; Minto, I think, was the name of the place.

2069. Supposing a line from Minto towards George's River at some given point—say George's Hill—would not that reduce the distance and give facilities for the Melbourne trains to reach Sydney at least three-quarters

* NOTE (on revision):—The elevated railway of New York is 9 miles in length, and for that distance it is the cheapest travel in the world. The uniform charge is 5 cents. The charge, however, is the same whether a passenger goes 9 chains or 9 miles. The number travelling is unprecedented; it is 9,500,000 per mile of line per annum. For volume of traffic there is nothing approaching it in the wide world. Its revenue is £96,000 per mile of line.

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three-quarters of an hour under the time now occupied? I should like to know what the mileage is—the difference between the mileage from Minto by the old route and from Minto by the new one. Including stoppage they would travel at the rate of 25 miles an hour.

2070. The distance from Campbelltown to Sydney is 32 miles and that would be lessened by one-third at all events: supposing it was lessened by one third, would not that be a great advantage to the travelling public? It would make a difference of nearly half an hour.

2071. Do you know whether the land on the south side of George's River is private or Government land? I believe there is a large quantity of Government land there—there is a large quantity of church and school lands there—but I think a great portion of it has been alienated.

2072. Looking at the probability of great traffic and of a large population settling beyond the 8-mile peg, would it not be to the advantage of the general public to construct a line beyond George's River to Minto? No doubt the travelling public would benefit because they would get their goods and themselves carried at a cheaper rate and in a more expeditious manner, but whether it would be for the benefit of the general public I do not know, because there is a large portion of the general public not benefited in that way.

2073. But that would relieve considerably the increasing traffic on the western, southern, and northern lines, would it not? The northern railway?

2074. Yes, coming in from Strathfield—the congestion of the northern and western traffic? That has all been met by the duplication or proposed duplication of the line. I think that the duplicated line will give ample facilities for conducting a very much larger traffic than there will be.

2075. For heavy traffic for all time to come? I would not say that altogether; but for the next twenty or thirty years.

2076. At all events you believe that the increased price of land in the other suburban districts shut out people of moderate means who would seek homes where this line would give them facilities? That is clearly my opinion.

2077. And if you were Commissioner for Railways, or Minister for Works, under the old régime, you would be in favour of that line on behalf of the general public? I would.

2078. And believe that, as a national investment, it would be equal to anything in the country? I believe so.

2079. *Mr. Lee.*] You were asked by Mr. O'Sullivan to divide the earnings as between Burwood Road and Marrickville, and Marrickville and Sydney; your estimated return from Burwood Road to Sydney is £8,000? From £8,000 to £10,000.

2080. For the sake of convenience we will say £8,000, and as the proportionate distance from Burwood Road to Marrickville is $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles, and from Marrickville to Sydney $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles, the proportionate part of the earnings from Burwood Road to Marrickville would be £4,150, and consequently—? I have already said that I do not think that it would be just to credit to the Illawarra line the revenue derived from those passengers passing over it.

2081. I am asking more particularly as to earnings between Burwood Road and Marrickville? It will be in proportion to the length.

2082. Whatever the main line might earn between Marrickville and Sydney would be in proportion—at the same rate? Yes.

2083. You have already stated that you think the Railway Commissioners' estimate of £3,000 a year an under-estimate? Yes, it is an under-estimate.

2084. Do you think your estimate of £8,000 a year is an over-estimate? No, I do not. I put £8,000 as the minimum.

2085. Taking the distance as $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles from Burwood Road to Marrickville, about what would be the ordinary passenger fare? I think it is $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. a mile first class, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. or $1\frac{3}{4}$ d. second class; I think that is the rate which prevails.

2086. At all events the first and second class journey, say, would average a little more than 6d.; I make it 8d. according to your figures? I think it would be between 6d. and 8d.

2087. And, at 6d. a fare, 180,000 would have to be carried in the year to give that amount? I would expect a very much larger number than that to be carried. If you take the average in Victoria, for instance, including the suburban traffic, you will find that each person in the country travels about thirty-seven times in the year. If there are thirty-seven million* journeys to a million of people, it is crediting them with thirty-seven journeys for each person, and if you were to credit the people living in this district with thirty-seven journeys each in the year, taking them at 20,000 people, it would be a very much larger number than you estimate. Our people do not travel to the same extent, because they have not the advantage of suburban railways to the same extent as they have in Melbourne, and I think you will find ours is not more than sixteen or seventeen millions.

2088. But are there 20,000 who would use that line in the first year? No; I think there would be from 14,000 to 15,000 the first year, but that would very largely increase—month by month.

2089. That, I admit; I am speaking more as to the population at present—as to what would give the traffic the first year? I should credit everybody living in that locality with twenty journeys in the year, and I should calculate them at 12,000 which would be 240,000 journeys.†

2090. Now as to the taking of these lines to race-courses; can you give the Committee any information as to how that line from Granville to Rosehill is worked: has it been a financial success? I am told it pays very handsomely, indeed. I am told it pays the Rosehill company 3 or 4 per cent. I am not aware of the correctness of the figures, and I have not made any recent inquiry about the matter, but I was informed that the proportion of the revenue which the Rosehill Railway Company obtained from the traffic coming to the races paid between 3 and 4 per cent. on the capital expended on the line.

2091. At the present time the Canterbury race-course is not so popular as the Rosehill; I mean there are not so many races held there? I think there are rather more.

2092. Although Rosehill is easier of access than Canterbury? Rosehill is farther away than Canterbury. I dare say that the facilities for getting there are very much greater.

2093. The Rosehill railway will take the passengers right up to the stand? Yes. 2094.

* NOTE (on revision):—It will be seen by the latest Victorian report that the number of journeys in the year equals 56 millions. The exact figures are 55,911,394.

† NOTE (on revision):—Twenty journeys is a very low estimate; it will be found to be far below the number travelling from any of the suburbs.

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2094. To what part of the district could this proposed line be advantageously extended? I think to the eleventh mile.
2095. In the neighbourhood of where? Bankstown. Chapel Road, I think, is the road that comes down to about that place. Chapel Road comes from the Liverpool Road and there are several roads running into it which would be a great centre for the traffic to gravitate to.
2096. If at any future time it were determined to extend the railway to Liverpool, could this line be utilized? It is the lock-spitted line to Liverpool.
2097. Although at present that does not enter into your consideration? No, unless it be considered that the advantage to the public would justify the construction by reducing the time of the journey and the cost of the journey by 5 miles, I do not see any reason for extending it.
2098. But in your opinion if this line were constructed as a suburban line there could be no possible doubt about its paying the working expenses and in a short time the interest on construction as well? Well, I should like to take it over as a private speculation.
2099. When you were in office, I presume you had to go into this matter very fully? Yes.
2100. You had every opportunity of making yourself thoroughly acquainted with the details of the whole scheme? I had.
2101. *Mr. Cox.*] Of course you are aware of the estimate made by the Commissioners as to the annual cost of this line? Yes. They have calculated, I presume, the interest on the capital, they have calculated the keeping together of the permanent way, they have calculated the locomotive charges, and the traffic charges.
2102. Amounting to £9,500 a year? If I were permitted to see the estimate I might be able to explain it better to you perhaps. I would like to point out, if I may be permitted to do so, the curious discrepancy there appears to me between these two estimates. The Commissioners say that the traffic department expenses for the whole of the line from Sydney to Liverpool would be £1,820, and yet for a shorter route, 4 miles 60 chains—the traffic expenses would be £2,600. It seems to me that while the traffic expenses should be lesser in consequence of the shorter distance they have made them greater.
2103. *Mr. Copeland.*] Is not one a double line and the other a single line? The one proposed as a single line they make the greater—£2,600 for a single line, and only £1,820 for a double line. In each case locomotive expenses are put down at £3,000. Surely it must occur to everybody that the locomotive expenses of running 17 miles must be considerably more than for 4½ miles. But they have put them down as the same.
2104. *Mr. Cox.*] They have estimated that the total revenue would be £5,200 a year? That is the Liverpool line.
2105. Consequently the revenue from the line from Burwood Road to Marrickville would be less? Not very much less, because in calculating that they take no note of any other traffic—they ignore the other traffic altogether in the route from Liverpool;—they put nothing for that; they call it “new” traffic, I think, and put it down at £5,250.
2106. In the estimated loss on the Liverpool and Marrickville line they put down £1,700 for traffic diverted from Petersham and Ashfield? I cannot understand why Petersham is introduced. I can understand why Ashfield is introduced—because of the race-course, but it seems to me to be a very large sum.
2107. Then you do not think it would have that effect and divert £1,700 traffic from the present line? There must be a very large traffic to the race-course if it would make that difference.
2108. You deal with this merely as a suburban line? I would deal with it merely as a suburban line.
2109. What paramount claims has Burwood Road for a suburban line over and above the other suburbs in the neighbourhood of Sydney? Have they not been supplied—the Illawarra line.
2110. There is no railway for instance to Waverley? But there is a good tramway service there.
2111. There is a tramway service here? Not so convenient. I think that while the people about Hurstville and Kogarah, and the people on the North Shore have railway communication, and also the people along the main suburban line at Petersham, Ashfield, and Burwood, it is not unreasonable to grant to these people a like facility, and for the reason that I have specially stated—that the locality offers more advantages for settlement owing to the smaller price of the land than those other places offer.
2112. But other suburbs have at present only tram communication with the city, and why should Burwood Road be singled out to have railway communication, while other suburbs have to be satisfied with the tramway? The reason that would weigh with me is that the line would be a remunerative one.
2113. Would not railway lines to, say, Waverley or Five Dock be remunerative? I do not think so; I think that the cost of putting a railway to Waverley would be exceedingly great.
2114. You mentioned incidentally just now the advisableness of having railway communication with the North Shore;—do you mean by a bridge over the harbour? No; I was alluding to the suburban railway from the Crow's Nest to Hornsby. I look upon that as a suburban line.
2115. You were asked a little while since by Mr. Hurley whether it would not be advisable to extend this railway so that the working classes in the city might have an opportunity of purchasing allotments of land at a cheap rate? I think it would be generally beneficial that the working classes, if they are cooped up in the city, should have an opportunity of obtaining land.
2116. Are you aware that some years ago it was computed that for every man, woman, and child in the community at least one allotment of land had been provided by cutting up the land round the city? I daresay it would average that, but I do not know that it is the case that every man, woman, and child has an allotment.
2117. How many years would elapse before this line would pay interest and working expenses? I think in about twelve months. The working expenses and interest could not be more than £10,000 or £12,000.
2118. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you know any suburban railway out of Sydney that does not pay? If you will except the North Shore line, I do not know of any.
2119. That is not a line out of Sydney? Well, North Sydney it is called.
2120. I mean any from Sydney? No, I do not.
2121. Have you any reason to believe that if the railway were constructed to this suburb it would be different from a line to any other suburb? For the reasons I have given, I think it would be very remunerative.
2122. Do you think that the facilities offered by this suburb are any different from those offered by others that have railway communication? I think that the facilities offered by this suburb are superior.

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2123. Do you think that many other suburbs at the time the construction of the railway to those places was advocated had the same facilities to offer that this suburb has at the present time? I think not. As far as my memory serves me, the location on the Illawarra line was considerably smaller than it is on this line.
2124. Have you any idea of the number of passengers carried by 'bus from the particular suburbs that will be served by this line? I estimate that these omnibuses must earn about £12 a week each. I am told that they actually earn about £20, but I cannot credit it.
2125. Do you know it is already taken in evidence that they earn over £2 a day each? I was not aware.
2126. Of course that would represent over £5,000 a year paid now by passengers coming in by 'bus? But the rate by omnibus would be slightly greater than it would be by railway.
2127. In your estimate of from £8,000 to £10,000 as the probable return, do you include the estimated returns from the racecourse? Yes.
2128. Supposing that the returns for passenger traffic over 4 miles of railway amounted to £3,000 a year, can you give us any idea what the goods traffic would be? I think it would materially depend on the character of the country and the industries established there. It may be generally estimated that in a residential population where there are no industries every person would require about 10 cwt. carried, and if there were no industries established in this place, and the traffic was purely residential, I should estimate that the goods traffic would amount, for 3,000 people, to about 1,500 tons. But there is a much larger number than 3,000.
2129. I am supposing that £3,000 were returned in passenger fares? I do not think that any comparison can be made on that basis.
2130. Do you think that $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the population would be an over-estimate of the number of travellers by rail; say that there were 15,000 inhabitants to be served by this railway, do you think that if we estimate $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. as travelling daily it would be an over-estimate? I should say it would be a very large under-estimate.
2131. That would represent about 400 passengers a day? Yes!
2132. So that the Commissioners' estimate of £3,000 as the total revenue from all sources—supposing this line were constructed—do you consider that is a fair and proper estimate? I think it is a very large under-estimate.
2133. And the working expenses—do you think that they are properly estimated, or do you think they are over-estimated—the estimated cost of maintaining the permanent way? I should think that was a little bit under-estimated.
2134. That is £800, and the traffic, £2,600? I should say that that is a little over-estimated, but it would depend very much on the number of trains run, especially as regards the locomotive expenses.
2135. But I suppose the Commissioners would not run trains at a loss, but would regulate them by the number of passengers? I should think that twelve trains in a day would be the number they would run.
2136. Have you any doubt that within (say) three or four or five years this will be a very remunerative line if constructed? My clear opinion is that it will be a very remunerative line.
2137. Have you heard any proposals to construct this line by private enterprise? Yes. I have never seen any substantive proposal of the kind, but have heard that people would undertake it.
2138. Supposing permission could be given to construct this line at the cost placed before this Committee, would you have any objection to putting in a large percentage of money, and taking shares in the thing, if you had permission from the Government to construct the line? I should like to ascertain in what way I should get from the junction into Sydney.
2139. You have no doubt in your own mind that this line, if constructed, will pay ultimately? I have no doubt.
2140. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you estimate that the additional revenue between Sydney and Burwood Road will be from £8,000 to £10,000? Yes.
2141. That will be the additional railway revenue? The additional railway revenue.
2142. Assuming that traffic representing £8,000 or £10,000 were carried between Sydney and Burwood Road, what would be a fair proportion to allow annually for the use of the line between Marrickville and Sydney, three miles and a half, for working expenses? Everything is calculated on a train mileage basis. There is the permanent way calculated on a train mileage basis, and we know the number of trains run in the year, and what the average cost is of maintaining the railway per train mile run. Well, with the exception of a small charge for the use of signals and for pointsmen, there would be very little traffic expenses incurred, in fact the staff required to work the Illawarra railway would work the traffic of this railway without extra cost, as between Marrickville and Sydney. The permanent way is really the only item to be considered, and I should think that a very fair amount to offer for the privilege of running over the railway line from the junction into Sydney would be about one shilling per train mile.
2143. Assuming a traffic of about £9,000 a year, what would that total; I only ask you to give it to me approximately? I should say there would be 86,000 miles run if there were a good frequent service. I do not mean that at first there would be 86,000 miles run in the year, but a sufficient service for the first three years would, I think, average 86,000 miles, and that would be about £4,300.
2144. Would that be for the use of the line between Sydney and Marrickville? Yes.*
2145. Not between Sydney and Burwood Road? No. That I should look upon as the parent line in connection with this consideration, and the route from Marrickville to Sydney as a foreign line over which this parent line would have the right to run—would have what is called "running powers."
2146. Presuming that the annual earnings would be £9,000, what would be a fair proportion to allow for the use of the line between Marrickville and Sydney. I ask this so that we may estimate how much additional railway revenue would be obtained by the construction of the line from Marrickville to Burwood Road? I quite understand your question. I say 1s. per train mile.
2147. Then you think that out of the £9,000, £4,300 should be allowed for the use of the line between Marrickville and Sydney? Yes. You understood me to say that that would be the average of three years' running. It would all depend on the number of miles run, and if not more than 20,000 miles were run £1,000 would be sufficient to pay. It is the running of trains that makes the wear and tear of the line.

2148.

* NOTE (on revision):—In calculating 86,000 miles as the probable running in three years, I intended to include the whole line from Sydney to Burwood Road—8 miles. The proportion due to the line from Marrickville to Sydney, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles, would be about 35,000 miles.

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2148. You estimate that the revenue the first year would be between £8,000 and £10,000? Yes; but I do not know how many miles would be run. Calculating there would be six trains in and six trains out per day, there would be over that portion of the line 36 miles of trainage a day, and that multiplied by 300—I suppose they would not run on Sundays—would make 10,800 miles a year over that portion of the line.
2149. Then assuming it to be 10,800, the expense for the first year would be about £500? Yes.
2150. Then what would be the additional revenue obtained from the construction of that line after allowing for the working expenses between Marrickville and Sydney. I want to know how much additional net revenue would be produced by the construction of the line, on your basis of £9,000? That would be the additional gross revenue obtained—£9,000.
2151. Less how much for the use of the line between Marrickville and Sydney;—what would be a fair allowance to make for the use of that line? I think a fair thing would be to allow £1,000 a year, to be increased as the train mileage increased.
2152. Precisely; but then your revenue would increase proportionately? Yes; but the right to use this line would be a fixed sum.
2153. Then, allowing £1,000, you reduce the revenue to about £7,000 or £8,000? Yes.
2154. What should be charged against that for working expenses between Marrickville and Burwood Road? That will depend upon the number of trains run.
2155. To produce a revenue such as you estimated for the first year? You might get the revenue in one train, or for the convenience of the public you might run twelve trains, and each train might be only partly filled.
2156. What would be sufficient for the working expenses and maintenance of the line for the first year between Marrickville and Burwood Road? The Commissioners have estimated the maintenance of the line at £800. I think that that is a little under estimated; I think it would be from £1,000 to £1,200, for five permanent way-men would be required at about £120 a year each, and that would be £600 a year; and there would be reballasting the line, making up ballast and sleepers, and maintenance generally in the shape of material—£300 or £400; and certainly £1,000 or £1,200 would be required for permanent way, and there would be the locomotive and traffic charges, and these might safely be put down at 2s. 6d. per train mile run, which would be about £2,500. I think the working expenses of that line for the 4½ miles would be about £3,700 a year for the first year.
2157. Taking your lowest estimate, £8,000, less £1,000 between Sydney and Marrickville, that would give net over £3,000, would it not;—what would be left after deducting £3,700? There would be left about £3,300.
2158. You would have £3,300 net? Yes.
2159. The cost of construction is estimated at £90,000? That is only for a single line.
2160. You reckon for a double line? I should, and should put down the cost at £130,000, that is, supposing the other estimate, £90,000, is right.
2161. In your estimate of traffic you are having regard to a single line only? That is immaterial.
2162. The cost is estimated at £90,000; 3½ per cent. on that would be? £3,150, is it not?
2163. Therefore, you would have £3,300 to meet the interest, which would amount to something less than that? Yes.* I am not at all sure that the Commissioners would agree with me that £1,000 would be a proper amount to allow for running over the rail from Marrickville to Sydney, but I say that in justice to a new line it would be a reasonable charge to make, and it is unreasonable to weight a new line by deducting from the revenue derived from its traffic that proportion which is derived from travelling over the old line on a mileage basis, although I am bound to admit the practice has been to do so.
2164. As a railway expert, you are quite justified, are you not, in expressing your opinion as to what you think would be a fair thing to do as between the new portion and that already constructed—a fair adjustment of the case? I would look upon that as a fair thing. For instance, when we ran over the Wallsend line I tried to persuade the Wallsend Company to be satisfied with 1s. per train per mile for the use of their railway, but they would not consent to that; they did for a number of years, but as traffic increased they wished to share in the benefit, and they went for a portion of the earnings. My theory is that a fair thing is to pay so much for the privilege of running over the line—so much per train mile.
2165. *Mr. Copeland.*] You say you think this line will be a very remunerative line? I think so.
2166. What is the population you estimate for at the present time? Of Western Marrickville?
2167. Yes? I think the population there must be close upon 7,000.
2168. Do you think that is a sufficient population to make this line a very remunerative one? No; but there is Canterbury to come in, and Rosevale and Kingsgrove and a lot of other places to swell the population from 7,000 to 14,000, I think.
2169. That is if the line is extended? No; even to Burwood Road it would command a population to that extent.
2170. Do not a large number of these people make their way at the present time to the existing lines? I think not. Certainly the people of Belmore would come on to this line, and the people of Bankstown would also make use of the line. It must be their nearest point.
2171. You are anticipating, I presume, a considerable influx of population there? Oh, yes.
2172. You say that the land is very cheap now? The land is very cheap.
2173. And if the railway were constructed the people would buy land? It is £1 per foot as against £3 to £5 in other places.
2174. Where do you anticipate these people would come from? I think there are a large number of persons resident in Sydney who would go. I am sure it will be an advantage to the city if the "Rocks" were cleared—if the population assembled there were moved out.
2175. You do not propose to put a charge of dynamite under them so as to remove them from the "Rocks"? I do not propose that.
2176. Are there not enough suburbs at the present time for these people to avail themselves of if they wish? I am sure there are, but the value of the land is so great that it is almost prohibitory for this class of people to get out there.
2177. Are there not other places besides the "Rocks" from which you think population is likely to be derived? Yes, I think Redfern and other places which are getting very densely populated now. 2178.

* NOTE (on revision):—There would be in addition the locomotive expenses on the line from Marrickville to Sydney—say £750.

2178. Is there not sufficient room already for them to go to on the Illawarra line? Yes, I am sure there is sufficient room for them there, but as I said before the land is very dear there.
2179. Have not the Government several sub-divisions which they have endeavoured to sell on the suburban lines still on their hands; I think that on the Illawarra line they have one or two which they did not succeed in selling? I am not aware of it. I know that on the Field of Mars they have been subdividing, but they have not given the people railway communication—they have not carried out their promise of railway or tramway communication.
2180. Take the Illawarra line; is there not land at Heathcote at a grand elevation—800 or 1,000 feet—that still remains unsold by the Government? That is on the South Coast line. I should say it is beyond the suburban area.
2181. Well, at any rate, what I wish to get your opinion about is whether, if the people are desirous of going out to the suburbs, there is not plenty of suburban land available for them at the present time without building this line? Certainly; I have no doubt about it whatever.
2182. Are there not hundreds of empty houses in every one of the suburbs at the present time, showing that the people are not desirous of availing themselves of the existing lines and the existing houses? I believe there are a great number of houses empty.
2183. Has it been your policy—I am referring to your position as Commissioner—has it been the policy of the Government hitherto to build lines where the population was not? Oh, yes.
2184. Rather, has it been their policy to build lines where the population was? Where the population was not, but where the population was likely to come to. I might quote as a favourable instance of that, the Illawarra line, and as an unfavourable instance of it, the North Shore line.
2185. The Illawarra line, you must be aware, was built expressly for the purpose of carrying coal from Illawarra, and to give Sydney people access to what was generally denominated the "Garden of New South Wales"? No doubt that was its chief object, but incidental to that was, of course, the providing for a suburban traffic.
2186. Besides, that was a line that led somewhere; this is a line that leads nowhere? This does not go to any place beyond Burwood at present, or rather it is not now proposed to take it to any place beyond Burwood Road.
2187. I suppose you are aware that the price of land usually rises as soon as it is announced that the Government is going to construct a railway? Yes. I am informed, however, that the assumption was so strong that the railway would come to this place, that the land has already acquired its maximum value.
2188. Then is the maximum value a very low value, or a comparatively good one? As compared with other suburban land, I look upon land at £1 per foot frontage with a depth of 150 feet, as cheap land.
2189. Is there any reason you know why this land if it is in a desirable situation should be at a less rate per foot than land in other suburbs; is there anything special about it; do the breezes blow fresher there, or has it any other particular recommendation more than the other suburbs? As a matter of choice, I would rather give more for the land on this route than on the main line route; it is far better land, I consider, for residential purposes.
2190. At any rate, if it were announced that this line was to be built, would not the land in all probability immediately rise in its market value? Well, I have already said—
2191. You think it has risen to its maximum value now? Yes.
2192. Well, if its maximum value is only £1 per foot whilst land fetches £5 or £6 per foot in other suburbs, there must be something deleterious about this suburb that would make it not desirable? I could not argue that question with you; I cannot give the reasons which cause the difference.
2193. You said you were under the impression that manufactories would spring up if this line were built; can you say whether manufactories have sprung up on the other lines that have been built; say, for instance, on the Illawarra line where the railway crosses one or two rivers? They are salt rivers are they not; but Cook's River is a fresh water river at Canterbury.
2194. At any rate you base your calculation more particularly on the passenger traffic without going into these manufacturing works which are all in the air? I think it would be a passenger line at first and will grow into a goods line afterwards.
2195. You do not reckon that the population at the present time is sufficient to warrant the anticipation of deriving this £10,000 a year do you? No. I say that the population will increase before this line is completed. Before this line is completed and opened for traffic three years must elapse.
2196. How will that population increase in that period—by natural increase of population? No, I think by people going out there.
2197. How far will the Canterbury racecourse be from the railway line if constructed? About a quarter of a mile I understand.
2198. By the position of it on the map it would be about a mile? I thought there was some deviation which took the line nearer the racecourse.
2199. Well if it is half-a-mile do you anticipate that the people will walk that half-a-mile to the racecourse? I think they would, but I do not think it would be so popular a resort as it would be if the railway went close to it.
2200. The question is whether you would suggest that the railway be diverted to the racecourse or whether you would suggest the building of a tramway to carry the people from the railway terminus to the racecourse? I should certainly not advocate a tram from the railway to the racecourse, for the reasons I have already given.
2201. I suppose you would advocate the railway being diverted to the racecourse? If there are no engineering difficulties in the way, and it would not increase the expenditure very much I think it would be a wise thing to take it as near the racecourse as you can get it.
2202. Are you aware whether the racecourse is private property or not? I believe it is private property.
2203. And I suppose that if the railway is diverted so as to be brought nearer the racecourse it will enhance the value of the racecourse and the profits of the proprietors? I should think so.
2204. You said just now that you did not think that it was desirable to have a tram from Ashfield or any of these stations on the Parramatta line to the racecourse, because the Government would not be able to supply accommodation sufficient to take the passengers to the racecourse? I think that is very likely.
2205. But how is it the Government supply sufficient accommodation to convey passengers to Randwick racecourse?

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racecourse? They do not all offer at the same time; they are spread over a longer time, and do not offer in the same numbers. You bring up a train with a thousand people in it and you could not carry them away by tram, but in taking the passengers to Randwick you have four or five trams running, and at different portions of the day—spread over three or four hours.

2206. How many people will one of the double-decker trams carry? I should say about eighty or ninety if they sit down, but when they are overcrowded they take, I believe, 150 sometimes.

2207. Well, I suppose that each tram would carry 100? Yes.

2208. What is the estimated number of people that go to this racecourse? I am informed there are about 2,000 to 2,500 at each meeting.

2209. Well, 2,000 would be twenty tram-loads;—would it not be possible for the Government to convey them from Ashfield? I do not think that more than one double-deck car could be taken at a time by one motor along such gradients as those to be met with between Ashfield Railway Station and the racecourse.

2210. But is Ashfield the only place from which the tram could branch off? It would be the nearest place; and the difficulties would be as great near the course—the gradients are very steep indeed.

2211. What distance would it be from Ashfield to the Canterbury course? I should say not much more than a mile and a half, if that.

2212. By that plan it seems to be evenly situated between the two lines? They do not go as the crow flies, you know.

WEDNESDAY, 22 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

C. A. Goodchap, Esq., M.P., sworn, and further examined:—

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2213. *Dr. Garran.*] While you were Commissioner did you ever give any consideration to the question of providing Sydney with suburban railways as a whole and systematically? Oh yes.

2214. Is it your opinion that, looking to the future, Sydney will need a system of suburban railways? I have no doubt about it. I think all the eastern suburbs should be connected with Sydney by railway.

2215. Do you look upon the present tramway system as merely a temporary makeshift or as a permanent institution? In its present form I should say it is a makeshift.

2216. Do you think that the tramways in any form will meet the requirements of Sydney so far as suburban requirements are concerned? I do not think that, so far as suburban portions of the community are concerned, tramways are the most effective means to meet the requirements? For street to street traffic in a city no doubt they are more effective than a railway would be.

2217. They put people down at the corner of a street as close as possible to where they want to alight? Yes.

2218. But when you get out of the city every increased mile tells against tramways as a system? That is my opinion.

2219. And the limit of tramways' utility would perhaps be about 6 miles? Six miles at the outside.

2219½. When beyond that the time taken is so great it comes practically worthless? Practically worthless in comparison with a railway.

2220. To make more of these suburban railways for Sydney, in the east, to which you referred, would be very expensive? No doubt.

2221. A great deal of tunnelling and rock cutting would be required? No doubt.

2222. The line we now have under consideration would be one of the comparatively easy ones of whatever lines we could make out of the city? I think so.

2223. Would you consider that the Government ought to wait before making that line until it had got a complete system, and was ready to go on with all the others? I should think not. I think it would be unjust to the public residing in that particular locality, and also unjust to the general public, because that line offers every expectation of being a paying line.

2224. If we made several suburban railways at once we might possibly over-do the supply, might we not? I think it is quite possible.

2225. Do you think that at present the supply of suburban railways is overdone? No, I do not.

2226. You think it is rather deficient than otherwise? I think it is decidedly deficient; compared with Melbourne, of course it may be considered to be very deficient.

2227. We have it in evidence that there are about 100 suburban railway stations within 10 miles of Melbourne; we have nothing like that with respect to Sydney? Nothing.

2228. Of course we have the steamboat traffic; but do you think that that would account for the difference? We have a tramway service which, no doubt, is in substitution for a suburban railway system.

2229. So they have a tramway service at Melbourne? They have, but it is confined, I think, within what might be termed the city area.

2230. Taking their railway and tramway system together, and our railway and tramway system, and our harbour steam traffic, do you think we are as well supplied as Melbourne is? I do not.

2231. You think we have something to do to fetch up arrears? I think so.

2232. Do you know any district out of Sydney more suitable for suburban extension than this Burwood Road line? No, I do not.

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2233. Do you know any that could be more quickly and cheaply put into execution? I do not.
2234. Do you know any district more suitable for residential population? I do not. I think this particular district is exceptionally situated for residential traffic.
2235. Then on all grounds you look upon this as having, so to speak, a prior claim to any other suburban extension? Yes, I do.
2236. It has been given in evidence that there are several hundreds of houses now unoccupied between Sydney and Parramatta;—do you think that a sufficient reason for not making a new suburban line? No, I do not. I think that if these places be empty it is not an indication that they are not required. I think that with a little return of prosperity, and the general demand which arises therefrom for residential dwellings, they will not only be full but there will be room for others.
2237. According to your observation is not the population of Sydney increasing very rapidly? Yes.
2238. The same with regard to Melbourne? I think, at any rate, in an equal ratio.
2239. It seems to be a fact that in both these great metropolitan cities there is a great increase every year in population? No doubt.
2240. Is it not true that some parts of the city of Sydney are almost unwholesomely crowded now? I think so.
2241. Is it not also a fact that business premises are gradually displacing private residences? I believe that to be the case.
2242. So that there is a forcible movement of the population outside the city towards the suburbs? Yes; the tendency is to remove from within the city boundaries to the suburban areas.
2243. And to meet that a fair supply of suburban railway accommodation is required? Yes.
2244. Then looking at it in the interest of the metropolis you think this is a justifiable undertaking? As I have already stated, I think that, because of the natural features of the country commanded by this railway, and the fact that the land is cheaper out there than in any other suburban areas, this particular locality offers attractions of a superior kind.
2245. Now as to the finances; during the time that you were Commissioner did the profit on the line between Sydney and Homebush increase? Considerably.
2246. You were a witness to that increase? Yes.
2247. Has not the line as far as George's River also been a financial success? Yes; unexpectedly so.
2248. So far as your experience enables you to judge, the extension of this line from Marrickville for 4 or 6 miles would very soon also be a financial success? That is my clear belief.
2249. You do not think it would be any burden on the railway account? I do not.
2250. It would rather help to pay the loss on some of the country lines? Well, in so far as it would exceed working expenses and interest upon the capital, it would no doubt contribute, but I do not consider that the amount would be so considerable as to affect materially the loss on other lines.
2251. But it would be a valuable asset? Yes.
2252. Can you name any limit as to which the suburban traffic is thoroughly trustworthy and payable—limit of distance? I do not think it would be found to be remunerative a greater distance than 11 or 12 miles.
2253. Then you do not anticipate on the Illawarra line any great suburban traffic south of the George's River? I do not.
2254. Do you anticipate on the Newcastle line any great suburban traffic north of the Parramatta River? No.
2255. You think in each case the river is about the boundary? The river is about the boundary in each case.
2256. And that estimate would in your judgment justify an extension of this line as far as Bankstown? As far as the 11th mile-post—yes, as far as Bankstown.
2257. And quite certainly as far as Burwood Road? Quite certainly. I think it might be advantageously extended farther than that.
2258. You stated in your evidence yesterday that you made an effort quietly to secure for the Government the increment of value on this projected railway before you made any public announcement of it? Yes.
2259. At that time the "Public Works Act" was not in force, was it? It was not.
2260. Now that that Act is in force, and the Government gets recouped the increment of value that it creates for any residue of the estate;—do you think that any importance attaches to the stipulation that the people should give their land? No, I do not.
2261. If the valuation is really fair—and we are bound to presume it will be—the Government will give what is fair, and the owner will get what is fair? Yes.
2262. Is there anything we ought to ask for more than that? I think not. You could not expect the holders of small allotments to give the land required free, and the holders of large allotments would not receive any compensation, I consider, because the benefit which would be done by the construction of the railway to the residue of the land will be full compensation for what they give up.
2263. I am asking you whether under the new circumstances there is really any importance to be attached to those promises? I do not think so.
2264. Then if it should turn out that promises originally made with respect to this line on the assumption that it would go through to Liverpool have now fallen through, you would not stop the making of the line simply on that account? I would try to get those persons to adhere to their promises, in this view of the case—that when those promises were made there were large areas through which the railway would have passed, and since that time those areas have been cut up into small allotments; if they be still held, if still unsold though subdivided, I would, notwithstanding their subdivision, hold the people to their original promises.
2265. But we have been told that the original promise was conditional on the line going to Liverpool? No doubt that was so.
2266. And if that condition is not fulfilled all the promises would fall through, and I ask if they should do so, do you consider it a matter of great importance? Not of great importance.
2267. *Chairman.*] You said that to construct the line to Liverpool would save the public 5 miles of charges travelling south? Yes.
2268. Is that so? It is so.

C. A.
Goodchap,
Esq.
22 Jan., 1890.

2269. Would not the increased locomotive expenditure be a charge on the public which would be more than the saving for the 5 miles haulage; you now do that service to Liverpool by one line—one set of stations? As a matter of fact the locomotive charges would be less, because they would travel 5 miles less than they would otherwise have to travel to Liverpool.

2270. You would be taking the locomotives two routes instead of one when one would answer the purpose? As regards locomotive service it would make no difference whatever.

2271. Why they might run one engine to carry all the passengers going south to Liverpool, and you would run two? But there are different services; there is the local service provided by one set of locomotives and the other service provided by another set, and it would be immaterial whether the other engine went via Parramatta to Liverpool, or by this other route. The distinct advantage of going by this other route is that they would save 5 miles of running.

2272. Would there not be additional expense in connection with stations and officers in connection with those stations? Those are traffic charges. No doubt the traffic charges would be increased.

2273. So I suppose that the public in the end would not gain very much by it? There are two publics to be considered in this case—there are the public who use the railway for that purpose, and there are the larger public who are not specially benefited by it. No doubt the larger public might lose, but it would be an advantage to those who make use of the railway.

2274. *Mr. Lackey.*] During the time you were in office there was, you said, a project for a system of suburban railways initiated? Not initiated.

2275. Spoken of? It was in the air—yes.

2276. It did not reach the extent of having any design or plans submitted? No.

2277. Did you have any plans submitted to you—skeleton plans, tracings, or anything of that sort? I can think of no plan other than that of Mr. John Young for bringing the railway into Sydney, going out round by Woolloomooloo, then up to Waverley, and then round by Botany, forming a suburban railway to the eastern suburbs.

2278. There was no general plan devised by the Department? No.

2279. The plan of which you speak now, submitted by Mr. Young, is available, I suppose; was it lithographed? I believe it was. I do not know that any sections were taken; I think it was only a ground plan.

2280. Is it not your opinion that any system of suburban railways ought to be of a uniform character; that they ought to fit in one with the other, as it were? No doubt, as far as possible.

2281. You do not know that this line would not fit in? I do not see how it would possibly fit in with an eastern service, such as I alluded to now.

2282. But I took it that the service was a general one; I have a sort of distant idea that it was a sort of circular service with branches going in different directions, was it not? I think it was a circular service going from Redfern and coming to Redfern again via the places I have spoken of.

2283. Not extending towards the Parramatta Road, or Five Dock, or those places? No.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

APPENDIX.

A.

PROPOSED LOOP-LINE, ST. PETERS TO LIVERPOOL AND RIVAL ROUTES; ALSO DUPLICATION OF THE SOUTHERN LINE, GRANVILLE TO LIVERPOOL.

[*Précis of Proceedings in relation thereto.*]

THE first reference which I find in the papers to a proposal to lay a loop-line from the vicinity of Liverpool to some point on the Illawarra Railway is contained in an extract of Mr. Commissioner Goodchap's Annual Report for the year 1882 of which the following is the text:—"I have called the attention of successive Ministers of Works for the last two years to the desirability of providing for the increased traffic on the southern line, and creating and developing additional suburban traffic by the construction of a line from Liverpool to meet the Illawarra line in the neighbourhood of Newtown. Such a line would open up a large area of country capable of cultivation, and would give an additional outlet for the over-crowded population of the city."

The attention of persons living on the route and connected with the properties likely to be affected by the line was directed to the subject, and Mr. Wearne of the Liverpool Paper Mills addressed the Hon. A. Stuart in advocacy of the scheme, but naming Hurstville as the point of junction with the Illawarra line. 20/4/83.

Mr. Commissioner Goodchap wrote a minute in substance the same as the before quoted remark, adding that if the Government would purchase or resume a mile in width along the route the cost of the line might be recouped by the sale of the unused land.

In the same interest an influential deputation waited on the Minister and presented a petition signed by 12,429 persons praying for the construction of a line from St. Peters on the Illawarra line *via* Marrickville, Canterbury, Kingsgrove, Moorfields, Belmore, and Bankstown to Liverpool. The deputation represented that if the line were made it would bring Liverpool within 15 miles of Sydney and would cause a large area to be populated. It was in view to construct tramways to some of the districts concerned but they thought this railway would be better in every way. The deputation seems to have held out a prospect of the land required being given to the Government free of charge. 31/8/83.

The Minister informed the deputation that the cost of the earthworks of this line would be £150,000 to which must be added £150,000 for three bridges over Cook's and George's Rivers, and £30,000 for rails. The item for land would be enormous, at least £250,000. The line *was* wanted to relieve the plethora of traffic on the main line, but in view of this monstrous outlay he could not recommend the proposal to Parliament, because Parliament would not approve it. It would be cheaper to quadruple the present line. If, however, a majority of the land owners along the route would sign an undertaking to present the land required to the Government, he should be prepared to recommend the line, and the necessary preliminaries should be carried out at once.

A few days after the Minister directed that a trial survey should be made of the line above referred to, a large number of the landowners concerned having complied with the Minister's condition in executing an undertaking to give the land required for the line free of cost to the Government.

On the 19th October a deputation waited on the Minister to advocate a rival route, *viz.*, from about Burwood to Liverpool, which they said would pass through easier country and avoid the bridges over George's River.

Mr. Wright informed the deputation that the route proposed by them had much to recommend it, but he had already ordered a trial survey to be made of the St. Peters route, which had strong claims inasmuch as it had been promised that the land would be given free. The ultimate recommendation of any line would depend upon the landowners, or the bulk of them, providing the necessary land.

Mr. Wearne's scheme was revived. A deputation waited on the Minister to ask for a trial survey of a line from Hurstville to Liverpool which, although they said a longer run from Sydney, would only require 10 miles of line to be constructed. One of the speakers stated he understood the large landowners on this route were also prepared to give the land. 4/1/85.

The Minister promised that a trial survey of the line should be made, and instructions accordingly were given to the Engineer-in-Chief.

Yet another scheme was shortly after proposed: On the 1st February, 1884, a deputation waited on the Minister to ask for a trial survey of a line from near Minto to the Illawarra line, between St. Peters and Hurstville. The arguments adduced were almost identical with those used in favour of the other routes.

The Minister informed the deputation that their proposal really meant the formation of a line from Liverpool to Campbelltown parallel with the existing line. Picton or any other town might just as reasonably make a similar proposal. He had been liberal in granting surveys but he could see nothing to justify his granting a survey in this case.

Mr. R. J. Johnson, one of the landowners who signed an undertaking to give the land required for the original scheme, wrote to say that there had been a departure from the proposal first made and that if this were persisted in he would not only not hold himself bound by his undertaking and claim compensation for any of his land that might be taken, but would claim compensation for severance and disfigurement of his property. 6/5/84

In reply Mr. Johnson was informed that the Minister would not recommend the line until the persons interested had given a conveyance of the land required.

Mr.

Mr. Johnson replied that he was still prepared to give land in the "grants" specified in his undertaking, but he certainly never intended to give *carte blanche* to take the line through any part of his property to his injury and loss. He had allowed ample margin for any reasonable divergence of the proposed route, but it was neither law nor reason to apply his promise to any or all other routes that might be proposed in opposition to the line he had accepted.

[I have specially noted this episode because it may have an important general bearing upon the promises made to give land. There are several instances in our records where similar promises have been made and afterwards, upon one pretext or another, evaded.]

The Government in submitting their railway proposals to Parliament in the succeeding session, omitted the line St. Peters to Liverpool.

A public meeting of the promoters was convened and was numerously attended. The beneficial nature of the proposal was affirmed by the speakers, and it was stated that the Commissioner for Railways was in favour of it, and that Mr. Secretary Wright thought so well of it that he had given a distinct promise to recommend it.

The outcome of this meeting was a deputation which waited on Mr. Secretary Wright on the 10th October. They reminded the Minister that he had promised to recommend the line, provided the land required was given free; and now they found that the line had been omitted from the Railway proposals. Those who had promised land were as willing as ever to give it. As regarded Mr. Johnson's correspondence with the Minister, that gentleman was prepared to give land if the line were taken from St. Peters, but not if taken from Hurstville. It was asked if there would be any objection to a private Company undertaking the construction of the line.

The Minister informed the deputation that he would oppose any proposal for a private Company to make the line. He was still, he said, prepared to recommend the line if they fulfilled the promise they had made in regard to the land, but he had ascertained from the Crown Solicitor that the written promises already given were not legally binding, and that unless the land was absolutely conveyed half the promises would not be kept. He looked upon Mr. Johnson's letter as a withdrawal of his promise, and moreover, he had learned that many of the landowners had since subdivided their land. He was still prepared to select one of the two staked routes and recommend it, but he must know at once if they would give the land, and he would have conveyances prepared. He did not expect small owners to give their land, nor did he expect to get the large areas required for Stations, but only sufficient to make the line the ordinary width from fence to fence.

This reply of the Minister's settled the fate of a scheme for making a line to Bankstown, a deputation in favour of which waited on the Minister on the same day as the above. Mr. Wright informed the deputation that they could not do better than to co-operate with the St. Peters-Liverpool promoters.

5/11/84.

Mr. F. C. Rorke wrote to Mr. Hammond, stating that they wanted information in regard to the route it was proposed to take, in order that the land owners concerned might be communicated with as to the conveyance of the land required. This letter was forwarded to the Minister by Mr. Hammond, who was informed that the action promised by the Minister to the deputation was in progress.

22/12/84.

The promoters were informed that the line was then in course of being pegged, and Mr. J. H. Legge replied that the Committee were making satisfactory progress in obtaining conveyances of land from the owners.

24/12/84.

Engineer-in-Chief minuted that the Minister had authorized the permanent survey of the line commencing at $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Sydney, on the Illawarra railway, passing through Canterbury, crossing George's River at 15 and $16\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and joining the Southern line near Liverpool.

2/2/85.

The attention of the Minister was drawn by a Mr. A. Childs to the liability of the route selected, to floods, and to the objectionable nature of the point at which it was proposed to place the bridge across the river.

Mr. Palmer explained that he was well aware of the liability of the locality to floods, that at the first bridge this would be provided for by a viaduct of $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles, and at the second bridge by a viaduct of $\frac{3}{4}$ miles, and that the crossing-places would be carefully selected.

2/2/85.

Mr. J. H. Legge wrote that they were apprehensive from the proceedings of the surveyors, that that an important divergence from the original route was in contemplation. Mr. Kennedy, a Government Surveyor, was engaged, he said, on a new trial survey.

The reply given by the Construction Department was practically a disclaimer of any intention to depart from the accepted route.

28/6/85.

The same gentleman again addressed the Minister, stating that his Committee had reason to believe that a serious divergence from the original route was in contemplation, and that if carried out it would have the effect of excluding Canterbury South, Rose Vale, Parkestown, Belmore, and Moorfields, from the benefits of the line.

22/8/85.

The papers do not show what action if any was taken in connection with this letter, but

A public meeting was shortly after held at Canterbury to protest against the supposed intended deviation of route. References were made to promises given by Mr. Secretary Wright, that he would recommend the line through Canterbury South, Parkestown, Kingsgrove, Moorefield, and Belmore if the land were given for the purpose, and (it was maintained) the fact that ninety-seven landowners on the route had agreed to that condition entitled them to expect a fulfilment of those promises. It was finally decided to form a deputation to wait upon the Minister on the subject.

Mr. Secretary Wright was accordingly asked to appoint a day, but he declined to receive a deputation on the ground that he was in possession of all the facts that could be urged.

It would appear by a minute of the Engineer-in-Chief that the alternative routes were about this time submitted to the Minister for selection, but no decision was come to. From allusion in the papers it would seem these alternative routes were:—

(1.) Belmore route, length 14 miles 16 chains; estimated to cost £415,938.

(2.) Direct route, length 13 miles 52 chains; estimated to cost £393,870.

(3.) Via Lansdowne Creek, length 14 miles 4 chains; estimated cost, £346,393.

30/7/85.

Although a little out of date a deputation which waited on the Minister in July, 1885, to urge the adoption of the Bell route, via Bankstown must not be passed without notice. The Minister informed the deputation that a number of surveys had been made, one of which was in the direction indicated by them, and that a line a little to the south of Bankstown would be the best, but no decision would be come to until the report of the Engineer-in-Chief had been received.

The

The following day a deputation waited on the Minister to advocate the duplication of the line from Liverpool to Granville. The arguments they desired to employ are set forth in a letter from Mr. McCulloch, M.L.A., to Mr. H. Taylor, M.L.A., which was handed to the Minister. It is there stated that the line in respect of width of bridges, culverts, &c., was prepared for a double road; that the traffic on the road was so large as to justify the duplication of the road. Even when the loop-line from St. Peters to Liverpool was constructed there would be a large traffic from Liverpool to Parramatta and from Liverpool to Homebush in coal and minerals. There was besides a large population of artisans, &c., along the line, and the traffic would soon be immensely increased. The Minister informed the deputation that the action of the Government would depend upon the practicability or otherwise of the St. Peters to Liverpool loop-line, that if the latter were carried out the whole of the through southern traffic would be carried over it, and there would be little but local traffic to provide for between Granville and Liverpool. If the proposed loop were abandoned then—and in that case only—the scheme referred to by them would have to be considered, and would in all probability be carried out.

The papers do not record anything further in connection with either of these proposals until after Mr. Wright went out of office and Mr. Lyne came into power as Minister for Works.

Soon after the accession of the latter to office a deputation waited upon him to advocate a duplication of the line from Granville to Campbelltown. Nearly the same arguments were adduced by the deputation as were employed by the deputation which waited on the previous Minister in favour of duplication between Granville and Liverpool. In addition to these arguments they maintained in connection with the duplication from Parramatta to Penrith, that the Southern line, in point of heaviness of traffic, had the better claims to consideration. The Minister in reply said that doubtless the proposed duplication would facilitate the traffic, but he thought the question was intimately connected with that of the loop from St. Peters to Liverpool, because if the latter were made it would relieve the present main line of a large amount of traffic. If the traffic on the Southern line was the larger as stated, the duplication of the line from Parramatta to Penrith was certainly an argument in their favour. He would, however, cause full inquiry to be made.

The Engineer for Existing Lines, in reply to the Commissioner, estimated the cost of the proposed duplication at £121,500, with an additional expenditure of £43,000 if the bridges were renewed, which it was thought would be necessary.

The action of the advocates of the quadruplication of the line, in urging their proposal upon the Minister, seems to have alarmed the persons who had the construction of the loop from St. Peters to Liverpool, in view—the two being, to a certain extent, rival schemes—and they in their turn formed a deputation to interview the Minister. No new arguments were employed; but the deputation stated that a well known firm of contractors were prepared to undertake the work for two-thirds of the estimated cost. The Minister said that this scheme was largely bound up with that of duplicating the line, for it was not to be expected that both works would be carried out, as the construction of a loop would do away with the necessity for duplication. The loop would be a very expensive work; but the fact of the greater part of the land being given free was a strong inducement to the Government to undertake it. He (the Minister) would promise that this should be considered with any proposal the Government might submit, but he did not think they would submit any that session.

On the 30th July another deputation, in the same interest, was received by the Minister. They advanced nothing new, but maintained that the line, as they were informed by practical men, could be constructed for £200,000. The Minister said there was really no occasion for them to come to him, as matters stood precisely as they did when they waited upon him a short time previously, and he could only repeat that the line should be considered when the next Railway proposals were dealt with.

Mr. Myles M'Rae drew the attention of the Minister to a scheme which he had propounded some years before, for resuming land on an extensive scale along the course of the proposed line, and after the construction of the line disposing of the surplus land, which he maintained could be done at an enormous profit. Mr. M'Rae also advocated making Arncliffe the point of junction with the Illawarra line.

The Minister declined to receive a proposed deputation in the interests of the duplication, Granville to Liverpool.

Again another deputation (St. Peters to Liverpool) equally barren of new facts with the previous one waited on the Minister who replied in substance as before, and minuted that the St. Peters loop scheme and the duplication question were in his opinion intimately connected and that if the former were carried out the latter would be unnecessary.

Mr. Commissioner Goodchap replied that there was no pressing necessity for a double line beyond Granville.

Another deputation waited on the Premier and the Minister for Works to urge the St. Peters to Liverpool loop. The Minister informed them that the question at issue was whether that scheme or the duplication should be carried out and it seemed to him that the advantages were in favour of the loop.

A Mr. W. W. Bucknall wrote advocating Arncliffe as the point of junction of the loop with the Illawarra line, but the Construction Department reported that that route had already been considered in connection with a survey made outside the Department by a Mr. Saunderson.

Mr. Secretary Lyne made a long promised visit to the locality and after inspecting the route told the promoters that they might reasonably expect that the line would be made, and that no long time would elapse before it was commenced.

About this time Mr. Lyne went out of office, but he left a minute on record to the effect that he had determined to submit the loop (St. Peters to Liverpool) to the Cabinet with a view to its being recommended to Parliament for approval. He had been over the line and considering the easy nature of the country he did not see how it was to cost anything like the estimated amount £395,000. Nearly the whole of the land would be given, and with the exception of the bridges over St. George's River there would be no work of any magnitude. As far as he could judge £6,000 a mile and £134,000 for the bridges making £214,000, should suffice for the work, and he would urge the Cabinet to submit the line for the approval of Parliament.

Immediately after this Mr. Sutherland took office, and very shortly afterwards received an unusually influential deputation in advocacy of the same scheme (the St. Peters to Liverpool loop). The Minister said the Government did not intend to submit any railway policy that session, and that he would not be bound by any promise given by previous Ministers. He knew, he said, that the line had been agitated for for a long time, and that action had been delayed by the disagreements of rival

syndicates. He would take an early opportunity of examining the route, and would appoint an officer to obtain information as to the prospects of the line. The Minister was anxious for the promoters to guarantee the erection of a certain number of houses if the line were constructed, but they declined to go beyond the undertaking to give land.

2/4/87. The following month a deputation waited on the Minister to press the duplication scheme (Granville to Liverpool). In addition to the old arguments they pointed out that large industries had been established in the locality and would bring traffic on to the line, and the construction of the latter moreover would give work to the unemployed. They disclaimed any idea of rivalry with the loop scheme, both works being they thought required. The Minister promised to obtain an estimate of the cost of the work (but discovered afterwards that an estimate had been furnished. "See page 3 of this paper") and to give the matter consideration. He looked upon the duplication as a necessity, but he did not regard it as antagonistic to the loop scheme. He was prepared to recommend the duplication to the Cabinet.

15/7/87. Another deputation was received by the Minister in the interest of the Liverpool loop scheme, but nothing new was advanced in advocacy of the line. Mr. Carruthers intimated that he was getting an undertaking to give the land free—signed by nearly every owner on the route. The Minister repeated his promise to depute an officer to obtain information as to probable traffic, &c.

In pursuance of this promise the late Commissioner deputed Inspector Hornidge to examine and report from a traffic point of view upon the several routes.

Inspector Hornidge, having examined the route, reported that having no statistics to guide him, he had been obliged to take population as his basis in calculating the traffic. Roughly stated the line would serve 14,500 persons, and the probable traffic would be—

Passengers, including 30,000 to Canterbury Races	...	...	...	900,000
Goods, inwards	...	...	...	22,000 tons
Firewood	..	...	...	18,000 "
Coal	..	...	...	30,000 "
Goods, outwards	...	...	...	100,000 "

In addition to this the following would pass through the loop to and from the south—Passengers, 583,721; Goods, 211,085 tons. As regarded the southern traffic, the Department would gain a little in haulage by the shortened route, but it would lose more in revenue from the same cause. The three proposed routes were so near to each other that the estimate of traffic would answer for them all, but the direct route had the advantage in being the shorter and cheaper, and giving slightly the greater traffic. The traffic might be estimated as

Coaching	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£23,000
Goods, coal, and wood, inwards	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20,683
"	"	outwards	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,500
									£51,183

The duplication project had been mentioned as an alternative to the loop; but it must be borne in mind that the mere duplication of an existing line could not create fresh traffic, and, moreover, the sections Granville to Liverpool were not those which most required relief. The two schemes were distinct. The loop passed through a country highly favourable to the development of a paying traffic.

The Traffic Manager concurred on the whole, but thought the loss of revenue on the southern line by the diminished mileage a serious matter. The time, he added, was not far distant when the quadruplication of the line to Homebush would be an absolute necessity, and when that was done there would be no difficulty in accommodating the southern traffic upon it.

12/10/87. Mr. Myles M'Rae wrote, informing the Minister that Mr. Coglean and party were boring for coal in the Bishop's 6,000 acres with every prospect of success, and stating that the line should pass that way, and that the junction should be at Arncliffe.

13/2/88. Mr. A. H. McCulloch, M.P., addressed the Minister, urging the duplication of the line from Granville to Liverpool. It would, he said, be an immense convenience to the public, and the cost would be only that of ballasting and laying the rails.

26/10/88. A deputation waited on the Minister to request the survey of an alternative route. The line already surveyed had to cross a large tract of country which was liable to floods, and, moreover, required two expensive bridges which would cost from £100,000 to £150,000. The direct route by Upper Bankstown which they advocated would avoid these bridges and pass through higher country, and a survey of it had been promised. The Minister promised to obtain a report, and if the facts were as they represented, to have the whole matter reconsidered.

A report accordingly was obtained with the result that a surveyor was sent to make a trial survey of the proposed alternative line.

25/4/89. The chairman at a public meeting of the residents of the Canterbury and Marrickville districts, held on this date, forwarded to the Minister copy of a resolution, carried unanimously at such meeting, to the effect that so much of the proposed line St. Peters to Liverpool, as it was understood, had been favourably reported upon by the Railway Commissioners, be at once transmitted for the consideration of the Public Works Committee.

3/5/89. The chairman of a public meeting held at Marrickville also forwarded copy of resolution carried in favour of the entire line.

5/4/89. A large deputation waited on the Minister to urge the construction of the line. They stated that previous Ministers had been in favour of it; that the undertaking would be a largely reproductive one; that all land required for the purposes of construction would be given to the Government free, and that if this line were made it would obviate the necessity for the quadruplication of the main line to Parramatta, while there would be a saving of £2,000 per annum in haulage. In the event of the Government declining to make the line, a syndicate was prepared to raise the funds and carry out the work. The proposed line, by furnishing an alternative route, would provide for the contingency of a block of the existing line, and would introduce two new sources of revenue—the Canterbury Park and Warwick Farm.

The Minister informed the deputation that the Public Works Act made it a *sine qua non* that an undertaking of this kind should be reported upon by the Railway Commissioners before being submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee. The report of the Commissioners was to the effect that the proposed

proposed line would result in a loss of £17,000 per annum; but they admitted that a line to Canterbury would pay, and might some day be extended to Liverpool. It was important that they should be prepared with evidence to meet the arguments of the Commissioners. The whole case would be laid before the Cabinet.

A list of "reasons why" this line should be constructed was on one of the foregoing occasions submitted by the promoters. I am not clear as to the exact place of the document on the papers, and I introduce a brief notice of the "reasons" here as follows:—(1) The line was necessary; (2) and would pay. (3) It had been asked for by 12,429 persons. (4) The land would be given free. (5) It would reduce the distance by 6 miles. (6) £20,638 per annum would be saved in haulage. (7) The value of the land given would exceed the cost of making the line. (8) It would give communication to districts already populated—Marrickville, Canterbury, Kingsgrove, Moorfields, Belmore, and Bankstown. (9) It would relieve the main line and render quadruplication unnecessary. (10) The Bishop, who was prepared to give 2 miles of the land, was about to cut up the estate, and the future owners might refuse to give. (11) It would give access to the fresh air of the country and enable many to get out of the overcrowded courts and lanes of Sydney. (12) The Canterbury racecourse, with thirteen meetings per annum, and the Warwick Farm racecourse, with twelve meetings, and in both cases an average attendance of 5,000 persons per meeting, require that provision should be made for the traffic.

The Minister minuted that he had promised to write to Messrs. Ritchie and Hobbs his reasons why the whole of the Liverpool loop-line could not be carried out, and to acknowledge that if the whole could be done for £160,000 the whole aspect of the question would be altered. "Propose interview *re* cost, and engineer will be present. Commissioners to visit again."

The Chairman of the Bankstown Railway Committee wrote complaining that that place had been cut off from the long-promised and expected railway communication.

Mr. Deane explained that it was on the recommendation of the Railway Commissioners that a portion only of this line had been submitted to the Parliamentary Committee.

The Under Secretary asked to be favoured with the expression of Mr. Deane's own views.

Mr. Deane replied that when he heard the Commissioners had recommended a portion of the line he thought they intended the Punchbowl Road (9½ miles from Sydney) as the terminus. This would have tapped Belmore, and would in his opinion be a proper length to make. If Bankstown were to be served the works must be continued as far, 11½ miles from Sydney.

The Chairman of a public meeting held at Bankstown on the 8th August, forwarded to the Minister a report of the proceedings at such meeting, of which the following is a condensed statement. The Chairman in opening the proceedings gave expression to the disappointment that was felt at the "seeming intent of the Government to again exclude the district of Bankstown from the long-expected and oft-repeated promised line of railway to the city." The Railway Commissioners, he said, had reported in a manner prejudicial to the interests of Bankstown, but they had done what they doubtless conceived to be their duty. Possibly with better and more correct information they might yet see their way to moderate their views in favour of the District. Those gentlemen could not be expected to know the rapidity with which the already subdivided land would receive population. Another speaker said the Commissioners had estimated the traffic at £5,000, but they must be astray in their reckoning, as he had that day seen a gentleman who was prepared to guarantee £5,000 for his own firm alone. Resolutions were carried expressive of the regret and disappointment of the residents that the hopes held out to them had not been fulfilled, and that the long expected and oft promised line to Bankstown was again deferred. They felt certain that the whole line if submitted to Parliament would be carried. The members for the District should be requested to arrange for a deputation to lay the whole case before the Premier and the Minister for Works.

Mr. Lyne, M.P., wrote to the Minister stating that he would not be able to accompany a deputation which was about to wait upon the Minister *re* the Liverpool loop-line. When Minister for Works he had had an estimate of cost made, and—speaking from memory—it was a little over £200,000. He had no hesitation in saying that, both as a relief to the Southern line, and as a suburban line, it would be a success.

The proposed deputation to represent the claims of Bankstown, waited upon the Minister. They stated that the people were indignant that the entire question had not been submitted to the Public Works Committee, as promised by the Premier. It was believed that the estimate for construction was much too high, and the estimate for traffic too low. The relief the line would afford to the main line traffic had been underestimated. They urged that the whole line should be submitted to the Committee, and that the Commissioners should be instructed to visit the district again.

The Minister replied that the deputation had advanced nothing new. He had no interest to serve but that of the public, but it was natural for them to advocate the line. It was clearly laid down that any proposal submitted to the Committee should be recommended by the Government as a desirable public work. How would the House be likely to treat a proposal accompanied by a condemnatory report? If they could bring rational arguments against the decision of Government, he was prepared if necessary to modify his opinion. He was prepared to meet a committee (say three) of their body who might bring with them a competent engineer, and he on his part would be accompanied by the Engineer-in-Chief with the plans and specifications. The whole question could then be discussed, and if they could show that the line could be constructed at smaller cost, and that the revenue would bear a fair relation to such cost, he was quite willing to take a different view of the question.

The report of the Railway Commissioners was to the following effect:—

Estimated cost	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£349,324
Annual charges, including interest on capital	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21,346
Anticipated new traffic	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,200
Annual loss	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£16,146
But besides this the shortening of the route to Liverpool and places south would involve a further loss of	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£17,423
Traffic diverted from Petersham and Ashfield	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,714
Further annual loss	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£19,137

The Commissioners stated that the construction of the loop would relieve the main line only to the extent of four trains each way per day, and that the quadrupling of the main line was required for the development and accommodation of the traffic along the route. They recommended the construction of a branch line about 4 miles along the proposed route. It would accommodate Canterbury and a fairly good residential district. The traffic would probably pay working expenses, and in a few years be a good investment. The line should take the exact route laid down, so that at some future time an extension might be made and ultimately perhaps be carried through to Liverpool.

C.A.B., 23/10/89.

B.

REPORTS OF THE RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,
29 December, 1888.

Proposed Loop Line of Railway—St. Peters to Liverpool—14 miles.

In accordance with the provisions of the "Public Works Act, 1888," section 13, we beg to report as under:—

Cost of Construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief estimates the cost of construction of the railway, with a double line of rails, exclusive of land and compensation, at... .. £349,324

Annual Cost—

Interest on cost of construction, at 3½ per cent.	£12,226
Estimated cost of maintaining the permanent way, per annum	£3,500
For first two years an additional cost of	800
Traffic Department expenses... ..	1,820
Locomotive expenses	3,000
	9,120
Total annual cost	£21,346

Traffic Estimate—

The new passenger traffic which will accrue to the line will, for a long time, be very small, and would probably not exceed	£3,300
The goods traffic also would not exceed	1,900
	£5,200

As the bulk of the population is located within 5 miles of Sydney the marketing would be done in Sydney and carted direct. Bricks and firewood would to some extent be carted also.

The shortening of the route to and from Liverpool and places south thereof by 5 miles would cause an annual loss of £17,423

And it is estimated that traffic would be diverted from Petersham and Ashfield to the extent of 1,714

£19,137

The theory which has been put forth, that the construction of this line would avoid the necessity for increasing the carrying capacity of the existing line from Liverpool to Sydney, should not have any weight in the consideration of the question, as the construction of the line would only relieve the parent line to the extent of about four trains per day in each direction; and the quadrupling of the line out of Sydney to Homebush is required to accommodate the increasing purely residential service of trains; and the doubling of the line from Granville to Liverpool will be required for the development of the country along that route, which is being fairly rapidly settled.

If a branch line were constructed from St. Peters through Canterbury to a point 8 miles from Sydney (*i.e.*, 4 miles of new line), it would accommodate Canterbury and a fairly good district for residential traffic; and at the suggested terminus of the line we observe that two large properties have been laid out for the purpose of encouraging a suburban population.

The construction of a branch line to the point indicated is the only course we could recommend, which would have the effect of giving another suburban outlet for Sydney; and we believe if this were done the traffic created would probably pay working expenses, and in a few years it would doubtless be a good investment.

The line should take the exact route laid down for the proposed through line, so that when the proper time arrived an extension might be made, and probably the line ultimately carried through to Liverpool.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales has been hereunto affixed by the Railway Commissioners in the presence of,—

{	E. M. G. EDDY, (L.S.) Chief Commissioner.
	W. M. FEHON, (L.S.) Commissioner.
	CHARLES OLIVER, (L.S.) Commissioner.

D. VERNON.

Office

APPENDIX.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,
Sydney, 20 November, 1889.

Proposed Branch Line of Railway, Marrickville to Burwood Road, 4 miles 60 chains.

In accordance with the provisions of section 13 of the "Public Works Act, 1888," we beg to report as under:—

Cost of Construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief estimates the cost of construction of a single line of railway, exclusive of land and compensation, at £90,250

Annual Cost—

Capital expenditure, at 3½ per cent....	... ..	£3,158
Estimated cost of maintaining the permanent way	... ..	£800
Traffic expenses	... ..	2,600
Locomotive expenses	... ..	3,000
		6,400
Total annual cost	... ..	£9,558

Estimated Revenue £3,000

By giving a frequent service it is estimated that on the line a revenue of about £3,000 per annum would be secured, but, in connection with this there would also be an additional estimated revenue upon the existing line of a similar sum. A speedy development of the district, however, is confidently anticipated, so that within two years the working expenses would be more than recouped.

The line, if constructed, should be, in our opinion, a double line, otherwise a most unsatisfactory service for residential purposes would be afforded.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereunto affixed this twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, in the presence of,—

<p style="text-align: center;">JNO. D. WARD.</p>	}	E. M. G. EDDY, (L.S.) Chief Commissioner.
		CHARLES OLIVER, (L.S.) Commissioner.
		W. M. FEHON, (L.S.) Commissioner.

C.

APPARENT ANOMALLY IN THE ESTIMATED EXPENSES OF WORKING THE PROPOSED RAILWAYS, MARRICKVILLE TO BURWOOD ROAD, AND ST. PETERS TO LIVERPOOL.

Sir,

Government Railways of New South Wales, Secretary's Office,
Sydney, 3 March, 1890.

I am directed by the Railway Commissioners to acknowledge your letter of the 28th ultimo, relative to an apparent anomaly in the estimated expenses of working the proposed Railway Extensions, Marrickville to Burwood Road, and St. Peters to Liverpool.

I have to point out that the circumstances under which the estimates were framed are entirely dissimilar. In December, 1888, when the Railway Commissioners were asked for a report with regard to the loop-line St. Peters to Liverpool, it was considered that existing trains *via* Granville would give a portion of the train facilities required, and as the greater portion of the route would not call for any accommodation, being away from public roads, it was only intended to open two stations and one intermediate platform, and the fixed operating expenses would consequently not be heavy.

With regard to the proposal before the Committee for a line from Marrickville to Burwood Road, it was intended that this section should provide for developing a suburban district, and it was proposed to establish two intermediate stations and a terminus, and to give a frequent train service running from early in the morning until late at night. This would entail an independent set of trains, and consequently involve considerable cost in the way of guards, car cleaners, &c., in addition to the expenses incurred in keeping two sets of men at the proposed stations. The same consideration would apply to the locomotive expenses. A separate locomotive service would have to be maintained, whereas with the through loop-line the engines for the through service would be used to pick up the local traffic.

In the evidence it is stated that the Commissioners proposed to work the extension to Burwood Road as a single line, but I may point out that although the estimate of the Engineer-in-Chief provided for a single line of rails only, yet the Report of the Railway Commissioners, dated 20th November, 1889, stated:—"The line should be in our opinion a double line, otherwise a most unsatisfactory service for residential purposes would be afforded," and the calculations were based thereon.

I have, &c.,
H. M'LACHLAN,
Secretary.

C. Lyne, Esq., Secretary Parliamentary Works Committee.

[To Evidence of H. Deane, Esq.]

D.

ESTIMATE OF COST OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

Department of Public Works,
Railway Construction Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office.

Proposed Railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road.

Estimated cost of constructing a single line of Railway (exclusive of cost of land and compensation).

Length of main line, 4 miles 60 chains; length of sidings, 34 chains. Total, 5 miles 14 chains.

Class of work.	Estimated cost of works of each class.		Total cost.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Excavations			33,764	10 0
Culverts—				
Three 4 feet	591	16 0		
Three 6 feet 6 inches	1,457	0 0		
Three 8 feet	2,588	1 0		
Six rail openings	156	0 0		
Bridges—			4,792	17 0
Cook's River	9,274	16 0		
Canterbury Road	3,000	0 0		
Overbridges—Four roadways 24 feet wide			12,274	16 0
Level crossings			3,262	16 0
Diversions of roads			1,537	6 0
Permanent-way and ballasting			2,932	10 0
Stations			10,500	14 0
Fencing			8,084	4 0
Signals			2,137	10 0
			900	0 0
Cost of works			80,187	3 0
Engineering and contingencies, 12½ per cent.			10,023	7 11
Total (say £90,250)			90,210	10 11
Average cost per mile (say £19,000)			18,991	13 11

[To Evidence of J. J. Cooper, Esq.]

E.

Starland, Bankstown, 20 November, 1889.

Sir,
Having, since March, 1882, taken an active part in trying to obtain the much needed and just claim of railway communication with the city for Belmore, Bankstown, Auburn Park, and Campbell Hill Estates, I beg most respectfully to take exception to, and to direct the special attention of the Committee to, the erroneous statements reported in this day's *Sydney Morning Herald*, as made before the Committee yesterday by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief of Railways, *in re* the St. Peter's and Liverpool line of railway,—

Firstly,—That the originally proposed route was to the south of that now proposed, is incorrect. It is over 1 mile to the north.

Secondly,—It was the first, and not the second, as stated by Mr. Deane, that was petitioned for, March, 1882.

That passed through between Belmore, Bankstown, and Campbell Hill Estate, to the north. Mr. Deane states it is not desirable to deviate. Then why deviate from what each of the petitioners have asked for—the most direct practicable route? Again, that the construction of this line through would not greatly relieve the main line. It would relieve the main line after leaving the junction of not less than between thirty and forty trains daily, there being fully twenty-four south trains daily at the present period; and I would also beg respectfully to suggest that the Committee satisfy themselves. If it is not the adopted detour from a more direct line, repeatedly brought under the notice of the Department of Railways, that by causing the unnecessary expensive cost of the construction, is the obstruction to the construction of the whole of this line.

To the Honorable Joseph Abbott, Esq., M.L.A.,

Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

I have, &c.,

J. J. COOPER.

Gentlemen,

Starland, Bankstown, 21 November, 1889.

I beg respectfully to supplement my evidence by stating that a line starting from the same point at Marrickville, running parallel, but at a certain radius northerly, would not interfere with the general interests of the Marrickville, Canterbury, Moorefields, or Belmore districts; would the better benefit the settled population of Bankstown; would pass along a more elevated route; would go through a sandstone and bluestone hill, which would furnish ballast for the line; would enable the Engineer-in-Chief to avoid the inundated portion at Long's Swamp, also the two bridges over George's River, which the Government estimate to cost at the very least £100,000; would tend to benefit the population represented by the 5,000 acres of subdivisional areas in the district; would be no longer, if not shorter, and, as shown by the Engineer-in-Chief's evidence, effect a great saving in the cost of the construction.

I have, &c.,

J. J. COOPER.

To the Honorable Gentlemen of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

[To Evidence of Mr. M. Hamburger.]

F.

STATEMENT OF REASONS IN FAVOUR OF THE RAILWAY.

Sydney, 30 November, 1889.

Sir,
As I have been informed that your Committee intends to call only a few more witnesses *re* the proposed construction of a railway from Marrickville to Burwood Road, I have put my statement down in writing, which please be good enough to place before the Committee.

Yours truly,

MATHIAS HAMBURGER.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

Gentlemen,

363 George-street, Sydney, 30 November, 1889

Having given my name to your Secretary as a witness wishing to be examined before your Committee, but being informed that only a few more witnesses would be called, I put my statement in writing, and trust it may be of some use.

I am a property holder at Belmore. The staked line is 55 chains (under $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile) distant from my property, which fronts the Canterbury Road, opposite Belmore Church. The survey known as Bell's is only 2 minutes' distant therefrom, and would be more advantageous to me. When Mr. Cameron stated that the staked line is 1½ mile distant from the Belmore Post Office he is in error. The distance is only 50 chains, or a little over half a mile. The staked line will suit the largest majority of the Belmore people, although Bell's line would be better for them. At a meeting called about seven years ago by Mr. Aaron Brown (a witness before your Committee, I understand), upon his own grounds, a resolution

resolution was proposed by him to urge Government to adopt Bell's survey. There were only three persons for this motion, and the amendment, "to leave the choice of route to Government," was passed nearly unanimously. The meeting was a representative one, and included most of the property holders of the district.

The staked line, recommended by Mr. Whitton, I consider as good a line as can be made. It is shorter by $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile than Bell's survey. The distance from the Canterbury Road does not exceed 60 chains or $\frac{1}{3}$ of a mile anywhere.

It is fair to presume that the new suburbs to spring up upon the construction of this line will fill this gap between the railway and the Canterbury Road. This has been the case in the old suburbs. Petersham, at the time of opening the Parramatta railway, was a hamlet on the Parramatta Road. It extended very soon to the railway line and across. The same was the case at Ashfield and Burwood, then small settlements along the Liverpool Road, but now densely populated, and extending from the Liverpool Road on one side to the Parramatta Road on the other.

The staked line is fairly suitable for the present population, and gives a great scope for the formation of new suburbs. The Harcourt Estate, laid out as a model township, is close to it, and settlement under such liberal conditions as to area of ground, &c., should be encouraged, and may be the means of promoting the laying out of other areas upon the same healthy conditions.

In my opinion a single line would be a mistake. In any case provision should be made that a double rail could be laid down without extra expense as to formation of the road bed, whenever required.

The estimate of the Commissioners as to probable earnings of the line I consider to be a very safe one. It seems to be based upon the present traffic.

I have no doubt that the racecourse traffic alone, estimated by Mr. Kirkcaldie at £750 per annum, will yield £3,000 as soon as the line is opened. It will quadruple the attendance at the meetings, which would be larger if the round-about way of getting there (*via* Ashfield and bus) did not deter the great majority of the people from attending. At 1s. return fare crowds would go where now there are only individuals.

I believe in having the line carried through to Liverpool. The intervening area is all suburban. The land is well adapted for settlement. It is mostly level, with some undulating tracts. It is easily drained. Woolli Creek, and George's River on the south, and Cook's River on the north, are the natural watersheds.

As the Government proposal is, however, only for the construction of the line as far as Burwood Road, I trust your Committee will see its way to sanction it as an instalment of the whole line.

I would suggest that, if your Committee cannot see its way to recommend the line being carried out through to Liverpool, that a suggestion to extend the line in the near future as far as the 12-mile peg (that is the Bankstown district) may be embodied in your report.

The line would then open up a most picturesque, elevated, and healthy district, which has hardly any communication with Sydney at present.

As to the more northern survey, mentioned in the evidence of Mr. Thornton, it would be too far away from the Upper Canterbury and Belmore district to be of any use. It would go through very sparsely-populated territory. The statement that such a line would not benefit Mr. Thornton I consider erroneous. His property is to the north of Liverpool Road, I am informed, and would be greatly benefited.

The four additional miles to 12-mile peg is the most inexpensive part of the line, and ought to be constructed for less than £20,000. The land is quite level. The 12-mile peg is at the Chapel Road, the principal thoroughfare from Belmore to the Liverpool Road, and would be just as central as the proposed terminus at the Burwood Road, the main cross-road from Burwood to the Canterbury and Illawarra districts.

Hemmed in as Sydney is, by the Pacific on one side, and the waters of Port Jackson and Parramatta River on the other, the natural outlet for any surplus population is the Canterbury district.

Settlement has only been prevented by want of proper communication. I am confident that within six months from the starting of the line at least £25,000 will be spent in building residences by parties like myself who were only prevented from residing upon their properties by the want of speedy access to the city. Dr. Benbow, Mr. Horn (jeweller, Arcade), Mr. Hust (late of the "Imperial Hotel," Wynyard-square), and many others who own property at Canterbury and Belmore will build at once. The distance from town is only the same as from Ashfield, Burwood, or Homebush, but, by the present mode of transit, Sydney cannot be reached under an hour to an hour and forty-five minutes by bus.

An extension of the tramway from Dulwich Hill to Canterbury would not suit at all. Fifty minutes is the time to Dulwich Hill, to which at least thirty minutes have to be added to reach Burwood Road. Even the through trams could not do the distance under one hour, while the railway ordinary trains will only take twenty-five minutes to Redfern or thirty-five minutes to the Post Office, and through trains will do it in twenty-seven minutes.

The Liverpool through line will, if completed, be the main line to the south and Melbourne, and a great boon to through travellers. Against the loss of revenue upon the Granville-Liverpool section of the old line ought to be set the saving in fuel, wear and tear, &c., by the shortening of the distance. It is, in my opinion, a very questionable policy to make the people pay for more distance and haulage than is necessary, just for revenue sake.

Mr. W. G. Cameron has stated before your Committee that none of the proposed routes would pay, in his opinion, for some time. This is in flat contradiction of his utterances when he was a candidate for Parliament in the Canterbury district, when he not only gave it as his opinion that the line would pay as well as the Illawarra suburban line, but promised to work for its being made. Whether his present evidence is a consequence of his defeat, or a desire to burke the line in order to get it made from Arncliffe or Hurstville, which would intersect his property, I am unable to determine.

I would further call the attention of your Committee to the necessity of constructing a belt line of railway to start from the Homebush sale-yards, about $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Redfern, to the neighbourhood of the 10-mile peg of the proposed line Liverpool, and through to Hurstville, 9 miles 70 chains on the Illawarra line from Redfern. This line will be essential:—

- 1st. To transfer sheep, cattle, coal, and produce from the Northern, Western, Southern, and Illawarra lines, without the detour of going to Redfern, and thus blocking our old suburban line.
- 2nd. To enable people from all parts of our railway system to go to National Park. In connection with the duplication of the Illawarra line from Hurstville to the Park, this will actually open up the National Park to the whole of the New South Wales population. The traffic on holidays alone should recoup interest upon the outlay. Its length will be under 7 miles, and through level country.

The longer this necessary line is delayed the more it will cost to construct.

Although not within the province of the present proposal, I draw your attention as Members of Parliament to it.

In connection with my remarks *re* the Harcourt Estate, whose allotments are laid out in areas of not less than a quarter of an acre, I would draw your attention to the necessity of so amending Mr. Reid's Act, which merely prescribes minimum widths of roads and lanes, that it shall be made unlawful hereafter to lay out estates in the suburban area in less than quarter-acre allotments, and further, that it shall be unlawful to build more than one dwelling upon such allotment.

To the Parliamentary Committee for Public Works.

Yours, &c.,

MATHIAS HAMBURGER.

G.

CAPITAL AND ANNUAL VALUES OF MUNICIPALITY OF CANTERBURY.

Municipal Council Chambers, Canterbury, 6 December, 1889.

Sir, I have the honor, by direction of His Worship the Mayor (James M'Bean, Esq.), to forward you the following information relative to the capital and annual values of this Municipality:—

	£	s.	d.
1879-80—Annual value	11,553	10	0
Rate of 1s. in the £	577	13	6
1889-90—Capital value	471,997	0	0
Annual	16,856	0	0
Assessed	38,779	0	0
Rate of 1s. in the £	1,938	19	0

In the Municipal year 1879-80 no capital values were run out. In the present Municipal year, 1889-90, there are 939 acres of land in blocks of 20 acres and upwards taken at rental value, the capital value of which is £78,120. Of the 939 acres there are 450 acres within a quarter of a mile of the proposed railway. Number of allotments of land sold, 2,168.

I have, &c.

BENJAMIN TAYLOR,
Council Clerk.

The Chairman, Parliamentary Committee on Public Works, Sydney.

H.

H.
MARRICKVILLE TO THE BURWOOD ROAD.
Book of Reference to Parliamentary Plan.

No on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Name of			Remarks.
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.	
PARISH OF PETERSHAM.						
1	Timber yard, with wooden buildings.		Edward Curran	Robert Wilkinson & Sons.		
2	Fenced paddock	Market garden	Barnard Gallagher		Barnard Gallagher.	
3	"	"	"	Boo Hing	Tong Hing.	
4	Fenced paddock, and swampy land.					
5	Road					
6	Allotment					
7	"					
8	"					
9	"					
10	"					
11	"					
12	Road					
13	Allotment					
14	"					
15	"					
16	"					
17	"					
18	"					
19	"					
20	Lane					
21	Fenced paddock, and swampy land.		— Way			
22	Road					
23	Lane					
24	Fenced paddock	Partly cultivated	James Meek		James Meek.	
25	"	Market garden	"			
26	"	Partly cultivated	Elizabeth Cavey		Mrs. Purdy.	
27	"		Adolphus Clapin		Adolphus Clapin.	
28	"		James Meek			Subdivided by Watkin & Watkin.
29	"		John Henry Hoare		John Henry Hoare	
30	Fenced, house and garden	Partly cultivated	"		"	
31	Road					
32	Fenced, brick-house		Geo. Warburton		Geo. Warburton.	
33	"		David Blair		Roland Tyler.	
34	"		"		— Taylor.	
35	"		"		Geo. Schirverel.	
36	Fenced	Garden	John Heaney		John Heaney.	
37	" wooden buildings	"	"		"	
38	" brick-house		George Toyer		George Toyer.	
39	"		Charles Moyes		James Wellfare.	
40	Brick works		"		William Moyes.	
41	Fenced paddock		John Moyes		John Moyes.	
42	Brick works		Charles Moyes		Griggs & Loveday.	
43	"		"		Toyer Bros.	
44	"	Partly cultivated	Thomas Moncur		Thomas Moncur.	
45	Fenced paddock, brick-house	Garden	"			
46	Fenced, wooden buildings		"		James Moncur.	
47	Fenced paddock	Garden	"		"	
48	Livingston Road					
49	Randall-street					
50	Allotment	Garden	— Randall			
51	"		"			
52	"		"			
53	"		"			
54	Fenced, wooden house	Garden	Philip Jameson		Philip Jameson	
55	Allotment		John Jaggelman		John Jaggelman	
56	"		Mrs. Davis		Mrs. Davis	
57	"					
58	"					
59	"					
60	Open scrub		Priddle & McArthur		Priddle & McArthur	
61	Fenced wooden house	Market garden	Thomas Cotterell		Thomas Cotterell.	
62	Partly fenced, brick-house	"	Michael Byrns		Michael Byrns.	
63	"	"	Robert Nicholl		Robert Nicholl.	
64	" wooden buildings.	"	James Braddock		James Braddock.	
65	Fenced, wooden buildings		William Jones		William Jones.	
66	Wardell Road					
67	Open scrub land		Priddle & McArthur.		Priddle & McArthur	
68	Fenced, brick cottage and garden	Partly cultivated	John T. Colah		William Burton.	
69	Terrace Road					
70	Fenced, stone house and grounds	Partly cultivated	William Starkey		William Starkey.	
71	Open scrub land		Priddle & McArthur.		Priddle & McArthur	
72	Road					
73	Fenced scrub lands		E. Vickery & Sons		E. Vickery & Sons.	
74	Road					
75	Open scrub land		Thomas Cavey		Thomas Cavey.	
76	Road					
77	Open scrub land		— Campbell		— Campbell.	
78	Road					
79	Fenced grass land		William Starkey		William Starkey.	

Geraldine Estate, bought and subdivided by C. J. Fache.

Subdivided by Watkin & Watkin.

Randall's subdivision, allotments 1 to 12, subdivided by Mills & Pile.

No on Plan	Description of Property	State of Cultivation	Name of			Remarks.
			Owners	Lessees	Occupiers	
80	Open scrub land ...		— Campbell		— Campbell.	
81	Road ..					
82	Open scrub, stone house ...		John Slocombe		John Coleman	
83	Road					
84	Open scrub land	...	— Campbell	— Campbell.	
85	Canberra street		
86	Open scrub land	...	— Campbell		— Campbell.	
87	Sugar-house road	...				
88	Fenced paddock	Blacket & Co		Blacket & Co.	
89	Iron foundry		"		"	
90	Minter street					
91	Fenced paddock .		Blacket & Co		Blacket & Co.	
92	Fenced	Market garden	"		Chinamen	
93	Town allotments	Thomas West		Thomas West.	
94	Close-street	...				
95	Fenced, brick house, wooden buildings, shed, and stables.		Samuel Taylor		Stephen Barnett.	
96	Fenced, brick-house		Charles Woodley		Charles Woodley.	
97	Fenced paddock, wooden buildings		"		"	
98	House and paddock ..		Isaac Pecks		Isaac Pecks	
99	Cook's River					
PARISH OF ST. GEORGE						
100	Market gardens		Executors of late Wm Redman.		Chinamen	
101	Open scrub land	...	"		— Redman.	
101a	Road	...	"			
102	Vacant old brickworks, allotment 44, Bridgewater Estate	...	Executors of late Wm Redman.		— Redman	Bridgewater Estate.
103	Allotment 43,		"		"	
104	" 42,		"		"	
105	" 41,		"		"	
106	" 40,		"		"	
107	" 39,		"		"	
108	Road	...				
109	Canterbury Road					
110	Allotment, scrub	...	Bruce Nicholl		Bruce Nicholl	
111	Brick-cottage, and bush land		Neil Sharkey		Neil Sharkey	
112	Grass paddock		Barker & Co.		Barker & Co.	
113	Road	...				
114	Fenced, bush land ..		A. A. Building Society			
115	Road	...				
116	Allotment 86	...	J Adams			
117	" 87	...	Adonis Nesbitt			
118	" 88	...	W. B Nesbitt			
119	" 89	...	E Riemenschneider			
120	" 90	...	Allan and Bryant			
121	" 71	...	Benjamin Bush			
122	" 72	...	E Riemenschneider			
123	" 73	...	A McLaren			
124	" 74	...	R Edmiston			
125	Road	...				
126	Fenced, brick-cottage, allotment 48	...	Margaret Brandt		Margaret Brandt	
127	Fenced, allotment 49 ..		T Redwood		T Redwood	
128	Fenced, brick-cottage, allotment 50	...	Joseph G. Andrews		Joseph G. Andrews	Golden Park Estate.
129	Allotment 51	...	Ann Gall		Ann Gall	
130	" 52	...	J Thomas		J Thomas	
131	" 29	...	— Sullivan		— Sullivan	
132	" 30	...	Albert Shortiss		Albert Shortiss	
133	Fenced, brick cottage, allotment 31.		Robert Livingston		Robert Livingston	
134	Allotment 32	...	Fred Davis		Fred Davis	
135	Road	...				
136	Allotment 10		W Davis			
137	" 11	...	W L Davis			
138	" 12	...				
139	" 13	...	Golden Park Estate			
140	" 14	...				
141	Fenced, bush land	...	Frederick Beamish		Frederick Beamish	
142	Beamish-street	...				
143	Fenced, bush land	...	— Macpherson		— Macpherson	
144	Cleared land	...	A. A. Building Society		A. A. Build Society	Campsie Park Estate.
145	Road	...				
146	Fenced, scrub land ..		E Boucher			Fitzroy Sub-division.
147	" bush land	...	Executors of late Wm Redman.		Mrs. C A. Falstedt	
148	" paddock	...	"		"	
149	Private lane ..	...	"		"
150	Fenced	Garden	"		"	
151	Old vineyard fenced		"		"	
152	Paddock, bush	...	"		"	
153	"	...	"		"	
154	Road	...	"		"	
155	Paddock, bush ..	...	John Mooney		John Mooney.

A.

[To Evidence of William Lovell Davis, Esq.]

CANTERBURY PARK RACE CLUB—STATEMENT SHOWING THE RECEIPTS DERIVED FROM THE ENTRANCE GATES DURING THE LAST TWENTY MEETINGS.

Date.	Amount.	Estimated number of people.	Date.	Amount.	Estimated number of people.
	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	
28 June	114 14 0	2,294	23 March	85 11 9	1,712
30 „	148 18 5	2,978	20 April	126 6 0	2,526
1 August	149 9 7	2,990	18 May	110 18 0	2,218
1 September	130 12 9	2,613	29 July	117 6 0	2,346
16 October	180 0 4	3,600	14 August	73 9 6	1,470
27 „	95 18 6	1,920	25 September	102 18 0	2,058
24 November	114 0 9	2,280	5 October	84 18 6	1,698
31 December	106 19 3	2,140	7 „	219 5 3	43,85
19 January	105 13 5	2,114	22 „	53 8 6	1,068
16 February	107 17 9	2,158			
2 March	89 16 9	1,797			46,865

Or, an average of 2,318 per meeting; at 1s. each, return fare, say £2,500 per annum.

B.

[To Evidence of William Lovell Davis, Esq.]

CANTERBURY PARK RACING FIXTURES FOR 1890.

Saturday .....	...	...	...	...	25 January
Wednesday .....	...	(Galloway, Pony, and Trotting Meeting)...	...	...	29 „
Saturday .....	...	...	...	...	15 February
Wednesday .....	...	(Galloway, Pony, and Trotting Meeting)...	...	...	26 „
Saturday .....	...	...	...	...	8 March
Wednesday .....	...	(Galloway, Pony, and Trotting Meeting) ..	...	...	9 April
Saturday .....	...	...	...	...	3 May
Wednesday .....	...	(Galloway, Pony, and Trotting Meeting)...	...	...	29 „
Saturday .....	...	...	...	...	5 July
Wednesday .....	...	(Galloway, Pony, and Trotting Meeting)...	...	...	16 „
Friday .....	...	...	...	...	1 August
Wednesday .....	...	(Galloway, Pony, and Trotting Meeting)	...	...	27 „
„ .....	...	„	„	„	17 September
Saturday .....	...	„	„	„	4 October
Monday .....	...	„	„	„	6 „
Wednesday .....	...	(Galloway, Pony, and Trotting Meeting)...	...	...	22 „
Saturday .....	...	...	...	...	1 November
Wednesday .....	...	(Galloway, Pony, and Trotting Meeting)...	...	...	26 „
Saturday .....	...	...	...	...	29 „
Tuesday .....	...	...	...	...	30 December
Wednesday .....	...	(Galloway, Pony, and Trotting Meeting)...	...	...	31 „

M. SEALE, Secretary.

[Four Plans.]

1890.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

MARRICKVILLE TO BURWOOD ROAD
RAILWAY BILL.

(MESSAGE No. 15.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 2 July, 1890.

By Deputation from the Governor,
ALFRED STEPHEN,
Lieutenant-Governor.

Message No. 15.

In accordance with the provisions contained in the 54th section of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends, for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly, the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses in connection with a Bill to sanction the construction of a line of railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

Government House,
Sydney, 25th June, 1890.

1890.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

MARRICKVILLE TO BURWOOD ROAD RAILWAY BILL
(NO. 2.)
(MESSAGE NO. 61.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 6 November, 1890.

ALFRED STEPHEN,
Lieutenant-Governor.

Message No. 61.

In accordance with the provisions contained in the 54th section of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses in connection with a Bill to sanction the construction of a line of Railway from Marrickville to the Burwood Road.

*Government House,
Sydney, 6th November, 1890.*

1890.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDICES, AND PLAN,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

MOLONG TO PARKES AND FORBES.

Presented to Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act,
51 Vic. No. 37, section 8.

SYDNEY : CHARLES POTTER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable JOHN LACKEY, Vice-Chairman.
 The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN.
 The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
 The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
 The Honorable GEORGE HENRY COX.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esquire, Chairman.
 JACOB GARRARD, Esquire.
 HENRY COPELAND, Esquire.
 JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esquire.
 WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esquire.
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esquire.
 JOHN HURLEY, Esquire.
 CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esquire.

MEMBERS OF THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esquire, Chairman.
 The Honorable GEORGE HENRY COX.
 WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esquire.
 CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esquire.

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PLAN.

PLAN, showing the proposed Line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, together with the routes of the Lines from Borenore to Cudal and Forbes, Cowra to Forbes, *via* Canowindra, and Young to Forbes, *via* Grenfell; and the deviation on the Molong to Parkes Line through the Bocoble Gap.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM MOLONG TO PARKES AND FORBES.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, and the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the proposed Railway should be constructed, and, in accordance with the provision of subsection IV, of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly :—

1. The proposed railway is intended as an extension from the present terminus of the branch line from Orange, at Molong, to Parkes and Forbes, a distance of 71 miles 52 chains. Surveys have been made of two routes between Molong and Parkes— one *via* Flagstone Creek, and the other *via* Bumberry. The former, which is the route referred to the Committee, sweeps round the north end of the high land on which the town of Molong is situated, crosses Molong rivulet twice, and then goes in a south-westerly direction, on rising gradients, until it approaches Lord's Gap, which it crosses at a point about 6 miles from Molong. Mandagery Creek is crossed $8\frac{3}{4}$ miles further on. From near Lord's Gap the gradients fall for 9 miles, and from Mandagery Creek they steadily rise again for about the same distance, at which point the line attains a height of about 2,000 feet. This height is maintained for 4 miles, and the line then descends almost continuously into Parkes. From Parkes to Forbes the line proceeds in a south-westerly direction over fairly level country, passing through the parishes of Parkes, Martin, Mumbidgle, and Forbes, county of Ashburnham, and terminating in the town of Forbes. Up to a point about 22 miles from Parkes the two surveyed routes between Molong and Parkes are identical; they then diverge, the route *via* Bumberry being more northerly than the other. Description of the proposed railway.

2. The estimated total cost of the proposed railway is £430,100, or something more than £6,000 per mile; but this, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways states, can, to a certain extent, be reduced. The cost of the line as far as Parkes by the Flagstone Creek route is set down at £329,700, or £6,444 per mile; and this estimate, it is represented, can be reduced by £67 a mile, which would make the total cost to Parkes £306,000. For the length from Parkes to Forbes the estimate is £100,400, or £4,950 a mile; this can be reduced to £90,450, or £4,412 per mile. In each case the estimate of cost is exclusive of land and compensation. Estimated cost.

3. The movement for affording railway accommodation to Forbes appears, from an exhaustive *précis* published as an appendix, to have commenced as far back as 1874, in May of which year a memorial was presented to the then Minister for Works in favour of a survey from Orange to Forbes. Nothing definite in that respect was done, however, until 1877, when a trial survey was commenced of a line from Orange towards Wilcannia and Menindie, passing within 7 miles of Forbes. Representations were then made that any railway intended to serve the country in the neighbourhood of the Lachlan River should go to Forbes, and, after various deputations to the Minister for Works, and petitions from different quarters, an amount History of the proposal.

amount of £705,000, for a railway from Orange *via* Molong to Forbes, was placed, in 1881, on the Loan Estimates, and passed by 74 votes to 2. In 1884 the route from Borenore to Forbes, *via* Cudal, was urged by a deputation to the Minister for Works, and in the same year a motion was carried in the Assembly proposing the sum of £705,000 for the construction of a line from Orange to Molong *via* Borenore, and from Borenore to Forbes *via* Cudal. This appears to have been regarded as a rescission of the vote in 1881 for a line from Orange to Forbes *via* Molong. In 1886 the plans of a line Borenore *via* Cudal to Forbes were approved in the Legislative Assembly, but negatived in the Legislative Council. The following year the movement in favour of a line from Cowra to Forbes *via* Canowindra and Eugowra was started, and the advantages of a line from Young to Forbes and Dubbo *via* Grenfell, first suggested in 1884, were also urged. Last year, 1889, the proposed line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes was referred for report to the Railway Commissioners, and subsequently by the Legislative Assembly to this Committee.

Railway
Commissioners'
Report.

4. The Railway Commissioners have reported upon the portion of the proposed line from Molong to Parkes, and also upon the line as a whole. The length from Molong to Parkes, in itself, they do not recommend, except as the means of opening up an admittedly good agricultural district around and north of Parkes, as they consider that little revenue could be expected from local traffic between the two places; but taking the whole line, from Molong to Parkes and Forbes *via* Flagstone Creek, they regard it as "an instance where the working expenses of the line will probably be covered by the traffic." A comparison between the total annual cost, which is estimated at £26,055, and the estimate of traffic, which is set down at £11,264, shows a loss of £14,791; but the total annual cost includes interest on the cost of construction, amounting to £15,155, leaving the working expenses as £10,900, and this, compared with the traffic estimate, shows an annual profit above working expenses of £364.

Rival routes.

5. Four routes or lines have been advocated in relation to the proposal to give railway communication to Forbes. One of these is that referred to the Committee, from Molong to Parkes and Forbes; another is from Borenore, *via* Cudal and Eugowra, to Forbes; the third is from Cowra, *via* Canowindra, to Forbes; and the fourth from Young, *via* Grenfell, to Forbes. Each of these has its supporters, and the relative merits of the different routes will be found clearly set forth in the evidence. Both the Committee, and a Sectional Committee who visited the districts affected by the proposal for the construction of the railway, have been careful to obtain, as far as possible, from whatever source it has been procurable, the fullest testimony upon the different branches of the subject, as well as upon the matter generally. Much of this testimony, it will be seen, supports one or other of the routes or lines, and disapproves of everything which is opposed to it.

The inquiry
by the
Committee
and by the
Sectional
Committee.

6. The inquiry which has been held in respect to this proposed railway has been of a very comprehensive character. In the first instance, the Committee had before them the Under Secretary for Public Works, who handed in certain documents, and made a statement necessary to enable them to acquire a general understanding of the proposal before them. His examination was followed by that of the District Engineer in the Department of the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, who directed the survey of the portion of the line between Molong and Parkes; the District Traffic Superintendent of the Railway Department, upon whose report the Railway Commissioners based their calculations in reference to the traffic on the proposed railway between Molong and Parkes; the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways; and the surveyor who surveyed the routes from Orange to Molong and on to Parkes, and from Orange to Borenore and on to Forbes. These witnesses placed before the Committee, by their evidence, the principal points in relation to the proposed railway; and a Sectional Committee was then appointed to visit the districts concerned in the railway, and to take local evidence. The Sectional Committee examined 192 witnesses, taking evidence at Orange, Molong, Manildra, Bumberry, Parkes, Tichborne, Forbes, Eugowra, Murga, Cudal, and Cowra, and by this means obtained what appears to be a fair representation of the opinion of all parties interested in the railway.

Borenore to
Forbes *via*
Cudal route.

7. The route from Borenore to Forbes *via* Cudal is advocated on the ground that it passes through country much more fertile than that met with on the route from Molong, that in the distance to Forbes it is 17 miles shorter than the route from

from Molong, and that it would serve a large population. The witnesses examined by the Sectional Committee at Orange were in favour of this route, as were also some of the witnesses at Forbes. At Cudal, so strongly did the witnesses support it that they declared their determination not to have anything to do with any other route. On the other hand, it may be seen from the evidence of the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways that the Cudal route is in parts very rough, two or three portions of it containing very heavy work, and the gradient in one portion being 1 in 40. Furthermore, a deviation of the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes is proposed, which will bring the railway within 6 or 8 miles of Cudal, and in that manner enable the residents of the Cudal district to avail themselves of the facilities offered by the line for the conveyance of produce to market. The Sectional Committee carefully considered the evidence for and against this route, and they reported against it, for the following reasons:—"First, the steepness of its grades; secondly, that it would not serve as large an area as either of the two routes [the Molong to Parkes and Forbes and the Cowra to Forbes routes]; and thirdly, that its most thickly-populated portion, viz., Cudal, is already fairly served, and would by the proposed deviation, *via* Bocoble Gap, on the Molong to Parkes line, be brought within 6 or 8 miles of a railway."

8. The route from Cowra to Forbes has much to recommend it. A railway to Forbes from that town would pass through almost level country, capable of sustaining a large population. It would not be difficult to construct, and, taken altogether, it would not be expensive. Many of the residents of Forbes advocate it, principally on the ground that it would give the district the advantage of the Melbourne as well as the Sydney market. It is supported also for the reason that it is the only line which would serve Canowindra. The Sectional Committee gave considerable attention to it, the subject being dealt with very fully in their report; and it was duly considered by the Committee. In the view of the Sectional Committee there appeared to be so much evidence in its favour that some doubt existed in their minds as to the relative merits of a line by this route and that by the route from Molong *via* Parkes. The reasons in support of the Molong to Parkes and Forbes route are, however, of greater weight than those which favour the Cowra proposal, and both the Sectional Committee and the Committee came to this conclusion after a due consideration of all the evidence. The proposal to construct a line of railway from Cowra to Forbes is, moreover, not unlikely to be carried into effect in the near future, in addition to the railway which it is proposed shall go to Forbes from Molong. The Under Secretary for Public Works, when under examination, informed the Committee that he had authority to state that it was the intention of the Minister for Works to bring under the notice of the Cabinet the desirableness of connecting Forbes with either Young or Cowra, as well as of constructing a line from Parkes to Dubbo, and from Dubbo to Werris Creek; and this authorized statement has gone far to influence some members of the Committee in deciding that at present the preference in the question of routes to Forbes should be given to that referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly.

9. The route from Young to Forbes would be of advantage to Grenfell, and by it the line could be extended to Parkes and Dubbo. Evidence in favour of this route was given by representatives of Grenfell before the Sectional Committee at Forbes.

10. Starting from Molong the proposed railway would not benefit Grenfell or Canowindra, but it would, more than any other of the suggested routes, be generally beneficial, serving the largest population and opening up extensive tracts of good land. Along this route there is some rocky country after leaving Molong, but the land immediately surrounding these inferior patches is very good, and it extends for a considerable distance. In every direction the Sectional Committee found settlement of a satisfactory description, the farms and other fenced holdings being in many places continuous for miles. Between Molong and Manildra they saw for a distance of 6 miles an unbroken succession of farms, averaging in area about 200 acres, and generally there appeared to be a large and important farming population settled in the district. From Manildra to the neighbourhood of Bumberry other farms in a similar continuous succession are situated. Near Bumberry the good land becomes in extent narrower, in consequence of the vicinity of the Dungeon Range, and about this range the country looks very poor; but immediately the range is crossed, land of the best description,

description, and in every way suitable for agriculture, is met with, and this continues to Parkes. Around Parkes there is a large amount of settlement, and it shows unmistakable signs of increase. Especially is this the case to the north and north-west of the town. In whatever direction the Sectional Committee went about Parkes and its neighbourhood they found the land had been taken up and cultivated. Between Parkes and Forbes there is very little settlement, but there is very good country, the explanation of the absence of settlement being that most of the land in this locality is a gold-field reserve. Were this reserve thrown open for settlement, there would, without doubt, be a line of farms from Parkes to Forbes. At Forbes there is not much cultivation, but a large quantity of wool is produced in the district.

Traffic prospects.

11. The prospects relating to traffic on the proposed line appear to the Committee to be very good. The Railway Commissioners represent in the estimates contained in their report that the railway will pay working expenses; but there is reason to believe it will do more than this. An examination of the evidence and of the Sectional Committee's report will show that the amount of production in the districts which the railway will serve is, at the present time, very large, and, with railway facilities, this must greatly increase. A satisfactory traffic seems probable immediately the line is constructed, and in the near future the railway should pay.

Decision arrived at by the Committee.

12. After carefully considering all the circumstances connected with the inquiry, the Committee have arrived at the conclusion that the line as proposed, from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, should be carried out. The Sectional Committee recommend it for the reasons, chiefly, that "Parkes is at the present time a most flourishing and largely increasing town; that at Trundle, to the north-west of Parkes, about 90,000 acres, and at Kadina, direct north of the town, from 70,000 to 80,000 acres of land have very recently been taken up in comparatively small selections, principally by Victorian farmers, for the purposes of agriculture; and that in the event of it being found desirable to extend the line to the Darling River, to the south-west, the extension could be made with equal advantage from Parkes or Forbes." A majority of the Committee take a similar view, and are generally in favour of the proposed line because it will meet the requirements of a much larger number of people than would be served by a line taken along any one of the other routes, and open for settlement a very extensive area of country which only requires to be taken up and cultivated in order to make it profitable both to the holders and to the railway. The route from Cowra to Forbes impresses the Committee, as it did the Sectional Committee, as one that would probably prove very beneficial, and is worth constructing, but it may be dismissed from further consideration in this Report for the reason already mentioned, and to be found in the statement made to the Committee, at the opening of their inquiry, by the Under Secretary for Public Works. The route from Borenore to Cudal, and thence by way of Eugowra to Forbes, has the advantage of representing a line which, if carried on from Forbes to the Darling, would be shorter than an extension of the line commencing at Molong, but it has the great disadvantage of a grade of 1 in 40, and it would not serve Parkes. If the more thickly-populated districts between Orange, Borenore, or Molong, and Forbes are to be accommodated, and the trade of those districts, as at present available, secured, the Committee are of opinion that the line from Molong to Parkes, and thence to Forbes, is the right one to construct. The Committee took the evidence and the Sectional Committee's report into consideration on the 13th and 14th instant, and by a majority of 10 to 2 adopted the following resolution:—

"That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out."

The division upon the resolution was as follows:—

Ayes, 10.
Mr. Abbott,
Mr. Lackey,
Dr. Garran,
Mr. Humphery,
Mr. Trickett,
Mr. Garrard,
Mr. Tonkin,
Mr. Dowel,
Mr. Hurley,
Mr. Lee.

Noes, 2.
Mr. Copeland,
Mr. O'Sullivan.

Published

Published with this Report are the Sectional Committee's report; the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee and before the Sectional Committee; various appendices to the evidence, including a *précis* of the papers relating to the subject of railway extension in the direction of Forbes, submitted to the Committee by the Department of Public Works, and the Railway Commissioners' Report; and a plan showing the proposed line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, together with the routes of the lines from Borenore to Cudal and Forbes, Cowra to Forbes *via* Canowindra, and Young to Forbes *via* Grenfell, and the deviation on the Molong to Parkes line through the Bocoble Gap, which it is intended shall serve the interests of Cudal by bringing the railway within 6 or 8 miles of that locality, and which deviation the Committee recommend.

J. P. ABBOTT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 21 May, 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM MOLONG TO PARKES AND FORBES.

WEDNESDAY, 22 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.	JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Joseph Barling, Esq., Under Secretary for Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Mr. Lackey.*] This project has been under the consideration of the Government for a long time? Yes.
2. There were different projects at first? Yes, a number of them; but this was considered to be the most feasible.
3. Is the proposed route of the line shown on the plan? I believe it is; but I can describe it. I will put in the papers relating to it. I will hand in the report of the Railway Commissioners on the proposed line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, the length of which is 71 miles 52 chains [*See Appendix A*]. I also hand in the official description of the line [*See Appendix B*]. I may perhaps be permitted to draw attention to the words in which the Secretary for Public Works moved the resolution in Parliament referring the project to the Committee. He said: "I may state that the length of the line from Molong to Parkes is 51 miles 12 chains, and that of the railway from Parkes to Forbes 20 miles 30 chains, giving a total length of 71 miles 52 chains; hon. members are aware that for a long time two rival routes have been advocated regarding this particular district—one from Borenore through Cudal to Forbes, and another from Orange; but I can only say this—that after a very careful investigation of all the merits of these two routes it was decided by the Government, as a whole, to recommend this particular line which I am now laying before the House—from Molong to Parkes and Forbes." The Minister is fully aware that there are a great many reasons to be urged in favour of other routes, but after taking into account the whole of the circumstances he has come to the conclusion that this is the best one to recommend to Parliament. I think there are two main reasons which induced him to select this route. The first is that by adopting this line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, as against the proposed line from Borenore to Cudal and Forbes, we shall have something like 11 miles of railway less to make. The Minister is also keenly alive to the fact that if the route from Borenore via Cudal to Forbes is selected, we shall have a short fork running from Borenore to Molong, which would simply go nowhere. By the adoption of the route now before the Committee we shall utilise the whole of the extension from Orange to Molong.
4. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you mean that if this line is adopted there will be 11 miles less of railway to make or that the distance from Sydney to Parkes will be 11 miles less? There will be 11 miles less to make to reach Forbes and Parkes. I am authorised to state that it is the intention of the Minister to bring under the notice of the Cabinet, the desirableness of connecting Forbes with either Young or Cowra. The Minister wished me to put his views before you because it might influence you in dealing with this particular line. He says it is his intention to bring under the attention of the Cabinet, a proposal to extend the railway from Forbes to either Young or Cowra, from a point not yet decided upon; also, that he intends to propose to the Cabinet the construction of a line from Parkes to Dubbo and from Dubbo to Werris Creek. This will give an independent line from Queensland without coming to Sydney. I have not the figures to show the actual distances.
5. The line from Forbes to Parkes would form a portion of that extension? Yes. The Minister promised in Parliament that he would lay before the Committee any papers that they wish to have about the other routes. Of course, he very carefully guarded himself against the supposition that he was submitting rival routes to the Committee. So far as any evidence might be considered as favoring another route the Minister would view it simply as negative evidence in regard to the route before the Committee. I shall place before the Committee as they go on any papers that they want in regard to the other routes. I have also to hand in a report by Mr. Thompson, our land valuer, who went over the route. His report is a very voluminous one. Mr. Thompson, also went over the Cudal route, and if the Committee wish it I will put in the papers in connection with that too.

J. Barling,
Esq.

22 Jan., 1890.

- J. Barling, Esq.
22 Jan., 1890.
6. *Mr. Lackey.*] Speaking of the extension from Molong to Borenore, you said that it went to nowhere; you are cognisant of the fact that when that railway was constructed it was part of a proposed through line from the Western line on to Wilcannia, and that it was constructed in conformity with a resolution of Parliament? Yes, the vote was taken in 1881 for a line from Orange to Forbes, via Molong, 83 miles, £705,000, also a vote for an extension to Wilcannia; but in the Loan Estimates of 1884 it was,—Orange to Molong, via Borenore, 21 miles, and Borenore to Forbes, via Cudal, 60 miles—£705,000. Under clause 7 of the Act of 1884, the appropriation made by Public Works Loan Act of 1881, for a railway from Orange to near Forbes, via Molong,—83 miles—is cancelled, the route as above being substituted therefor. Plans, &c., of the line from Borenore to Forbes, via Cudal, were approved by the Legislative Assembly on the 9th September, 1886, and disapproved by the Legislative Council on the 8th October, 1886.
7. *Mr. Lee.*] Is it to be a single or a double line of railway? A single line of rails.

Stanley Alexander, Esq., district engineer, sworn, and examined:—

- S. Alexander, Esq.
22 Jan., 1890.
8. *Mr. Lackey.*] You are District Engineer in the Department of the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways? Yes.
9. Was the route of the proposed railway from Molong to Forbes and Parkes surveyed under your directions? It was from Molong to Parkes.
10. Only to Parkes? Yes.
11. Had the line to Forbes been surveyed previously? Yes.
12. And you took up that survey? I have not seen it from Parkes to Forbes.
13. Have you seen the other? Yes, from Molong to Parkes; I have been all over it.
14. Do you regard it as a difficult country in which to construct a railway? It is a mountainous country, and it is easy for a mountainous country. There is no particular difficulty in it.
15. Is there much cultivation there? On the first length it is all cultivated as far as Meranburn; that is the beginning of Croker's Range.
16. To which part of Meranburn do you refer; do you mean near the Post Office and the store? Yes.
17. There is cultivation considerably beyond that I think—there is one of the bends of the Lachlan along there? There is the Manildra Creek? Yes, there is cultivation, then the mountains are entered, and the next cultivation is about Bumberry, on one side of the range, and on the level ground running into Parkes on the other side.
18. At Bindogandra? Yes, at Bindogandra Flats and Bumberry.
19. Is the range very difficult to get over? No.
20. The gradients are not very steep? They are between 1 in 50 and 1 in 60.
21. Is there much timber there? The ranges are all covered with ironbark.
22. With good ironbark? No, not very good. I think that all the piles, all the sleepers, and, in fact, all the short squared timber will be got there, but not the long squared timber.
23. Is there much of it? Yes, any quantity of it.
24. Are there many water-courses to cross? Mandagery is the biggest river, but it is nothing very formidable. It would take about 100 feet of water-way.
25. Is it a high running stream? Yes, we cross it close to the ranges.
26. Did you have anything to do with the surveying of the line from Borenore to Forbes? No.
27. Have you been advised, from a political point of view, that the line between Parkes and Forbes is supposed to form part of a projected cross line from Dubbo to Grenfell, Young, or any of those places? I just know the fact, nothing more.
28. In the survey that you have made do you think you have selected the most desirable route? About the first 12 miles up I propose to deviate from the surveyed line so as to pass through an easier gap through the Pine Range just below Molong. A surveyor is out now making that survey. The new survey will pass through Bocoble Gap, and the old survey is through Lord's Gap. The deviation will give a much easier line.
29. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you been over all these rival routes? No, only between Molong and Parkes.
30. What is the character of that country? As soon as you pass through Bocoble Gap you get into cultivated land which continues right up to Meranburn and Manildra.
31. How many miles? 17 miles. It is all good land for a distance of 17 miles from Molong. We then get into Croker's Range.
32. What is the character of the country? It is sandstone, with granite here and there.
33. Is it poor country? No, it is not poor country. All the base of the hills is very good wheat country. The sandstone there is older than the Sydney sandstone; there is very good country on the top of the range; between the ranges and Parkes it is all very light red sand soil.
34. Is it under cultivation? The greater part of it is. It would be all under cultivation if it would pay to cultivate it.
35. Do you call it an easy line from Molong to Parkes? It is easy for a hilly country; the same as you see on the Crookwell line; no very deep cuttings or bad rivers.
36. Constant undulations and curves? Yes, it is Croker's Range that constitutes the whole difficulty.
37. What is the gradient? From 1 in 50 to 1 in 60. I think that a gradient of 1 in 60 might be got.
38. Did you make the estimate of £433,000 which has been put before us? Yes.
39. The part from Parkes to Forbes is comparatively level? Yes.
40. And that is the chief part of the line? Yes.
41. What do you reckon the cost of that per mile to be by itself? I do not know what I estimated it at.
42. The amount is £4,950 per mile. Do you agree with that? That is my estimate, but I have not seen the ground.
43. In round numbers it is £5,000 a mile for a very light line? Yes.
44. When you speak of a light line, what weight of rails do you propose? 60 lb.
45. Do you add fencing? Yes.
46. And in that part of the line, you would require very heavy earthworks? No; as I recollect the section, it is a light one.
47. And no rivers or creeks to cross? Yes, creeks, but no rivers.
48. No flooded lands? Yes, 4 miles of flooded land. That is what makes that estimate so high. It is flooded from the north of Forbes to Strickland's Reef.

49. Do you require to cross that on piles? Not the whole of it, but we must make ample provision for the water. S. Alexander, Esq.
50. What is your estimate of the cost of the line per mile from Molong to Forbes? Before I inspected the line I estimated it at £6,444 a mile. After discussing the matter with Mr. Deane this morning, I have come to the conclusion that the cost might be reduced to £6,000 a mile. 22 Jan., 1890.
51. What did you cut out to make that reduction? We did not go into details. It is principally in stations that we should make the reductions, and in the class of fencing to be used.
52. No cheapening of the permanent-way? No.
53. Nor in the bridges? No.
54. To the best of your knowledge the railway could be made at that cost? Yes.
55. It seems a high price for a light line? Well, it is a mountain line.
56. What is the difference between the length of the line between its two points and the length of a straight line between those points; I suppose we might add one-quarter to it from Molong to Parkes, in consequence of the hilly nature of the country? I should think it would be more likely one-third more.
57. But that is only a rough statement? Yes.
58. You do not know the line at all from Orange to Forbes? No.
59. Do you know the line from Cowra to Forbes? I do not.
60. Is there anyone in the office who could give us information about that line—it has been surveyed? Yes; but I do not know who surveyed it. I can ascertain, and inform Mr. Lyne. One thing I should like to point out. The Flagstone Creek was the line which was suggested for construction; but since my inspection of the routes I am inclined to think—it is my own opinion entirely—that the route to adopt, both for revenue purposes and the development of the country, as well as from an engineering point of view, is the Bumberry route.
61. But the one put before us is the Flagstone Creek route? Yes.
62. And you are inclined to give preference to the other? I am. I think the Bumberry route, though longer than the other, would be cheaper per mile.
63. Will you tell us why you favour it? I think it goes through better country. There is a very large extent of cultivated country to the north of the junction of the Flagstone Creek and the Bumberry routes.
64. But if the traffic comes to the junction, will it not be common to both lines? The Flagstone Creek line is cut off from the good country to the north.
65. What station would that come near on the Bumberry route? A station at the junction between the Dungeon and the Croker Ranges.
66. And between that and the other line there is a route, is there? The Bumberry route is on the top of a range; the Flagstone Creek route is about half a mile away, and several hundred feet lower. The whole of that country along the Billabong Creek would be favoured by the Bumberry route.
67. For engineering reasons, which route is the best? I think the Bumberry route. The Flagstone Creek line is on the range the whole way up to the 252 miles, whereas the Bumberry line may be said to be on the ranges only up to the 249 miles.
68. On the plan there is a cross line from the Flagstone Creek route down towards Parkes,—is that surveyed? Yes.
69. What do you call that cross-piece? That was intended as a sort of half-way line between Parkes and Forbes, on towards Condobolin.
70. Is that on easy country? I think it is level country from where it branches off from the Flagstone Creek line.
71. Do you descend much between Molong and Parkes? 700 feet.
72. Would there be any material difference between the levels of Forbes and Parkes, both being in the Lachlan Valley? The water is all running from Parkes towards Forbes. I do not think that the difference is more than 100 feet or 200 feet.
73. Can you tell us who can give us information about the line from Borenore to Forbes? No, I do not know.
74. Mr. O'Sullivan.] You say you think that the Bumberry route is the best, but how can you arrive at that decision if you are not acquainted with the other proposals? I was speaking of the Flagstone Creek and the Bumberry routes only. I have not compared the others.
75. Mr. Lee.] What are the routes of these lines? The Bumberry route leaves Flagstone Creek at Porcupine Gap, crosses the Dungeon Range where that range meets the Croker Range, then descends into Bindogandri Flats, passes through Bindogandri, and goes direct to Parkes.
76. I understand that the other goes from Flagstone Creek to Parkes, and thence to Forbes? Yes.
77. Mr. Tonkin.] In leaving Molong, have you much trouble in getting out through the limestone ridges? No; a new line has been laid out up a creek called Mossy Hollow. It goes round the north end of the town; it does not cut across the limestone ridges.
78. Is the country through which the line goes of a much rougher description than the country from Goulburn to Crookwell? Yes.
79. Is it a more expensive class of country to construct a line over? Some parts of it are, but then there are long stretches of flats—easy ground, which keeps down the general average of expense.
80. Do you know that the estimate for this line is much over the estimate for the Goulburn to Crookwell line? The Goulburn to Crookwell, I think, averages about £6,000 a mile.
81. On that line there is no timber whatever for sleepers, but on the line now before us there is plenty of timber,—should not that make a material difference? The estimate has not been got out in full detail since my inspection of the route. The first 12 miles are now being resurveyed and when the surveyor returns it will have to be re-estimated. We can make no better estimate than £6,000 a mile at present. The Bumberry route I put down at £5,700 a mile.
82. How many miles longer than the Flagstone Creek route will that line be? 3 miles.
83. That would be £7,100 over on account of the extra length, but it would reduce the cost of the total length by £300 a mile? Yes.
84. Does the line from Molong to Parkes go near the mail-coach road? Yes, with this deviation. It leaves the coach road close to Molong and does not reach it again until it gets to Manildra. It meets it now and then, and crosses it now and then.
- 85.

- S. Alexander, Esq. 85. What is the average distance from the surveyed route to the coach road? It is 2 miles away at the greatest distance.
- 23 Jan., 1890. 86. You say it is nearly all agricultural land from Molong to Parkes? All except on Croker's Range.
87. How much of that would be unfit for agriculture? 20 miles of it, or excepting the patches of good land, say 15 miles.
88. Is there any mineral country there? No.
89. What is the range composed of? Sandstone, highly altered.
90. A barren sandstone range? I do not think there is anything on it, except in patches.
91. Have you had any chance to form an estimate of the population on the route of the line? No.
92. Did you form any idea from what you saw as to whether the line would pay if run that way? If I gave an opinion it would be based on such insufficient evidence that it could only be misleading.
93. You have never seen any of the other routes? I have not.
94. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you know whether the Molong branch is paying? I do not.

THURSDAY, 23 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Alexander Duff, Esq., District Traffic Superintendent, Railway Department, sworn, and examined:—

- A. Duff, Esq. 95. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your position? District Traffic Superintendent.
- 23 Jan., 1890. 96. Are you the officer on whose report the Commissioners base their calculations in reference to the traffic on the proposed railway from Molong to Parkes? I understand so.
97. Have you seen the report of the Commissioners? Yes, I have it here.
98. Did you send any detailed report to the Commissioners on which theirs is based? I sent in a report based on the information which I received from local residents.
99. Have you a copy of that report? I have not.
100. Did you not keep a copy? There is a tissue copy at Wellington.
101. Would it be possible for the Committee to obtain a copy of it? Yes.
102. Did you travel over the whole route of the proposed railway, or did you go by the road when making your inquiries? I took the main road.
103. But the proposed line deviates from the road at many points, does it not? Not to any great extent.
104. What is the nature of the country between Molong and Parkes? Commencing 4 miles out of Molong you have 16 miles of very good country; but from there until you reach Bumberry the country is unproductive from a railway point of view.
105. Because of there being no settlement? There is no settlement; it is simply ironbark ranges.
106. Then if it has been given in evidence here that in the opinion of some people the line should go *via* Bumberry, because it is better country there, that is a mistake? I should imagine so.
107. Do you know that it is proposed to take a line *via* Bumberry? Yes.
108. And a little further on there is to be the Flagstone Creek line, another deviation? Yes.
109. Do you think that the line submitted to the Committee is better than the other two deviations from Molong to Parkes? I could not say. So far as production is concerned one is as good as the other.
110. You have given us as your opinion that the Bumberry district is not so good as the Flagstone Creek district? No, I have not said that. I say that commencing 4 miles out of Molong for 16 miles you pass there is good agricultural country. Then from that to Bumberry you pass through ironbark ranges, producing nothing but timber.
111. From Bumberry to Parkes? From there over the Dungeon ranges until you come within 10 miles of Parkes. The country is unproductive from a revenue-producing point of view.
112. The country is not nearly so good when you get 16 miles from Molong? It is not nearly so good after you have passed the 20-mile boundary.
113. You would not offer an opinion as to which is the best of the three lines? I think one is as good as another.
114. How did you obtain your information? From local residents. I verified the information by testing one man's veracity by the statements of another.
115. But it would be to the interest of those whom you examined to give a glowing description of the country? Yes, but I do not think that they overestimated it.
116. Did you come across anyone in your travels who was against the project? I met with people who were perfectly indifferent about it—not any who were against the railway.
117. I only want to find out the value of their evidence. Is there a large amount of cultivation going on along the route between Molong and Parkes? A very considerable amount along that 16 miles of country.
118. What is the nature of it? Principally wheat.
119. Where do the farmers find a market? At Molong and in the western country—at Orange.
120. Do you estimate that any of the traffic from that district will be carried over the trunk line to the metropolis or that it will go westward? It is more than probable that it would go west. Of course much would depend on the seasons.
121. Have you taken into consideration the extent to which the trunk line will be benefited by the traffic from the proposed line? We carry the whole of the traffic now over the trunk line. The estimate is only for the proposed line. I doubt whether the new line will make any great difference to the trunk line.

122. If the railway is constructed, will it not lead to a greater area being put under cultivation in those districts? As a natural consequence, yes. A. Duff, Esq.
123. Would not that bring more traffic on to the trunk line and make it pay better? It would depend altogether on circumstances. It is probable that they might find—I believe do find—a market for the whole of their produce west of Parkes. 23 Jan., 1890.
124. Well, it amounted to the same thing—whatever increase there is in the traffic on the existing lines will make them more remunerative? Yes.
125. Do you not think that some consideration ought to be given to the branch line that brings that remunerative traffic? I believe it has always been taken into consideration.
126. You have not allowed for it? The Commissioners may have allowed a certain percentage.
127. I understand that you have their report before you? Yes.
128. Does it tally with your report? I cannot say. I do not know the basis on which they have made their calculations.
129. Do you know whether the Commissioners have made an estimate of £4,000 the same as yours? I did not make an estimate. I merely stated the probable traffic. They would take a certain percentage as likely to travel.
130. You only gathered the statistics as to population and production? Yes. I made no reference to revenue. I merely showed the producing power of the country which the line will have to traverse.
131. Then you are not in a position to check this statement? No, by no means.
132. How long have you been employed in the Department? I have been ten years in the service.
133. How long have you occupied your present position? Nearly three years.
134. Have you had opportunities before of reporting upon proposed railways? Yes. I have obtained returns respecting them.
135. Have your returns been borne out? More than borne out—tested and found correct.
136. If anything, you under-estimated? Yes.
137. And you have adopted the same course in reference to this line? Yes.
138. And you have every confidence that your report is strictly accurate? I believe it to be approximately correct.
139. You do not know whether this would be likely to be a paying line in our time? I do not.
140. What line have you ever reported on before? The Nyngan to Cobar line.
141. But not any lines which have since been constructed? No.
142. Do you know of any branch line paying well now with which you can compare this as regards the nature of the country? No; there is no branch line that would compare with it, except perhaps the Mudgee and the Orange to Molong lines.
143. What about the Orange to Molong line? There is a fair traffic on it.
144. Is it paying? It is paying working expenses.
145. Not the interest on the capital? I do not suppose that it is paying that.
146. Do you think that this proposed line will pay the working expenses and the interest on the capital? I do not believe so.
147. How long do you think it would be before we might expect the line to pay working expenses and the interest on the capital? It would depend on whether it was intended as a main trunk towards Condobolin and that way.
148. I want you to look at it as it is from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I do not think you could increase settlement within that 16 miles of good country, and which commences 4 miles from Molong. It is all taken up and settled.
149. *Dr. Garran.*] And the traffic goes to Molong at present? Yes, and the greater part of it will continue to go there.
150. Even if the railway is made? Yes.
151. *Mr. Garrard.*] By rail, of course? Not the whole of it. There are a great number of farms in the Gregra country.
152. Nearer to Molong by road than by rail? It would not be nearer; but the main road would join the proposed line within 2 miles of Molong.
153. If only going to Molong with their produce it will not pay them to put it on the railway? No.
154. But if the produce was going beyond there it would be sent by the railway? Yes.
155. You do not expect any increase of the produce of the land in the first 16 miles from Molong in consequence of the construction of the line? They are increasing the yield year by year.
156. What is the nature of the country between Parkes and Forbes? It is simply squatting country; nothing on it at present. I have no doubt that in the course of time it will produce to a certain extent.
157. Do you think it is not capable of being converted into an agricultural area? It may be in time; it is level country, and parts of it are under cultivation.
158. Then your evidence would lead us to believe that there is no probability of the line paying for some time to come? No; it is on the outside boundary of settlement.
159. Do you know anything of any of the other routes by which it is proposed to reach Forbes? I reported on both the Borenore and the Molong routes.
160. Do you estimate that the traffic on the Borenore line will be greater than that on the line under consideration? Most decidedly.
161. Do you think that that line would pay almost as soon as it was constructed? It would pay much better than the proposed line from Molong to Forbes via Parkes.
162. Is the town of Parkes increasing in size? Yes; I should not be surprised if in time it should outstrip Forbes.
163. What is the cause of its progress? There is extensive settlement at Parkes, but Forbes is surrounded principally with grazing-country. Land is more locked up around Forbes than at Parkes.
164. Is there any mining industry near Parkes? Yes.
165. Is it being developed largely? Yes; there is a considerable amount of mining going on there.
166. Is it true that there have been fluctuations? I have no doubt about that.
167. Then, looking at the relative value of Forbes and Parkes, would it pay to make a line to Forbes as against a line to Parkes? I do not know that Parkes and Forbes should be taken wholly into consideration. I should take the producing power of the country through which the railway would run.

- A. Duff, Esq. 168. Which line would pass through the best country, one from Orange to Forbes via Parkes, or one from Orange to Forbes via Cudal? The one from Orange via Borenore and Cudal.
- 23 Jan., 1890. 169. You have no doubt about that? Not the slightest doubt of it.
170. Judging of it as a railway-man, you would extend the line via Borenore? I would extend it according to the revenue-producing power of the country through which it would pass.
171. Which way do the wool-teams come from the grazing-country? Some one way and some another. They bring both wool and copper from the far country beyond Parkes and Forbes.
172. Taking Forbes as a centre to which the productions of the grazing-country gravitate, and then go on to the main line, which way does the traffic go? It depends a great deal on the back-loading that the teamsters are likely to get. In certain seasons they are bound to come along the river for water. They can come round by Parkes to Molong, provided they can get back-loading. If back-loading can be secured at Borenore they go there.
173. Do you know anything of the proposed line from Cowra to Forbes? I have not been over that country.
174. Do you know if there is much business done at Cowra and Dubbo? Yes, a considerable amount.
175. Is there more traffic at Cowra than at any other point between Blayney and Murrumburrah? No; Young and Cowra are almost equal.
176. What is the nature of the country on the Parkes-Forbes line, as against the Borenore-Cudal line;—which is the easier route? They are pretty well equal. The country about Toogong is very hilly.
177. Do you know anything of the difficulties which the survey parties had near Toogong? I understand that they had a difficulty in getting round there, but I believe they surmounted it.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

- H. Deane, Esq. 178. *Dr. Garran.*] What are you? Acting Engineer-in-Chief.
- 23 Jan., 1890. 179. Have you been over this line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I have not.
180. On what engineer do you principally rely for information? Mr. Alexander has been over this route.
181. Have you been over the line from Orange to Cudal and Forbes? Yes.
182. Have you been over the line from Cowra to Forbes? No.
183. Then you are only acquainted personally with one of the three competing routes? With only one,—the line which was permanently staked some years ago.
184. Who surveyed the route between Cowra and Forbes? I believe Mr. Cumming did.
185. Is he still in the service? Yes.
186. Who surveyed the line from Orange to Cudal and Forbes? The permanent staking was done at the Orange end by Mr. Sharkey and at the Forbes end by Mr. Geissow.
187. Was Mr. Sharkey engaged on either of the other two lines? I believe not.
188. Can you tell me the distance between Bathurst and Forbes by the Molong route? The distance from Sydney to Forbes by the Molong route is 285 miles.
189. What is the distance from Sydney to Orange and Cudal? 268 miles.
190. And from Sydney through Cowra to Forbes? 283 miles.
191. Then the shortest route will be that through Orange and Cudal? Yes.
192. What is the maximum elevation going by Molong from Sydney? The highest elevation would be on the mountains.
193. Between Bathurst and Forbes, by the Molong route? Milthorpe is 3,138 ft.; Huntley, 3,176 ft.
194. That point is common to the Molong route, and to the Cudal route, is it not? Yes.
195. And by Cowra the greatest elevation would be Blayney? Just at this side of Blayney, at Newbridge, 2,877 ft.
196. There is an elevation of 97 ft. more by the Orange route than by the Cowra route? Yes.
197. But the shortest distance is by Cudal? Yes.
198. As to the length of the line to be constructed, which will require the most construction of the three to get to Forbes? That requiring the least construction will, no doubt, be the line from Cowra to Forbes.
199. What is the length of that line? 64 miles.
200. And the length of the line from Orange through Cudal to Forbes? 66½ miles.
201. And from Molong to Forbes via Parkes? 71 miles.
202. That is by the Flagstone Creek route? Yes.
203. And the distance by the Bumberry route? About 2 miles further.
204. The two shorter lines would both leave Parkes out? Yes.
205. But Parkes would be included in the route suggested yesterday by Mr. Barling from Forbes to Dubbo? Yes.
206. Which do you consider the easiest line to construct? I have not any reliable information about the Cowra to Forbes line. There is an estimate for that which is very similar per mile to the estimate of the Borenore to Forbes line. It would certainly be a lighter line.
207. It follows the valley of the Lachlan? Not quite; it goes through Canowindra.
208. It would have to cross several tributary streams? Yes.
209. There would be some bridges on that line? Yes.
210. No heavy cuttings? Nothing heavy. It joins the Borenore to Forbes line at Eugowra.
211. How much of the route would be common to the two? The line from Cowra to Forbes junctions with the line from Borenore to Forbes at Eugowra.
212. How far is Eugowra from Forbes? About 23 miles.
213. What is the height of Cowra above the sea-level? 987 feet.
214. Would there not be a slight fall between there and Forbes? Yes.
215. No heavy ranges? Nothing remarkable.
216. Would it be a line of easy gradients? Yes.
217. And comparatively cheap to make? A portion from Eugowra to Forbes is easy, but there will be some amount of work elsewhere. It will not be an expensive line taken altogether.
218. Which of the other two lines will be the more difficult and costly to make? The Cudal route in part is very rough, and part of that route will be mere surface line. The estimate which I have is for £6,000 a mile, taking it all through.
- 219.

219. That includes the easy part, Eugowra to Forbes? Yes, two or three portions of it contain very heavy work. H. Deane,
Esq.
220. Principally from Orange, I suppose? The descent from Borenore and two or three bad places. 23 Jan., 1890.
221. How are the gradients on that line? 1 in 40 on that descent. I could not say whether it would be possible to cut out that grade.
222. As to the cost per mile, Cudal and Molong are about equal? Yes.
223. And as to the cost of maintenance, would that be much the same? Very much the same.
224. As to expense there is nothing to choose between them? No. If the object is to get to Forbes and you add the Parkes and Forbes to the Molong to Parkes, of course you get a larger total.
225. If you merely want to go to Parkes and then to the westward? Taking the line from Borenore to Forbes, as compared with the Molong to Parkes, the Borenore to Forbes estimate appears to be the higher one, but adding the line from Parkes to Forbes to the Molong to Parkes, assuming that Forbes is the ultimate end of the line, it makes that line the more expensive of the two.
226. If we take Forbes as the objective point, then it is more expensive to go by Molong? Yes.
227. If we take Parkes as the objective point it is cheaper to go by Molong? Yes.
228. Can you give us the particular totals? According to the estimate furnished the Flagstone Creek route would cost £329,700. That is equal to £6,444 per mile. The estimate can be reduced by £67 a mile, making it £306,000.
229. The line from Parkes to Forbes would be how much a mile? The total is £100,400. I find that that estimate can be reduced to £90,450, being £4,412 a mile.
230. Then there is the route from Borenore to Forbes, via Cudal? That is $66\frac{1}{2}$ miles at £6,000 a mile; total £399,000; but I believe that £6,000 a mile is excessive.
231. Then if we add the £306,000 to the Parkes to Forbes line, £90,000, that will make £396,000? Yes.
232. You would still make the Cudal line slightly cheaper? Yes; I have no doubt that the Cudal line can be cheapened.
233. But it would leave out Parkes? Yes.
234. But the Parkes and the Bumbery country would be accommodated with the line from Forbes to Dubbo? Yes.
235. Suppose the line from Forbes to Dubbo were made, what would be the greatest distance between that and the Molong line? Thirty miles.
236. You have traversed one of these routes? Yes.
237. What was the character of the country which you traversed as a traffic yielding country? It is a very good wheat-growing country.
238. Where does the trade go now? To Orange.
239. By road? Yes.
240. Are the roads pretty good? Yes, very fair.
241. Have the farmers much difficulty in getting their produce to market? I believe not.
242. So far as your experience goes, what distance on either side of it is fairly served by a railway in an agricultural country? I should say from 10 to 15 miles.
243. Do you find people taking up farms and settling within 20 miles of a railway station if there is a fairly good road to the station? Yes; they take farms at greater distances than that. In the Toogong district they have been growing wheat for a number of years, and the distance from there to Orange is more than 20 miles.
244. They have taken up the land knowing that they would have to carry their wheat more than 20 miles? Yes.
245. At present does the wheat from the district you have been referring to go to Borenore? It goes to Orange.
246. Is it carted all the way? Yes.
247. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] There is one route of which you have not given the distance, that via Combing and Cargo? That is such an expensive one that I have not taken a note of it. The distance from Combing Creek to Forbes is 83 miles.
248. In the event of Peak Hill becoming an established goldfield possibly there may be a considerable population there, and they may want a railway in the near future, would not that start from the end of the Molong line? I should say that if the Dubbo to Parkes line is ever made it will be unnecessary to make another branch, or to extend the Molong branch.
249. Is it in contemplation to construct that line? Yes; it has been under consideration—all these cross-country lines to Werris Creek, Dubbo &c.
250. In the event of that line not being carried out would not the end of the Molong line be a good point of departure for Peak Hill? I think so. I do not know what the country is like.
251. *Mr. Garrard.*] In the event of the Werris Creek-Dubbo line being constructed, do not you think it would be better to take the line from Dubbo to Forbes and Young than to Cowra? Yes; the line from Forbes to Young has been surveyed.
252. *Dr. Garran.*] What would be the distance to Sydney from Forbes, via Young and Murrumburrah? 320 miles; 268 by Borenore and Cudal.
253. The difficulties of running on the Western line are very much greater than the difficulties of running over the Southern trunk line, are they not? The steepest gradients are the same on both lines.
254. But all the traffic coming to Sydney by the Western line has to come over the Blue Mountains? Yes.
255. The traffic from Forbes, coming by the Southern line to the metropolis, would escape all that heavy haulage? The heights to be ascended would not be so great on the Southern line; but there are heavier gradients on the Southern line against traffic coming to Sydney than there are on the Western line.
- 255½. But are they not limited, while on the Western line the heavy grades frequently occur? The steepest grades are about 2 miles on each line.

TUESDAY, 28 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.
JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

John Charles M'Lachlan, Esq., solicitor, sworn, and examined:—

J. C.
M'Lachlan,
Esq.
23 Jan., 1890.

256. *Dr. Garran.*] Where do you reside now? In Sydney now.
257. Have you resided in the west? Yes; for over twenty-seven years, until about a year ago.
258. At Orange? At Orange, for about twenty-three years; at Bathurst, for three or four years.
259. When did you leave Orange? In January, 1889.
260. Was the line to Molong open when you left? Yes, for some time.
261. Was that line carried out at the wish of the residents in Orange? Not specially, I think. I think the people were divided. Some were in favour of it, and some opposed to it. I think that the majority of the people there were opposed to it.
262. At the time it was started there was a general feeling that that should be the route to Wilcannia, was there not? Not at that time—not when it was started; that has been suggested since.
263. Whither was the extension supposed to go? I do not remember that there was any determination on that point. There was simply a resolution to take the railway to Molong; but beyond that I do not know that any determination was arrived at. I presume that the Government records would show. I do not remember any.
264. Then it was under pressure from Molong people mainly? I think so.
265. Without any ulterior portion definitely marked? Apparently. I understand that there was an idea of carrying it on to the Bogan to join the Great Western line, but that was merely the idea of some people. I was informed, but not by Mr. Whitton, that Mr. Whitton was in favour of a line to the Bogan.
266. It was the original idea that the line from Dubbo to Orange should go to Molong? Many thought it was a good route, as it would avoid a bridge at Wellington and at Dubbo, and serve Dubbo as well.
267. Do you know whether the traffic on the branch to Molong has been such as to justify the construction of that line? I do not know, but I think not.
268. That branch having been constructed, the question now arises whether Parkes and Forbes would be better reached through Molong or from Orange by way of Cudal, or, as some others think, from Cowra;—is that not so? Yes.
269. Have you from your long knowledge formed any opinion on that subject? I have.
270. Will you state what it is, and your reasons for it? In my opinion the line from Borenore to Forbes would pass through better and more thickly populated country, and a country more likely to give immediate returns to any railway. I believe it would pay almost at once. There is a very large population along that line.
271. Is it continuously good country between Borenore and Forbes? Yes; it is very evenly good between those places. In one part I should think that the Cudal district is one of the best wheat-growing districts in the Colony. There is excellent soil.
272. There are no large patches of bad country that the line would go through? No.
273. Is it capable of settlement all along the line? I think so.
274. And for what distance on either side of the line? For at least 8 or 10 miles, I should think, and more than that, but my intimate knowledge of that country is to that extent. I might mention that on that line the population would be much larger were it not for the number of reserves which constitute all the best land along that route. That would affect the matter in two ways: no compensation would have to be given for going through those reserves, and the land is exceptionally good.
275. In looking forward to railway construction we may regard those reserves as only temporary? I think so, because I think that if the line were constructed they would be scarcely necessary. Some little accommodation would be required for travelling stock, but not so much as at present, and that land would be available for farming operations, for which it is very suitable.
276. You mean that as the country passes from the pastoral into the agricultural stage those reserves will have served their purpose? Undoubtedly.
277. And I understand that you wish the Committee to believe that between Borenore and Forbes there will be for nearly the whole distance a belt of at least 6 or 8 miles on either side to contribute agricultural produce to the stations *en route*? I think so, contributing almost at once, and very much increased by railway accommodation there.
278. Whither do the farmers at present cultivating that locality send their wheat now? Chiefly to Orange, I think, and to some extent to Forbes.
279. What distance do they have to cart it? The chief wheat district would be Cudal and the surrounding country, and the village of Cudal is about 27 miles from Orange, but of course they could reach Borenore if they struck the railway line at Borenore, which is about 8 miles from Orange. There would be an average of about 20 miles of cartage from the Cudal district, which is the principal wheat district.
280. Then wheat-growers at present are carting wheat 20 miles? Yes; and there is hay—it scarcely pays to grow it. I have even seen it at £1 per ton, and I think a man can hardly live by growing it at that.
281. The construction of this line would bring railway communication within 6 or 8 miles of every farm on the route? I think so.
282. And that would mean a saving of cartage, and enable them to grow a more bulky crop of hay? Yes. It is a country very suitable for maize also, and for vineyards.
283. The maize would find a local market to some extent? Yes, because I think that most of the maize comes from this part. Orange is not a district for maize; it is too cold.

J. C.
M'Lachlan,
Esq.

28 Jan., 1890.

284. The growers there could hardly compete with the growers at the Richmond for the Sydney market? No, not in the Sydney market.
285. You think that the cultivation of maize would be limited to the local market supply? Yes.
286. And of hay, too? To a large extent. As the railway extended maize would be sent into the interior.
287. Is there any business with squattages in the interior with maize; is it forwarded for horse-feed at all? I do not think there is a great business because of the expense of cartage, but there would be if there were facility of carriage.
288. Take the line to Bourke;—is any quantity of maize sent to the north-west? I am not sufficiently acquainted with that business to be able to say.
289. In the dry season is hay sent on? Oh yes, in the dry season.
290. What is the average rainfall along this line that you favor? I have not noted that.
291. Can you remember how many seasons the crop has been destroyed by drought? No. There is not often a complete destruction. They are affected very much no doubt.
292. You think it will be a permanent agricultural district? I think so undoubtedly. Even now there are many prosperous farmers—under present conditions.
293. You speak of Cudal as being the choice spot on the line; is land near Eugowra good? It is very good also, but being farther from market than Cudal it is not opened up. I believe there is excellent land about Eugowra that would pay better to work than it does now.
294. Supposing a line were continued from Forbes through the Lachlan valley to Menindie, do you think that the growers between Orange and Forbes would find a market in the west for their produce? I think so. I know the land the other side of Condobolin—midway between that and Euabalong—and that is very good country.
295. Do you not think that as it is opened up the west will be the true market for farmers in the west rather than their sending to Sydney? I think so—eventually.
296. You think that pushing these railways will give them the chance of getting that western market? I think so.
297. Will you tell us what you have to say against the Molong-Parkes line? I do not know that I have so much to say against it. There is some very good land on that route, and some very inferior.
298. It is rather more patchy? About Dungeon Creek and Bumbury there is some which is not good land; to an ordinary observer it seems good, but the land is not so good. About Manildra and some other places there is some very good land. The greatest objection to constructing that line is that at no very distant date the farmers would almost be entitled to a line along by Cudal also, as there will be such a population there as will be entitled to railway communication even if the other line be constructed.
299. You do not think that between Molong, Parkes, and Forbes we shall have on either side of the line such a belt of settled productive land as on the other route? I do not think so. I might mention that some of that very country along the Molong line, such as near Manildra, would not be a great distance from the Cudal line.
300. If you look at that map you will see that the line from Orange to Eugowra runs, roughly, parallel with the line from Blayney to Cowra; what distance would those two lines be apart? I suppose that is better shown by the scale. I have been across the country from one point to the other, but this map is scaled and the distance would be more satisfactorily shown by scale than I could state it.
301. Supposing it to be 25 or 30 miles, the population between these two railways would be well provided for? I think so then.
302. Because you say it will pay to cart within 20 miles? It pays but not well. There are farmers there making a very good living, but some are not doing well.
303. Do you know the character of the country between Borenore, Cowra, Eugowra, and Blayney;—is it all capable of settlement? Not all, but considerable land would be taken up if there were proper railway communication, and it is very good land; the general character of it.
304. If the line went by way of Molong it would be north of the line you favour and would be a more intermediate line between the line to Dubbo and the line to Cowra? It would.
305. In laying out these lines it is very desirable to give the greatest possible accommodation to the people who settle, do you not think? All other things being equal I think so.
306. We cannot make lines everywhere, and if we can bring most of our settlers to within between 15 and 20 miles of a line it is better than making them too close together? Yes.
307. Would not your line be much closer to the line from Blayney to Cowra than the other proposed line would be? Yes.
308. It would over-accommodate some portions and under-accommodate others? Yes; but the settlement is not nearly so great in that district as here. When people settle on land not so near the railways—
309. You think that that is a proof that it is the better land? I think so. Ever since the Forbes gold-field was opened, before the railways were thought of, the tendency of the traffic was all along by Cowra, Cudal, and so on.
310. Looking at the number of present settlers, and the amount of present produce, you think that the Orange-Eugowra line would be a better national investment than the Molong-Parkes line would be? I think so.
311. And from your knowledge of the district as a whole do you think it would be a better railway for the district? I think so.
312. If we do not extend the line from Molong that branch will remain a solitary branch? Unless the idea should be carried out of continuing it along to the Bogan—which, as I stated I heard Mr. Whitton was in favour of—and eventually striking the Great Western Line at present running to Bourke; but that would hardly be constructed at present, I suppose.
313. Where do you propose to strike it? Somewhere about Nyngan, I think. That is a line I should hardly consider justified at present. That line would pass through Cumnock where there is very excellent land.
314. So far as you know the opinion of the Orange people do they prefer the Borenore line? I think so.
315. Orange is the natural centre for that district? Yes.
316. Permanently established as such? Quite so.
317. They have to climb by the present road to get to Orange? Yes.
318. It is at a good height? Yes. In any direction from Orange you descend. It is the highest point in that portion of the country.

- J. C. M'Lachlan, Esq.
28 Jan., 1890.
319. All the people round have to go uphill to get to Orange? Yes.
320. That is not adverse to it as a business centre? No, I think not. It has never been any detriment to it. When there were no railways all the Lachlan traffic up to Forbes passed through Orange.
321. Have you been to Parkes? Yes.
322. Is there mining going on there now? Yes.
323. And at Forbes? Yes.
324. As mining townships, is one more important than the other? From a mining point of view I should say that Parkes is. Forbes was originally a mining township, but to a considerable extent it has been converted into a squatters' township.
325. Looking at the future of the two townships do you think that one has a distinctly better outlook than the other? I think that Forbes is the more important town. It is on the river Lachlan. There is very good land about both.
326. Is either more naturally than the other the business centre of the district? Forbes I think is.
327. In laying out a trunk line you think it more important to pass through Forbes than Parkes? I think so.
328. If in planning a railway line you had to make either town subsidiary you would make Parkes subsidiary and Forbes the principal one? Certainly.
329. You know that one of the suggested lines to reach Forbes is from Cowra, to which place the railway already extends? I know that.
330. Have you ever travelled from Cowra to Forbes? No.
331. Your knowledge of the intervening district would be only second-hand? Quite so. I cannot say that I have any knowledge that would be worth anything to the Committee; but so far as I can judge, it is very good country about Cowra.

John Philip Sharkey, Esq., C.E., sworn, and examined:—

- J. P. Sharkey, Esq.
28 Jan., 1890.
332. *Mr. Lackey.*] What are you by profession? Civil engineer.
333. Had you anything to do with the survey of either of these two lines—between Borenore and Forbes or between Molong and Forbes? I surveyed them all.
334. When you say "them all" do you mean these two lines? Yes, both the line from Orange to Molong, and on to Parkes and the line from Orange to Borenore and on to Forbes.
335. Had you anything to do with the survey from Cowra to Eugowra? Nothing whatever.
336. Who surveyed that line? I cannot say. It has been surveyed since I left the department.
337. The line between Borenore and Forbes—did you survey it right through? I was on most part of it. I did it nearly all myself. There were several surveys over that route until I prepared a permanently staked line.
338. Was it a line showing difficult gradients in any parts? One portion of the line, going down from Borenore to Keenan's Bridge, had pretty steep gradients. That line was surveyed originally—before any other line was surveyed out from Orange—for the purpose of getting a line to Forbes, but the surveyors engaged upon the line were stuck up by the stiff gradients, and by the difficulty that arose in passing what they call Keenan's Swamp, and it was not until I had done the survey to Forbes that I was called upon to go over the work on that portion of the line and find out a practicable route. I was directed to do so by Mr. Wright, the then Minister for Works, and I found a line that obviated the necessity of crossing Keenan's Swamp, and therefore removed the difficulty that originally existed. By making a slight detour I also cut down the steep gradients which were considered strong features of difficulty in the original surveys, and consequently that line of survey was adopted by the Government of the day.
339. Do we understand that the first surveyors sent up gave up this line as impracticable? It was considered so by the Government.
340. On the report of the survey party sent up? Yes.
341. What was the character of the detour you recommended? I recommended a slight detour by which a rising ground was taken in in the course of the line which helped as a kind of stepping-way and extended the gradient for an extra distance, which of course reduced its steepness.
342. Was your alternative route, or the route you proposed, north or south of Keenan's Swamp? It kept south of the original survey as it approached Keenan's Swamp and passed to the south there, and kept outside of Keenan's Swamp—closer along the main road. The original survey went through a large spur with very steep cuttings, and then over the swamp.
343. What was the steepest gradient in the improved line, the adopted line, the line you recommended? I think 1 in 40.
344. How far did that gradient extend? For a good distance. You must remember it is some years since I was there. I have no means of refreshing my memory unless I had my plans before me.
345. Then it went on from there to Eugowra? There was no difficulty after that. I think as far as my memory serves me that the grades are very flat indeed between that and Forbes.
346. Did you take notice of the character of the country between Eugowra and Forbes so far as floods were concerned? I did.
347. Did you make inquiry? I had the plainest evidence before me, because the big flood of 1870 was the largest flood recorded in that part of the country during the residence of white people. I could see the remains of the flood there at the time when the survey was done, and we were 6 feet or 7 feet above the highest flood-mark. My level book gives the record of this large flood of 1870 and the formation level for the line.
348. You know a place, as you approach Forbes, called the Southern Cross? I do well.
349. Is it the case that it was submerged by the flood of 1870? Yes; it was.
350. How far was your line from that? It runs at the back. I am only speaking from memory, but I believe it is 4 or 5 miles at the back of that. There was a survey made—not done by me—which ran close to the Southern Cross, but in consequence of a report that it was under flood-level the direction was altered so as to take the top of this dividing ridge. It is hardly perceptible to the naked eye, but it is absolutely 5 or 6 or 7 feet higher than the adjoining country.
351. Where does your survey end near Forbes? Within, I think, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the town of Forbes.
352. Do you know the crossing of the Parkes Road where the original survey was? Perfectly well.
353. Is it far from that? It comes up to the line I surveyed. I surveyed a portion of the cross line from

from Dubbo to Parkes and from Parkes to Forbes, and on by Grenfell, and it joins that line near the Parkes Road—within a few chains.

354. Have you ever heard of traffic on the road between Forbes and Eugowra having to be abandoned in flood time, and go round by Parkes? I have not, but I have not the slightest doubt it would be stuck up anyhow. Part of that road certainly would be submerged in a big flood such as that of 1870, but I do not think that any flood has taken place since then that would stop the traffic on that road. It would have to rise exceedingly high, as the rise from the summer level to the level of the road must be 50 feet or so.

355. You know the mail road now? Yes.

356. Have you heard the height to which the water rises on that in flood time? I have not, but I dare say I have a record of the level there too; but in the absence of my level or field-book I cannot give the information.

357. You became fairly well acquainted with the character of the country all through those districts? At that time I was thoroughly acquainted with it.

358. It is good rich land all through those districts? It is good rich land all the way from Orange. I think it is the finest land I have seen anywhere in the Colony.

359. Do you mean that no flood would reach the line of railway you marked out? The line of railway now marked out is, I say, above the big flood mark of 1870, and a flood would have to rise from 5 feet to 7 feet higher than that before it could possibly touch the present ground line of the line of survey.

360. Of the proposed railway line? Yes.

361. You have become well acquainted with the whole character of the country in these districts generally? Yes; I made it my business to do so.

362. You have been to Eugowra, Cudal, and Meranburn? Yes.

363. Do you know Townsend's, on the Parkes line? I know what is called Bumbery.

364. They are all wheat-growing places? Yes; but not of the character of the land on the Borenore line. Where you go off the Borenore line you get another character of soil; but that land there is a red chocolate soil, of considerable depth—4 ft. or 5 ft. or 6 ft. perhaps before you come to a change; but on the other line of country it is black soil country—very loamy country.

365. Have you seen both countries under crop? I have.

366. Which do you regard as the most successfully cultivated country of the two? Without any comparison the Cudal district is richer in every way.

367. Have you been in the Parkes district? I have.

368. What is the character of the soil there? In some places it is patchy; in some places there is very good soil; it is black soil.

369. Do you know the country along by Meranburn? I do well. There is a patch of good land about Meranburn and Manildra.

370. What do you call a patch? It is on the flat, and I consider it will extend from the main road a mile on either side. There may be patches here and there; but it is not in its general character the same as at Cudal.

371. I believe that the Forbes road was the old track? It was.

372. The settlements are older? Yes.

373. The country of which we are now speaking is comparatively new? I believe it was opened much later.

374. I take it that the older country would be more largely populated, and more cultivated? Yes, naturally.

375. Do you know the country about Brymedura? I know it well.

376. Is there wheat cultivation about there? None, that I saw there, except in the station paddock.

377. How long is it since you were there? About six years. There was not much extent of wheat cultivation there then.

378. I suppose you are aware of the circumstances under which the line was first constructed between Orange and Molong? Perfectly.

379. You recollect, probably, the contest that existed for some time as to whether the line from Orange to Wellington should go by Molong or Ironbarks? Perfectly.

380. And you know there has been a strong feeling between the people of Molong and of Orange as to the route this line should take? I do.

381. Do you know that most of the people recommend the line by Borenore? I believe they do.

382. The Molong people recommend the line by Flagstone Creek? Yes, I believe they do.

383. Is it your opinion that there is a strong prejudice in the minds of residents of both those towns as to which course the line should take? I have never seen much interest taken in the matter at Orange; but they seem to like the Borenore line. I know that the people of Molong are very anxious that the line should pass through their town to Parkes. The line from Borenore presents a feature I thought I might mention. On either side of the line there is good land right up to a place called Cargo.

384. You know the country round Cargo? I do well.

385. It is between the two lines, is it not? Yes; on the other hand the centres of good land, such as Manildra and Meranburn, are only 8 or 9 miles from the Borenore line.

386. Is it your opinion that one line of railway will meet the convenience of the whole farming population of that district? I think that the Borenore line is geographically situated to meet the requirements of the country, and if you make one line you will have people continuing to cry out for a line to relieve their traffic.

387. Do you think that the Government should be influenced in the construction of a line to Parkes or Forbes by the existence of towns, or should take it to the district most prolific in crops? I think that the Government of any country should deal with matters of railway on a commercial basis, and in the interest of the public all lines should be taken where there would probably be a remunerative traffic, and the Government should treat either towns or localities in the same manner.

388. The line you have surveyed does not go exactly into Forbes? No; within 3 or 4 miles. As to the matter of traffic, when I was out surveying I took notes of the traffic on the various lines I was on, and as regards the Forbes line—from Borenore to Forbes—I can safely say I never saw such heavy traffic in New South Wales as I did on that line of road. I have known in the winter season—just before the rainy season—about October or November, the Roads Department in Orange always put a coating of broken metal on the line, Borenore to Forbes, so as to enable the roads to withstand the heavy wool and wheat traffic

J. P. Sharkey,
Esq.
23 Jan, 1890.

- J. P. Sharkey, Esq.
28 Jan., 1890.
- traffic into Orange. Immediately afterwards, when camped on that road, I have been astonished to see the way in which that broken metal was ground down into an even surface.
389. How long ago was that? I am speaking of 1885.
390. Most of the traffic of that part of the country came through Forbes at that time? Yes.
391. Currajong and Parkes have not been so long settled? But I was there about five years ago, and there was no comparison in the traffic. I have been camped on the Parkes Road—one of the finest roads in the Colony—and it is a fact that not a shilling has been spent on it for three or four years at a time, because the traffic was not sufficient to wear down the road. Another note I made at Molong was that before the railway was made there was a man with a two-horse van, and he actually did all the carrying into the town of Molong from Orange. Sometimes he had two and sometimes four horses, according to the nature of the traffic. But in two trips a week he carried into Molong all the goods that came there.
392. I suppose you know the country north of Parkes—the head of the Bogan? Yes.
393. How far have you been out north of Parkes? Not very far.
394. Do you know of any of the country about Curragery or Ganalleggy? Not sufficiently well to speak of it.
395. Do you know there has been a great deal of settlement there during the last few years? I have heard so.
396. Settlement of agricultural population? I believe it has taken place.
397. Much larger than in any other part of the district? It may have taken place.
398. When you speak of the great traffic on the Forbes road, of course you know that the Forbes road was an outlet to the country long before the line extended to what is called Parkes? Yes.
399. Parkes is considered a new town or district? It was a very important town in 1885.
400. How old is Parkes? I cannot say, but it was a good town at that time.
401. You know that the Parkes road, or the Currajong as it was previously called, is not to be compared with the road to Cudal, Eugowra, and Forbes? That may be.
402. If you know the country you must know it is so? I knew it only between certain periods.
403. The road to Parkes and Currajong is a road known only within the last few years? That may be.
404. You are not resident there now? No. I am a resident of Sydney. I am an engineer practising in Sydney.
405. Sometimes the officers of the Government settle down or buy properties in these parts of the country; that is not the case with you? No. I am practising as an engineer in Sydney, and am putting up some verly large works.
406. You are not in the Public Service now? No. I am practising myself; I am building the water-works for Windsor now, the Penrith and the Nowra.
407. You have no interest in either of these lines? None whatever. I speak impartially, without any motive on either side; but I was impressed beyond measure with the importance of the line. Before any question of competing lines arose, I reported on the country in the vicinity of Cudal, and that land opened up by the Borenore route would decidedly be, and should be, selected as a commercial speculation in preference to the other. I have had sufficient experience of railways in this country, and America, and Queensland, to enable me to procure sufficient data for a report on the commercial aspect of any railway, I think, in the world.
408. Do you recollect the date of your report? I could not say, but I have with me a report in which this question is mentioned.
409. Can you give us the date of it? I will give it to you, and also the report itself. [*Report handed in by witness*]
410. This is dated December, 1883? Yes. That was the first time when that question cropped up.
411. Would you be good enough to read that report, and then it will be noted in your evidence? This is a portion of my report under date 8th December, 1883, addressed to the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, from the survey camp, Cudal. That portion that bears on the character of the country is as follows:—
- BORENORE, the locality of my starting point, is the centre of a prosperous and thickly populated agricultural district; from thence to the terminus of my survey all the available land has been selected for a considerable distance on each side. The class of settlers is decidedly agricultural, and a very large area is under cultivation. The wheat crop of this district is one of the largest in the colony, and gives promise of extensive traffic on a railway should it be constructed. As a matter of comparison of capabilities of land and the character and number of settlers on the country adjacent to this line and that passing Molong, I may state that but very little of the land in the vicinity of the line passing Molong is fit for settlement beyond Meranburn, which limit is 7 miles west of Manildra, and that there are no agricultural settlers beyond that point, and consequently no agriculture. Should the branch line to Molong be determined upon, the length from Orange to Borenore (9 miles 26 chains) on that line may be deducted from the gross mileage to Forbes, thus making a considerable reduction in the distance to be constructed to that place.
412. That is 1883—six years ago? Yes. Another matter I might mention is that the land beyond a place called Coates' Creek when I was in that district was the last open to settlement in that neighbourhood.
413. Your opinion was formed at the time you were there in 1883? Yes.
414. Have you been there much since? I was about that district till 1885, but beyond Coates' Creek there was no settlement whatever, and the line passes in through the Dungeon Ranges.
415. That is where it goes off to Flagstone Creek? Yes. There is little or no surface soil on the ranges, which fact gives rise to the name "Dungeon Ranges." There is no surface soil—the rock is nearly exposed.
416. Those ranges form the head of what is called the Billabong, I think? Yes.
417. Have you travelled the Billabong generally? No. It is the Flagstone Creek that I am talking of. The country was so rough that I never went much off the line of survey. I surveyed the line from Flagstone Creek to Parkes and Forbes.
418. How far from Parkes is the terminus there; how close is the line to the town of Parkes? The survey I made went right into the town of Parkes. I passed through that portion of the town and went to the extreme end of the town.
419. The country is very rough about Flagstone Creek? It is very rough, and there is no soil fit for any purpose. Flagstone Creek is a very difficult part of the line to make. While I was working on one side of the creek a heavy thunderstorm fell for an hour, and I was compelled to camp on that side, as I could not get across for several hours. The creek rose 20 feet in that time. As there was no soil through which the water could percolate it came into the creek, and flooded in that manner.
420. What is the character of the stone in the neighbourhood of Flagstone Creek? I think it is sandstone.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

APPENDIX.

A

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS REPORTS.

Proposed line of Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, *via* Flagstone Creek—Length, 71 miles 52 chains.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 27 September, 1889.

In accordance with section 13 of the "Public Works Act, 1888," we beg to report as under :—

Cost of construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief estimates the cost of constructing a light line of railway (exclusive of land and compensation) at £433,000

Annual cost—

Capital expenditure, at 3½ per cent.	15,155
The estimated cost of working would be as under—	
Permanent-way expenses	£7,300
Locomotive expenses.....	1,800
Traffic expenses	1,800
	10,900
Total annual cost	£26,055

Traffic estimate—

Passenger traffic	£4,000
Mails.....	864
Merchandise Traffic	5,600
Live stock traffic.....	800
	£11,264

It will be seen from the foregoing figures that this is an instance where the working expenses of the line will probably be covered by the traffic.

The Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereunto affixed this 27th day of September, 1889, in the presence of—
H. McLAUGHLIN.

E. M. G. EDDY,
Chief Commissioner.
W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.
CHARLES OLIVER,
Commissioner.

Molong to Parkes Extension.

THIS is an extension of the branch line from Orange to Molong, which runs through a fairly good agricultural district, but on leaving Molong the character of the country changes, being of a rocky nature for a considerable distance between Molong and Parkes, and therefore but little revenue can be expected from local traffic, the settlement *en route* being limited.

We are of opinion that an extension from Molong to Parkes could not be recommended, except as the means of opening up an admittedly good agricultural district around and north of Parkes, but we would rather favour a line from Cowra or Young to Forbes, and from thence to Parkes, which would run through fairly good country, and give the residents the choice of either the southern or western lines for business purposes.

E. M. G. EDDY,
W. M. FEHON,
CHARLES OLIVER.

9th July, 1889.

B.

OFFICIAL descriptions of the proposed Railway.

Line from Molong to Parkes.

THIS line is an extension of the branch which leaves the Great Western Railway at Orange, and is a continuation from Molong, the present terminus.

A sum of £705,500 was voted during the year 1881 for construction of a line from Orange to near Forbes, *via* Molong, and a portion of this vote was used for the construction of the line to Molong; the remainder of the vote was rescinded in favour of the line from Borenore to Forbes *via* Cudal. Surveys have been made along two routes. They are named respectively—the Molong to Parkes, *via* Flagstone Creek route, and the Molong to Parkes, *via* Bumberry route. These two are identical up to 243 miles 66 chains 70 links from Sydney; at this point they diverge, the Bumberry route being the northerly one.

The Flagstone Creek Route.

Length—51 miles 12 chains 95 links—Estimated cost of a single light line of Railway, £329,700, or £6,444 per mile, exclusive of land and compensation.

THIS line is an extension from Molong station, at 213 miles 78 chains 85 links from Sydney. It sweeps round the north end of the high land on which the town stands, crossing Molong rivulet twice, and then turns south-westerly on rising gradients, as far as 219 miles, crossing Lord's Gap at 220 miles, and Mandagery Creek at 228½ miles; to this point gradients fall for 9 miles. The proposed village of Manildra is passed at 229 miles; from Mandagery Creek the gradients steadily rise again to 239 miles, and the height attained, *viz.*, about 2,000 feet above h.w.s.t., is maintained up to 243 miles. From this point the descent is almost continuous into Parkes, where the line is terminated at 265 miles 11 chains 80 links from Sydney.

Line

Line from Parkes to Forbes.

Length, 20½ miles.—Estimated cost of a light line from trial section, £100,400; exclusive of land and compensation, £4,950 per mile.

COMMENCING at a point on the Orange to Wilcannia survey, *via* Molong and Parkes, 1½ chain east of East-street, crossing Austral, High, and East Streets, at the south-eastern end of the town of Parkes, and proceeding in a south-westerly direction to Forbes; passing through the parishes of Parkes, Martin, Mumbidgle, and Forbes, county of Ashburnham; crossing the Parkes to Forbes Road at 2½, 9, and 17 miles, and Stephen, Lewis, Union, Dowling, Herbert, Clark, Barwin, Bando, and Ooma streets, in the town of Forbes—being a distance of 20 miles 40 chains.

January, 1889.

C.

PRECIS OF PAPERS ON PROPOSED LINES TO FORBES AND PARKES, WITH QUESTION OF EXTENSION TO WILCANNIA.

IN May, 1874, a memorial was presented to the Minister for Works (Mr. Sutherland) by the Municipality of Forbes, urging that a survey might be made of a line from Orange to that town, alleging in support of their request (1) the increasing population and importance of the district, (2) the badness of their roads as a means of communication, (3) the favourable character of the country for the construction of a railway, and (4) the extent of level country, unsurpassed for grazing, mineral, and agricultural resources which such a line would command. At that time no survey or exploration of the country had been made, and as the Engineer-in-Chief could not then spare surveyors consideration of the question was postponed.

No further movement seems to have taken place until June, 1877, when inquiry was made in the House whether a trial survey had been made of a line from Orange to Forbes, and the Minister replied that in compliance with a resolution of the House a trial survey was in course of being made from Orange towards Wilcannia and Menindie, and that with a view to avoid country subject to floods such line would pass 7 miles north of Forbes.

12/7/77. The Mayor of Forbes, acting in concert with a District Committee, requested that a survey might be made direct from Boree to Forbes, maintaining that any railway intended to tap the Lachlan should go to Forbes, and that inasmuch as out of the 4,000 or 5,000 acres selected weekly nearly all was on the south side of the river, taken for agricultural purposes; a railway passing so far to the north of Forbes would be of no service to the people, as they could get their goods cheaper from the Blayney station. In reply to the Minister (Mr. Hoskins), the Engineer-in-Chief said that a trial survey was in progress which would accommodate both Parkes and Forbes. It would pass 5 miles south of Parkes, and 7 miles north of Forbes. They could get no nearer on account of the liability to floods.

7/8/78. A public meeting was held at Molong, at which a resolution was carried that the great and increasing importance of Molong and its district, as evidenced by the large population, the fertility of the soil, and its large contributions to the public revenue, entitled it to railway communication with Sydney. As the outcome of this meeting, Mr. J. Shepherd, M.P., presented to the Minister (Mr. Sutherland) a petition from 432 inhabitants of Molong and its environs, praying for railway communication, and setting forth that Molong was the natural and best route for a railway, that the succeeding season's yield of wheat was expected to be 200,000 bushels, that from 7,000 to 10,000 bales of wool would be sent yearly to Sydney, that the country contains copper, shale, building stone, lime, &c., and that a line from Orange to Parkes, *via* Molong, would pay well, and be the shortest and cheapest to construct. The following statistics accompanied the petition:—

Land taken up during year	61,592 acres
Land alienated	150,000 "
Produce—Cereals	169,000 bushels
" Hay	2,400 tons
Stock—Sheep	500,000
" Horses	6,097
" Cattle	14,044
" Pigs	1,500

The Minister decided that a trial survey should be made.

Mr. Shepherd, M.P., wrote advocating a line *via* Molong in preference to that *via* Boree and Toogong.

Mr. Shepherd again wrote to same effect.

19/8/78. Mr. Whitton reported that the first trial survey towards Wilcannia was *via* Boree and Manildra, passing 10 miles south of Molong, 7 miles south of Parkes, and 6 miles north of Forbes. A trial survey had since been made from a point on the line surveyed from Orange to Wellington, passing through Molong, thence to a junction with the Forbes-Parkes line at Manildra. With a view to shorten the distance a deviation had been surveyed passing 2 miles south of Molong. The first-named survey gave 30 miles, the second 38 miles, and the last 36 miles; average cost per mile, about the same in each case.

12/8/79. The hon. secretary of the Wilcannia Progress Committee wrote, by direction, to the Minister, requesting that a sum of money might be placed on the Estimates for a line to Wilcannia *via* Parkes, Forbes, and Condobolin, with a bridge across the Darling. A petition to the same effect had shortly before been presented by residents of the district, and the following statistics were furnished:—

Tonnage and value of goods for the Upper Darling.

1875	19,034 tons	£339,170
1876	23,190 "	489,000
1877	23,198 "	494,475

Wool exported *via* Wentworth.

1875	25,390 tons	£694,169
1876	33,582 "	625,100
1877	*8,450 "	153,260

Number of sheep in district 5,000,000, and of cattle 60,000.

The compiler of the statistics wrote that if this Colony desired to secure this rich harvest, they must touch the Darling near Wilcannia. If there were a railway, the trade would most assuredly go to Sydney, for although water carriage was cheaper, it was so uncertain that wool was often kept back for months, and goods for dealers and others were similarly delayed.

26/9/79. A petition was presented to Mr. Secretary Lackey from farmers and other residents of the Forbes district, setting forth that the want of a railway between Orange and Forbes was a serious drawback to the district, that the country which would be served by an extension to Forbes contained 20,000,000 acres of first-class agricultural and pastoral land depasturing 5,000,000 sheep, besides being rich in minerals, that the yield of wheat was 20 bushels per acre, that the settlers had no outlet for their produce, the freight charges being prohibitory, and that Forbes, by its position, progress, and importance, was entitled to have a railway into the town, and they prayed that a trial survey, *via* Flagstone Creek, might be continued close to the town, and that a sum of money might be placed on the Estimates for the construction of a line. Mr. Secretary Lackey minuted that he had just received a deputation in the same interest, and had promised that the country should be examined, and, if found to be as represented, the line should be taken by way of that town. Mr. Whitton was requested to have the country examined in regard to its liability to flood and to carry the survey *via* Young to the Southern line.

A

* River not navigable, and wool detained.

A petition from residents of Orange and the neighbourhood was presented to the Minister by a deputation from Orange, which waited on him for the purpose, praying for the construction of the line to Wilcannia, and that Orange might be the point of departure from the present line. Dec. 1879.

Another deputation in the same interest waited on the Minister (Mr. Sutherland), and received a favourable reply. 31/1/80.

A leader appeared in the *Herald* stating that Mr. Sutherland appeared to be the only man who understood what was wanted to develop and utilize the so-called Darling country. When that gentleman was last in office, he thought the best means of making the most of that territory was to secure a permanent supply of water for navigation, and in that view gave instructions to prepare estimates for locking the Darling. There was not time to do that, but on the recommendation of the Engineer-in-Chief, £10,000 was placed on the Estimates for the commencement of the work. Mr. Sutherland retired soon after, and the locking scheme retired with him. Had he remained in Office, this great national work would have been undertaken, and the railway system of the Darling country determined upon in connection with it. They (the *Herald*) had no hesitation in saying it was beginning at the wrong end to construct the railways first and do the improvements of the Darling afterwards. If the river were locked as far down as Pooncarrie, the settlers would send their produce to, and receive their supplies from the terminus, and thus direct the trade to Sydney. In this scheme it was not the question of navigation only which was involved, but the equally important one of irrigation. 11/2/80.

Mr. Vaughn, M.P., inquired when the promised survey from Murrumburrah to Forbes *via* Grenfell would be made. It would seem that no reply was made to this question, and there is certainly no trace in the papers of any such promise having been given. 25/1/81.

Mr. Secretary Lackey proposed on the Loan Estimates an amount of £705,000 for a railway from Orange *via* Molong to Forbes, and it was carried by 74 votes to 2. 28/3/81.

Resolutions in favour of extending the line to Wilcannia were carried at a public meeting held at Forbes. 25/3/81.

Mr. Brodribb forwarded to the Minister certain statistics furnished by the Wilcannia Progress Committee (these statistics have already appeared in the paper, (see page 1), and proceeded to say that New South Wales with 312,000 square miles possessed 30,000,000 sheep, that Victoria with 87,000 square miles was fully stocked with 9,000,000, and yet she exported more wool than we did. As a fact, fully half the wool produced in New South Wales went to that colony and South Australia. In the years 1877 and 1878 Victoria exported 628,350 bales of wool, while in the same period New South Wales exported only 279,232 bales, the difference in favour of Victoria being 349,118 bales, the value of which, £5,236,770, was money lost to this Colony for want of railway communication with the Darling River. 28/3/81.

Mr. J. Bodel wrote to Mr. Secretary Lackey reminding him that he had promised to have a line surveyed to Forbes *via* Flagstone Creek provided there were no flooded lands to obstruct the route. He also asked for the survey to be so arranged as to place the station within a reasonable distance of the town. Mr. Whitton in reply intimated that the survey referred to should have attention. 28/3/81.

Petitions were presented to the House from Eugowra, Canowindra, and Goolagong, praying that Blayney might be made the starting-point of the line to Forbes.

The Minister, in reply to a question from Mr. Vaughn in the House, stated that a survey was being made from Parkes through Forbes to join the survey already made from Young to Grenfell.

Mr. H. H. Cooke, M.P., wrote to the Engineer-in-Chief asking him to have a survey made from 151 (251?) mile-post at the foot of Flagstone Hill to the original survey, near the crushing machine dam in the town of Parkes, a distance of 3½ miles, over level country and through Crown lands. Mr. Whitton gave the necessary instructions. 27/7/82.

Messrs. Vaughn and Coonan, Ms.P., wrote to the Minister asking that the surveyor who was engaged on a trial survey from Young to Forbes might be instructed to make the survey a permanent one. Mr. Whitton in reply intimated that the permanent survey from Orange, *via* Molong to near Forbes, had been made since the loan for that line was sanctioned. A trial survey only had been made from Young to Parkes, *via* Grenfell and Forbes. It was not usual to make permanent surveys of lines until the loans for them had been sanctioned. 11/5/83.

The Mayor of Wilcannia wrote to the Minister urging that railway facilities should be given to that town. 31/10/83.

Mr. Whitton, in reply to inquiries made by Messrs. Coonan and Stokes, Ms.P., reported that a trial survey had been made from a point on the Orange and Molong line, 7 miles from Orange, passing about 2 miles south of Cudal, thence about same distance south of Toogong to Long's Corner; thence by Mandagery Creek to Eugowra, and thence by a direct line to a junction with the line surveyed from Forbes to Parkes; and that two deviations from the Cudal route were under consideration. 19/12/83.

Several papers about this time which are shown by allusions in other papers to have been received are missing from the file. For instance, letters from Messrs. Coonan and Stokes, Ms.P., and from the Mayor of Forbes; also report of an indignation meeting to protest against the line to Forbes not being made.

A deputation waited on the Minister (Mr. Wright) to represent that any extension of the Orange and Molong line towards Forbes should not be taken from Molong but from Borenore and through Cudal, as it would then pass through a much more fertile country. The Minister replied that he believed the Cudal route was the best and shortest, and if his opinion was confirmed on investigation it would be his duty to ask Parliament to reconsider the resolution to take the line from Molong. 9/3/84.

Mr. K. B. Wilkinson wrote to Mr. Secretary Wright urging the construction of a line to Wilcannia from Forbes rather than from Nyngan. *Via* Forbes it would be a straight line from Sydney, and would first run through agricultural country and the rich copper district of Nymagee and Mount Hope, and then through one of the best squatting districts in the Colony, while a line from Nyngan would be very roundabout and pass through a scrubby poor country. 9/3/84.

Messrs. Coonan and Vaughn, Ms.P., introduced a deputation to Mr. Secretary Wright to urge the construction of a line from Young to Dubbo, *via* Grenfell and Forbes. They said it would open up a large extent of country, and be a convenient connection of the south and west systems. The Minister strongly concurred in the proposal. It was, he said, one of the first propositions he made on taking office with the addition of continuing the line from Dubbo to Werris Creek, thus uniting the three railway systems. He could not answer for the views of his colleagues, nor for the opinion of Parliament, but personally he believed that sooner or latter the line would have to be made. 22/2/84.

An influential deputation waited on the Minister to ask that a final decision might be arrived at as to the route to be taken by the extension to Forbes, as the progress of the district was much retarded by the existing uncertainty on this point. They were of opinion that the best route was from Borenore, *via* Cudal. The Minister replied that three routes had been surveyed (1) from Molong, *via* Manildra, (2) round by the Canoblas, and (3) *via* Keenan's Bridge and Cudal. He was aware that the last named went through better country, and if it were found more practicable in an engineering point of view it would probably be adopted. He, however, could not speak definitely as to the route, because if it were decided to alter the route already approved, Parliament would have to be asked to rescind that approval. 7/3/84.

Dr. Ross, M.P., wrote to the Minister complaining, in indignant terms, that tenders had not been called for the Molong extension. 14/3/84.

The same gentleman presented to the Minister three petitions (1) from residents of Manildra, (2) from residents of Garra and the neighbourhood, and (3) from residents of Parkes, Bumberry, Billagong Creek, Flagston Creek, &c., &c., praying for the immediate construction of the extension from Molong towards Forbes. April, 1884.

The Mayor of Forbes forwarded to the Minister copy of resolution carried at a public meeting held at Forbes in favour of the construction of the line from Borenore, *via* Eugowra, to Forbes. 3/6/84.

Mr. Stokes, M.P., presented a petition to the House from the residents of the Condobolin district, praying for favourable consideration for the Borenore-Cudal-Forbes line. 5/6/84.

A similar petition from residents of Eugowra was presented to the House. 19/6/84.

A petition from the residents of Parkes, the outcome of a public meeting held in that town, was presented to Parliament praying for the adoption of the rival scheme, viz: the extension to Forbes, *via* Molong and Manildra. 26/6/84.

Mr. Coonan, M.P., drew the Minister's attention to the fact that one mine alone on the route from Forbes to Wilcannia, paid annually £30,000 for cartage—freight which a railway, if constructed, would obtain. 21/7/84.

Dr. Ross, M.P., introduced to Mr. Secretary Dibbs a deputation to urge the desirability of constructing the line from Orange, *via* Molong and Manildra, already sanctioned by Parliament in place of that by Borenore, Cudal, and Eugowra which latter they alleged would be 36 miles longer. The Minister said it was an important question and would be decided on the principle of the greatest good to the greatest possible number. 25/7/84.

13/8 84.

Dr. Ross forwarded to Mr. Secretary Dibbs copy of a resolution carried at a public meeting held at Molong to the effect that such meeting protested against a mendacious statement which appeared in the *Evening News* that the general feeling was in favour of the line branching off from Borenore, whereas, on the contrary, it was the general desire that the extension should be by way of Molong and Manildra, as sanctioned by Parliament in 1881.

17/9/84.

Dr. Ross forwarded to the Minister a statistical statement referring to the Manildra and Gurra district, as under :—

Land holdings	71,348 acres
Land cultivated	7,950 "
Cereals	135,151 bushels
Horses	1,019
Cattle	1,225
Pigs	329
Sheep	44,748
Population	1,211

A paper was also furnished giving reasons as follow why the line should be made from Molong, *via* Parkes, (1) because Parliament had voted the money for that purpose, and the line was being made to Molong; (2) because there was a saving in distance; (3) because there were no engineering difficulties, and the country was thickly populated; (4) because it was the best line for Mount Hope and Wilcannia, and was level and free from floods; (5) because it was already surveyed; (6) because the population of Parkes was as great as that of Forbes; (7) because the population of the places touched by the line was much larger than on the other route; (8) because all the surveyed lines of railway west touched at Parkes, which already had a large farming population likely to be increased tenfold by a railway, and (9) because the plans and specifications were ready for this line and the adoption of any other route would cause delay. The following reasons were also alleged why the line should not be taken from Borenore, *via* Cudal :—(1) It would pass for 30 miles through private land; (2) it would pass for a mile through an almost bottomless swamp; (3) much of the country was liable to floods; (4) the population was scanty, the only centre being Cudal; (5) nearly all the land had been alienated; (6) it would be longer than the other route and serve fewer people.

12/10/84.

Mr. Commissioner Goodchap wrote an important minute with reference to the proposed line, Forbes to Wilcannia, but it is not now on the file, and would appear to have been missing a few days after it was written.

22/10/84.

Mr. Secretary Wright proposed in the Legislative Assembly a sum of £705,000 for the construction of a line from Orange to Molong, *via* Borenore, and from Borenore to Forbes, *via* Cudal. The motion was carried, and this was virtually a rescission of the vote of 2S/3,81 for a line from Orange to Forbes, *via* Molong.

19/12/84.

Mr. T. J. Keenan wrote to the Minister suggesting a deviation of the Borenore line, by which he alleged a saving of 6 miles and £50,000 might be effected, and many difficulties avoided.

Jan., 1885.

A petition from persons interested was presented to the Minister praying that the original Borenore route might be adhered to.

12/1/85.

The residents of Borco, Cabourn, and Barton also presented a memorial to the same effect, maintaining (1) that Mr. Keenan's proposal would inflict an injury on a large number of persons; (2) that by it 12 miles of rich agricultural land would be cut off from railway communication; (3) that the saving to be effected was much exaggerated; (4) that it would make the line pass through Mr. Keenan's own property and Mr. Smith's, such properties being mere sheep walks carrying no population, and therefore having no traffic for a railway, and (5) that the only person to be benefited was Mr. Keenan himself.

16/1/85.

A writer in the *Daily Telegraph*, evidently a partisan of the Molong route, commented in sarcastic and angry terms upon the Minister's adoption of the Borenore scheme, accusing him of being led by a "cuckoo cry."

6/2/85.

A deputation waited on the Minister to request the survey of an alternative line, but the Minister declined to entertain the application, stating that there must be some finality in the matter of surveys, and that the route had been finally decided.

21/3/85.

The inhabitants of Toogong presented to the Minister a petition in favour of Beattie's line, in preference to Pitt's line. Mr. F. J. Smith, in behalf of himself, the Hon. J. Smith, and others objected to Pitt's line as being longer and less convenient and unnecessarily injuring property.

4/6/85.

The Chairman, Forbes Railway League, forwarded copy of a resolution carried at a meeting of that body in favour of prompt action in carrying out the Borenore scheme.

22/8/85.

Dr. Ross, M.P., forwarded to the Minister a petition from inhabitants of Orange and Molong, against making the Forbes line from Borenore, and suggesting Amaroo as the point of junction.

21/8/85.

Mr. F. J. Smith wrote to the Minister again protesting against the adoption of Pitt's line on the score of the injury it would do to his property. Mr. Whitton reported that Beattie's line was being improved and would be adopted, and would do much less damage to Mr. Smith's property.

31/5/86.

Mr. Irvine also wrote, protesting in the name of the people of Toogong, against the adoption of any other line than Pitt's. Mr. E. Quinn, M.P., addressed Mr. Secretary Lyne, stating that the Darling being in flood it was a favourable opportunity for getting rails and sleepers for the Wilcannia line brought up by water, and recommending that tenders should be invited. The Engineer-in-Chief minuted that nothing could be done until the plans had been approved by Parliament. The Minister, however, did not take that view, and by his instructions tenders were invited for 176,000 sleepers, and an indent was sent to the Agent-General for rails, fishplates, &c., of the value of £73,300.

The matter was taken up adversely in Parliament, and ultimately no tenders were accepted for the sleepers. The materials ordered through the Agent-General came to hand in due course, and were taken into stock, to be used, it is said, for the Nyngan-Cobar line, or some other line requiring a light rail.

The "Hansard" report of the debate in the House in connection with this episode has been submitted by the Under Secretary.

29/6/86.

Messrs. Stokes and Coonan forwarded to Mr. Secretary Lyne copy of a resolution carried at a meeting at which the residents of Cudal, Eugowra, Forbes, and Condobolin were represented, deprecating further delay in moving the adoption of the Forbes line, a line for which Parliament had voted the money years before, and representing the inconveniences and losses which the people were suffering from the delay.

9/7/86.

A deputation of Members waited on the Minister to urge immediate action in connection with the Borenore-Forbes line. The Minister informed them that he was fully alive to the fertility and importance of their district, and recognized their claims to a railway, and said that he would, on an early day, move the approval of the plans. He added that he had evinced his sense of the value of the Wilcannia extension by calling for tenders for the necessary materials with a view to facilitate matters.

5/8/86.

A deputation of the Forbes Borough Council waited on the Minister to ask that the line Borenore to Forbes might be commenced forthwith.

August, 1886.

The Engineer-in-Chief submitted a report giving particulars of the line (from Molong) originally surveyed and approved by Parliament in 1881, and setting forth the circumstances which led to the survey of an alternative line (starting from Borenore). He pointed out that the original survey did not touch either Parkes or Forbes, that the proportion of good land in the district served by it was small, and the population scanty. On the route, Borenore to Forbes, on the other hand, the land was marvellously good, some of it being of the richest description, and the country was already fairly well populated.

He also furnished the following statistics of the district through which the Borenore lines passes (8 miles on either side). They are for the year 1884 :—

Land holdings.....	291,624 acres	
Land cleared	15,343 "	
Produce—Hay	3,252 tons	
" Wheat	185,385 bushels	
" Oats	13,376 "	
" Maize	5,740 "	
" Barley	2,397 "	
" Wool	916 bales	
Stock—Sheep	92,789	
" Horses	2,608	
" Cattle	4,739	
" Pigs	1,139	This

This return, Mr. Whitton thought, went to prove that the country was capable of supporting a very large population, and the suggested line moreover was the most direct from Sydney both to Forbes and Wilcannia. After giving particulars of the route of this Borenore-Cudal line, with table of gradients and curves, &c., the Engineer-in-Chief proceeded to show that the line taken from Molong would cost £192,000 more than that from Borenore.

On the motion of Mr. Secretary Lyne the plans, &c., of the line Borenore, *via* Cudal to Forbes, were approved in the Legislative Assembly by forty-one votes to nineteen, but were afterwards negatived in the Council by twenty-three votes to four.

An article appeared in the *Evening News* commenting upon this project (as part of the line to Wilcannia). It was necessary, the article said, to find employment for the thousands out of work, but it should be on reproductive works. This line would be a sucker, not a feeder, and to construct such a line would be stupendous folly—madness. A railway to Forbes would pay, but the extension to Wilcannia would pass for 300 miles through a comparative desert. What traffic would it get? That of a town of 1,500 inhabitants, and of a district where it required from 10 acres to 100 acres to feed one sheep. If a line were wanted, it could be taken on from Cobar. The Hay and Bourke lines had been made to catch the Riverina trade, and they did not pay interest, and would not for years to come, but this proposed line would take away half the traffic from each of them, and we should have three lines paying nothing on the capital instead of two paying, say, 1 per cent. By making the river navigable from Wilcannia to Bourke at a cost, say, of £100,000, we should secure the traffic and the Bourke line would, in that case, probably give a fair return upon the outlay. We had constructed more than one unwise line, but this Wilcannia proposal beat the record.

Petitions as under were presented to the Legislative Assembly—(1) from Mr. John Black, on behalf of the residents of the Molong District, urging the adoption of the line Orange to Wilcannia *via* Molong, and stating that most of them had taken up their holdings on the faith of the vote of the House in 1831, in favour of that line which was the shortest, the cheapest, and the most convenient; (2) from H. P. Miller, on behalf of the residents of Manildra, to the same effect; (3) from the Mayor of Parkes, on behalf of the people of that place, to the same effect; (4) from John Rubie, on behalf of certain residents of Garra, to the same effect.

Petitions in favour of the Borenore to Forbes *via* Cudal line were also presented to the Legislative Council—(1) from 56 residents of Eugowra; (2) from the Mayor of Forbes on behalf of the people of that town; (3) from W. Shields, on behalf of the inhabitants of Cudal.

A deputation from the Mount Hope District waited on Mr. Secretary Lyne to ask that the Wilcannia Railway might be arranged to pass that way. Mr. Lyne promised to make inquiry and give the matter consideration. The delay in preparing the plans, he said, was due to an agitation for carrying the line further south. There was, too, in the House, a strong feeling not to make the line to Wilcannia, but to take it further down the Darling. He thought a direct line to Silverton would be the best. A private line had been sanctioned from Silverton to the South Australian border, and a line to meet that, through Menindie, would be as near direct as possible.

Consequent on this statement of the Minister's views, an indignation meeting was held at Wilcannia to protest against the proposal to abandon the design of giving them a railway. It was stated by one speaker that the objections to the line emanated from an owner of steamers on the river (whose business would be injured by a railway). To deny them their line, they said, would throw the trade of 40,000,000 acres, carrying 3,000,000 sheep, and capable of carrying 7,000,000, into the hands of South Australia. It was absurd to suppose that the construction of a Menindie-Silverton line would bring the trade of that district to Sydney, when it could be done so much cheaper. Resolutions condemnatory of the policy foreshadowed by the Minister were carried.

The *Daily Telegraph*, in a leader referring to Mr. Lyne's intimation that the consideration of the line to Wilcannia would be deferred, thought that gentleman had done well, but they had no sympathy with the proposal to make a railway to Menindie and Silverton, which would be the greatest blunder ever committed here. The Silverton district was served better and cheaper by the Adelaide line than it ever could be by a line to Sydney. A railway between Menindie and Silverton would feed either the river (when navigable), or the South Australian railway. If the line terminated at Menindie the last 100 miles of it would only feed the navigation when practicable. The project must be condemned without qualification. Then as regarded the Forbes-Wilcannia scheme, we must be sure there was not a tax behind it. It must be shown by responsible experts that there was a reasonable prospect of its not imposing a new burden on taxpayers. There was no class of settlers with whom they had a deeper sympathy than those in the west, but sentiment should have nothing to do with the construction of a railway. The whole question should be, "Will it pay?" and upon this point nothing less than the testimony of responsible experts should be accepted. They doubted the capability of the district to carry 7,000,000 sheep. Their representative, recently there, heard nothing in support of this optimistic view. As to the extent to which it was alleged squatters would use the railway, they would use it when the much cheaper conveyance by water was not available. They (the *Daily Telegraph*) would be delighted to hear that the Wilcannia people could have their railway without risk to the taxpayer.

It appeared by a telegram in the *Evening News* that much local indignation was felt at Molong on account of the adoption by the Government of the Borenore route, and at Cudal on account of the rejection of the Borenore line by the Council, and they testified the intensity of their annoyance by the strange device of burning each others members in effigy.

A letter from the honorary secretary of the Cudal Railway League appeared in the *Telegraph*, giving the following particulars:—Between Borenore and Forbes there were seven stores, fourteen hotels, six post-offices, and eight townships, viz., Cudal, Toogong, Murga, Eugowra, Cargo, Canowindra, Manildra, and Meranburn, while within 8 miles of the line there were twenty-five public and three private schools, with an enrolment of over 1,000 pupils. The letter then proceeded to give statistics of production, &c., but as they were in confirmation of the figures already given by the Engineer-in-Chief (see page 3), they need not be quoted here.

A public meeting was held at Orange to protest against the rejection of the Borenore-Forbes line by the Council, and resolutions were carried to the effect that such rejection was inimical to the best interests of the Colony, and a great injustice to those who, in the faith that the Government would make the line, had invested their money in the district. Similar meetings were held at Cudal, Cargo, Burragan, Murga, Bowan, Toogong, and Cheeseman's Creek.

The Rev. Z. Barry wrote to Mr. Secretary Lyne, bearing testimony to the richness of the soil of the district which would be affected by this line, and intimating that there would be no difficulty in getting a railway made by private enterprise.

A deputation from Cudal, Toogong, Cargo, &c., waited on the Minister to present a petition, signed by 175 persons, expressing their disappointment at the rejection of the Borenore line by the Council, and their dismay at the resurvey of Townsend's line, which, if adopted, would involve a misappropriation of the money voted by Parliament, and be of little service to Cudal, Toogong, &c., and praying that in the event of the final rejection of the Borenore route, a survey might be made from Long's Corner to Coombing Creek or Carcoar, passing through Berrigan near Cargo and Cadia copper-mines, and about 8 miles from Cudal. The Minister promised compliance.

A deputation from Orange, Forbes, and Cudal, accompanied by several members of the Assembly, waited on the Premier to urge the construction of the Borenore-Forbes line. It was pointed out that the matter was ripe for inviting tenders, the only obstacle being the rejection of the line by the Council.

Sir Henry Parkes promised to represent the matter to his colleagues. The Government had no interest in the matter except to serve the country as a whole in the best manner. In this light the Government would consider the matter.

It would appear, in connection with the petition presented to the Minister, 12th March, 1887, that Mr. K. Mackenzie, a surveyor, under instruction from Mr. Jas. M'Killop, made an exploration of the Coombing Creek route, and prepared an approximate estimate of cost. He reported to Mr. M'Killop that the length of the proposed line would be 83 miles, and the cost (estimated) Coombing to Long's Corner, 43 miles 30 chains, at £5,200 a mile, £225,437; Long's Corner to Forbes, 39 miles 50 chains, at £4,500 a mile, £178,312—£403,749. Very little, he said, would have to be paid for compensation, most of the land-owners having signified their willingness to give the necessary land to the Government free of cost.

In compliance with the Minister's promise, a surveyor (Mr. Hardy) was sent over the route, but whether that officer's action went to the extent of a survey, or was confined to a simple exploration, the papers do not show.

Mr. Jas. M'Killop, as honorary secretary of the Coombing-Forbes Railway League, forwarded to the Minister duly executed undertakings from land-owners on that route to give the land required for a railway free of charge to the Government. Mr. M'Killop asked the Minister to signify his approval of the form of undertaking or to suggest any other form that he might desire. The Commissioner for Railways minuted that anything beyond an acknowledgment of the letter was unnecessary and inexpedient, that to comply with Mr. M'Killop's request would be construed into a promise to make the line if the land were given free.

- 9/6/87. Mr. M'Killop again addressed the Minister with reference to the unfavourable result of an exploration of this route made by Mr. Surveyor Hardy. A trial survey had been promised by the Minister, and the delay to carry this out was attributed by Mr. M'Killop to the unsatisfactory nature of the exploration. He maintained, however, that the discordance between Mr. Hardy's conclusions and those of Mr. K. Mackenzie was due not to any error made by the latter but to a defect in Mr. Hardy's "aneroid." They had tested the instrument on a fine morning, with the result that the levels were shown to be wrong to the extent of 70 feet in less than 2½ miles, and he referred the Minister to Mr. Hardy, who would admit the truth of this. The Minister caused Mr. M'Killop to be informed in reply that the Government was about to review the whole of the railway proposals.
- June, 1887. A movement was started for making a line from Cowra, *via* Canowindra and Eugowra, to Forbes which would pass, the promoters stated, through magnificent country and considerably lessen the distance to Sydney.
- 1/7/87. Mr. J. P. Sharkey, who, as a Government officer, had been engaged on a portion of the survey from Young, *via* Grenfell, to Forbes and Dubbo, furnished a report in regard to the nature of the country traversed by that line and to the prospects of the traffic to be expected. His opinion upon both points was of the most favourable character.
- 2/7/87. A deputation waited on the Colonial Secretary and the Minister for Works to advocate the construction of this line (Young, *via* Grenfell, to Forbes and Dubbo) and it then transpired that the plans, &c., of a survey made some years previously were destroyed in the Garden Palace fire. The speakers represented the prospects of such a line in very glowing terms. One gentleman stated the cost of carriage from Young to Grenfell only (33 miles) was considerably in excess of the freight from England or America to Australia. Sir Henry Parkes said that a glance at the map would convince any person that the line they proposed was deserving of consideration on several grounds, and he could promise them that it should be considered with a sincere desire if it were for the general interest to comply with their request.
- 4/7/87. Mr. M'Killop addressed a letter "to the Minister with a list of persons" from whom he had obtained undertakings (under seal) to give to the Government free of cost the land required for the Coombing-Forbes line.
- 11/10/87. Mr. Whitton reported that the Minister had already ordered surveys both from Cowra and from Coombing.
- Mr. A. Stokes addressed the Minister, urging the adoption of a line from Borenore to Parkes, *via* Forbes. The line had already been surveyed to Forbes, and a survey thence to Parkes (19 miles) was all that would be required. The land through which such line would pass was equal in point of fertility to any in New South Wales, and the line would run, moreover, through 40 miles of unalienated Crown land. The portion of the proposed line between Forbes and Parkes could be utilized hereafter for the line from Young to Dubbo, the construction of which was inevitable at no distant date. The line he proposed would pay as well as any existing line.
- 7/5/88. Mr. M'Killop forwarded original undertakings to give land in connection with the Coombing-Forbes proposal, and a list of persons who would look for compensation with amounts. The sum of the latter is £2,911.
- 12/5/88. Mr. M'Killop again wrote advocating the line from Coombing to Forbes, and giving a list of mining centres which would be commanded by the line.
- About this time the line, Young to Grenfell and Forbes was again mooted but with a difference. A list of reasons why a line should be constructed from Young, *via* Grenfell, Parkes, and Forbes, to a point near Narromine was forwarded. The chief reasons assigned for this proposal were the following:—(1) Vast quantities of stock pass through Parkes *en route* from Queensland to a market, and if this railway were made such stock would be trucked; (2) in times of drought a railway here would be the means of saving many thousands of sheep and cattle; (3) Parkes had a large and increasing farming population; (4) hundreds of selectors had settled along the surveyed route, and, as these people would in any case require roads, the wisest policy would be to give them revenue-earning railways; (5) they had no means of getting their surplus produce to a market; and (6) such a line would meet the views of all the persons in this district who had been agitating for a railway.
- 20/6/88. Messrs. Cooke and Stokes, M.S.P., forwarded to the Premier a copy of resolution carried at a public meeting held a few days previously in favour of the line Borenore to Forbes, *via* Cudal, and they requested that that scheme might be submitted to the Public Works Committee, and the approval of both Houses of Legislature obtained.
- 29/6/88. The Chairman of the Cudal Railway League forwarded to Mr. Secretary Sutherland copy of resolution carried at a public meeting, held at Cudal, in favour of the construction of the line Borenore, *via* Cudal, to Forbes, as part of the through line to Wilcannia, as being shorter and cheaper than the Molong line.
- 20/8/88. Resolutions of a similar character were also carried at a public meeting, held at Bowan Park, where a league was at the same time formed to agitate for the Borenore route.
- 11/12/88. A statement of the case as between the rival routes ("Borenore" and "Molong") appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, but as it was evidently inserted by a partisan it is not of much value as regards the merits of the matter, but some figures derived from official sources are given, and are very significant.

	Borenore, <i>via</i> Forbes, to Cudobolin.	Molong, <i>via</i> Parkes, to Cudobolin.
Distance	128 miles	134 miles
Cost	£523,000	£608,684
Letters passed through post office, 1887	192,612	74,370
Newspapers ..	54,219	14,940

These figures it is assumed convey an accurate notion of the relative importance of the two districts.

- 8/5/89. Messrs. Stokes, Ross, M.D., Cooke, and Greene addressed a letter to the Minister, requesting that for reasons stated, the entire line Molong to Parkes and Forbes might be referred as one section to the Railway Commissioners for report. They were informed in reply that the course suggested had been already adopted.

- 8/5/89. The Under Secretary minuted for information in regard to the line Young, *via* Grenfell and Parkes, to Forbes, the Minister having to receive a deputation on the subject.

Mr. Deane reported that this was a portion of a projected line from Young, *via* Dubbo, to Werris Creek to connect the Southern and Northern systems as under:—

Young to Grenfell, 34 miles.....	£7,804 per mile.
Grenfell to Forbes, 33 miles.....	£9,699 ,, ,
Forbes to Parkes, 20½ miles	£4,950 ,, ,

These estimates (from Young to Forbes) were for heavy permanent way materials. If it were decided to make a *light* railway the sections must be regraded and new estimates prepared. The section Forbes to Parkes had been thus treated, and the estimates reduced from £7,202 to £4,950 per mile, but the length had been increased from 19 to 20½ miles. This section had been submitted to the Railway Commissioners.

- 1/6/89. Mr. G. H. Greene, M.P., wrote to the Minister reviewing what had taken place in regard to the proposal to make a line from Young, *via* Grenfell and Forbes, striking the Great Western Railway about Dubbo or Narromine, dwelling especially on the favourable reply said to have been given by the Premier to a deputation which waited upon him on the subject, urging that immediate action should be taken in the matter, and intimating that the people would be quite satisfied if the line were referred to the Railway Commissioners to be dealt with on its merits.

The Under Secretary, by direction of Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith, requested the Railway Commissioners to advise him with regard to this proposal.

- 24/6/89. Mr. A. Stokes, M.P., forwarded to the Minister a letter which he had received from the Secretary of the Forbes Tenants' Union, embodying resolutions carried at a recent meeting of that body, to the effect that the Government be asked to refer the following railway routes to the Commissioners:—" *via* Molong to Forbes; *via* Borenore to Forbes; *via* Cowra to Forbes and Young to Dubbo; *via* Grenfell, Parkes and Forbes," for early report, and that a number of members of the Assembly be asked to unite to form a strong deputation to the Minister to represent the matter.

The Minister caused Mr. Stokes, M.P., to be informed that he was so impressed by the representations made that he had given instructions for the several routes to be reported upon at once. A

A meeting of the Crown Tenants' Union was held at Forbes, and was attended by a number of the members of the local Railway League. The object of the meeting was to arrive at an understanding as to which of the several railway proposals should receive the joint support of the two bodies. Ultimately a motion was carried that the Government be asked to submit the following surveyed railway routes to the Railway Commissioners for early report:—"Borenore to Forbes; *via* Molong and Parkes to Forbes; Cowra to Forbes; Young to Dubbo *via* Grenfell, Parkes, and Forbes; and to construct the line which was best in the interests of the district and the Colony at large." 4/6/89.

Dr. Ross, M.P., in fulfilment of a promise made to the Minister, addressed a letter to that gentleman, giving a *résumé* of the facts in connection with the Molong to Forbes scheme. Dr. Ross stated that this line was submitted and passed by both Houses of Parliament by an overwhelming majority—68 to 2—and, therefore had received the all but unanimous sanction of both Houses. It was rejected by the Council. The amount for the construction of the line—£705,000—was included in the Loan Bill of 1881, and the money had long since been obtained. Out of that money part of the line—Orange to Molong—had since been constructed. He felt sure that the extension to Wilcannia, originally proposed and carried in 1881, was the correct policy. That line was "the great natural outlet or national line to tap the Darling." The country, except for a few miles at Bumbleby, was not barren, as had been stated. It was, on the contrary, "magnificent fertile country," and "a great deal of it still Crown land." By a resurvey of the line the cost of construction had been reduced from £6,000 to £3,500 per mile. It was no question of localism or contending petty interests, but of a great national undertaking in which the best interests of the country and the development of the north-west interior were involved. Dr. Ross went on to say that he believed the intention of the Public Works Act was that only such lines as were approved by Government should be submitted to the Committee, and if so it was an infringement of the Act to refer the question of rival lines for their arbitrement. With his letter he forwarded certain documents—presumably of statistics—which, if now on the file, cannot be identified, and expressed a confidence that the Molong line with its extension to Wilcannia, would be "backed up" by the Minister and his colleagues. 11/12/89.

The Under Secretary, under instructions from the Minister, directed Mr. Thompson, the land valuer to explore the country between Molong and Parkes—5 miles on each side of the proposed line—and to report, as to the nature of the country and its capabilities—mining, agricultural, or pastoral; the population, and their occupations; the principal industries; the number of schools, and the attendance; the existing traffic, &c., &c. He was also to return *via* Forbes and Young, and report generally as to the country between those places. 1/9/89.

These instructions were subsequently modified by a telegram, directing Mr. Thompson to return from Forbes by way of Cudal and Borenore, and to abandon the journey to Young. 26/7/89.

The Under Secretary declined to comply with a request from Dr. Ross for a copy of the Railway Commissioners' report on the Molong-Forbes line. 26/7/89.

Messrs. Dalton and Torpy, Ms.P., forwarded to the Minister a pamphlet, purporting to contain an accurate statement of the case between the two rival lines—the Borenore-Forbes and the Molong-Parkes, and statistics of the country traversed by each of the two routes. The bulk of the statistics have already appeared in this paper, and, moreover, they are embodied in another document which will come specially under the notice of the Committee. This being so it is unnecessary to swell an already too-ample paper by any attempt to condense such statistics here. The object of the pamphlet was to show that the Borenore line is in every way the best, and Messrs. Dalton and Torpy maintained that, if constructed it would show as good financial results as any line in the railway system. The Under Secretary directed that Mr. Thompson should embody the statistics contained in this pamphlet—after verification—in his report. 30/7/89.

Dr. Ross forwarded copy of resolutions carried at a public meeting held at Molong, to the following effect:—(1) That the statement (assumed to have been made) that the Molong route passed through barren, rocky, and uninhabited country, was mendacious and misleading, and (2) that the Molong line was the best in every way, and should be constructed on the principle of "the greatest good to the greatest possible number." The Under Secretary in reply informed Dr. Ross that the Minister had arranged to have all statements thoroughly sifted by independent persons. 3/8/89.

Messrs. Dalton and Torpy, Ms.P., had an interview with the Under Secretary (in the absence of the Minister) with reference to a deputation from the Cudal Railway League, which was to have waited on the Minister this day, but had failed to put in an appearance. They explained that the non-attendance of the deputation was due probably to their having seen in the Orange newspaper an announcement that the Government had finally determined to adopt the Molong-Parkes route, and they asked that if that line were to be proposed that session the reports of Messrs. Thompson and Harper might be laid upon the Table of the House. 26/9/89.

The report of the Railway Commissioners will be submitted to the Committee; also the reports of Mr. Thompson, the Land Valuer. There is no trace on the file of any report from Mr. Harper.

C.A.B.,
2/2/90.

C 1.

PRECIS OF FURTHER PAPERS RELATING TO THE PROPOSED RAILWAY LINES TO FORBES.

The following is a *précis* of further papers which have been found referring to the question of Railway routes to Forbes:—

22/1/86.—Dr. Ross, M.P., wrote to the Minister expressing a hope that the "suicidal policy" of carrying the line to Forbes by way of Cudal would not be persisted in. The line *via* Molong, as carried in the House by seventy-two votes to two, was the best route to Wilcannia, and the shortest by at least 40 miles—meaning a saving of £280,000. The plans of the Molong route had been laid on the table of the House and approved by both Houses.* He hoped the "monstrous" resolution to carry the line by way of Cudal would be rescinded, and the original line by way of Cudal-Molong adopted again.

14/10/86.—The Hon. W. H. Suttor wrote to the Minister stating that if the Government intended to survey a trial-line from the Murrumburrah and Blayney line he would suggest that such survey should start from Eugowra, on the Borenore to Forbes line, and work back to the Murrumburrah and Blayney line. From Canowindra the country should be explored towards Lyndhurst, Wood's Flat, and Cowra, and he was confident an almost level line would be found.

Mr. Palmer reported that a survey from Eugowra had been commenced.

19/10/86.—Mr. Whitton reported to the Minister that, in compliance with instructions from the latter, surveyors had been detailed to make a trial-survey from a point about 12 miles north of Cowra (M. and B. line) to a point near Eugowra.

22/10/86.—Mr. Baker, M.P., also addressed the Minister in advocacy of a line to Forbes from some point on the Murrumburrah-Blayney line.

30/10/86.—The hon. secretary of the Cowra Railway League, addressed the Minister by telegram, asking that a line might be surveyed (a flying survey) from Grinshaw's selection, or other accessible point, on the Belabula River, to a point at or near Cowra. The League was prepared to give the surveyors every assistance.

The Engineer-in-Chief reported that the surveyors were then engaged in making a survey from Eugowra, *via* Canowindra, to Wood's Flat.

26/11/86.—Mr. Secretary Lyne paid an official visit to Orange, and was waited upon by a deputation from Cudal, relative to the Orange to Forbes Railway (*via* Cudal), which had been rejected by the Council. The district, the deputation said, had a right to a railway by reason of its settlement and productiveness. Large areas of land had been taken up and cultivated, but the crops were wasted, because, for want of the means of transit, it did not pay to send them to market. They asked, therefore, that the line might be resubmitted to Parliament, and they promised to arm the Minister with statistics of the population, productions, and resources of the district. The

* A mistake only by the Assembly. It was rejected by the Council.

The Minister said, in reply, that this line had been carried in the Assembly by an overwhelming majority, but had been most unwisely rejected by the Council. In the debate on the question, it was stated that a line could be found between Cowra and Forbes which could be made for £2,500 or £3,000 a mile, and that route was being surveyed. Full inquiry would be made as to the best route, taking all circumstances into consideration. Upon the result of that inquiry would depend which of the several alternative routes would be adopted.

20/1/87.—The Engineer-in-Chief reported that the trial survey from Eugowra to Wood's Flat was completed; that if the line were taken from Wood's Flat instead of from Borenore, the distance from Sydney to Forbes would be increased by 6½ miles, while there would be 272 miles of railway more to construct. The estimate showed a reduction of £182,700 as compared with the estimated cost of the line from Borenore to Forbes. The reason of this large saving would be apparent on an inspection of the diagram section and table of gradients.

A comparative statement of the cost, as estimated, of the two routes, was prepared at the Minister's request, and it appeared that the estimate for the line from Borenore was £565,242, and of the line from Eugowra £383,235, the chief item of difference being earthwork £109,000, bridges £23,000, stations £10,000, culverts £12,000, and permanent way £10,000.

11/3/87.—A deputation waited on Mr. Secretary Sutherland, and stated that the survey recently completed from near Cowra (Wood's Flat) to Forbes—known as 'Townsend's line'—would practically shut out the best agricultural land in the district, be of no benefit to the bulk of the selectors, and not serve the principal mining industry. They suggested a line from Forbes, *via* Long's Corner, to Coombing or Carcoar, which, from every point of view, would be the best that could be adopted. The route had been examined by Mr. Mackenzie, a qualified engineer, who estimated that a line could be constructed here for £400,000, less by £150,000 than the estimated cost of the line *via* Borenore. They asked that an official examination of this line might be made.

The Minister informed the deputation that he would have an examination of the country made as requested, and in dealing with the railway policy would consider all the facts, but they must bear in mind that it was not always the shortest or the cheapest line which was the best.

A petition was presented by the deputation, but it is not on the file.

14/3/87.—A report of the above proceedings having appeared in the papers, and certain statements having been made as to the acquiescence of the people of Cudal in the proposal, the hon. secretary of the Cudal Railway League wrote to the Minister, denying that they had in any way concurred in the proposal referred to, and stating that it would be impossible to get a line from Cadia to Cargo, through the high southern spurs of the Canoblas, which would compare at all favourably with the worst part of the Borenore route, that the cost would be much beyond Mr. Mackenzie's estimate, and that the only result of a survey of this Coombing route would be to delay the making of a railway.

28/4/87.—The surveyor appointed, in compliance with the Minister's promise, to examine this route, reported that he started from the point on the Murrumburrah-Blayney line indicated by Mr. Mackenzie, that the crossing of Flyers, Creek showed 40 feet of bank and 40 feet of cutting, which would, however, be lessened by a detour, increasing distance but easing grades, cuttings, and banks, and that the country passed through was for the most part of the finest description and pretty well populated. The distance from Coombing to Long's Corner, as scaled from parish maps, was 43 miles 20 chains, increased on actual survey to 45 or 46 miles, probably. The line was well worth a trial survey, but Mr. Mackenzie had much under-rated cost of construction. The proposed line ran within 20 miles of Orange, 1 mile of Burnt Yards, 3 miles of Cadia, 30 miles of Molong, through the township of Cargo, 13 miles of Canowindra, 8 miles of Cudal, and 4 miles of Toogong.

31/1/88. The hon. secretary of the Coombing-Forbes Railway League forwarded to the Minister three undertakings to give land required for the Coombing line, free of cost, to the Government, and intimated that others were holding back from a fear that direct damage might be done by the cutting up of their farms.

29/5/88.—A petition, signed by 545 residents of Grenfell, was presented to the Legislative Assembly, praying for the construction, as early as possible, of a line from Young through Grenfell, Forbes, and Parkes, to Dubbo, and representing the advantages which would accrue to the district and to the country from such a line, and the disabilities and losses the district suffered from the want of the means of conveying their produce to a market.

6/6/88.—A petition in the same sense, signed by eighty-seven residents of Young, was presented.

Aug., 89.—A request was sent to the Minister, signed by fifty-two residents of Cadia—that the proposed line Coombing to Forbes, might be referred to the Railway Commissioners for report.

17/9/89.—The hon. secretary of the Coombing-Forbes Railway League (Mr. J. M'Killop) forwarded a petition, signed by 243 residents near the line of the proposed Coombing-Forbes railway, praying that that line might be submitted to the Railway Commissioners. They stated that it was the most central of all the proposed routes, and would serve the largest number of people; that it would secure the most traffic, and that it would serve many hundreds of settlers who were entirely neglected by any other route. The petitioners, in referring to the comparative cost of the several rival routes, give figures which are so absurdly inaccurate that it would be folly to quote them.

Mr. Deane reported that he could not recommend this line, that it would be nearly twice as expensive as the rival routes from Wood's Flat and Cowra, and that if Forbes was to be connected with the Blayney line, in preference to Molong or Borenore, the junction should be at Cowra, as the line would have better grades and be easier to construct.

The following is the length and estimated cost of each of the several proposed lines of railway to Forbes:—

	Length. Miles. Chains.	Estimate. £
Borenore to Forbes, <i>via</i> Cudal	66 46	565,242
Wood's Flat to Forbes, <i>via</i> Eugowra	64 0	383,235
Coombing to Forbes, <i>via</i> Long's Corner	83 3	714,845
Cowra to Forbes, <i>via</i> Canowindra	64 73	389,540

19/2/90. The hon. secretary of the Cowra Railway League forwarded to the Railway Commissioners statistics referring to a radius of 8 miles from Cowra and 6 miles on either side of the proposed line, Cowra to Forbes, for the year 1889.

Land-owners	157
Land-holdings	130,403 acres.
" cultivated	8,786 "
Stock sheep	138,423
" cattle	4,382
" horses	1,930
" pigs	1,594
Goods traffic between Cowra and Forbes, conveyed by 104 carriers' teams	5,183 tons.
Population of Cowra	1,800
" District of Cowra	5,000
Schools	10
Attendance	594
	£
Cowra Station earnings, 1887	16,026
" " 1888	28,682
" " 1889	36,742
And for the first month of 1890 the earnings amounted to	5,359
	C.A.B., 27/2/90.

D
DETAILS OF ESTIMATED COST OF PROPOSED RAILWAY.
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS.
RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION BRANCH.

Proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes, via Flagstone Creek.

ESTIMATED cost of constructing a single line of railway (exclusive of cost of land and compensation).
Length of main line, 51 miles 12·95 chains; length of sidings, 3 miles 2·59 chains. Total, 54 miles 15·54 chains.

Class of Work.	Estimated Cost of Works of each Class.		Total Cost.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Excavations			76,475	0 0
Culverts—				
No. 12— 3 ft.	1,250	0 0		
No. 20— 4 ft.	2,755	0 0		
No. 8— 5 ft.	2,427	10 0		
No. 3— 6 ft. 6 in.	1,340	10 0		
No. 3— 8 ft.	2,310	0 0		
No. 4— 10 ft.	3,915	0 0		
No. 111— Box drains	1,672	10 0		
No. 20— Rail openings, aggregating sixty-eight openings	952	10 0		
Bridges—			16,623	0 0
No. 69— Treble spans of 6 ft.	8,077	0 0		
No. 1— Bridges of more than three spans of 6 ft., aggregating five spans	225	15 0		
No. 24— Single spans of 10 ft. 6 in.	5,113	15 0		
No. 4— Treble " "	1,198	0 0		
No. 3— Bridges of more than three spans of 10 ft. 6 in., aggregating twenty-four spans	1,238	0 0		
No. 4— Single spans of 24 ft.	1,753	0 0		
No. 1— Treble " "	621	0 0		
No. 5— Bridges of more than three spans of 24 ft., aggregating thirty-one spans	4,528	0 0		
Overbridges—			22,754	10 0
No. 1— Roadway 18 ft. wide			629	10 0
No. —Level crossings			10,547	5 0
Diversions of roads			3,027	10 0
Permanent way and ballasting			118,075	10 10
No. —Stations			29,036	10 0
No. —Water supplies			4,500	0 0
Fencing			15,512	10 0
Turntables			750	0 0
Signals			1,800	0 0
Cost of works			299,731	5 10
Engineering and Contingencies	10 per cent.		29,973	2 7
Total, say			329,704	8 5
Average cost per mile, say	6,444	0 0	6,444	6 5

Engineer-in-Chief's Office,
30th April, 1889.

W. H. QUODLING,
For the Engineer-in-Chief.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS.
RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION BRANCH.

Proposed Railway from Parkes to Forbes.

ESTIMATED cost of constructing a single line of Railway (exclusive of cost of land and compensation).
Length of main line, 20 miles 40 chains; length of sidings, 1 mile 2 chains. Total, 21 miles 42 chains.

Class of Work.	Estimated Cost of Works of each Class.		Total Cost.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Excavations			15,546	5 0
Culverts—				
No. 40—Box drains			750	0 0
Bridges—				
No. 5—Single spans of 6 ft.	581	10 0		
No. 2—Treble " "	233	2 0		
No. 10—Single spans of 10 ft. 6 in.	1,537	10 0		
No. 1—Double " "	173	0 0		
No. 2—Treble " "	477	15 0		
No. 2—Bridges of more than three spans of 10 ft. 6 in., aggregating 120 spans ..	5,085	15 0		
No. —Level Crossings			8,088	12 0
Diversions of Roads			2,076	13 6
Permanent Way and Ballasting			552	10 0
No. —Stations			44,939	1 4
No. 1—Water Supply			9,059	0 0
Fencing			1,500	0 0
Signals			6,336	0 0
Cost of Works			89,198	1 10
Engineering and Contingencies ..	12½ per cent.		11,149	15 2
Total, say			100,347	17 0
Average cost per mile, say	4,895	0 0	4,895	0 4

Engineer-in-Chief's Office,
27th September, 1889.

H. DEANE,
Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

E.

RAILWAY LINE PARKES TO FORBES.

Extract from Report by Mr. J. B. Thompson, Land Valuer.

THE country between Parkes and Forbes is undulating with wide flats and long stretches of level land. The undulations are low ridges, many of them showing outcrops of quartz, and most of the flats have been more or less extensively worked for gold. The country is generally lightly timbered with white box, white pine, she-oak, &c., and some small black soil plains formerly covered with myall, but now denuded of that timber.

The soil throughout is of good quality, and a large proportion is fit for cultivation, and would in good seasons produce abundant crops. As pasture land it is of the very best description.

The town of Forbes is situated on the right bank of the Lachlan River, about 20 miles from Parkes. It is built on three hills, divided from each other by low flats, which are liable to inundations during excessive floods.

These three divisions of the town are known locally as "North Hill," Forbes proper, and "Camp Hill," or South Forbes.

North Hill has many scattered buildings on it, mostly used for residential purposes.

Forbes proper is upon a low elevation, nearly circular in shape, and which, during high floods, is an island. It is, however, well laid out, and compactly built. It contains a fine court-house, post and telegraph offices, and a number of other very superior public buildings.

The business premises in this part of the town are, many of them, large and substantial buildings, and the original weatherboard houses, shops, and hotels are being rapidly replaced by premises of a much superior description.

The streets are unusually well made, and tree-planting in them has been carried on to a greater extent than I have seen elsewhere. A good water supply is forced from the river to a reservoir on Camp Hill, and thence it gravitates throughout the town, which is thoroughly reticulated. The permanence of the supply has been assured by the construction of a weir across the river, which dams the water back for about 8 miles, and which, I may mention incidentally, cost only about £250. Camp Hill, or South Forbes, is south of the preceding divisions, and extends to the river bank. It is a considerable elevation, and is well built. On it are the hospital, police barracks, gaol, and water reservoir, and a considerable number of private residences and places of business, the latter including a large flour-mill and a brewery.

Forbes is even now a town of considerable importance, and taken together with the adjacent town of Parkes, whose interests are almost identical, and I think inseparable—and situated as they are in the centre of a magnificent pastoral country, and with fairly good seasons, an immense area of prolific soil, they are the seat of considerable local trade, and with improved means of transit will probably be found to be—as they are now to a great extent—a most convenient and central stock market, in which buyers and sellers from the western and north-western, and from the southern districts respectively, would meet and effect their transactions.

Gold-mining is still carried on about Forbes, but not at present to any great extent.

In the vicinity of Forbes, and chiefly on the banks of the river, there is a large extent of cultivation, chiefly wheat, hay, and fruit, for which the climate and soil are well adapted. As to fruit, I beg to state that all the English summer fruits flourish well, and that fruits of the citrus family are produced in abundance and of excellent quality. Several irrigation plants have been constructed along the river, and the beneficial effect upon crops of all kinds is very great.

F.

REPORT BY MR. J. B. THOMPSON, LAND VALUER, ON PROPOSED RAILWAY EXTENSION FROM MOLONG TO PARKES, VIA MANILDRA.

Department of Public Works, Valuation Branch, Sydney, 27 July, 1889.

IN compliance with your instructions of 12/7/89, received 15/7/89, I have now the honor to report, as desired by the Minister, first, as to the nature of the country between Molong and Parkes and its capabilities, whether for mining, agricultural, or pastoral pursuits; second, statistics in regard to the population, and the various occupations; third, a statement of the principal industries of the district; fourth, the number of schools and attendance thereat; and fifth, an idea of the traffic which passes along the roads between the places named, and any other particulars which might tend to throw light upon the question of the construction of the railway between the places mentioned.

1.—*As to the nature of the country between Molong and Parkes, and its capabilities, whether for mining, agricultural, or pastoral pursuits.*

I have carefully explored the country in accordance with my instructions, for a distance of about 5 miles on either side of a line connecting the towns mentioned. Before reporting in detail on the localities inspected, I may state generally that although the country for a distance of about 23 miles from Molong varies much in character, the whole of it is either pine ridges, usually rocky and poorly grassed, which occur at distant intervals, low gravelly hills well grassed and timbered with white box occurring more frequently than the former, or slightly undulating or level land suitable for agricultural purposes, of which there are thousands of acres of the very best description, and on which a considerable population is already settled. I shall now proceed to describe my exploration in detail and its results.

For a distance from Molong of about 3 or 4 miles along the road to Parkes, the country is rough and stony but well grassed; thence for a further distance of about 15 miles by a breadth of about 10 miles the country generally is of good quality and comprises localities, within arbitrary lines, laid down by myself for convenience of reference and description, without regard to parish boundaries. These localities I shall refer to as Garra, Gregra, Gumble, Manildra, and Mandagery, and excepting Gregra, they are so designated after the principal creeks by which they are watered.

Garra, which is about 8 or 10 miles west of Molong, and lying north of the proposed railway, contains, approximately, about 15,000 acres of land, a large proportion of which—about 6,000 or 7,000 acres—may be cultivated to advantage; the hills and their slopes being mostly deep chocolate soil of the best description, which is admirably adapted for the growth of cereals and fruit, and I think specially so for grapes. Some of the flats are light reddish sandy loam, which in fairly good seasons would produce abundant crops of wheat, and a considerable area is used for that purpose. Of the residue, about 6,000 acres is pasture land of good quality, being often white-box forest, well grassed, but rather too stony for cultivation, and about 2,000 or 3,000 acres consist of rocky pine forest ridges of little if any value.

Gregra, in which is Bocoble Creek, lies south of Garra and of the proposed railway and is of similar character to the Garra country, except that the southernmost portion of the area inspected is rich basaltic soil, and that the proportion of pasture land is somewhat larger.

Gumble is north of the proposed railway, and about 15 miles westerly from Molong. It contains an area of about 16,000 acres, and Mandagery, south of the proposed line, and of Gumble, contains a similar area. They do not differ in any important respects from Garra and Gregra. The agricultural land is equally good, the pasture land is of similar character, but the pine ridges form a smaller portion of the total area.

Manildra, about 20 miles from Molong, and extending about 5 miles north and the same distance south of the proposed railway, contains a large area of first rate agricultural land, chiefly on Manildra Creek, and between that creek and the lower part of Dulladerry Creek, but there is in this division a larger proportion of pine ridges (which are spurs from Croker's dividing range) than in any of the localities previously described.

At or near a point about 23 miles from Molong, there is a marked change in the character of the country for about 15 miles along the proposed line and for a distance of about 5 miles to the north. This includes the heads of Dulladerry, Billabong and Bindagandri Creeks, Croker's Range, and spurs therefrom, and with the exception of a considerable extent of good land on those creeks the country is unfit for agriculture and inferior for pasturage. It, however, contains some extensive forests of ironbark, from which an unlimited quantity of railway sleepers and fencing might be obtained. South of the proposed line, for the same distance, most of the country is very different and far superior. The Goaming country at the head of Reedy Creek, and the country at the head of Moura Creek, containing together an area of about 10,000 acres, is of first rate quality, much of it, probably about one-third, being rich agricultural soil and the remainder white box pasture and of the best description. Outside this area and within the 15-mile length mentioned there is some good pasture land, and some iron bark forest which is of little value, except for the timber thereon.

The

The foregoing brings me within about 10 or 12 miles of Parkes, and from thence to the town, whether it be approached by Flagstone Creek or Billabong Creek, the country is a wide expanse of good land, of practically unlimited extent, a great part of which, notably on the Billabong and Goobang Creeks, is of the most fertile description; and those parts which might be considered too light and sandy for cultivation, are splendid pasture land. These remarks refer to the country lying east, north-east, and south-east of the town; and I have to add that the country around Parkes, to the north, west, and south, is equally good for a distance of 4 or 5 miles, and I have no doubt far beyond the distance named, to which want of time compelled me to limit my inspection.

As to its capability for mining pursuits, I have to report that, except in the vicinity of Parkes, where gold-mining is still carried on with vigour and success, the only discoveries of any importance between Molong and Parkes have been Delaney's Dyke Gold-mine, about 8 miles north-west of Garra, which is now being worked with encouraging results, and a mineral deposit in the Gumble country, known locally as the Tin-mine, on which two shafts—now idle—have been sunk, and at the mouths of which some very fine specimens of copper carbonates and other ores are lying; but whether sufficiently rich, or in sufficient quantity to pay, I could not ascertain. In many other places what is technically known as the colour of gold has been found, but hitherto nothing payable.

I shall conclude my remarks under this head by stating briefly, and by way of recapitulation, that while between Molong and Parkes there is, in the pine ridges and ironbark forests referred to above, a large area of inferior country, there is a much larger area of country well adapted for agricultural or pastoral purposes, and, taking the one with the other, the average is good. I have been led to this opinion by the careful and thorough examination which I have made, and its accuracy is, to some extent at least, borne out by the fact that the Brymedura and Billabong runs, which formerly extended from Molong to the site of the present town of Parkes, and embraced the whole of the intervening country, were long regarded as two of the best runs in the western district.

2.—*Statistics in regard to the Population and the various Occupations.*

I have found it impossible to procure statistics for which I could personally vouch, but such as I have been able to gather are appended to this report, with the exception of the paper marked A, which I received with my instructions; those marked B, C, and D were furnished to me by J. A. Rose, Esq., Mayor of Parkes, whose signature they bear. I beg to state, with regard to them, that, although I believe they were compiled in good faith by Mr. Rose, and were strongly supported by other local gentlemen of respectability and position, I do not feel so satisfied that they are free from exaggeration, induced by strong local bias, as to feel justified in asking the Minister to view them as absolutely correct. It is only fair, however, to add, that after every allowance has been made for possible, or even probable exaggeration, they are sufficient to show that a large and important trade would follow the establishment of the proposed Railway, and so far I feel no hesitation in expressing my concurrence with them.

The occupation of the residents on and near the proposed railway may be briefly described, as, with very few exceptions, they combine sheep grazing with agriculture. It is worthy of note that nearly the whole area inspected by me is occupied by a most desirable class of colonists, viz., *bona fide* selectors, men who selected land for themselves, fulfilled the conditions required by the law, and thereon made permanent homes for themselves and their families, and who, despite losses in stock and crops from the recent disastrous drought, are generally a thriving and well-to-do body of settlers.

Parkes itself is an important town. It has been incorporated about five years, and has a population of about 2,000 souls within the municipal boundaries. The town proper is not more than about eighteen years old, and although it derived its origin from the gold diggings on which it was built, it has all the adjuncts which indicate a thriving and prosperous community, and which prove it to be the centre of considerable trade, such as churches (4), schools, banks (3), hotels (10), and stores &c.

3.—*A statement of the principal industries of the district.*

I have already explained the extent and character of the pastoral and agricultural industries as far as my exploration extended, and I now beg to submit such particulars of the important industry of gold-mining as I think may be regarded as reliable. Some of these particulars are contained in a statement marked E herewith, showing the quantity of gold purchased by the local banks, from which it appears that the quantity for the last half-year is a considerable increase on the average for the previous three years; and a statement given to me by the local mining registrar marked F herewith, which I only submit as it appears to contain one simple fact, viz., that "upwards of 600 miners' rights have been issued here this year," and as it incidentally refers to a considerable "rush" about 16 miles north of Parkes. Concerning this rush I have heard most conflicting statements, but I think on the whole that the discovery is likely to prove important. Stone from five claims in the immediate vicinity of Parkes is regularly crushed at the "Company's machine" in the town. Two of these claims, Hazlehurst's and Quail and party's are very rich, and the others are more than payable. A good deal of fossicking is also carried on, and there is reason to believe that there are many payable reefs in the neighbourhood awaiting development.

The only other industries necessary to mention are saw-mills, of which there are four at work, and another being erected, which are chiefly employed in cutting pine into flooring boards, and scantling of various kinds for building purposes and a large flour-mill in the town of Parkes. There is a large crushing machine at work in the town and another about to be erected, of which part of the machinery is on the site.

Agricultural machinery such as strippers, reapers, mowers, and steam-threshers, chaff-cutters, &c., are largely used by farmers, and all the various handicraft trades are carried on in the town itself, but I do not think it necessary to refer to them more particularly.

4.—*The number of schools, and attendance thereat.*

The following is a list of schools visited by me between Molong and Parkes, and others around the latter town within a radius of about 8 miles, showing the position and average attendance:—

Public School—Garra.	Attendance	43.	8 miles from Molong.
Do Gregra	do	30	3½ do Manildra.
Do Manildra	do	30	Parkes Road at do.
Do Meranburn	do	40	do 16 miles from Molong.
Do Bumberry	do	27	do 30 do do.
Do Bindogandri	do	24	8 miles from Parkes.
Do Goobang	do	32	6 do do do.
Do Trelowarren	do	30	1½ do do do.
Do Welcome	do	28	2½ do do do.
Do Tichbourne	do	43	6 do do do.
Do No Mistake	do	25	3 do do do.
Do Parkes	do	180	town of Parkes.
R. C.— do	do	60	do.

Total average attendance 592

In addition to the above there are seven Public Schools northerly and north-westerly from Parkes, and from 8 miles to 20 miles distant, situated at Kadina (two schools), Warge Rock, Milpose, Bogan Gate, Broigan, and Trundle.

5.—*An idea of the traffic which passes along the roads between the places named (Molong and Parkes), and any other particulars which might tend to throw light upon the question.*

The traffic from Molong towards Parkes consists chiefly of the carriage of the usual merchandise to be found in country stores, with a large quantity of squatters' and selectors' supplies, such as rock-salt, fencing wire, corrugated iron, wool bales, &c., and occasionally heavy machinery amounting to a weekly consignment of about 72 tons, as shown on the annexed paper marked B. The accuracy of this estimate might be roughly tested by a reference to the returns on the Molong Railway Station, although those returns would not include goods forwarded from any of the business houses in Molong to their constituents along the route of the proposed railway, and thus would not be strictly accurate.

The up traffic would be mainly confined to the carriage of wool, live stock, sheep-skins, hides, and grain, and possibly a little copper from Mount Hope. Of wool, the clip from at least 460,000 sheep must be carried to Molong, being about 407,000 depastured on the stations surrounding Parkes, and about 53,000 on and near the proposed line, or about 920 tons of wool. In addition to this there are many other large clips which the construction of a railway would almost

almost certainly attract to a station or terminus at Parkes, amounting to about 1,300 (thirteen hundred) tons of wool. My authority for this estimate will be found on paper C, herewith, and I may say with reference to this most important statement, and to my previous remarks respecting these statistics generally, that I have consulted some station-managers, and they fully corroborated that statement as to the number of sheep, but they are of opinion—with which I agree—that the clips from Balgandramine, Mungery, Genanagy, and Wando Wandong, would most probably be conveyed to Naramine, on the Great Western Railway. The live stock traffic would probably amount to about 100,000 fat and store sheep, and about 1,500 head of cattle and horses. Grain, the production of which might be enormously increased, sheepskins, and hides would undoubtedly form considerable items in the traffic, but I regret that I am unable to give a sufficiently close approximation to their quantities to justify me in quoting figures. The requirements of passenger traffic are, at present, sufficiently met by a daily four-horse coach and a few private vehicles, but this would be immediately and largely increased were railway communication established.

I have now dealt with the several aspects of this question as required by the Minister, and before all things I have endeavoured to give a thoroughly impartial and faithful report. I have, I hope, adequately appreciated the great importance of the duty entrusted to me by the Minister, and trust I have performed it in such a manner as to meet with his approval
I have, &c.,

J. B. THOMPSON,
Land Valuer.

The Under Secretary for Public Works, Sydney.
Mr. Badham.—J.B., 10/9/89. Synopsis received.—C.A.B., 11/9/89. Put with proper file of papers.—
D.C.M.L., 5/12/89.—Mr. Badham. The Minister promised to send this to Mr. Eddy for perusal. Do so.—J.B., 3/8/89.

(A.)

STATISTICS.

Collected from the Manildra and Garra Railway League, showing the number of selectors, area of holding, area under cultivation, number of stock, number of inhabitants, schools, with number of scholars on the Rolls, all adjacent to the proposed line of railway from Molong, viz Manildra, towards Parkes, &c., commencing 3 miles west of Molong and extending 20 miles only.

Collector.	Landholders.	Areas.	Under cultivation.	Horses.	Cattle.	Pigs	Sheep.	Schools.	Scholars on Rolls.	Population.
Mr. John Rubie, sen....	55	15,674	1,984	285	461	33	3,748	Garra	104†	317
Mr. James A. Liscombe	26	13,179	1,150½	181	119	74	9,150	Meranburn	57	195
Mr. Michael O'Donnell	16	7,626	1,128	94	201	53	5,000	Green Grove ...	35	110
Mr. Joseph Wren	27	6,684	1,171	125	95	35	1,650	Gregra	48	147
Mr. E. R. Sloggett.....	33	9,602	873	114	149	50	4,800	.....	.....	145
Mr. Richard Gosper ...	22	3,178	460	83	70	49	1,800	.....	.....	115
Mr. H. P. Miller	30	15,905	1,184	137	130	35	18,600	Manildra	55	182
Totals	209	71,848	7,950½*	1,019	1,225	329	44,748	5	299	1,211

*135,150 bushels wheat.

†Including night-school.

Signed { JAMES A. LISCOMBE, Chairman ; } Manildra Branch.
 { JOSEPH WREN, Secretary. }
 { JOHN RUBIE, Chairman ; } Garra Branch.
 { BERTRAM GLASSEN, Secretary. }

Goods coming from Molong to Parkes at present average about 72 tons a week, or 3,744 tons per annum. The above includes goods for Parkes, fencing-wire, rock-salt, and building materials for the surrounding settlements.

The above will be largely increased if a line is constructed to Parkes, without taking away from earnings of lines now in use, as a considerable quantity of goods are taken delivery of at Molong by settlers in our own neighbourhood, and of which we have no record.

JOHN A. ROSE,
Parkes, 27/7/89.

(B.)

Stations.—Wool from which will come to Parkes.

	Bales.		Bales.
Burrawang	250,000	Burra Burra	70,000
Woodlands	70,000	Gobondry	30,000
Melrose Plains	40,000	Murrumbogie and Wallanbillan.....	40,000
Balgandramine	60,000	Genanagy	60,000
Coradgery	50,000	Brien Plains	12,000
Mungery	60,000	Wando Wandong	23,000
Troffs	40,000	Blowclear	10,000
Gunningbland	40,000	Nelungaloo	50,000
Curra	20,000	Coobang	30,000
Wanera	15,000	Moura	10,000
Bartley's Creek	10,000		
		Total	990,000

Owned by selectors to the north, north-west, and north-east of Parkes, viz., at Kadina, Mickibri, Genanagy, Coradgery, Warge, Rock, Limestone, Wilga Vale, Melpose, and Trundle..... *150,000
†1,140,000

When the selectors already here are fairly stocked they will have not less than 450,000 sheep.

JOHN A. ROSE,
Parkes, 27/7/89.

(C.)

APPROXIMATE number of fat stock that will be trucked annually at Parkes, 115,000 sheep and 2,000 cattle.

The above will be largely increased as the country becomes improved.

It is not possible, without a lot of trouble, to ascertain the quantity of land under cultivation at present. It will be fully one-third more this year than there was in 1887.

All the land in the parishes of Bindogandri, Beargamil, Kamandra, Coobong, Currajong, Parkes, and Milpose, immediately surrounding Parkes, has been alienated under the "Repealed Acts."

Under the 1884 Act up to date, 175,000 acres have been conditionally purchased, and 525,000 acres conditional leased.—Total, 700,000 acres.

Attached is the grain and other statistics taken by Senior-Constable Atkinson in 1887.

JOHN A. ROSE, Parkes, 27/7/89.
(D.)

*The above wool comes here now from Molong. †1,140,000, say 10 bales to the 1 000 sheep, and 5 bales to the ton=2,280 tons.

(D.)

From a return furnished by Senior-Constable Atkinson, we gather that the total acreage under wheat in the Parkes agricultural district for 1887 was 3,306, and the total yield 41,863 bushels, giving an average per acre of 12½ bushels; 1,512 acres were under cultivation for the raising of other crops and for horticultural purposes, making a total of 4,817 acres under general cultivation. The average yield this year, as compared with that of 1886, shows a decline of 7½ bushels. Owing to the severity of the late rains, several large paddocks have had to be left, through the crops having been so thoroughly beaten down as to make it a work almost of impossibility to get the stripper to work on them, the owners preferring to turn in their stock to eat it off.

(E.)

GOLD PURCHASED BY BANKS IN PARKES, 1886, 1887, 1888, AND 1889.

Year.	Banks.	Retorted.			Alluvial.			Total each year.		
		oz.	dwt.	gr.	oz.	dwt.	gr.	oz.	dwt.	gr.
1886.....	Commercial Bank	2,848	16	10	345	14	2	5,811	14	1
	A. J. S. Bank	2,307	16	4	309	7	9			
1887.....	Commercial Bank	3,508	12	23	410	2	18	5,427	13	18
	A. J. S. Bank	1,152	1	11	356	16	14			
1888.....	Commercial Bank	2,342	12	17	181	7	1	4,538	1	17
	A. J. S. Bank	1,457	7	7	244	14	16			
	Union Bank .....	.....	.....	.....	312	0	0			
1889 to 30/6/89.	Commercial Bank	2,440	5	0	125	16	3	3,060	10	13
	A. J. S. Bank	232	2	19	174	6	15			
	Union Bank .....	.....	.....	.....	88	0	0			
		16,289	14	19	2,548	5	6	18,838	0	1

JOHN A. ROSE, Parkes, 29/7/89.

(F.)

Sir,

Warden's Office, Parkes, 27 July, 1889.

I have the honor to report that upwards of 600 miners' rights have been issued here this year. There are about 300 gold-bearing reefs in this division of the Lachlan mining district, which are capable of giving permanent employment for upwards of 10,000 men for years to come.

The whole of the country running north and south is gold-bearing, and extends over 5 miles westerly and about 55 miles easterly.

The land is suitable for small settlers, and any extensive system of water conservation would make this one of the most prosperous districts in the colony of New South Wales.

At the new township of Alectown, about 16 miles north, there are over 600 miners, many of them holding golden claims.

I have &c.,

JAMES MILLAR,
Mining Registrar.

J. B. Thompson, Esq.

G.

RAILWAY FROM MOLONG TO PARKES, *via* FLAGSTONE CREEK.
Book of Reference to Parliamentary Plan.

Name of Parish.	No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
County of Ashburnham.					
Molong	1	Molong Rivulet .....	.....	.....	.....
County of Wellington.					
Gamboola	2	Cleared land	Mary Marsden .....	.....	Mary Marsden.
County of Ashburnham.					
Molong	3	Molong Rivulet.....	.....	.....	.....
"	4	Town lot	John Smith .....	.....	.....
"	5	"	Thomas White .....	.....	.....
"	6	"	Patrick Cleancy .....	.....	.....
"	7	"	Henry Bennett .....	.....	.....
"	8	Market-street .....	.....	.....	.....
"	9	Town lot	Henry Bennett .....	.....	.....
"	10	" .....	" .....	.....	.....
"	11	Pond and King Streets .....	.....	.....	.....
"	12	Town lot	Edward Blunden .....	.....	.....
"	13	"	Thomas White .....	.....	.....
"	14	Crown lot	Crown .....	.....	.....
"	15	Lane .....	.....	.....	.....
"	16	Crown lot	Crown .....	.....	.....
"	17	Parker-street.....	.....	.....	.....
"	18	Crown lot	Crown .....	.....	.....
"	19	Castle-street .....	.....	.....	.....
"	20	Town lot	John Harden .....	.....	.....
"	21	Thistle-street.....	.....	.....	.....
"	22	Crown lot	Crown .....	.....	.....
"	23	Town lot	William Neville .....	.....	.....
"	24	Hill-street .....	.....	.....	.....
"	25	Town lot	Andrew Ross .....	.....	.....
"	26	"	John Rubie .....	.....	.....
"	27	Road .....	.....	.....	.....
"	28	Town lot	Henry Bennett .....	.....	.....
"	29	Road .....	.....	.....	.....
"	30	Crown lot	Crown .....	.....	.....
"	31	" .....	" .....	.....	.....
"	32	Road .....	.....	.....	.....

Name of Parish.	No. on Plan	Description of Property.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
County of Ashburnham— <i>continued</i>					
Molong	33	Town lot	Henry Packham		Henry Packham.
"	34	Temporary Common	Crown		
"	35	Road from Parkes			
"	36	Temporary Common	Crown		
Brymedura	37	Bush land	William Good		William Good.
"	38	Road			
"	39	Bush land	William Good		William Good.
"	40	"	"		"
"	41	"	"		"
"	42	"	"		"
"	43	Crown land	Crown		
"	44	Road			
"	45	Crown land	Crown		
"	46	Bush land	William Cook		William Cook.
"	47	Crown land			
"	48	Bush land	John Burgess, Junr.		John Burgess, Junr.
"	49	"	"		"
"	50	"	"		"
"	51	Crown land	Crown		
"	52	Richard Bradley	Richard Bradley		Richard Bradley.
"	53	"	"		"
"	54	"	"		"
"	55	"	"		"
"	56	"	"		"
"	57	"	"		"
"	58	Road			
"	59	Bush land	Isaac Staines		Isaac Staines.
"	60	Bocoble Creek			
"	61	Bush land	Isaac Staines		Isaac Staines.
"	62	"	"		"
"	63	"	J. Boardman		J. Boardman.
"	64	Road			
"	65	Bush land	John Rubie, Junr.		John Rubie, Junr.
"	66	"	"		"
"	67	"	"		"
"	68	"	"		"
"	69	Main Road			
"	70	Bush land	John Rubie, Junr.		John Rubie, Junr.
"	71	"	"		"
"	72	"	"		"
"	73	Water Reserve	Crown		
Gregra	74	Freehold	D M & P M M'Callum		D M & P M M'Callum
"	75	"	"		"
"	76	"	"		"
"	77	Road			
"	78	Bush land	John Fleeting		John Fleeting.
"	79	"	"		"
"	80	Road			
"	81	Bush land	John Fleeting		John Fleeting.
"	82	"	H. Tanner	H. P. Miller.	H. P. Miller.
"	83	Road			
"	84	Bush land	H. P. Miller		H. P. Miller.
"	85	Road			
"	86	Bush land	John Fleeting		John Fleeting.
"	87	"	"		"
"	88	"	"		"
"	89	"	T. Brettell		T. Brettell.
"	90	Water Reserve	Crown		
"	91	Crown land	"		
"	92	Mandagery Creek			
Dulladerry	93	Crown land	Crown		
"	94	Town lot	"		
"	95	Roads			
"	96	Town lot.	Crown		
"	96a	Lane			
"	97	Town lot	Crown		
"	98	Road			
"	99	Reserve	Crown		
"	100	Road			
"	101	Town lot	Crown		
"	102	Lane			
"	103	Town lot	Crown		
"	104	Road			
"	105	Reserve	Crown		
"	106	Road			
"	107	Town lot	Crown		
"	108	Lane			
"	109	Town lot	Crown		
"	110	Road			
"	111	Reserve	Crown		
"	112	Road			
"	113	Reserve	Crown		
"	114	Bush land	Charles Miller		Charles Miller.
"	115	Road			
"	116	Bush land	David Townsend		David Townsend.
"	117	"	George Dean		George Dean.
"	118	"	Richard Townsend		Richard Townsend.
"	119	"	George Dean		George Dean.

Name of Parish.	No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
County of Ashburnham— <i>continued.</i>					
Dulladerry	120	Bush land	George Dean		George Dean.
"	121	"	Hector Angus		Hector Angus.
"	122	"	"		"
"	122 ^a	"	Roderick Angus		Roderick Angus.
"	123	Road	"		"
"	124	Bush land	Roderick Angus		Roderick Angus.
"	125	"	"		"
"	126	Road	"		"
"	127	Bush land	William Williams		William Williams.
"	128	Road	"		"
"	129	Bush land	William Williams		William Williams.
"	130	"	"		"
"	131	"	"		"
"	132	Road	"		"
"	133	Bush land	William Williams		William Williams.
"	134	Road	"		"
"	135	Bush land	William Williams		William Williams.
"	136	Road	"		"
"	137	Bush land	William Coomber		William Coomber.
"	138	"	"		"
"	139	Crown land	Crown		"
"	140	Bush land	Richard Shrumpton		Richard Shrumpton.
"	141	"	"		"
"	142	"	Arthur Townsend		Arthur Townsend.
"	143	Reserve	"		"
"	144	Bush land	A. Ezzy		A. Ezzy.
"	145	"	"		"
"	146	Crown land	Crown		"
"	147	Bush land	Richard Gosper		Richard Gosper.
"	148	Road	"		"
"	149	Bush land	Richard Gosper		Richard Gosper.
"	150	Road	"		"
"	151	Crown land	Crown		"
"	152	Bush land	Robert Ezzy		Robert Ezzy.
"	153	"	"		"
"	154	"	Fred. Wyndham		Fred. Wyndham.
"	155	"	George B. James		George B. James.
"	156	"	Richard Foster		Richard Foster.
"	157	"	"		"
"	158	"	Thomas Dwyer		Thomas Dwyer.
"	159	"	"		"
"	160	Crown land	Crown		"
Terarra	161	Bush land	Thomas Dwyer		Thomas Dwyer.
"	162	Main Road—Parkes to Orange	"		"
"	163	Crown land	Crown		"
"	164	Bush land	F. S. Hugo		F. S. Hugo.
Coonambra	165	Flagstone Creek	"		"
"	166	Crown land	Crown		"
"	167	Flagstone Creek	"		"
"	168	Crown land	Crown		"
"	169	Flagstone Creek	"		"
"	170	Crown land	Crown		"
"	171	Flagstone Creek	"		"
"	172	Crown land	Crown		"
"	173	Creek	"		"
"	174	Flagstone Creek	"		"
"	175	Crown land	Crown		"
"	176	Flagstone Creek	"		"
"	177	Crown land	Crown		"
"	178	Bush land	Alfred Stokes		Alfred Stokes
"	179	"	J. Colletts		J. Colletts.
"	180	Road	"		"
"	181	Bush land	J. Colletts		J. Colletts.
"	182	"	Patrick Flanagan		Patrick Flanagan.
"	183	"	James Flanagan		James Flanagan.
Cookamidgera	184	"	W. E. Townsend		W. E. Townsend.
"	185	"	"		"
"	186	Road	"		"
"	187	Bush land	Robert Salter		Robert Salter.
"	188	"	"		"
Kamandra	189	"	D. J. Haynes		D. J. Haynes.
"	190	Creek	"		"
"	191	Crown land	Crown		"
"	192	Bush land	A. Grady		A. Grady.
"	193	"	William Kearney		William Kearney.
"	194	"	"		"
"	195	Crown land	Crown		"
"	196	3-chain road	"		"
"	197	Travelling stock reserve	Crown		"
"	198	Bush land	Thomas Woods		Thomas Woods.
"	199	Travelling stock reserve	Crown		"
"	200	Bush land	Daniel Cowles		Daniel Cowles.
"	201	Crown land	Crown		"
"	202	Bush land	A. J. Cooling		A. J. Cooling.
"	203	"	T. Jenkins		T. Jenkins.
"	204	"	"		"
"	205	Billabong Creek	"		"
Parkes	206	Camping reserve	Crown		"

Name of parish.	No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	Names of		
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.
County of Ashburnham— <i>continued.</i>					
Parkes	207	Streets (Village of Goobang).....	.....	.....	.....
"	208	Lot .....	.....	.....	.....
"	209	Street .....	.....	.....	.....
"	210	Crown lot	Crown .....	.....	.....
"	211	" .....	" .....	.....	.....
"	212	" .....	" .....	.....	.....
"	213	Reserve for Public Water Supply.....	" .....	.....	.....
"	214	Town lot.....	R. Coleman .....	.....	R. Coleman.
"	215	East-street.....	.....	.....	.....
"	216	Reserve for mining	Crown .....	.....	.....
"	217	Town lot.....	Henry Jones .....	.....	Henry Jones.
"	218	Reserve for mining	Crown .....	.....	.....
"	219	Currajong-street .....	.....	.....	.....
"	220	Crown lot	Crown .....	.....	.....
"	221	Street .....	.....	.....	.....
"	222	Crown lot	Crown .....	.....	.....
"	223	Lachlan-street .....	.....	.....	.....

W. H. QUODLING
(For the Engineer-in-Chief).

H.

PARKES TO FORBES RAILWAY.

Book of Reference to Parliamentary Plan.

Name of Parish.	No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	Names of Owners.
Parkes	1	Railway reserve	Crown.
"	2	East-street	"
"	3	Railway reserve	"
"	4	Street	"
"	5	Reserve	"
"	6	Austral-street	"
"	7	Water reserve and Temporary Common	"
"	8	Forbes Road	"
"	8c	Temporary Common	"
"	9	Bush land.....	Benjamin Robiusion.
"	10	Goobang-street	Crown.
Martin	11	Travelling stock reserve	"
"	12	Bush land.....	E. P. Judd.
"	13	Travelling stock reserve	Crown.
"	14	Forbes Road	"
Mumbidgle	15	Travelling stock reserve	"
Forbes	16	Road	"
"	17	Temporary Common	"
"	18	Cultivation	John Bartley.
"	19	Bush land.....	"
"	20	Cultivation	Richard Barton.
"	21	Road.....	Crown.
"	22	Water reserve.....	"
"	23	Blackett-street	"
"	24	Town allotment.....	W. P. Jones.
"	25	Stephens-street	Crown.
"	26	Town land	C. F. Cooper.
"	27	Lane	Crown.
"	28	Town land	J. Tompkinson.
"	30	"	Joseph Dickson.
"	31	Lewis-street.....	Crown.
"	32	Town land	T. Lewis.
"	33	"	J. Shaw.
"	34	Union-street	Crown.
"	35	Town land	T. Lewis.
"	36	Dowling-street	Crown.
"	37	Town land	T. Lewis and J. M'Innes.
"	38	Recreation reserve	Crown.
"	39	Lagoon	"
"	40	Reserve	"
"	41	Bent-street	"
"	42	Reserve	"
"	43	Clark-street.....	"
"	44	Reserve	"
"	45	Ferry-street.....	"
"	46	Reserve	"
"	47	Barwin-street	"
"	48	Reserve	"
"	49	Lane	"
"	50	Reserve	"
"	51	"	"
"	52	Bridge-street	"
"	53	Reserve	"
"	54	Bandon-street	"
"	55	Ooma-street.....	"
"	56	Reserve	"
"	57	Road	"

5 December, 1888.

JOHN WHITTON,
Engineer-in-Chief for Railways.

PARLIAMENTARY

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

RAILWAY FROM MOLONG TO PARKES AND FORBES.

REPORT.

YOUR Committee, appointed on the 12th February, 1890, to inspect, take evidence, and report upon the proposed railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, proceeded to Orange on the 21st February. They sat at the Court-house, Orange, on the morning of the 22nd February, when Mr. J. E. Tonkin was unanimously appointed chairman. The Committee subsequently took evidence with regard to the proposed railway. Ten witnesses were examined. Their testimony strongly favoured the construction of a railway to Forbes *via* Borenore and Cudal. It was pointed out that this route would be 17 miles shorter than the route *via* Molong and Parkes. Mr. Crouch, District Surveyor, produced a map showing the whole of the land on both routes alienated, unalienated, and reserved in his district. It appeared that a large area of land had been reserved for railway purposes upon the Molong-Parkes route, between Meranburn and Bumberry. The total area of land reserved for all purposes within 1 mile of the suggested route *via* Cudal in the Orange district was 12,700 acres as against 17,100 acres similarly situated on the Molong-Parkes route. In the judgment of Mr. Crouch, almost the entire district was suitable for agriculture, and contained a large amount of small settlements. Mr. Stobo, land agent, of the Orange district, said that although almost all the good land in the district available for selection had been taken up, frequent inquiries were made concerning land upon the leasehold areas, which would be thrown open to settlement in the course of a few months. Approximately, 20,000 acres would be thrown open to selection in the Molong district, and the witness anticipated that the whole of this area would be selected. Several witnesses instituted a comparison between the population on the two routes, greatly to the advantage of that *via* Cudal. They were of opinion that whereas the Cudal route would serve a great portion of the population in the vicinity of the northern route, the adoption of the line *via* Molong would place almost the entire population to the southward of the surveyed Cudal route at a great disadvantage. Mr. E. Nathan, representative of Cobb & Co., gave information relative to the passenger and goods traffic between Orange and Forbes and Parkes, from which it appeared that the bulk of the traffic went to Forbes *via* Cudal. The witness spoke very confidently of the progressive nature of settlement in the district, and, with others examined, was of opinion that the construction of a railway to Forbes and Parkes would largely increase the traffic on the main line. This increase would be composed chiefly of wheat, hay, straw, &c.

The Committee examined twenty-one witnesses at Molong, on the 24th February. They were unanimously in favour of the proposed route from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, with a possible deviation through Bocoble Gap, bringing the line within easy reach of the farming population of the Cudal district. They advocated the claims of this route mainly on the ground of the large area of valuable agricultural land within the leasehold areas and reserves, which would be shortly thrown open to settlement; having regard also to the large area under cultivation to the northward of the proposed route, and to the rapidly increasing passenger and goods traffic from Parkes and intermediate centres. Mr. T. Kennedy, railway surveyor, said he had made deviations between Molong and Meranburn, but

that he had not inspected the line between that point and Parkes. The deviations made reduced the grade to 1 in 50, the length being increased 2 miles. Mr. Chippindall, land agent, said there were about 30,000 acres of leasehold land within 10 miles on either side of the proposed line. From inquiries which were made he believed that the greater part of this land would be selected as soon as it was available. Mr. E. Aland, station-master, informed the Committee that, for the twelve months ending the 31st December last, the passengers booked inwards at the Molong station numbered 4,060. The outward goods for the six months ending 31st January, 1890, were 2,338 tons of merchandize and 57 tons of coal. In the same period there were five cattle-vans and sixty-five sheep-vans trucked. The inward goods aggregated 1,346 tons, and the wool 1,367 bales. The live stock inwards comprised twenty cattle-waggons and ninety sheep-vans. About 830 tons of grain were forwarded inwards in the month of January. Mr. Wren, as showing the increase of land under cultivation, said that in 1885 the whole area under crop between Molong and Bumberry was 7,950 acres, producing 135,150 bushels of wheat. This area had been increased to 9,399 acres within a distance of 9 miles of Molong and 2 miles south and 4 miles north of the Molong-Parkes route. Several witnesses referred to the probable large increase of population in the direction of Peak Hill and Alectown consequent upon the development of the mining industry. Mr. J. Lohan, agent for Wright, Heaton, & Co., at Molong, testified to the large increase in goods traffic to and from Molong. It appeared that, on the opening of the Molong railway, the firm were paying for freight, between Sydney and intermediate stations to Molong, between £400 and £500 per annum, whereas they were now paying £1,000 per month on the outward freight. The firm, during the last six months, had despatched an average of 250 tons per month along the Parkes route. Mr. Haslam, a storekeeper of Molong, speaking with regard to the cost of cultivation, said that Mr. Peterson, of Ghewang, sowed, reaped, and bagged wheat at a cost of from 20s. to 21s. per acre. He also informed the Committee that some farmers in the district had as much as from 300 to 400 acres under wheat—that many had 250 acres under that crop—and that any area under 100 acres would be regarded as a very small farm. Several witnesses examined were of opinion that the revenue anticipated from the proposed railway by the Railway Commissioners would prove considerably short of the actual receipts. They also took exception to the report of the Commissioners descriptive of the character of the country through which the proposed line passes. The land referred to by the Commissioners as being of a rocky nature for a considerable distance between Molong and Parkes was described by these witnesses as comprising some of the best agricultural land in the colony. The ironbark timber at the Dungeon was spoken of as likely to contribute a large revenue to the railway. Evidence was also forthcoming with regard to the *bona-fide* position and general prosperity of the farmers of the district, whose wheat crops were said to have averaged in the past season from 17 to 20 bushels to the acre. The average area of farm holdings was estimated to be from 100 to 640 acres. Several old residents of the district objected to the line being taken *via* Cudal to Forbes, on the ground that the projected route passed almost entirely through large freehold properties not likely to be subdivided, whereas the proposed route to Molong would pass through small holdings, and would serve large tracts of Crown lands, the leases of which will expire in the middle of the year. Many witnesses described the farming population on the Molong-Parkes route as being considerably in excess of that on the route *via* Cudal.

Several witnesses examined at Molong having expressed their dissent from the report of the Railway Commissioners relative to the rocky nature of the country on the route of the proposed line, your Committee proceeded, on the morning of the 25th February, to make a careful inspection of the land lying on each side of the staked survey between Molong and Manildra. Leaving the main road at a distance of about 5 miles from Molong the Committee drove through the very fertile district of Garra, north of the staked line. The road traversed for a distance of 6 miles an unbroken succession of farm holdings, averaging in area about 200 acres. The Committee afterwards crossed the road and drove through the Gregra Parish. Here the holdings were even larger—one holder having 400 acres under wheat. The land appeared uniformly fertile. The Committee were satisfied from their personal observation that a large and increasing farming population was settled in these parishes. The extreme southern point of the Bocoble deviation was passed at an estimated distance of 5 or 6 miles from Cudal.

At

At Manildra, on the afternoon of the same day, the Committee examined ten witnesses. They obtained some important information from Mr. C. M. Steuart, C.E., respecting the deviation survey through Bocoble Gap. It appeared that the grade did not exceed 1 in 60, and that the line would be brought within 6 miles of Cudal without increasing the total length. This, in all probability, will supersede any deviations previously proposed. At this place, also, a very considerable area of land was under cultivation, and very valuable evidence was given as to the timber. It was stated that girders, 30 feet long and 12 inches square, of iron-bark, perfectly sound, had been obtained in a very extensive forest in the vicinity, and that an unlimited number of sleepers could be obtained there. Valuable statistics were handed in by Mr. D. M. McInnes. He informed the Committee that he had collected them within a distance of 5 miles on either side of the line from Mandagery Creek to Coates' Creek. One witness stated that he had put in and taken off his crop at a total cost of 15s. per acre. In this case, however, a disk was used.

Continuing their inspection of land in the neighbourhood of the proposed railway, the Committee left Manildra on the morning of February 26th, and at Gosper's Sawmill inspected some ironbark and some pine logs of a sound and serviceable character. They shortly afterwards left the road on the north side, crossing the railway line at B.M. 94 in a good box country; they subsequently entered ironbark ridges, with fertile flats between.

At Bumberry, five witnesses were examined. They all testified to the good quality of the adjacent ironbark, and of the soil of the district from an agriculturist's point of view. The wheat crops averaged 20 bushels per acre, and population and traffic were said to be increasing. On leaving Bumberry, the Committee passed some very good agricultural land; this extended to the Dungeon Range, which is of a very barren nature. The country, however, vastly improves on the Parkes side of the range, and continues to do so until the town itself is reached.

The Committee met at Parkes Court-house at 10 a.m. on the 27th, and examined fifteen witnesses. The evidence strongly favoured the construction of the proposed line, on the ground of the large and increasing settlement in and around Parkes, especially in the districts to the north and north-west of the town. Mr. Rose (the Mayor), while affording the Committee information from carefully-compiled statistics relative to the settlement and progress of the district, estimated that Parkes alone would contribute to the revenue of the proposed railway to Molong no less a sum than £10,008 annually. He estimated that a similar return would be given by Forbes, making a total of over £20,000 per annum from these two districts, exclusive of the intermediate traffic. He stated that one lessee in the district had guaranteed haulage upon the line to the value of £600 in the first year of the railway's existence. The representative of Wright, Heaton, & Co. at Parkes said the goods received from Molong for the twelve months ending December 31st, 1889, amounted to 3,448 tons, the inward goods from Parkes to Molong consisting of 1,500 tons of merchandise and 6,000 bales of wool. This estimate was exclusive of the grain. Speaking of the firm's business, he said that whereas three or four years ago they found that six or seven teams were sufficient to carry goods between Parkes and Molong, and *vice versa*, there was at the present time sufficient traffic between the abovenamed places to find constant employment for seventeen large teams. He estimated that the railway return on goods alone between Molong and Parkes would be £8,000 annually. Several witnesses referred to the rapid increase within the last few years in the value of township and suburban allotments. Within the last four years nearly the whole of the resumed areas of runs to the north-west and west of Parkes had been selected. The rapid growth of the parish of Trundle, to the northward of Parkes, was referred to in illustration of the growing popularity of the district among agriculturists and small graziers. Most of the witnesses who had selected land to the north-west and west of Parkes held the maximum area allowed in the division. They were grazing on the average about one sheep to the acre; they intended embarking in agriculture immediately they were assured of railway communication; and were of opinion that in average seasons no better district could be found in the colony for the growth of wheat. We were assured of the existence of a succession of farms from Kadina to Molong, a distance of 45 miles. The Committee examined several practical miners; they are at present engaged in mining in the vicinity of the township and are of
opinion

opinion that the mining prospects of the district would of themselves justify the construction of the railway. The Committee continued to take evidence at Parkes on February 28th. The testimony respecting the agricultural capabilities of the district, taken on the preceding day, was supplemented by valuable information from several witnesses engaged in agriculture. Mr. Quin, who is a partner in a firm of millers, and who is also engaged in farming, said that, given the average crops of the district, wheat at 3s. a bushel would leave a profit of £1 7s. 3½d. per acre. At 2s. 6d. a bushel it left him a profit of £102 8s. 4d. on 122 acres. This harvest was gathered by paid labour, at the rate of 8s. per diem. He considered that if the present railway rates were maintained farming could be carried on in the district at a good profit in competition with other districts of the colony and with markets of the outside world. The dray carriage to Molong, 9d. per bushel, had operated as a serious check to the growth of wheat for the Sydney market. Several witnesses were of opinion that if the railway were constructed two acres would be put under crop for every acre now sown. The following advantages were enumerated as attaching to the proposed line, as distinguished from any other route, viz., the existence of excellent timber for sleeper, culvert, and bridge purposes, as well as of good building stone, freedom from flood, and excellent agricultural land. The present prosperity of the district was attributed to the increased settlement of *bonâ fide* farmers, although it was asserted that the development of mines on the field had also contributed to the general progress. In the parish of Kadina, due north from Parkes, 17,000 acres had been already selected in small holdings alone, and to the north-west of Parkes, in the parish of Trundle, 19,000 acres had been similarly selected. The Committee were somewhat surprised to learn that the majority of the new selectors to the north and north-west of Parkes were Victorians, in whose judgment the land they now occupy is even superior to the best agricultural land in the neighbouring colony. The mining registrar informed the Committee that there had recently been a great increase in the number of applications for miners' rights and gold-mining leases, and a witness representing the united banks in the town said, that during the last four years, £90,000 worth of gold had been purchased by the banks, and that last year alone no less than £31,000 worth was purchased by them. The Committee inspected at one of the banks over 1,000 oz. of alluvial gold, obtained from Alectown and Peak Hill. The increase in the electoral roll of the Parkes division of the Forbes electorate was, for the present year, 236.

On the morning of Saturday, March 1st, the Committee drove out to the Little Billabong, a distance of about 6 miles from Parkes, through an exceedingly rich agricultural country, containing a large number of improved farm holdings. We also visited the Dayspring and Bushman's mines, and saw a public quartz battery in operation. At 1 o'clock we started for Forbes; the land bordering upon the whole distance of the road, from Parkes to Forbes, appeared eminently suited to agriculture, but is not available for settlement, being set apart for a gold-field reserve. At a distance of about 7 miles from Parkes the Committee found the small settlement of Tichborne, and there examined four witnesses, who were of opinion that the whole of the land between Parkes and Forbes would be taken up immediately upon the cancellation of the reserve. The present population, amounting to about 100, would become permanently settled under the operation of the amended mining law, permitting 10-acre miners' tenements. The fertility of the soil was so great that 10 tons of potatoes to the acre, and 3½ tons of hay to the acre, had been grown in the present season. The average attendance at the public school was 50, and there had been an increase in the average by 20 during the last four years.

The Committee commenced to take evidence at the School of Arts, Forbes, on Monday, March 3rd, and examined twelve witnesses. The evidence was invariably favourable to railway communication between Forbes and the existing system, but was conflicting as regards the route which should be adopted. The majority of the witnesses were in favour of a railway *via* Eugowra to Cowra, but several witnesses preferred the route *via* Cudal to Borenore, and all agreed in condemning the proposed line *via* Parkes. The chief argument advanced in support of the Cowra line was that it would give the district the advantage of the Melbourne as well as of the Sydney market. This consideration, it was urged, was of special importance, in view of the live stock traffic. The route *via* Cudal to Borenore was preferred to the Parkes route on account of the shorter distance. Three witnesses from Condobolin were examined. They acknowledged Forbes to be the

the nearest depôt, there being a difference of from $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 miles between that point and Parkes, from Condobolin, but they represented that unless the line was taken to Cowra, it would be of little or no benefit to them. One witness stated that goods could be delivered at Forbes, by teams, at the same price as would be charged on the railway, *via* Molong and Parkes. It was stated that the traffic between Condobolin and Forbes had been actually stopped by flood for only one week during the last twenty years. The wheat crops near Condobolin were sworn to yield an average of $14\frac{1}{2}$ bushels to the acre, and the soil was described as very suitable to the growth of hay, oats, and fruit. At the present time local requirements are not fully supplied by the crops grown. The District Surveyor at Forbes stated that, on his recommendation, the Mines Department had decided that 22,000 acres of gold-field reserve should be thrown open to selection. This area commenced at a point 7 miles from Forbes, and extended to within 3 miles of Parkes. The whole of the available land in the district had been taken up; constant applications were made for holdings, and whenever an area was thrown open to selection a great rush of applicants took place, applications being often made by persons outside the colony. 5,000 acres had recently been taken up to the south of Forbes in special areas, not exceeding 160 acres. From 70,000 to 80,000 acres had been taken up to the north of Parkes, and 90,000 acres at Trundle, north-west of Parkes. This land was held by *bona-fide* selectors. Mr. Gatenbey, the lessee of a run 20 miles below Forbes, on the southern bank of the Lachlan, said he had 200 acres under cultivation, irrigated by means of extensive machinery. Wheat, oats, maize, fruit, vegetables and lucerne grew in abundance. The wheat averaged 40 bushels per acre, and he had stacked 300 tons of hay grown upon a portion of this area. He was of opinion that land, irrigated, would carry ten sheep to the acre for eight months of the year. As an instance of the value of the river frontages, he mentioned that he had placed under offer 1,000 acres suitable for irrigation purposes at £6 per acre. The intending purchaser had subsequently offered £6 10s. per acre for a similar area of land further down the river, but the price offered had been refused. The Committee were placed in possession of valuable returns, showing the number of sheep in the district, together with the sheep traffic through Forbes; also as to the extent of the alienated, unalienated, and reserved lands in the Forbes district; these appear as appendices to the evidence. The post and telegraph returns exhibited a steady increase within the past three years.

The Committee continued to take evidence at Forbes on the morning of the 4th March, examining twenty witnesses. As on the previous day, the majority of witnesses were in favour of the line from Forbes to Borenore. Some of them went so far as to state that the line *via* Parkes and Molong would be useless to them. Mr. Reymond, miller and selector, stated that he had 500 acres under crop, the land being irrigated, and yielding 20 bushels to the acre. In a fortnight after the natural grasses were irrigated, sheep and cattle could live upon them. In some paddocks on the river frontages ten sheep to the acre had been carried without irrigation for seven months. He had himself 1,600 sheep on 200 acres of land. All kinds of fruit grew luxuriantly, and very superior wine could be made from the grape. Splendid timber—pine particularly—was to be found in great abundance. The witness thought that if a railway were constructed *via* Parkes and Molong Forbes would be ruined, inasmuch as Parkes would become the main outlet to the west, Forbes being the terminus of a branch line. By paying for all work in its production, wheat could be raised at 2s. per bushel. Mr. Thomas Leslie, a large selector, said that during the last four years, without irrigation, his land had carried a sheep to $1\frac{1}{8}$ acre. A steam thresher in this district in the present season threshed 18,000 bushels of wheat; it was estimated that a much larger quantity was taken off by the stripper. The agent for Wright, Heaton, & Co. said the loading received through his office in the last twelve months was as follows:—Forbes, 1,180 tons; Condobolin, 380 tons; Mount Hope, 26 tons; Borambil, 24 tons; and Burrawang, 90 tons. The firm had despatched 10,000 bales of wool during the season. A wool-scourer had scoured in eighteen months 180 tons of wool, and he said he could scour double that quantity if he had means of getting it away. He had wool standing six weeks through the want of means of carriage. Another scourer said he sent away 215 tons annually, but that he would rather send it by team to Cowra than by train *via* Parkes and Molong. From one station, Burrawang, this season, 4,184 bales of wool, the clip of 246,000 sheep, were sent to Sydney, there being back loading

loading to the amount of 100 tons for station supplies. Most of the witnesses agreed that the surveyed route *via* Borenore, as also the route *via* Parkes, were out of the reach of floods, although one witness said that land at the junction of the Eugowra Creek with the Lachlan was very subject to them. Mr. Tozer, who exhibited magnificent samples of peaches and apples grown on irrigated land on the banks of the Lachlan, said that if the railway were constructed to Parkes he could send tons of fruit to the metropolitan market. The Committee examined several witnesses from Grenfell. They advocated the line from Young *via* Grenfell, Forbes, and Parkes, to Dubbo. Mr. Vaughan said that 10,000 to 12,000 tons of goods annually went into the town, and that one firm paid as much as £2,000 freight during the past twelve months. Mr. Greene, the member for Grenfell, said that in that district 7,913 acres had been under wheat this season, producing the largest average in the colony, *viz.*, about 20 bushels per acre. The total wheat yield of the district was 157,984 bushels. There had been a steady increase in agriculture and in general prosperity for some years. Last year's rainfall was 32 inches. Wheat could be grown remuneratively at a cost of 2s. 6d. per bushel on the ground.

Your Committee left Forbes at 8 a.m. on the 5th March, and arrived at Eugowra shortly before noon. The road passed through very good pastoral country with a fair percentage of land suited to agriculture. At Eugowra they examined thirteen witnesses, four of whom were from Canowindra. The witnesses were unanimous in the opinion that the line should not be constructed *via* Molong, Parkes, and Forbes. They were divided in opinion, however, with regard to the routes *via* Borenore and Cowra. It was represented to the Committee that the land of the surrounding district was particularly fertile, in many instances carrying over two sheep to the acre. The average crop of wheat was set down at 18½ bushels, and the population was stated to be 200. Timber—red gum and pine—both suitable for building purposes, was said to be available. Fruit of excellent quality was also grown in the district. The Canowindra witnesses testified to the fertile nature of their district, and said that no line, other than that *via* Cowra, would be of service to them.

The Committee started from Eugowra at 7.30 a.m. on the 6th March, and arrived at Murga shortly after 10 o'clock. The road followed the course of the Mandagery Creek, within a short distance of the surveyed routes to Borenore and Cowra. The land being for the most part reserved there was very little settlement by the roadside, but the country appeared well adapted to pastoral and agricultural pursuits. At Murga nine witnesses were examined. Their evidence went to show that a large area of land in the district was under cultivation, and that the average yield of wheat was about 15 bushels to the acre. One witness said that rather than utilise the proposed line *via* Parkes to Molong he would cart his produce 40 miles to Cowra. An experienced farmer said that wheat could be grown at 2s. 6d. per bushel on the ground, and that many farmers at Reedy Creek, to the northward, would be well served by the line which the Committee had had referred to it for investigation. We left for Cudal at 1.15 p.m., and diverged southward from the main road as far as Barragin, a fine agricultural district. Arriving at Cudal at 5 p.m. we examined two witnesses, by whom it was shown that Cudal is to some extent served by the existing railway to Borenore, a distance of 15 miles from the township. In the event of the proposed deviation, *via* Bocoble Gap, now being surveyed, being made, they would be brought within 6 miles of the proposed line. Statistics were exhibited showing that an average of 2 tons of hay, 25 bushels of wheat, 40 bushels of oats, 50 bushels of barley, and 20 bushels of maize were grown to the acre. The Committee were also informed that at Borenore during the past twelve months £13,000 had been paid by Wright, Heaton, & Co., for trainage from Sydney and intermediate stations; also that the following quantities of wheat had been transmitted through them this year, *viz.*, January, 1,400 bags; February, 6,300 bags; March, 1,990 bags. The Committee started at 6 a.m., on the 7th March on a visit of inspection to the country round Bowan Park. It was all of a very fine description, and was mostly under cultivation. At 9 a.m. they met at the Court-house, to take further evidence, and examined sixteen witnesses. With one or two exceptions, the witnesses testified to the absolute necessity for the line being constructed, *via* Borenore, and so adverse were some of them to the line referred to the Committee for investigation that they stated that rather than take their produce to the nearest point of that line about 10 miles distant, they would cart it from 30
to

to 40 miles to avoid the railway. It was shown that the land in the district was of the highest quality for agriculture and that wheat could be grown profitably at from 2s. 6d. to 3s. per bushel. One witness, Mr. A. G. Peterson, J.P., gave details as to the cost of the production of wheat, which he estimated at 21s. per acre. The progress of the place was illustrated by the postmaster and several of the business residents, although it was pointed out that traffic had considerably decreased since the opening of the railway to Cowra, Nyngan, and Molong. It was suggested by one gentleman that the railway should be taken from Borenore to Eugowra, *via* Cudal, and that it should there branch to Parkes and Forbes, and by another witness that the starting point should be Amaroo, instead of Borenore, with a view to the reduction of grade as well as of the distance to be constructed. It was admitted that a large number of the farmers in the neighbourhood of Cudal, being not more than 14 miles from the existing line at Borenore, by a first-class road, were already served.

The Committee proceeded in the afternoon to Orange, which they reached at about 6 o'clock p.m. At 8 o'clock they examined Mr. Alley, agent for Wright, Heaton, & Co. at Orange, whose evidence confirmed that already given at the same place on 1st March.

Your Committee arrived at Cowra early in the morning of the 8th March, and commenced to take evidence at the Court-house, on the morning of the 10th March, examining sixteen witnesses. The principal number urged the immediate construction of a railway from Cowra to Forbes, *via* Canowindra. The district was represented to comprise exceptionally rich agricultural land. The police returns for the year ending 31st December included the following items:—269,988 bushels of wheat, 12,000 bushels of oats, 1,800 tons of hay, and 150,000 bushels of corn. It was stated that by the construction of a line from Cowra, the Melbourne as well as the Sydney market would be rendered more accessible to the west and north-west portions of the colony. The postmaster said that within the past eight years the postal business had considerably increased, and that the rainfall was 29 inches. Mr. D. C. J. Donnelly, J.P., storekeeper and miller, informed the Committee that great improvements had been made in the town during the last twelve years; that the district was rich in minerals—iron, copper, silver, and gold; and that a line westward would be of still greater benefit to it than the existing line eastward. The actual cash receipts at the railway station were sworn by the station-master to be, for the year 1889, £21,164; 15,375 bales of wool, and 6,461 bags of wheat had also been despatched from the station. This showed a large increase upon the traffic of preceding years. The average returns of wheat were sworn to be over 15 bushels to the acre. Good timber of all kinds was obtainable in the district, and land selections had been sold recently at from £2 to £3 per acre. Several witnesses from Canowindra were examined. They were, without exception, of opinion that the line from Cowra to Forbes should receive priority in construction. It was shown that the pastoral country between Cowra and Canowindra was capable of carrying over one sheep to the acre; that the population of Canowindra and Belmore was fully 400; that land in that district was worth from £2 to £4 an acre; that the postal returns, together with the population, showed a decided tendency to increase; that the average rainfall was 24 inches; and that the proposed railway would pass through several large as well as a number of small holdings.

The Committee continued to receive evidence at Cowra on Tuesday, 11th March, and examined eight witnesses, who unanimously pressed upon their consideration the route from Cowra to Forbes, *via* Canowindra. It was demonstrated that in three years and one month—the period for which the Murrumburrah and Blayney line has been open—the sum of £84,500 had been taken at the Cowra Station for freight. One miller (Mr. Reuben) said he had had passed through his hands this year 20,000 sacks of wheat, and that last year he sent to Forbes 300 tons of flour. Mr. Phillips, a solicitor practising at Cowra, acknowledged that although the Borenore line would, in his opinion, serve a greater number of people, he believed that the Cowra line was the proper one to construct. He appeared, however, to have no knowledge of recent settlement to the north of Parkes. Mr. Muir said that although he had but a small holding, he found grazing more profitable than agriculture. He had no doubt, however, that one of the effects of railway communication would be to place a larger area under crop.

Your

Your Committee, in travelling over the scene of their investigations, were fully impressed with the richness of the soil generally, and believe that the returns of wheat are exceptionally large. But they desire to direct special attention to the fact that the statistics handed in to the Committee at the various points (and appearing as appendices to the evidence) cannot be taken as representing accurately the acreage, the yield, or the population, inasmuch as the desire has been manifested by the parties interested in rival routes to exhibit their particular portion of the district in its most favourable light. They have, in almost every instance, collected their statistics without due regard to boundaries, and have therefore overlapped each other.

Your Committee viewed with regret the absence of settlement on a very large area of first-class agricultural land between Parkes and Forbes, which is accounted for by its being locked up in the Billabong gold-field reserve. We are of opinion that the interests of the miners might be duly conserved, and yet a large portion of this reserve be thrown open to settlement.

It will be observed that your Committee have been exceedingly careful and even minute in their investigations concerning, not only the proposed line, but also the rival routes, Borenore to Forbes and Cowra to Forbes. The necessity for a line of railway connecting both Parkes and Forbes with the metropolis is beyond doubt, as both are large and important centres, which would be materially assisted by railway communication. The line would at the same time be an extension of what must become one of our most important railways, viz., the south-west line to the Darling River. In making their recommendation, your Committee have had some doubt as to the relative merits of the line *via* Cowra to Forbes and the proposed line. The line *via* Borenore was dismissed from consideration upon the following grounds:—First, the steepness of its grades; secondly, that it would not serve as large an area as either of the two other routes; and, thirdly, that its most thickly populated portion, viz., Cudal, is already fairly served, and would, by the proposed deviation, *via* Bocoble Gap, on the Molong to Parkes line, be brought within 6 or 8 miles of a railway. The proposed railway from Molong to Parkes passes through a country composed of rich alluvial flats and gullies. There are, however, some stony ridges with a barren ironbark ridge here and there. Parkes, which is the centre of a very large district, is surrounded by extremely rich agricultural land. To the north and north-west a large number of selectors have just settled. These will no doubt materially affect the returns derived from the proposed railway. The whole of the distance between Parkes and Forbes is also covered with rich agricultural land, which, if thrown open, would, without doubt, be taken up immediately. Forbes is also the centre of a large and important district, but the land in its vicinity appears to be held in much larger areas than does the land in the neighbourhood of Parkes. The Committee were satisfied that the whole country from Parkes to Forbes and Cowra is eminently adapted to agricultural pursuits. The evidence showing that wheat could be grown profitably at from 2s. 6d. to 3s. per bushel, points to the fact that with the existing tariff a large supply would be sent from these districts in the event of railway communication being established. The Committee were also greatly impressed by the very superior quality of the fruit grown in these districts. The prolific growth of the grape justifies the expectation that in the near future an extensive wine industry will be developed.

In conclusion, your Committee have determined to recommend the construction of the proposed line, in preference to the line from Cowra to Forbes, for the following reasons:—Firstly, that Parkes is at the present time a most flourishing and largely increasing town; secondly, that at Trundle, to the north-west of Parkes, about 90,000 acres, and at Kadina, direct north of the town, from 70,000 to 80,000 acres of land have very recently been taken up in comparatively small selections, principally by Victorian farmers, for the purposes of agriculture; and, thirdly, that in the event of it being found desirable to extend the line to the Darling River to the south-west, the extension could be made with equal advantage from Parkes or Forbes.

19th March, 1890.

JAS. E. TONKIN,
Chairman.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM MOLONG TO PARKES AND FORBES.

[TAKEN BEFORE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.]

SATURDAY, 22 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Orange, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Henry Augustus Crouch, Esq., District Surveyor, sworn and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am a District Surveyor. I have the Orange Land Board district. H. A. Crouch,
Esq.
2. How long have you been in that position? Eight years.
3. Can you give us any information as regards the alienated and unalienated lands on the route of the proposed railway? I can produce a plan showing, on a small scale, the land that has been alienated in the district. The plan also shows the reserves—that is the position of the two routes and the reserves on those routes. The plan shows, in the red tint, the land in the district alienated on the two routes. It shows by green tint the reserves, and the untinted portions are unalienated land. The two lines have been shown from the trial surveys. 22 Feb., 1890.
4. Your district extends where? As far as Eugowra on the Cudal line, and as far as the range near Bumberry on the other line.
5. *Mr. Lee.*] Your boundary is defined by the blue lines on the plan produced? Yes. I have also shown in red circles the number of electors, as shown by the last electoral roll, approximately in each parish.
6. I see the circles are numbered? Yes. The numbers inside show, approximately, the number of electors in the parishes.
7. The figures only denote the number of the electors approximately? Approximately. In some cases I could not determine them exactly; but they are approximately correct.
8. Could you, from memory, give the Committee a rough estimate of the number of acres alienated? No, I have not had it made up. Of course I should want to know how far you would go—to what distance on each side of the lines.
9. Would the land shown to be alienated upon this map come within the influence of either of these railways if constructed? Well, a great deal of it would. Of course some of the alienated land is already provided for by the Molong terminus. I could not say that that would be influenced by the line which it is proposed to construct.
10. Have you any idea of the acreage of the unalienated land in your district in the vicinity of the two lines? No; but I could have it made up if the Committee desired.
11. Are you acquainted with the character of the unalienated land in the district? I am.
12. What is the quality of it? Generally inferior.
13. Is any portion of it suitable for agriculture? But very little; probably not above 7 or 8 per cent. of the unalienated land.
14. How should you class the land at the present time? Some is next to useless; other of it is inferior grazing land, and the other would be fair grazing country.
15. Is there any rough country? Some, very rough.
16. Is any of it flat? Yes; there is some flat country towards the north, but there is not a great deal of it. Probably the flat country would not be more than 10 per cent.
17. I see the unalienated land in proportion to the alienated land is very small? Yes.
18. I presume the best land in the district has been taken up? Yes.
19. I see there are a number of small reserves dotted all over this particular locality—could you tell this Committee for what purpose they were made? Different purposes—water reserves, travelling stock reserves, and forest, principally.
20. Are there any railway reserves along any of the two routes? There is a quantity of land, especially on the Parkes line, which has been reserved for railway purposes.
21. Between what points? Between Meranburn and Bumberry. Any land not reserved for other purposes has been reserved for railway purposes.

- H. A. Crouch, Esq. 22. About how much has been reserved for railway purposes? I should prefer to give you the exact quantity.
23. Do I understand that most of the Crown Land along the railway surveys was reserved under the Railways Act? No; under the Land Act.
24. I notice that the surveys do not run entirely through the reserves? No. I may say that I was instrumental in having a large reserve made for forest purposes, in anticipation of a line being ultimately constructed. We have some good ironbark timber where you see one of the reserves.
25. According to the map a large portion of the surveys are made where there are no reserves? Quite so.
26. I suppose that is in consequence of the land being alienated before the survey was made? Yes.
27. Are all the reserves shown here required for public purposes? Yes; I think so.
28. In the event of either of the lines being constructed, do you think any portion of these reserves would be thrown open to the public? Well, there is a considerable travelling stock reserve between here and Forbes. The stock inspectors have always opposed any part of that reserve being revoked, but perhaps some of it might be revoked if the line were constructed. There are about 12,700 acres reserved within 1 mile of the Forbes line, and there are 17,100 acres of reserve within 1 mile of the Parkes line.
29. There appears to be a large stock reserve between Eugowra and Toogong—would that be necessary if a line were constructed? It would probably be in excess of requirements. I think some part of it might be revoked.
30. What are the prospects of settlement in this particular district, having in view the small quantity of unalienated land, and the small percentage of reserves to be thrown open? I do not think the prospects of further settlement are very good, unless some of the larger estates now held were thrown into the market privately. So far as the Crown Lands are concerned, I do not think there would be much larger settlement.
31. Are there many large estates in the district which would be served by these surveyed routes? Well there is a large quantity of land on the Forbes route held by the Smith family—the land from Boree to Toogong is private property.
32. Are there many estates between Molong and the boundary of your district on the northern route? No.
33. Or between Parkes and Forbes? That is out of my district. I think the largest holder on the northern route would be M'Callum.
34. Is there much small settlement in the district? Yes, a good deal in places.
35. Is it of a *bona fide* nature? Of a *bona fide* nature.
36. Has dummying been practised to any extent in the district? I think a good deal. A portion of the Smith estate was, I believe, acquired in that way.
37. But the people now settled on their farms, are they good *bona fide* farmers? Yes, I think they are *bona fide*.
38. They have made their farms their *bona fide* homes? Yes, as a rule.
39. And consequently are likely to be permanent settlers in the district? Yes.
40. Do you know much of the levels along the proposed lines? No; I would have made a note of it, but I thought you would have it from the railway plans. I noticed the other day that there was a fall from Borenore to Boree bridge of 600 feet.
41. In what distance is that? About $5\frac{1}{4}$ miles.
42. Will you give the Committee a return showing the number of acres alienated in your land district, the number unalienated, and the number in the reserves—if you will send it to Sydney we should like to have it as an appendix to your evidence? Yes; I suppose you would like to have it within a certain distance of the line.*
43. We should like to have it as shown on the map handed in by you? Yes.
44. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know the route of the proposed railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I know it as far as it runs through my district.
45. What is the character of the country through which it passes? It is very largely an agricultural country. There is also some first-class grazing country.
46. Is the country fairly settled? Fairly settled—yes.
47. The holdings are not likely to revert to pastoral purposes? Not those at present in existence, I think.
48. You think there is every probability of a permanent population residing on the land now occupied? I do; I think the country is capable of carrying a very much larger population.
49. Does the proposed line pass through many large estates? No, it does not.
50. Through small holdings? Generally speaking, through small holdings.
51. Will the reserve to which you have referred as having good timber upon it be traversed by this route? Yes.
52. What is the character of the timber upon it? It is principally ironbark in largish quantities, and good quality.
53. Do you think that if these reserves were thrown open for timber purposes, any trade would be developed to supply a revenue for the railway? I have anticipated that if the railway were constructed, a large quantity would be required for railway purposes.
54. But would there be a sufficient quantity of timber to be worked up and sent away for market purposes? I think so.
55. You think that some railway revenue might be derived from the timber? Yes.
56. Can you inform the Committee whether any portion of the route through which the railway passes is liable to be flooded? I think not—none of it.
57. It is all on good sound dry land? Yes.
58. Are there any great engineering difficulties on the route that you know of? Nothing to speak of—nothing at all.
59. You think the line could be constructed at a reasonable cost? Yes.
60. You have resided in the district for a considerable time, and have had an opportunity to judge of public opinion in the matter? Yes.
61. Can you say of your own knowledge whether public opinion appears to favour the construction of this railway? Public opinion certainly favours the construction of one railway. 62.

* NOTE (on revision):—With reference to the return referred to in question No. 42, I would explain that it has not been forwarded, as, when returning through this town after visiting Parkes and Forbes, the Chairman of the Sectional Committee informed me that it would not be required.

62. But I mean the route we are now considering? It is a very difficult thing to say. Of course, when you refer to public opinion, you must remember that there are different interests to be considered. Public opinion in one place would decidedly favour the route before you, whereas public opinion in another place would not do so. At Parkes, for instance, public opinion is strongly in favour of the route before the Committee. H. A. Crouch,
Esq.
22 Feb., 1890.

63. Can you give the Committee any idea as to what action the public have taken in regard to the construction of the line marked red on this map? No.

64. I think you informed Mr. Lee just now that the land remaining to be alienated was of a poor character? Generally speaking, of inferior character.

65. Suitable only for pastoral purposes, and then only in a secondary degree? Yes.

66. What, generally, is the character of the alienated land? It is very good.

67. Is it capable of growing all sorts of crops? Anything, according to its climate.

68. What is your experience of the climate in this particular district? It is a very good climate along the line, very suitable for wheat-growing.

69. What else? Or fruit suited to a semi-tropical climate.

70. You do not think there is any probability of the district retrogressing? No; I do not think so.

71. You think rather the reverse? I do.

Edye Hayles Stobo, Esq., Crown Lands Agent, sworn and examined:—

72. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your position? I am Crown Lands Agent in the Orange district and Clerk-in-charge of the Land Board Office. E. H. Stobo,
Esq.
22 Feb., 1890.

73. How long have you been here? Five years.

74. I suppose a large amount of land has been selected during your residence in the district? A fairly large amount. 22 Feb., 1890.

75. How much a year on the average? I could not give you the number of acres from memory.

76. Your books would show? They would. But the Land Board Office has to deal with eight districts. I could single out Molong. I could ascertain for you, however, in a short time, what the acreage is.

77. Will you let us have the number of acres alienated by conditional purchase in the whole district, specifying the area in the Molong as well as the Orange district? Yes.

78. Is there much land sold here by auction? No; very little. There is a demand for land to be sold by auction, but it is seldom offered by the Government now. If the land were offered, however, I think it would be sold.

79. About what quantity of land is usually taken up? In areas of from 40 to 320 acres or 400 acres. Most selectors avail themselves of the provisions of the Crown Lands Act of 1884 to take up the maximum area by conditional lease.

80. Has there been an increase or decrease in the last year or two? A slight decrease, I should imagine, on account of the leasehold areas not being open to selection, and on account of there not being sufficient land.

81. All the good land is taken up, I suppose? It is nearly all gone. All, in fact, except that which is locked up in reserves and leasehold areas.

82. But in the Eastern Division the leasehold areas are shortly to be thrown open? Very shortly.

83. You anticipate a large rush for land then? Yes, I have many and frequent inquiries as to when the land will be thrown open. Many persons say that they intend to take some up.

84. Approximately, how many acres will be thrown open to selection? I should scarcely like to hazard a guess. I should say at least 20,000, and probably 30,000 acres. At all events, something between those two areas. I am referring now to the Molong district.

85. In what part of the district is this land chiefly situated? It is about equally divided through the district.

86. How much land will be thrown open in a similar manner in the Orange district? There are no leasehold areas in the Orange land district proper—that is, within a radius of 15 or 20 miles round Orange.

87. Then there will be no land available for selection in the Orange district? No; the Orange district is nearly all sold. The bad land is being taken up now, because they cannot get any better.

88. I suppose your books will show the total area taken up since 1861? Yes. Returns are made up every year, and they would only require a little adding to bring them up to date.

89. Have you been over the land you have been describing? No, I have no personal knowledge of it, but I know it from reports, and from general information.

90. Have you been over the two rival lines of railway? No, I have not been beyond Borenore.

91. I suppose your duties do not lead you out into the country, and that you cannot tell us anything as to the amount of traffic and so on? Well, I know there are a number of people living on the line from Borenore to Eugowra, but I have never seen any of the land—my duties do not take me there.

92. I suppose the traffic centres in Orange? Well, I cannot say that altogether. There is a good deal of traffic from below Cudal—passengers and goods—which does not come to Orange at all.

93. But it eventually comes through Orange? On the railway line, previously, people used to come here by teams; that was before the Molong line was constructed. I have no doubt the land agent at Molong would be able to give you more information on this point.

94. *Chairman.*] You think that 20,000 acres to which you have referred will be selected when it is thrown open? All the good parts of it, and a fair amount of the indifferent parts. Judging from the inquiries I hear, people are quite eager to obtain the land.

95. You cannot tell me what proportion of good land there is? No, but I think a large part of it is good, because there are so many persons inquiring about various parts.

96. *Mr. Dowel.*] During the five years you have been here, have you made yourself acquainted with the outlying districts? Only by inquiry, not by visit—that is, I have not been beyond Borenore.

97. Does the district appear to you to have been progressing since your residence here? Yes, certainly.

98. It has been going ahead? Yes, both Orange and Molong—but on the Molong side particularly, because there is more new settlement there.

99. The settlement appears to be of a permanent character? Yes, as far as I have seen.

- E. H. Stobo, Esq.
22 Feb., 1890.
100. You have made no estimate of the area included in the leasehold areas likely to be thrown open to selection in June and July next? No. I have only guessed it approximately.
101. Is not the area you have given us somewhat small? Well, I do not know. There is a great deal of land available in the Molong district in the leasehold areas, but none here. I think my figures will be found something near the mark, although, as I have said, they are only a guess, as I had no notice to attend here as a witness.

Mr. Samuel Landauer, storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. S. Landauer.
22 Feb., 1890.
102. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am at present a storekeeper at Cudal.
103. How long have you been in the district? I have been living in the district between Forbes and this place since 1862.
104. How long have you had your present store? Nearly fourteen years.
105. Have you found very much difference in the population of Cudal since you started there? Yes; a considerable difference.
106. Is it increasing now? Yes.
107. Is the difference appreciable? Well, it is hard to see any difference when you see people day after day, but the population is increasing.
108. Is your business as good as it was a year or two ago? Yes, fully.
109. Has the construction of the line to Molong decreased traffic and affected your business? The combined influence of the different lines has taken traffic from the place, of course.
110. But it has not decreased the number of residents? No; I do not think so. I am alluding principally to road traffic.
111. What forms the principal support of Cudal? Well, that is a farming district.
112. It does not depend upon the road traffic? No; but that is a great help to blacksmiths, bakers, butchers, and storekeepers. The Cowra line has taken a portion of it away, and the traffic to the Lower Lachlan has been completely cut off, through the south-western line from Junee to Whitton.
113. Can you give us the number of acres in the Cudal district under cultivation? I can give you the exact number in 1883. The total holdings were 136,249 acres, and of that area 11,092 acres were cleared.
114. Under crop, you mean? Yes.
115. Was that much in excess of the previous year? It was in excess of the previous year, and it has increased since.
116. To what extent has it since increased? Fully 25 per cent.
117. Under crop? Yes.
118. You know the proposed route from Molong to Parkes and Forbes—would that railway assist the Cudal people much? It will not assist them at all; it will be anything but assistance to them.
119. How far is it from Cudal to the nearest point of the proposed line? About 10 miles.
120. And what distance is it from Cudal to Orange? Well, we have Borenore. By taking the railway on to Parkes, we should have about another 32 miles of railway carriage.
121. But when you speak of this large area being under cultivation does not a portion of it extend towards the proposed line? It is comprised within 10 miles east and 8 miles west; that would not affect the Parkes line.
122. Do you mean that there would not be any settlement within 8 miles of the proposed line coming up from Cudal. There is a little.
123. But you said that if this line were constructed it would not benefit the Cudal people? It would benefit a few, not the bulk of the settlers.
124. You mean it would not benefit them to the extent to which they would be benefited by the suggested line from Borenore to Forbes? Yes, exactly. Although it is only 10 miles from the Parkes line to Cudal, the distance from Cargo and Barragin is so great that it would be utterly impossible for settlers there to use it. Borenore would be nearer for them.
125. You say it is only 10 miles between the surveyed route from Molong to Parkes and the route from Borenore to Forbes—that is at Cudal? It is about that distance, I think.
126. The lines run nearly parallel? Up to Cudal.
127. Do you not think that residents 5 miles on each side of a line are materially served by that line? I admit that, but a majority of the settlers are on the southern side of Cudal, while the people of Manildra would get shorter railway carriage and a better road.
128. The people of Toogong would not be materially affected by the construction of the proposed line? They would get no benefit at all from it.
129. Do you know what class of country it is about Cudal? Yes. It is not to be beaten as an agricultural country.
130. Is it much superior to the same class of country on the other line? There is more of it. It is true that at Manildra and Meranburn there are some good patches, but they are small. The country further on about Coate's Creek is like the Blue Mountain country.
131. Do you know the route from Borenore to Forbes? Every inch of it.
132. Is the whole of it good country? The line has to cross two spurs of the Canoblas; the land there is not good, but the line is within a mile of good land.
133. The whole of the traffic to Forbes goes through Cudal? Yes.
134. And the whole of the traffic to Parkes through Molong? Yes. I heard a gentleman to-day giving some evidence about the timber on the reserves. I was sawing timber for nearly twenty-five years. I put up the first saw-mill at Forbes. In 1870, I went to the country to which the witness referred to saw ironbark, but I could not find a sound stick in 20 acres—so much for the Dungeon.
135. Are you referring to the timber reserves to which the previous witness referred? Yes; the timber looks very nice to the eye, but wait till you get your axe in you will find it is rotten; you cannot find a sound stick for miles; some of it might do for splitting but not for sawing.
136. Is there any good timber on the line from Borenore to Forbes? There is good timber on the Lachlan, and there is good stringybark within a few miles of Orange.
137. Could the timber of which you speak as rotten timber be utilised for railway sleepers? It might do for splitting for post and rail fencing, but I do not know about sleepers.
138. Do you think you could find timber fit for sleepers? I do not know. It is possible, but not very likely.

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139. And on the other line is there timber fit for sleepers? Yes.
140. *Mr. Lee.*] Do you know the country between Molong and Parkes? Yes.
141. And from Parkes to Forbes? Yes.
142. Are you well acquainted with the whole traffic from Borenore to Forbes? Yes.
143. Do you know the country between Cowra and Forbes? No. But I know the country between Eugowra and Canowindra.
144. Is the country between Borenore and Forbes flat or undulating generally? Undulating.
145. Is it subject to flood? I have seen the country flooded, but it does not come up to the level of the railway line.
146. Does the river frequently overflow its banks? About once every ten or twelve years. I have seen no floods since 1870.
147. Have you seen a flood sufficient to stop the traffic through that country? Well; I have seen a flood sufficient to necessitate the mail being sent through on horseback instead of by coach.
148. Then team traffic would be stopped? For a time, but they could get round it if they liked.
149. Do the same circumstances apply to the route via Molong? I do not think so.
150. What is the chief route used by teamsters to get to the main line? Up to Borenore.
151. But I mean from the country to the west of Forbes? That traffic is divided. Most people below Forbes are Victorians, and the stuff they get from Melbourne comes through Cowra. From the time you leave Forbes till you reach Balranald you meet nothing but Victorian people.
152. I presume you are best acquainted with Cudal and that neighbourhood? Yes.
153. Is there much grain grown there? Yes.
154. About how many bushels of wheat were there last season? I have not seen any statistics, but I believe the total quantity grown was close upon 200,000 bushels.
155. Which market is that sent to? We have to cart it the best way we can to send down to Sydney.
156. I presume it finds its way into various markets? Yes; but the carting is a great drag upon the growers.
157. As a matter of fact however it finds its way to market? It does.
158. Supposing a line were made from Forbes to Cowra, is it possible that grain would be sent in that direction? From the extreme southern parts, but the quantity would be trifling. Another thing to be considered is the enormous quantity of hay and straw to be found further to the northward. In the country about Boree there are over 20,000 tons of straw allowed to rot annually.
159. Could that be sent to market and utilised if there were a railway? Yes. I suppose it is worth from 40s. to 60s. a ton.
160. What price obtainable in Sydney for straw would pay the residents of Cudal? Well, I do not know. In many instances I know they had to burn it to get it out of the road.
161. Is the wheat crop a regular crop in this district? Yes, on the average; last year was a total failure.
162. What was the failure owing to last year? Want of rain.
163. Is there any rust? A little, this year, very trifling.
164. As a rule is wheat rusted in this district? No.
165. Generally then, the wheat crop is a certain crop? Yes.
166. In anything like an average season? Yes. I suppose it would average somewhere about 17 bushels.
167. Are the settlers chiefly free selectors in your locality? Almost entirely.
168. What is the size of their holdings? It varies from 40 to 2,000 acres.
169. In your experience are these men gradually increasing their area under agriculture, or are the agricultural areas dying out and being replaced by stock? One or two men have given in.
170. What is the general tendency? The general tendency is to increase the area. If we had a railway it would be increased three-fold. At the present rate the carriage to Borenore is within 2s. of the trainage from Borenore to Sydney.
171. In your opinion, if the facilities for getting to market were greater more land would be brought under cultivation? There would.
- 171½. In your judgment, the best facility would be afforded by means of a railway? Yes, both sides would benefit from it.
172. Is any other grain besides wheat grown? Yes, oats and maize.
173. To any extent? Yes, there have been some good crops of maize.
174. Where does the district get its supply of maize? The district is self-supporting in maize.
175. Does Orange and the immediate district absorb what is grown in your district? Not all.
176. I suppose you will find a market at Goulburn for a portion? For some of it. There is a man now buying wheat for Young.
177. Where else do you send it? Sydney, some of it is sent north and some south.
178. Are there not markets for your grain between here and Sydney? Not sufficient to take it all.
179. If grain is shipped from here it must go to Sydney? The bulk of it.
180. That is after local requirements are supplied? Yes.
181. Do you own any land upon the railway you suggest? Well, I have some town allotments.
182. I mean, have you any large area on the Forbes line? No.
183. Are you a selector? No.
184. *Mr. Cox.*] The last witness said there were no leasehold areas in the district of Orange, in which district is Eugowra? That is in the Forbes district.
185. Of course, there are leasehold areas there? I think so.
186. And they will be thrown open for selection in the middle of the year? Yes, I suppose so.

James Torpy, Esq., M.P., sworn and examined:—

187. *Chairman.*] You are a representative of Orange in the Legislative Assembly? Yes.
188. And you reside here? Yes.
189. For how long have you been here? Twenty-five years.
190. *Mr. Dowel.*] You know the permanently staked route from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I know the road.
191. But do you know the way it is proposed to take the railway? Tolerably well—it is on the edge of the district.

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- J. Torpy,
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192. What is your opinion on that particular route—is it the most advantageous which could be made for the district? I am quite certain it is not.
193. What line do you consider should be constructed in the interests of the country generally? The Borenore and Cudal route, on the score of population, particularly.
194. On the route to which you refer, what centres of population would be served by the construction of the line? Cudal, Eugowra, Toogong, Cargo, and the country lying between Cudal and Canowindra.
195. Have you any personal knowledge of that country? Yes.
196. What is the character of it? It is equal to any agricultural land in Australia.
197. That is, the bulk of it is? Yes.
198. Is it settled upon extensively? Extensively.
199. With good permanent holdings? Very permanent—it is a deep chocolate soil, about 5 or 6 feet in depth, admirably suited for wheat, maize, and for wine growing.
200. Does the route you advocate pass through any large estates? I think it does at this end—that is between here and Cudal.
201. Are the holdings very large? Yes.
202. Do you think that if this railway were constructed the proprietors would be likely to have these estates cut up for sale or occupation? I think it is extremely probable that they would.
203. Do you know of your own knowledge whether there is any land upon the route you refer to available for settlement? It is nearly all selected, I think.
204. Are there not, within the leasehold areas, land, which might be available for settlement? I understand there are large reserves.
205. On the leasehold areas? Yes.
206. And if the Government were to throw them open to settlement, would it not induce population to come there? Certainly.
207. Can you give the Committee an idea of the population likely to be served by the line you propose within a radius of 10 miles? I have a fair knowledge of it. I know the population of Cudal is 300, of Cargo 280, of Eugowra 150 or 160.
208. Do I understand that is the number of holders of land? That is the number of residents in the towns I have named.
209. Including men, women, and children? Yes.
210. Do you know anything of the country beyond Forbes towards Wilcannia? Yes; but not far that way. I know the country between Forbes and Condobolin.
211. Is it practicable to carry a railway in that direction? It is almost a plain.
212. Do you think it will be practicable to carry a railway from Forbes to Wilcannia, and thence on to Broken Hill? I am sure that is the best route.
213. Would it go through a good class of country? Splendid country.
214. And it would be the means of supplying to another portion of the colony that which they do not produce themselves? Yes. In fact, the railway would travel almost parallel with the Lachlan River.
215. Is that river navigable? No.
216. Can you give the Committee any information as to the number of steam-threshing machines in the districts to which you have referred? No.
217. Do you know the number of flour-mills? Yes.
218. How many are there? I think only two. There is one at Cudal—a steam flour-mill—and another at Cargo.
219. Are there any sawmills? There is one sawmill.
220. Have you any knowledge of the timber on the route? Yes.
221. What is the character of it? Box and gum.
222. Do you know anything of the ironbark timber on the reserve already referred to? No; I do not.
223. I suppose that in your capacity as member, and during your long residence in the district, you have come into contact with a large number of residents? I have.
224. Can you inform the Committee what, generally, is the state of public opinion as to the advisableness of constructing this railway? I think there can be no doubt that the majority of the public are in favour of the Borenore and Cudal route.
225. And that it is strongly opposed to the construction of a line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? Yes. I think the passenger traffic between Orange and Forbes is as two to one, compared with that between Molong and Parkes.
226. Have there been any public meetings in the district, and any agitation by petition as to the construction of this railway? For many years.
227. Has the opinion expressed at these meetings been unanimous? I will not say that, but I think I might say almost unanimous.
228. Resolutions have been carried in favour of the line? Repeatedly. I think the Committee ought to understand this clearly, that the Molong district is an extensive one—it overlaps Cudal, and it extends away between Toogong and Cudal. The bulk of the fine country is south of the proposed line.
229. Are there any minerals on the proposed route, or within a radius of 10 or 15 miles? Cargo is a township which is the centre of a small gold-field, quartz and alluvial.
230. Now, coming back to the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, *via* Flagstone Creek—you know it is 71 miles? Yes; so I have been informed.
231. And that the cost of construction would be £433,000? That is what they state.
232. Do you think, in the interests of the public, that the line should be constructed at that cost? I distinctly say—no.
233. You do not think that it would pay interest on the capital expenditure and on the working expenses? I do not think it could for many years.
234. It is estimated that the annual cost would be £26,055—do you think revenue approaching that cost is likely to be obtained? I do not think so.
235. When the Commissioners estimate that the working expenses of the line would be covered by the traffic, do you think that is a correct statement? I do not think so by any means.
236. Then you have no hesitation in saying that the route now before the Committee is not one which should be recommended for adoption? I unhesitatingly say that the evidence is overwhelmingly on the side.

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- side of the other route on the score of amount of land cultivation, settlement, and population—the number of towns, and the passenger traffic demonstrate conclusively that the line should go *via* Borenore and Cudal to Forbes—I state that, after very careful inquiry. There is a large reserve at Cargo waiting to be thrown open—that, of itself, would cause a great deal of increased settlement.
237. Do you think it is desirable to construct a light line of railway from Forbes to Parkes? That is, I think, the right course to take. Parkes is the centre of a fine agricultural district. There is magnificent country around Parkes—it is splendid soil, and is largely settled upon by men from Victoria. The country between Forbes and Parkes is a regular bowling green. A pair of good horses will trot the distance in 2 hours.
238. Then your opinion is that the railway should be constructed *via* Cudal and Eugowra to Forbes? Yes; and that a light line should connect Parkes with Forbes.
239. Forbes would be the terminus of the main trunk line to Wilcannia and Broken Hill? Yes.
240. *Mr. Cox.*] There is a difference of some 16 miles in the length of the two lines? About 17 miles, I think.
241. Are you aware that although there is that difference in the distance, the cost of the Cudal line would be much greater? From my researches I understand less.
242. Are you aware that the highest grade on the present projected line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, is 1 in 70, and that there are some miles of line between Borenore and Cudal where there is a grade of 1 in 40? Yes.
243. Well, is not that objectionable? I think it is an objection.
244. So that, although that line might go through better country, there would be this great disadvantage in connection with it—that there would always be this steep grade, over which all the traffic of that grand country—the Lachlan valley—would be carried for all time? It is an objection; but the grade is only for a short distance.
245. Do you think it would be possible to remedy this steep grade? Well, it is, of course, a difficulty which cannot be put out of sight.
246. There is a fall from the range which you must negotiate in some way? There is; but although there is this disadvantage you mention in bringing the traffic over the steep grade, I think the increased number of passengers and the increased quantity of wool and produce would more than compensate for it.
247. You are aware of the character of the country all round here? I am.
248. I understand that it is fairly good country from Molong some few miles out? Yes.
249. You then get into indifferent country? Yes.
250. When you get to Flagstone Creek, it is indifferent country until you reach Parkes? Yes.
251. What kind of country is there on the other line—is it all good country? No; a small portion of it is very hilly, but not much.
252. There are a number of stations about Eugowra? Yes.
253. And in the middle of the year all those leasehold areas will be thrown open to selection? Several of them will, I understand.
254. We heard that some would be thrown open in the Molong district, and that they would be influenced by the railway to Parkes? Our argument is, that we have a larger population in our district; that we have a bigger area of valuable country; and that the Meranburn people would be within 10 or 11 miles of the route I advocate.
255. You think that the Borenore line would accommodate more people? That can be proved beyond possibility of doubt.
256. And you think it would fairly serve the people to the north as well as to the south? Yes.
257. You think it would fairly divide the district? Yes. Except that the bulk of the superior land would be on the southern side.
258. Supposing the line were taken to the north? Then it would be on the northern edge of the good country.
259. I presume there is a good rainfall about Cudal? A fair rainfall.
260. Potatoes, I presume, would grow there? Yes; but they are not a certain crop. The wheat grown there is of a superior character, and commands rather a higher price than any other wheat in this district.
261. *Mr. Lee.*] The agitation in reference to this Borenore line, I presume, is confined chiefly to the Orange people and the people residing about Borenore and Cudal? Yes, and the people of Forbes.
262. And they have been almost unanimous? Almost unanimous.
263. Do the Parkes and Molong people hold with you in regard to the route? No; they are strongly opposed to it.
264. Is the object of this proposed extension *via* Borenore and Cudal to serve the Forbes people, chiefly? The object is to serve the people living to the south of Cudal and the Forbes people as well, of course.
265. Is not Forbes an important centre? Yes.
266. A more important centre than Cudal or any place along the line of route? Yes.
267. And important in so far as it is the largest town in that direction out west? Yes.
268. Consequently, it would offer a fair market for produce grown in the district? A fair market.
269. Consequently, the claims of Forbes would be greater than those of places along the route? I think so.
270. If that is the case, should not the population be served by a line from Cowra, thence to Eugowra, Forbes, and Parkes? That would pass through a district with scarcely any population—at least, with a very small population.
271. Is there much population between Cowra and Eugowra? Straight across there would be, I suppose.
272. What is the population between Eugowra and Forbes? I could not say. It is on the score of settlement and population that we lean to the route I have named.
273. *Chairman.*] You mentioned that the people of Cargo would be greatly assisted by the construction of a line from Borenore? Yes.
274. Would they not be equally served by a line from Cowra through Canowindra? No; they would be further from that line—the distance is much greater; nearly double, I think.

Mr.

Mr. Edward Nathan, manager for Messrs. Cobb & Co., sworn and examined:—

- Mr. E. Nathan.
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275. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am manager for Cobb & Co.
276. How long have you been at Orange? Orange has been my home since 1868. I came to Orange first in 1861.
277. How long have you held your present position? Seventeen years on the 8th of next month.
278. During that time you have had the entire management of traffic under Cobb & Co.? No; only within the last eight or nine years.
279. Previous to that, however, you were connected with the firm? Yes; I did the office work.
280. What is your experience of the traffic between Borenore and Forbes, and Molong and Parkes at the present time? From July, 1888, to June, 1889, we carried on the Orange to Forbes line, 2,480 passengers—there we were running opposition against the mail. The mail coach carried a lot of passengers; we will allow that we carried 75 per cent. of the traffic; that will give the mail coach 600 passengers, making a total of over 3,000 passengers from Orange to Forbes. In the same time we carried, on the Molong and Parkes line, a little over 1,100 passengers.
281. You had no opposition on that line? No; we had the whole of the traffic to ourselves.
282. Have you found the traffic decreasing between Orange and Forbes? No.
283. Is it quite up to what it was a few years ago? It is more now.
284. Do you find an increase in the Parkes route? Yes. The increase on the Parkes route is caused by a new rush on the other side of Parkes, to the north. It is the nearest route to Alectown. I have seen coaches go loaded with diggers only.
285. Do you know the road on both routes—that is between Molong and Parkes, and Orange and Forbes? Intimately.
286. What is the position of the two routes in regard to townships and population? Let us commence with the Molong route—the first township is Meranburn—it consists of one small public-house, one blacksmith's shop, two small stores, and what they call a farmer's hall; then there is Cobb & Co.'s stables, and that is the township. The next place is called Bumberry; it is called a postal town; it is a receiving office. It consists of one public-house only, and Cobb & Co.'s stables. There is a little hut beside it.
287. Between that point and Parkes is there any other township? There is a place called Job's, 9 miles from Bumberry. There used to be a public-house there. Then there is Bindogundra, about 6 miles from Job's
288. What townships are there on the Borenore and Forbes line? The first township is Cheeseman's Creek, then there is Cudal, a largely populated place, with churches, schools, telegraph office, and post office.
289. What is the next place? Toogong. There are public-houses, one called the "Royal Hotel," a couple of stores, a hay and corn store, a public school, and a blacksmith's shop.
290. Then as to Murga? That is a postal town, consisting of one public-house.
291. And Eugowra? There are three public-houses, one large store, and several other stores, a blacksmith's shop, and a wheelwright's place, a public school, a convent, and several other places of the kind.
292. Are there any other places between here and Forbes? No.
293. You have no hesitation in saying which line should be constructed? Not the least.
294. The Forbes line, you think? Certainly.
295. Do you know Cowra? Yes.
296. Do you know the country between Cowra and Eugowra, *via* Canowindra? I do.
297. Is it a fairly populated country? There is no comparison between it and the route I have just given you.
298. Would the population there compare favourably with the population on the route from Molong to Parkes? No.
299. It is not equal to that, you think? No; I speak from experience. I have taken the particulars from the passenger traffic on the line.
300. Is there a road through Canowindra? Yes.
301. Do you know the traffic? I have an idea of it. There is a coach from Cowra to Forbes, but the passenger traffic on the Parkes line is infinitely superior to the traffic carried there.
302. How long is it since you have taken notice of the traffic? This last year or two.
303. Has it been since the railway was constructed to Cowra? Yes; because we had not the coach running until then. There is a two-horse coach on the Cowra line.
304. Does that run daily? Three times a week.
305. And on the other lines? They run every day, except Monday.
306. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know anything of the country from Forbes to Wilcannia? As far as Condobolin.
307. What is the character of it? It will grow anything on earth, if it has rain.
308. Do you think it desirable that if the line were taken to Forbes it should be extended? I do.
309. The country is sufficiently good to offer every inducement for the construction of the line? Yes.
310. Do you think the line should be constructed from Wilcannia to Broken Hill? I think that would be the best paying route.
311. The line we have under consideration—from Molong to Parkes and Forbes—have you been over the route? Hundreds of times.
312. You know the permanently staked-out line pretty well? Yes.
313. You also have a large acquaintance with the country between Cudal and Eugowra? Yes.
314. Knowing both parts of the country, what opinion have you formed as to the route which should be adopted? I say the Borenore to Forbes route, because the settlement is near and the traffic is on the spot.
315. The traffic that way is larger? It is 3 to 1 as compared with the other way. I can give you some idea of the traffic on the other line from the receipts of our agent at Parkes in connection with the traffic from Parkes to Molong. The months given are in the year 1889:—January, £53 9s.; February, £36 11s.; March, £50 17s. 6d.; April, £63 8s.; May, £42 7s. 6d.; June, £34 3s. 6d.; July, £37 15s. 6d.; August, £49 7s. 3d.; September, £65 1s. 6d.; October, £61 10s. Total, £494 10s. 9d.
316. You think the country on the Forbes line is more settled? Yes.
317. And that that is better country? No, I will not say better. There is land on the Molong to Parkes route as good as any land on the other route.

318. What kind of country is there between here and Manildra? Splendid country.
319. Nearer to water? There is a permanent creek at Manildra. I have never seen it dry.
320. If you were to have regard to the traffic and to settlement, however, you would take the line via Cudal? Well, I would take shares in one line, and I certainly would not take any in the other. I have heard a great deal said about the floods on the Lachlan. Some years ago the flood-waters came over the banks of the river, and they made a metal road about 12 inches high—that is supposed by the Roads Department to be above the highest flood-mark.
321. How do you know that? From the Department. It was built expressly to be above high water-mark; they say it is above the flood-mark.
322. Who says so? The Road Superintendent.
323. Have you not seen roads made with floods running over them afterwards? Yes, but this road is supposed to be above the highest flood which ever occurred on the Lachlan. It was intended to be so built, I believe.
324. Is there any other information you would like to give the Committee? Well, as regards the goods traffic, I obtained from the Borenore station information which shows that from January 1st to December 31st, 1889, 570 tons of goods arrived for Borenore, 500 for Cudal, 17 for Toogong, 25 for Murga, 130 for Eugowra, 1,180 for Forbes, 90 for Burrawang, 34 for Borambil, 380 for Condobolin, and 26 for Mr. Hope, making a total of 2,952 tons. The wool received from 1st September, 1889, to December 31st, 1889, amounted to 8,989 bales. The outward goods for the year 1889 amounted to 4,294 tons. The coaching came to £855 12s. 10d., and the passengers to £530.
325. Do you know the road from Forbes to Parkes? Yes.
326. Does it go through good country? Yes.
327. Are there any engineering difficulties? No. The land is as level as this floor.
328. A railway could be constructed at a cheap rate? Yes, I should think so. It is a 10-miles-an-hour road.
329. Do you think a light line of railway between Forbes and Parkes would answer all requirements? Yes; they are only running two passenger-coaches three times a week. We are running four-horse teams on the Molong-Parkes road, using 24 horses in all, and 44 horses on the Orange and Forbes road.

Mr. William Moulder, auctioneer and commission agent, sworn and examined:—

330. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am an auctioneer and commission agent.
331. Residing where? At Orange.
332. For how long? I was born here—that is thirty-seven years ago.
333. You have a good knowledge of the country and the district through which the railway will pass? Yes, I have.
334. *Mr. Lee.*] You have heard the evidence given as to this line? Yes.
335. What is the nature of the evidence you wish to give respecting it? Touching the country on both lines and the traffic.
336. You have lived here for many years, you know the development of the inside and outside districts, as well as the outlet of the traffic—will you give the Committee some proof of the progress of the district? I have not seen the line from Molong to Parkes since the survey was made, but I know the road well enough. The country from Molong to Meranburn is good wheat-producing country—in fact, it is good for any purpose; but from Meranburn to near Parkes the country is not so good. It is some years since I was along that way, and it was then thinly populated. The country round Parkes is good. With the exception of a little bit of mountainous country, the country on the Borenore and Cudal line is very good. In most cases, however, the mountains are on one side and the good country on the other side of the Eugowra Creek—there are long valleys running up, and the land is all good. On the road from Forbes to Eugowra all the land on the southern side in towards the Lachlan for a distance of 8 miles is good. On the eastern side of the Eugowra Creek there is also good country. I think some of the best land in the colony is to be found in that district. The land all about Cudal is very good—in fact, from Cudal to Cargo it is thickly populated with farmers. I understand the line goes through private holdings to the extent of about 7 miles. I have lived on the Lachlan, and all the way along, as far as I have been, it is good country. I have obtained some particulars from an official source with regard to the traffic.
337. To what traffic do you refer? I find that the trainage paid for merchandise *en route* from Sydney to Forbes and Parkes districts during 1885 was considerable. I will show the amounts derived from each route separately. The trainage paid to Forbes via Cudal in 1885 was £7,424 9s. 5d; whereas the trainage paid via Parkes and Molong was £1,878 13s. 3d. Quantities of wool, flour, and copper were received for conveyance by rail to Sydney. The quantity received *via* Forbes and Cudal was 11,000 bales of wool, 52,788 ingots of copper, and 300 tons of flour, hides, &c. There was received *via* Parkes and Molong 3,000 bales of wool, no copper, and 50 tons of flour, hides, &c.
338. Do you know the surveyed routes between Borenore and Forbes? Yes.
339. But not the survey between Molong and Parkes? No.
340. Take the line from Molong to Parkes first—what is the nature of the agricultural settlement along that line? From Molong to Meranburn the country is well settled.
341. And at any other point between there and Parkes? Not until you come right up to Parkes,
342. And between Parkes and Forbes? I was 15 miles along the line three or four months ago, and there were then a few settlements.
343. Now as to the agricultural settlement on the line from Borenore to Forbes? There are settlements from the moment you leave Borenore station till you get to Mrs. Keenan's boundary.
344. Where is that? At Keenan's bridge, about 14 miles from Orange. For about 2 miles after you leave Borenore the land is settled with farmers, then there is grazing property till you get 6 miles from the railway, where there is a public-house and a Chinaman's garden and farms; then a mile and a half further on there are farms along the bank of the creek, and a public-house and post-office. Then you fall in with Mr. Smith's property, which continues for about 4 miles, then on either side of the road there are farms; on the right-hand side they go down to Mandagery Creek.
345. That is on the north side? Yes. Then on the south side the farms continue through to Davy's Plains; then there is a small break of a few thousand acres; thence on to Cudal it is all populated country. There are farms all down the Mandagery Creek on the north side of the line, and they continue right on to Eugowra.

Mr. E.
Nathan.
22 Feb., 1890.

Mr. W.
Moulder.
22 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. W. Moulder.
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346. And between Eugowra and Forbes? There is not much settlement along the road—it is a new road. The old road went round by the Lachlan. There are farms for about 4 miles.
347. I suppose some of these farms have been established for some years? Yes.
348. What do they produce? Wheat, hay, corn, and fruit.
349. More than sufficient for their own consumption? Yes.
350. What do they do with the balance? Send it to the nearest market.
351. Where is that? The nearest point would be Borenore.
352. Where is the market? Orange or Sydney.
353. Is Orange an available market for produce grown there? I think it is.
354. Are there any flour-mills in the town? Three.
355. They would absorb some of the produce? Yes. There is a flour-mill at Cudal that would take a lot of wheat.
356. What I chiefly want to ascertain from you is this: All the evidence so far goes to prove that there is a surplus of produce in the district; the Committee want to know where the market for that produce is? It must be Sydney; that would be the market for all surplus.
357. Is it a market at the present time? It is.
358. Are there any intercepting markets on the line? There are some markets along the line, but I do not think much wheat goes there. Bathurst is a market which grows wheat for itself, and some to spare too.
359. Have the farmers on this proposed line to Borenore any difficulty in getting their produce to a railway-station? They have the ordinary carriage by teams. Of course they would have to pay a certain rate for it, but there would be no difficulty.
360. What is the state of the roads? The greater part of them are in good order.
361. Macadamised? Yes.
362. Have you any idea of the rate of carriage from Toogong to Borenore? No.
363. You do not know the rate per bushel? No; it varies very much. It is much cheaper in some seasons than in others.
364. In bad weather more—in good weather less? It is always more in winter.
365. During your long residence here, have you known wheat and other produce to spoil on account of the farmers not bringing it to market? Not on account of their getting it to market.
366. What I mean is, the state of the roads being such that they could not haul their produce to the nearest railway-station for a market? Well, we have had so many dry seasons lately that we have not had enough rain to make bad roads.
367. You hold, I suppose, that railway extension creates settlement? I think it does.
368. Have you noticed that settlement has increased along the line from Orange to Molong? Well, a great deal of that land is held by Keenans and the Hon. John Smith.
369. Has settlement increased in consequence of the line? Well, the land is held by two individuals.
370. Have they subdivided their land to put it into market? Not that I am aware of.
371. So far as you know, they hold their lands intact? Yes.
372. The construction of the line, so far as the public are concerned, has not assisted the settlement of the country. No.
373. Do you happen to know if it is the intention of these landowners to open up their land? No.
374. To what purpose do they put it? Grazing.
375. Do they cultivate? Not to any extent.
376. I believe there are similar estates on the line from Borenore to Forbes? Yes.
377. And what has happened in one case may happen in the other? Yes. But then there are also estates upon the line from Molong to Parkes.
378. *Mr. Dowel.*] What is the distance between Orange and Molong? About 22 miles by road, and by rail I think about the same distance.
379. You think a considerable amount of surplus produce will be sent to Sydney? Yes.
380. Can you inform the Committee how many acres of first-class agricultural land will be served by the construction of the railway from Orange to Forbes? No.
381. Do you know anything of a petition sent down to Mr. Secretary Lackey in 1879, setting forth these particulars? No, I do not.
382. Is there a large quantity of agricultural land on the line you have been referring to? A great deal of it is splendid agricultural land.
383. Do you think there would be 20,000,000 acres? I could not form an idea.
384. Have you any knowledge of the number of stock in that particular district? Not the number.
385. Do you think there are 5,000,000 sheep in it? No, I do not.
386. If the petition said that 20,000,000 acres of agricultural land would be served by the construction of the railway from Orange to Forbes, and that there were 5,000,000 sheep upon it, is that statement likely to be correct? I think it is over-estimated, but I have no knowledge of it.
387. Considering that the cost of the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes would be £433,000, and that working expenses and interest would amount to £26,000 a year, do you think the Committee would be justified in recommending the work to Parliament? No, I do not.
388. Do you think it more probable that the other line would pay that sum? Yes. I do not think any line would pay better than the line from Borenore to Forbes.
389. From your long residence in and knowledge of the district, do you think it is fairly progressive? Yes.
390. And is settlement continually going on between Orange and Forbes? Yes. I did not go to Forbes for several years. When I went I stopped there ten days, and I moved round the district. I never saw such an improvement in any town in the same time. The district generally had improved greatly.
391. There was good, sound, substantial settlement? Yes.
392. Do you know the country between Forbes and Wilcannia? As far as Nymagee.
393. Have you been to Wilcannia? No.
394. How far on this side of it? I do not know the distance.
395. So far as you know the country, is it capable of maintaining and supporting a line forming portion of the trunk line to Broken Hill? I think it is. The line would run through magnificent country, so far as I know it.
396. Do you know the Lachlan River? Yes.
397. Could it supply a fair quantity of water for irrigation in the district? Yes. The irrigation is carried on

on very largely by Mr. Edols, of Burrawang, and Mr. Gatenby of Towyal; Messrs. Reymond & Nichols of Forbes also irrigate. There are several small plants around Forbes for orchards and small plots. It is a very good river for the conservation of water—there are many lagoons along its banks, which hold a large quantity.

Mr. W.
Moulder.

22 Feb., 1890.

398. Have the irrigation plants to which you refer been a success? When I went down the Lachlan they told me they were. The crops I saw at Gatenby's certainly looked well.

399. You think the construction of a line from Orange and Forbes, *via* the townships you describe, would serve the largest number of people? Yes.

400. And that it would also act as a feeder to the main trunk line? Yes.

Mr. Augustus Coulson, auctioneer, sworn and examined:—

401. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am an auctioneer.

402. At Orange? Yes.

403. How long have you been here? Over thirty-five years.

404. You have been nearly all that time in business? Yes; over thirty years in business.

405. Has the nature of your business placed you in communication with the districts affected by the several routes of this railway? Yes; I have travelled through them a good deal.

406. You know the country well on both routes? I know it better on the Cudal route, because I have been doing more business there. I have been on both routes.

407. Will you give us, in your own language, your idea of the relative merits of the two routes? I think that if you have regard not only to the country, but to the benefit of the largest number of the people, there is no comparison between the two lines. I suppose there is no better agricultural district in the colony than the Cudal district, and it is very largely populated. I know it because I have travelled right along the Lachlan nearly as far as Forbes, round by Canowindra and these places.

408. What class of country is it south of Cudal, in the direction of Canowindra? It is all good useful country, and it is all populated.

409. Is it all held in large estates? Principally in small areas.

410. Who are the holders of the largest estates through which either of these lines will run? Well, there is Mr. Lance Smith and Mr. Bowman.

411. What proportion of Mr. Lance Smith's property does the Borenore line pass through? I do not know what portion the line would take in. His place is Boree-Cabonne.

412. Does his station run as far as Boree-Nyrang? I am not sure whether his property joins it or not. There is a creek just on the north of Boree, I do not know whether that divides the properties.

413. Does Boree-Nyrang belong to his father? Yes; but the railway line does not go near it.

414. Does Mr. Lance Smith's property reach as far as Cudal? No.

415. How far from Cudal? I think about 4 miles. His father's property reaches near Cudal, but the principal portion of it would still be to the north.

416. Is that the largest estate on the Borenore line, or are there any other large estates there? There is one at Toogong. I do not know which would be the largest, Toogong or Boree. Toogong belongs to Mr. Bowman, Mr. Jago Smith sold it to him a short time ago.

417. Then from Boree-Nyrang, or the point of the railway nearest to that place, right away to Toogong, the land is in the hands of two large estate holders—the line runs through that land for the whole of that distance? Yes.

418. With the exception of a little private land at Cudal? Yes.

419. Now let us come to the Molong and Parkes route—what large estates does that run through? I think the only one is that of the M'Callum Brothers. I do not think it runs through much of Mr. John Smith's.

420. Where is the M'Callum Brothers holding? About 10 miles from Molong.

421. And where does the estate terminate? I do not know.

422. According to your evidence, there is no doubt that of the two lines the line from Borenore to Forbes would pass through the larger number of large estates? I do not know how many large estates there are near Parkes.

423. Do you know the country from Toogong to Eugowra? Yes.

424. Is it in large estates or small holdings? Small holdings.

425. And from Eugowra to Forbes—is it in large estates? No I think not. I do not know, however, that the line does not go through Goimbla.

426. From your knowledge of this country do you think that if the Borenore line were constructed it would tend to a very much larger settlement? I do.

427. In what way could it do that if it passed almost entirely through large estates? It is not nearly all in large estates. Round the Cudal district the land is all in small holdings.

428. But from Borenore to Toogong, with the exception of a few small holdings at Cudal, there are two large estates? There is a large population of small holders at Cudal.

429. I suppose there is no doubt that Cudal is a larger and more important town than any town between Orange and Parkes or Forbes? Yes, excepting Molong.

430. What is the nature of the country at Eugowra? Very good, it is in small holdings.

431. Would it be fit for agriculture? Yes, I saw that by the stripper the other day they got 40 bushels of wheat to the acre.

432. Do you think that if the railway were taken to Eugowra it would tend to increase the area there under agriculture? Yes, I have no doubt about it.

433. Do you know Bumberry, on the other route? Yes.

434. Is it country similar to the country at Eugowra? Yes, good useful country, but I do not think the soil is as good.

435. Is it held in large or small areas? Small areas.

436. If a railway were constructed there the area under cultivation would be increased? Yes, I daresay it would.

437. And how many miles on either side of a railway would the farmers or agriculturists be served by its construction? I could not tell you; I should say from 15 to 20 miles.

438. Do you know the country north of Molong, along the Parkes line—Dilga, Gumble, and Bell for instance? I know the Dilga property, that is very inferior.

Mr.
A. Coulson.

22 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. A. Coulson. 439. *Mr. Dowel.*] What are the chief products that would be carried on the proposed line from Borenore to Forbes? Well, a great quantity of stock and produce of various kinds.
440. Wheat, oats, and hay, I suppose? Yes; and there is a splendid corn-growing district at Cudal.
- 22 Feb., 1890. 441. There will be considerable traffic in wool? Yes; there are a tremendous lot of small holders of sheep there.
442. Stock of all descriptions? Yes.
443. Is there any wine-growing in the district? There is a splendid vineyard just off Cudal, at the Big Flat. A German has it, and has made it a big success. There is a small vineyard of $1\frac{1}{2}$ acre. I was talking to the man about it, and he said he had made more off it than off all his agricultural land. He said the season was not very good, and that he had made £150 off $1\frac{1}{2}$ acre of grapes.
444. You think the soil and climate are admirably adapted to wine-growing? I do not think there is better land in Australia for wine-growing than the land in the Cudal district. Now I come to think of it, I should like to amend my evidence with regard to the land between Boree-Cabonne and Toogong. I think I stated that, with the exception of some settlement at Cudal, the whole of the land on the railway in that direction was in the hands of two large estate holders. On reflection, I can remember that a great deal of the land is largely populated with farmers.
445. Are there farms on these large estates then? I suppose it is land selected out of the estates. There is one of 2,000 or 3,000 acres belonging to the Irving Brothers.
446. From what you say, the whole of the land from Orange to Forbes, is suitable to agricultural pursuits? Yes.
447. I suppose you would have a good knowledge of the other route also? Yes; I have travelled upon it a great deal, but not so much as upon the southern route.
448. Can you inform the Committee what is the comparative value of land on both routes—what, for instance, would be the difference in the price of an improved farm, supposing you had one, to submit to auction? The land in the Cudal district is more valuable and fetches more money, I believe, than land in the Molong district.
449. How much per acre do farms sell at in the Cudal district? I have known selections and improved farms sold for £4 per acre—it would be equal to £4 15s.—there would be 15s. owing to the Government.
450. Do you know the value of unimproved land in the Cudal district? I know land there worth £5 or £6 an acre—it is black soil.
451. Most of the holdings on the Cudal route are small, are they not? Yes. I think that from 2,000 to 3,000 acres would be about the largest holding.
452. I suppose some of these large holdings you have referred to are between Cudal and Forbes? Yes.
453. Having a large and extensive knowledge of this district for many years—what is your opinion in reference to the merits of the two routes? I think the Cudal route is superior.
454. In every respect? Yes.
455. Both as regards the population and the soil, the character of the soil itself, and the probable revenue from the railway? Yes. I do not think there is any comparison between the two lines.
456. Do you know anything of the country down the Lachlan to Wilcannia? No; but I have been as far as Condobolin.
457. You know the country between Forbes and Parkes? Yes.
458. What is its character? It is good, useful country.
459. Is it settled upon to any large extent? Yes.
460. Chiefly agriculturists? Yes. The only drawback is want of water.
461. Is there any dairying in the locality? Not that I know of.
462. Nor is there in the Cudal district? Not to any extent.
463. What are the principal products grown on the land between Borenore and Forbes? Wheat and oats.
464. First, as to wheat—Can you give the Committee any idea as to the average crop of wheat obtained from that country? I cannot; but the greatest crop I ever saw was in the Cudal district.
465. Have you any idea as to how many bushels to the acre the crops go? Some 50, some 30, some 25 bushels.
466. Do you think 20 bushels to the acre would be a fair average? I think so.
467. Of course you are aware that that is a higher average than is obtained in other parts of the colony? I think there is an average of over 20 bushels this year.
468. Then it is good wheat-growing country? Yes. The wheat is superior to our Orange wheat; I think the millers give more money for it.
469. What is the price now? Three shillings a bushel.
470. Is there much hay or oats grown? Yes; they grow a great quantity of hay.
471. What do the farmers do in the produce line? Well, I know they have to let a lot of straw go to waste through being unable to get it to the railway. In one year they burnt hundreds of tons. There is of course plenty of consumption for it, if it can be got to the railway.
472. What other produce do you think they could reckon upon to give revenue to the railway? Well, there is the stock.
473. Would there be much stock? Yes. There is a lot of live stock traffic in these parts.
474. Would there be much wool? Yes; they would grow a good deal of wool.
475. Do you think the railway would be the means of drawing wool from outlying districts which now send it elsewhere? Yes; I do.
476. Then you think that the permanently staked-out route *via* Cudal is the best that could be constructed in the interests of all parties? I do.
477. Supposing the line were constructed, would it not to a large extent serve a number of persons settled to the south of the proposed Molong and Parkes line? It might.
478. Would it not serve the people at Manildra? Yes.
479. And at Dulladerry? Yes.
480. All these people to a certain extent would be served by your proposed line? Yes.
481. Have you heard of any strongly expressed opinions among the public generally in favour of this line? Yes, I have. I was speaking to a stranger, Mr. Cassidy, just now, and he said he did not think there could be two questions about the line.
482. He knows the country? Yes, the Chairman of the Committee knows him very well.
483. Knowing the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, knowing that it would cost £433,000, do you think it likely that sufficient revenue would be obtained to pay working expenses and interest? I do not think so, at present.

484. Or for some considerable time? No; but I think that if a line were started *via* Cudal, there would soon be a tremendous population in that district. It is very largely populated now.
485. The district is a progressive one? Undoubtedly.
486. You see no probability of its retrogressing? Not the slightest.
487. You think that a line of railway, if constructed, would offer larger inducements to agriculturalists than to pastoralists? Yes, but I may say that a small property of 1,500 acres sold for £3 10s. per acre; it was principally grazing land, and it was near Cudal.
488. *Chairman.*] Is there land available for an increased agricultural population, if the line you speak of were constructed? That I cannot say, unless the owners subdivided or sold portions of their holdings. There is nearly a continuation of farms right on to Cargo.
489. Then unless these large landholders subdivide their holdings, there can be no fresh settlement? I am not aware of any land now available, but if there is any land for sale it will be snapped up very quickly as soon as people discover that a railway is going that way.

Mr.
A. Coulson.
22 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Patrick Kenna, hotelkeeper, sworn and examined:—

490. *Chairman.*] You reside at Orange? Yes.
491. What are you? An hotelkeeper.
492. How long have you been in the district? I have been a resident for thirty-three years.
493. You have a thorough knowledge of it? I have.
494. *Mr. Cox.*] You are aware that there has been for many years a desire to have a railway connecting this portion of the country with the Lachlan Valley? I am aware of that.
495. What is the reason you have been unable to obtain the railway? Well, there has been a deal of rivalry. It was decided by Parliament, some seven or eight years ago, that a railway should be taken to Forbes. There were only nineteen against it. Mr. W. H. Suttor moved an amendment for a trial survey from Cowra, and the work was thus shelved; but for that, we should have had a railway to Forbes to-day.
496. Now there is a third rival route? Yes, from Molong to Parkes.
497. So that this very thickly populated and fine agricultural country has been suffering an injustice from the want of unanimity among the people in the surrounding districts? Yes, the railway was carried by a large majority in the Lower House, but it was shelved in the Upper House, through an amendment moved by Mr. W. H. Suttor.
498. What was his objection to the Forbes railway from Borenore? I do not know that I can remember it now.
499. Did he not contend that the line from Borenore was an expensive one to construct, whereas the one from Cowra was an inexpensive one? Yes, I think it was, but the line from Cowra to Forbes was, and still is, thinly populated. It is nearly all squatting country.
500. And it would not have served a large number of farmers in the country round about Borenore? Well, if they made that line they would have to make another line to Eugowra.
501. What is your objection to the line proposed by the Government *via* Molong? I think in the interests of the country it ought not to be made, because it is not as good a paying line as the other line.
502. Why? I cannot tell you very much about the land from Molong to Parkes, but I know that the population is not nearly so great as it is on the other route.
503. Is not the fact that the country is thickly populated proof that it is better country? There is no doubt about that. The most people will settle where the best land is.
504. Which would develop the country most, a line *via* Cudal or a line *via* Molong and Parkes? Well, four or five places would be benefited to the south of Cudal if you took the line to Borenore. There would be Big Flat, Cargo, Canowindra, Davy's Plains, Barragin. It is all good agricultural land at those places, and they all lie to the south of the proposed line from Borenore. If a railway were taken from Molong to Parkes those places would not participate in its benefits—they would be too far away. They would have to go either to Borenore or to Cowra.
505. Suppose the line were carried from Borenore *via* Cudal—would not all the people to the north be left out in the cold? No. Most of the people on the north side, as far as I can hear from the information I have, until you get within 25 miles of Parkes, would be benefited by a line going *via* Cudal—they would only have to come some 9, 10, 12 miles to meet the Cudal line. They would participate for a certain distance, as much as the people in the south, in the benefits of the line.
506. Have you any interest in the country on the Cudal line? No.
507. You are speaking in the interests of the country generally? Yes.
508. Which is the shorter line—that *via* Cudal or that *via* Molong? Well, if you take into consideration the line from Molong to Parkes there would be 20 miles made, there would also be 10 miles made of the Forbes line up to Borenore. When completed, however, the Molong line, although shorter in construction, would be 17 miles longer from Sydney than the other line.
509. Consequently, all the residents of the Lachlan Valley for many miles down would have to pay some 17 miles of carriage more by way of Molong than by way of Borenore? Yes.
510. You think that ought to be taken into consideration in the construction of a railway? Yes; because it will be a charge for all time.
511. Is there any really poor country on the Cudal line? Well, there are some ranges which come into the creek about Giombla, Long's Corner, and the Eugowra Creek.
512. Is the country there well timbered? Yes; there is good box and ironbark. I know of two men who have taken up a selection at Pretty Plains, the fencing stuff is bad there, and I have seen them bringing down beautiful ironbark from near Toogong, as good as any you would get near the Nepean.
513. Do you know the country between Eugowra and Forbes? I know it all, it is a level, flat country. At present, however, it is only a sheep run. I believe some selectors have taken up 3,000 or 4,000 acres, combining farming and squatting.
514. What do they do with their produce? There is a mill at Forbes which turns out a large quantity of flour. They send their wheat there.
515. Is that a better market for them than the Sydney market? Yes, the carriage kills them sending to Sydney.
516. If a railway passed through this country then, they would not take advantage of it except to send their produce to Forbes? That would depend upon the price. If the price were higher in Sydney they would send it there.

Mr.
P. Kenna.
22 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. P. Kenna.
22 Feb., 1890.
517. Are you aware whether there are any leascholds likely to be thrown open on the line between Toogong and Forbes? There are large reserves about Cargo. I know people have been waiting for the last two or three years for them to be thrown open to selection.
518. You spoke a little while ago of the fine country about Canowindra, but the people there would not be benefited by either of these two routes, because they would be nearer Cowra? From Canowindra to Cowra the distance is 22 miles, but from Canowindra to where this line would go there would be a distance of only 12 miles. There would be a difference of 8 or 10 miles between the two places.
519. Where are the engineering difficulties in the making of a railway *via* Cudal? There are only 6 miles which are bad.
520. Where do they start? From the other side of Borenore down to Keenan's bridge.
521. The grades would necessarily be somewhat heavy there? Yes.
522. When you once get down to Boree-Cabonne you are in level country? Yes.
523. There are no difficulties between that and Forbes? There are some ridges coming into the creek, and there might be a little cutting at places, but there would not be any long cutting.
524. When you once get down to the flats on the Lachlan, is there no danger from floods? I think they made two surveys there some years ago. After making the first survey they found that the flood would come up above it, then they took a circuit, and went round outside flood marks, to a certain extent. I do not think the flood will interfere with the last route chosen.
525. Is not the town of Forbes subject to flood? Some parts of it.
526. There are two or three large estates on this line, Boree-Cabonne and Toogong for instance—they are at present merely sheep walks? There are sheep and cattle there.
527. But it is, nevertheless, distinctly good agricultural land? I do not think you would find finer agricultural land in the colony, not even in the valley of the Hunter than you would find at Cudal. It is splendid wheat growing land in a fair season.
528. Of course if that country were taken up by agriculturalists the probability is that the proprietors would be only too glad to allow human beings to live on it instead of sheep and cattle? It will come to that in time, when the old people are dead and the estates are cut up.
529. Speaking as a citizen, you say distinctly that the line *via* Cudal will serve the greater number of people, and would be more conducive to the welfare of the community than that *via* Molong and Forbes? Well, if the two lines were in the hands of companies, and I were asked to take shares, I should much prefer taking shares in the Cudal line than in the other.

Mr. Frederick Richardson, Railway Station-master, Orange, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. F. Richardson.
22 Feb., 1890.
530. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am Station-master at Orange.
531. How long have you been in that position? Nine years.
532. Can you give us any idea of the goods traffic from your station to Forbes and Parkes? I suppose you mean before the Molong line was open. If so, the figures Mr. Moulder gave you are those which I should give; mine would only be a repetition of his.
533. Did you hear Mr. Moulder's evidence? Yes.
534. And you confirm the statements he made? I do.
535. Since the railway has been opened has the amount of traffic to Forbes increased or decreased? I could not give you reliable information, for this reason, that a large proportion of the traffic has gone Cowra-way. The traffic at Borenore this year is greater than it was last.
536. Has not the Cowra traffic made a decrease in your traffic, so far as Forbes is concerned? Well, we do not see the Forbes' traffic, it never touches Orange, it only runs through. The records as to actual traffic are those Mr. Nathan gave you.
537. Have you noticed a great falling off in the goods traffic at your station since the railway to Borenore was opened? Undoubtedly.
538. You lose the whole of the Forbes traffic? We lose Forbes and Parkes as well; it is equivalent to £10,000 or £11,000 a year, probably a little more, but it would depend upon the season.
539. Could you give us any idea of the amount of traffic which comes through from Borenore? I could supply you with a statement of the number of trucks passing through, but I should have to go through my books to compile the statement.
540. Could you give us an idea of the class of goods? There would be, principally, four or five different sorts; there would be wool, flour, grain, and such things as hides and skins; that would be the principal traffic.
541. Is there much of that traffic left in Orange, or does it go through to Sydney? A fair proportion of the wheat is left in Orange, about 20 or 25 per cent. of the wheat would come to us, I suppose. There is a little flour, but nothing very startling. We get a little flour, I think, from Cudal.
542. I suppose you have no knowledge of the country outside? Not on the Parkes line. I have been on the Forbes line, to a place called Boney's Rocks, beyond Cudal and Canowindra. I have also been round by Davy's Plains. The land I have seen is very superior.

Caieb Robertson Barry, Esq., bank manager, sworn and examined:—

- C. R. Barry, Esq.
22 Feb., 1890.
543. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a bank manager.
544. Residing where? At the present time at Blayney, but for seven years I was residing at Cudal. I was then secretary to the Cudal Railway League.
545. Were you in a bank at Cudal? Yes.
546. Can you give us any information as to the rival routes now before us? I know a good deal of the country about Cudal.
547. What class of country is it, and what are its products? Well, from Molong to Canowindra, with the exception of one small patch, you may say that it is a wheat-field. Every acre is fit for wheat. It is rich red volcanic soil.
548. *Mr. Lee.*] How long were you managing a bank at Cudal? Seven years.
549. What was the state of the small settlers of the district at that time? When I first went there the district was a comparatively new one, and the settlers had, of course, an up-hill fight in clearing their land. Then they were much handicapped by the cost of carriage—they were confined to one crop. Being, as they were, 28 miles from Orange, it would not pay to grow hay, and, of course, the local population

was not sufficient to absorb it—the result was that the farmers had either to let the crops grow grain or to let them rot. I have known dry seasons in which, under ordinary circumstances, the crops would have been cut for hay, but the farmers, sooner than cut them for hay, which they knew they could not sell, risked losing everything, and allowed them to grow for grain.

C. R. Barry, Esq.
22 Feb., 1890.

550. How far would that be from Borenore? Seventeen miles and some chains.
551. You say that good land extends down as far as Canowindra? Yes, with the exception of small patches about Sandy Creek, near Molong. The land from Molong to Canowindra is of the same character.
552. Does it extend still further south? I know nothing beyond that.
553. How far would Canowindra be from Cowra? I could only make a guess—it is supposed to be half-way between Cudal and Cowra.
554. Can you, as a bank manager, give us some idea of the financial position of the settlers about Cudal—you need not answer the question if you think it would trespass upon your private business as manager? Their financial position, when I was there, was good. All that they had was expended in clearing the land and erecting improvements. They were in a good position, but the greater part of their wealth was lying in their land.
555. They were able to sell some crops to enable them to get along? Yes.
556. And the crops, you say, were wheat? Yes; they had to depend entirely upon that.
557. Were the settlers of a good *bona-fide* character? Certainly.
558. Had they selected to make homes for themselves and families, or were they, in a large degree, the representatives of capitalists? I do not know of an exception to their being all good *bona-fide* farmers.
559. As a rule they were? Yes, certainly.
560. And you think that if there were a fair outlet to enable these persons to get their stock to market the district would still further progress? Yes; and a number of other things would be grown there which they cannot grow at the present time, because they cannot bring them to market.
561. A railway would give them the necessary outlet? Yes. They must leave New South Wales, it seems to me, if they cannot get an outlet.*
562. These people are so shut up at present they cannot get access to the main thoroughfare? Yes; and it does not pay to send a great deal of the produce by teams.
563. Have they any difficulty in disposing of their grain at present? No, except that they have to cart it a long distance.
564. But they can find a market? Yes.
565. And you have no doubt that larger quantities would be grown if they had a better outlet? Yes.
566. Are you aware whether any capitalists have banded themselves together as syndicates on the line of route you advocate? Not that I am aware of.
567. Are you aware of any extraordinary influence that has been brought to bear to get the line carried in that direction for the benefit of syndicates? No.
568. As a bank manager, you would be in a position to know that such syndicates were in existence? Well, there were none before I left, and I think I should have known if there had been any since.
569. Do you know the route the line has been surveyed from Borenore to Forbes? A large portion of it.
570. How far have you been along it? As far as Eugowra.
571. What is the nature of the country? Not as good about Eugowra as it is at Cudal, but it is good country, and there are a number of farmers settled about Eugowra.
572. Are there any large portions in the neighbourhood as good as the Cudal land? The land down as far as Canowindra to Molong is the same; from Borenore to Murga there is much the same character of red land.†
573. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know the surveyed route from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I have been on a portion of it. I have been from a few miles on the Parkes side of Manildra into Molong.
574. Have you had an opportunity to observe the character of the country? I did notice it. There is very good land, indeed, from Molong to Garra, and getting in towards Manildra. Beyond that, the character of the land I saw was very inferior.
575. In your capacity as secretary to the Cudal Railway League you have had special opportunities to obtain a large amount of information as to these various lines? Yes.
576. Is the preponderance of evidence you have obtained in favour of the Cudal line? Yes, or I would not have advocated it.
577. You refer to evidence independently of your own personal observation? Yes.
578. You have informed Mr. Lee that you have considerable knowledge of the position of the early selectors of Cudal;—you have said that when they first settled on the soil they had considerable difficulties to contend with;—have they improved their position or not? I have been two years away, and I cannot say exactly, but I take it that they are improving their holdings every year. Their wealth is in their holdings.
579. Were the improvements you saw made substantial? Yes.
580. The agricultural settlement appeared permanent—that is, as far as you could judge, the land was not likely to revert back to pastoral purposes? The majority of the improvements were of a superior character. The fencing was very good indeed;—first-class fencing. There were also good orchards and homesteads.
581. Do you think a railway *via* Cudal and Toogong is likely to pay? I think it is likely to pay the Government better than any other line.
582. Do you know the estimated cost of the railway to Parkes and Forbes? I know it is estimated to cost about £60,000 more than the other line.
583. Do you think the line would give as good a return for the outlay as the other line? No. If you look at the map you will see that it comes out due west to Borenore from Orange. It then goes north-west to Molong, and comes down again to Manildra, within 7 miles of Cudal. That is the best point on that line. The majority of the population is settled south of Cudal; and, taking Cudal as the starting point, if a line were constructed *via* Molong, through Manildra, the people would have 10 miles to go to Manildra and 26 miles round to Borenore or Orange. The difference going from Cudal to Orange by Manildra and by Cudal direct would be 20 miles.

584.

* NOTE (on revision):—This question was—"If the farmers had railway communication (*i.e.*, with the metropolis *via* Borenore), could they dispose of their produce?" My reply was—"Yes; if they cannot, they had better leave New South Wales."

† NOTE (on revision):—From Molong on the north to Canowindra on the south, and from Borenore on the east to Murga on the west, there is the same character of rich, volcanic soil.

- C. R. Barry, Esq.
22 Feb., 1890.
584. That would be a considerable disadvantage? Yes. A man would have to go 10 miles to get to Manildra railway-station, and he would then have to pay carriage round to Borenore. That applies to all places situated south of Cudal.
585. You have a special knowledge of the country round about Cudal; it is stated that that country presents engineering difficulties;—what do you know of the matter? There is a difficult portion between Borenore and Keenan's Bridge, but I think the line there could be improved. I think it could be made straighter. I could never understand why the line was brought so far north. I believe that if the gradient was lengthened slightly, and if you took a longer time to come down, the grades would be considerably eased.*
586. Do you think the engineering difficulties arising out of the physical features of the country are sufficient to prevent the construction of a line? Well, the Committee have the permanent survey to judge by.
587. You do not think there is any great difficulty to contend with. As far as I can see, there is not.
588. *Mr. Cox.*] Did the League of which you were secretary make up a fair estimate as to the probable receipts of a railway to Forbes, *via* Cudal? Not the probable receipts, but we had statistics collected showing the number of farmers and the quantity of wheat grown at the time, and so forth.
589. Have you seen the estimate of the Commissioners as to the receipts on the Molong, Parkes, and Forbes line? I have not.
590. It appears that the annual charge upon the line will be £26,000; the traffic is estimated to be worth £11,000, so that the country will be mulcted to the extent of £15,000 a year? I can quite understand that.
591. Do you think you could show better figures than that in respect of the Cudal line? I have not made them up, but I am sure we could.
592. And the Cudal line would be 17 miles shorter than that *via* Parkes? 17 miles shorter to Sydney. Of course it will not be shorter to construct. I heard a question asked with regard to the settlement round about Cudal. The statistics we collected showed the number of farms within 9 miles of Cudal to be close upon 200.
593. *Chairman.*] How far is Cudal from the nearest point on the Molong and Parkes line? As the crow flies, about 7 miles—about 10 miles with roads.
594. That is the township? Yes.
595. For how many miles does agriculture extend northward up towards the line? Up as far as Manildra.
596. Then if a line were constructed from Molong to Parkes it would materially serve the Cudal people? No, I do not think it would. They would have to go 10 miles to Manildra with their teams, and then pay 26 miles of railway carriage to Borenore—whereas they could reach Borenore direct, by a good metal road, in 17 miles.
597. How far northward of Cudal do you reckon belongs to the Cudal District? It would be hard to say. Of course some of the Cudal farmers go to Molong.
598. Then if this line were constructed to Molong a portion of it would run through what is virtually a part of the Cudal District? That would be the nearest point, and it is the best point on that line.
599. The advantages of the line from Borenore to Forbes are derived principally by the farmers to the south of Cudal? It would also benefit those to the north. If a man were living 2 or 3 miles from Manildra, he would save expense by taking his produce down to Borenore, saving the railway carriage between Manildra and Borenore. If a railway were constructed from Borenore to Cudal, there would probably be a station at Boree, which would be the station for the Manildra people.
600. Have you any other information to give to the Committee? Well, in regard to the compensation for land, when a question was asked in the House, it was stated that there were 24 miles of purchased land on the Cudal line. The highest price for a highly-improved farm on that line would be £4 an acre. One farm, which the railway traverses, was sold at £3 10s. per acre. If you add 25 per cent., you would have £2,000 for the whole distance. The whole compensation ought not to exceed £5,000.

MONDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 1890.

[*The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Molong, at 10 a.m.*]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Thomas Kennedy, Esq., surveyor, sworn and examined:—

- T. Kennedy, Esq.
24 Feb., 1890.
601. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am in the Railway Survey Branch.
602. Where are you at present stationed? Near Gulgong.
603. Do you know the proposed railway from Molong to Parkes? Yes.
604. Had you anything to do with the survey of it? Yes; I made an improved survey on the permanently staked line.
605. When was this? Last January; I finished it in January of last year.
606. Did you make any material alterations in the original survey? The grades were 1 in 40 before, and I reduced them to 1 in 50. The first alteration I made was at the town of Molong.
607. What did that deviation consist of—in which direction did you go from the originally-surveyed line? Across the creek; that would be to the north.
608. How far did you go to the north from the originally-surveyed line? About one mile and a-half.
- 609.

* NOTE (*on revision*):—I explained, that if the line was taken more to the south than the present surveyed line, I believed a shorter line would be obtained, and that, in addition to this, I believed that an easier grade would be obtained by the southern route from the high land by coming down a longer spur from the Canoblas than that taken by the present surveyed line. This spur runs out on the low land at Mouse Hole Gap, near Ryan's farm, about three miles further on than Keenan's Bridge, where the present survey reaches the low land, and from that point on the lines would be identical.

609. And you then returned to the same line? At about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles on from Molong I connected with the line again. T. Kennedy, Esq.
610. And by so doing what was the advantage you gained upon the original survey? I reduced the grade from 1 in 40 to 1 in 76. 24 Feb., 1890.
611. Did that increase the distance much? It increased it by over a mile.
612. What is the ruling grade of the entire line from Molong to Parkes? There was a short bit of 1 in 40 in the rough survey; in the improved survey the grade was 1 in 50, *via* Bumberry, and 1 in 40 *via* Flagstone Creek.
613. You know of a short piece of 1 in 40? Yes, but it could be avoided.
614. 1 in 50 is the steepest grade that you left? Yes.
615. What would be the extra expense of crossing the creeks in connection with the first deviation you made at Molong? I could not say. I see there is an opening of about 30 feet.
616. Is it likely that the deep cutting attached to the originally surveyed line would counterbalance the cost of the two bridges? I should think so. An advantage is gained in this way. The original survey left about three-quarters of a mile on the Orange side of the Molong station.
617. Are we to understand that this deviation was made for the express purpose of bringing the line into Molong itself? Yes, a short branch line was constructed into the town of Molong—the surveyed line never came right through the town—that is the line from Molong to Forbes as it is here. An alteration was made just here at the station, taking the line on, and making a continuous line of it; to do that it was necessary to cross these creeks.
618. Do you understand anything about the cost of construction? No, I do not.
619. You could not tell us whether there would be any material difference between the cost of the deviation and the cost of the line as originally surveyed? I could not tell. I daresay estimates have been taken out by the Department from the two pieces. I should say it would be cheaper to come round through the town, else you could not possibly reduce the grade of 1 in 40 to 1 in 70 without tunnels.
620. Where is the next deviation made? Very little is made; it runs in and out of the line nearly all the way till you reach 241 miles.
621. Then you branch off to the north? Yes. Going through Bumberry there is a rough range to cross. On the other side of Bumberry the country is very rough all round, but there is a low gap in the range.
622. By that deviation you reduce the grade to 1 in 50 from 1 in 40? Yes.
623. Was the distance increased by that deviation? I think it is about the same—there may be a difference of about a mile.
624. Do you know anything about any other survey that has taken place in addition to these two? I know of one through Bocoble Gap.
625. Do you know anything of the country there? Yes, I went down and had a look at the country; it is an easier gap to get through than the other.
626. Is it a different gap to the one you went through? Yes.
627. You do not mount so high? No. It is lower than Lord's Gap.
628. In the event of a line going through Bocoble Gap, would it place the deviation further to the south than by any other survey? Yes, it would bring it nearer Cudal.
629. How many miles nearer Cudal than the present line? My deviation would go further away, but Mr. Stuart is making a deviation, and would be able to give evidence on that point.
630. *Mr. Lee.*] When were you sent to examine this staked line between Molong and Forbes? Last September twelve months.
631. That was before the proposal was referred by Parliament to the Public Works Committee? Yes.
632. Have you made any investigation since the matter was referred to the Committee? No.
633. The sketch survey, as shown on this map in the blue line, is the line that was submitted by the engineer of the department to the Public Works Committee? I am not sure; I think it was submitted up to 241 miles.
634. Is the red line shown on this map the line described? The blue line up to 241 miles, I think, and the red line afterwards.
635. The blue line from Molong to the point you name is as near as possible along the route of the originally staked line? Yes.
636. Describe the line from point 241 miles along the line *via* Bumberry? At 241 miles it takes a north-easterly direction till you reach 249.
637. At that point the blue line is how far from the permanently staked line? $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It takes a northerly direction up to 257 miles.
638. At point 257 how far is the blue line from the permanently staked survey? About 7 miles; the line then follows the main road right into Parkes.
639. Till it junctions with the staked survey at 262 miles? Yes.
640. And the widest point between the original survey and your survey is 7 miles? Yes.
641. What was the object of making a deviation so far from the original line in that direction? The country between the red and blue lines is rough broken country.
642. And what is the nature of the country through which you have taken your detour. For about 4 miles at the back of Bumberry it is very rough country. After that it goes into good grass country; that extends down until you get on to the Billabong Creek, and then it is good land.
643. Is there much agricultural country along that route? I think most of the flats along the Billabong Creek could be cultivated.
644. How much of the country has been taken up? It is nearly all held in selections or leases.
645. Are there many large freehold estates along that route? I do not think so; it is nearly all selections.
646. The land is chiefly in the hands of conditional purchasers? Yes.
647. Have you been along the main surveyed line from point 241 miles to Parkes? No.
648. What were your instructions when you were sent into the field;—were they to avoid the piece of line between 241 miles and Parkes? My instructions were to improve the whole length of the line from Molong to Parkes.
649. Did you go along the original survey to see if you could improve it? When I got to point 241 miles I was instructed to run an alternative route to Parkes. I believe a deputation went down to Sydney and asked for it.

- T. Kennedy, Esq.
24 Feb., 1890.
650. Is your deviation from 241 miles to Parkes much longer than the originally staked line? 2 miles.
651. What is the heaviest grade on the existing survey between 241 miles and Parkes? 1 in 40. There are short pieces between 251 and 252, between 249 and 250, and between 244 and 245.
652. Then you have not examined that portion of the permanently staked line to ascertain whether you could reduce these grades or not? No.
653. From point 241 miles to Parkes, you have confined your attention solely to a new survey? Yes.
654. And you have done nothing towards improving or reducing grades on the permanently staked line from that point to Parkes? No.
655. Has any other engineer been employed upon the work? I do not know.
656. Are you still on this section? No, I am surveying a line from Gulgong to Wellington.
657. *Mr. Cox.*] Is the deviation you have made more or less settled than the original survey? I fancy it is more settled, but I can only tell from the plan.
658. You have not been through the country? Well, I could not tell you what settlement there is except from the alienated portions on the plan.
659. *Mr. Dowel.*] How long have you been in the employ of the Government? Ten years as a surveyor; before that I was a draughtsman in the Department for two years.
660. Have you any knowledge or experience of railway construction? None whatever.
661. How long were you employed on this particular line from Molong to Parkes? From September to January—about four months.
662. During that time did you explore the country pretty well between those two places? Yes, I explored all that country.
663. Is there any good land between Molong and Parkes? It is very fair country right through. Of course; there is some good land and some bad land.
664. Does the line present many great engineering difficulties? No; there is nothing very difficult about it.
665. Where does the rough stony country commence? At Bumberry.
666. At what distance from here? About 32 or 33 miles.
667. Did you make an examination of the timber through which the line would pass;—did you notice whether it was suitable for railway construction—that is for sleepers, fencing, culverts, or bridge work? I think you could get good timber for sleepers and fencing, but I do not know whether you could get good timber for bridge work.
668. But there would be no difficulty about getting sleepers? No.
669. And short lengths for culverts? No.
670. What is the distance of the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? About 71 miles 52 chains.
671. If I were to inform you that it was to cost £6,000 a mile—would you consider that a large or a reasonable amount? A reasonable amount.
672. You would not think it too high? No.
673. Can you suggest any mode of cheapening the cost of permanent way construction? None whatever.
674. Would it not cheapen the cost of construction if half-round sleepers were used instead of the sort now used? It might be cheaper at first, but it would probably be dearer in the long run, because I do not think the sleepers would last so long.
675. Are you aware that on many railways in England and America half-round sleepers are used? I have heard so.
676. Can you inform the Committee what is the distance from Borenore to Forbes, *via* Cudal? I know nothing about the Borenore line.
677. Do you know that the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes is 11 miles shorter than the Cudal line? I believe it is a little shorter.
678. Your experience is confined to railway survey? Yes.
679. Railway engineering you have had nothing to do with;—you have been trying to improve the line in respect to some of the grades? That is all.
680. Who is engaged upon the line at the present time? Mr. Stuart.
681. What is he doing? He is making a deviation through Bocoble Gap. He is getting a fresh line, and reducing the steep gradient off Lord's Gap.
682. Will that line bring the railway any nearer Cudal than it is now? It will.
683. Can you tell the Committee what is the distance of the line you surveyed from Cudal? About 9 or 10 miles.
684. Do you think the people within a radius of 9 or 10 miles would use a railway? I think they would.
685. Do you not think the Cudal people might as well come to that line as people from other points go to Cudal? Well, it would be just as easy.
686. You do not know the intermediate country? No; I do not.

Henry Harold Septimus Chippendall, Esq., Clerk of Petty Sessions and Crown Lands Agent, sworn and examined:—

- H. H. S. Chippendall, Esq.
24 Feb., 1890.
687. *Chairman.*] What position do you fill? I am Clerk of Petty Sessions and Crown Lands Agent at Molong.
688. How long have you been stationed there? Between seventeen and eighteen months.
689. Can you give us any information as to the amount of land alienated and unalienated or reserved through which the proposed line will pass? I can give you approximately the area unalienated and the area under reserves, but the alienated land I have not taken a note of.
690. Can you give us a map showing the unalienated land? I can show you the parish maps through which the railway passes.
691. Where does your district terminate? At the parish of Terara, where it joins that of Bumberry. The parishes in my district are Brymedura, showing the proposed line to the parish of Gregra. The next map shows the proposed line through a corner of Gregra, thence through the parish of Dulladerry; then the line goes from Dulladerry through Terara.
692. Could you give us the aggregate area of the land in your district held under leasehold area within 7 or 8 miles of the railway? Roughly, the leasehold area of the runs through which the railway passes, or within

within a few miles of the railway, is 12,000 acres. The leases of this will expire on the 8th July, 1890. The available land unalienated on Brymedura is 450 acres; Gregra, 750 acres; Dulladerry, 1,700 acres; Terara, 1,247 acres. The reserves in Brymedura amount to 2,640 acres; in Gregra to 1,060 acres; in Dulladerry to 4,600 acres; and in Terara to 300 acres. This gives a total of 24,747 acres available in reserves and leasehold areas. H. H. S.
Chippendall,
Esq.
24 Feb., 1890.

693. What do these reserves consist of principally? In Brymedura the largest area is a water reserve; the others are quarry reserves. In Gregra it is principally water reserve; in Dulladerry, water reserve, railway reserve, and camping reserve. There is one forest reserve in Terara, principally on leasehold area. That is the only forest reserve of any size. It is of considerable extent.

694. Do you know what class of land is contained in these reserves and leasehold areas? I know nothing about that.

695. Have you had many applications from persons willing to select country and not able to obtain it? Yes, I have had a good many applications for land. Persons will say, "I should like to take up this and that piece," and I have to tell them that it is not open for selection.

696. I was speaking more particularly of the leasehold areas? I have had a considerable number of applications to select on leasehold areas in this direction.

697. Do you believe that the majority of these 12,000 acres of which you speak would be selected as soon as thrown open? I do not know that I can say the majority, but at all events a considerable portion of it.

Mr. Edward Aland, Railway Station-master, Molong, sworn and examined:—

698. *Mr. Cox.*] You are station-master here? Yes.

699. How long have you been in the district? A little over four years.

700. Since the railway was opened, I suppose? I came here about three weeks afterwards.

701. Can you give the Committee any idea of the amount of traffic which has taken place during that time? Not during the whole of the time. I have made an estimate of the goods traffic for the past six months, and an estimate of the coaching traffic for twelve months. Mr.
E. Aland.
24 Feb., 1890.

702. Have you previously made up the returns for the Government? The returns are made up monthly and forwarded to the audit office. For the twelve months ending 31st December, 1889, 4,060 passengers were carried; the inward goods for the six months ending 31st January were 2,395 tons 18 cwt; there were 5 trucks of cattle and 65 sheep vans; the outwards goods were 2,713 tons 18 cwt. 3 qrs.; there were 20 trucks of cattle and 90 sheep-vans; about 830 tons of grain were forwarded in the month of January.

703. Where does this produce come from, chiefly? I am not in a position to say. I simply take delivery as it comes in. I think the majority of it is from Parkes, or along the road to Parkes. Wright, Heaton, & Co.'s representatives would be able to tell you where it comes from.

704. Do you know the country through which the line passes? I have not been more than 5 miles out of Molong since I have been here.

705. Has the traffic increased during the last four years? It has been increasing every year.

706. Largely? Yes.

707. In what percentage? I could not say. I know that in the present season we have had over 800 bales of wool more than in any previous year.

708. Is the passenger traffic increasing? Yes, but I have made no estimate. I think it will reach at least 200 passengers more—that is, taking the past twelve months and comparing them with the previous twelve months.

709. Does much produce find its way by rail to Sydney? To January last month there were 830 tons 14 cwt. 1 qr.

710. I suppose the quantity of wheat is in excess of the previous years on account of the good season? Yes, but I think the wheat which has already gone away is nothing compared with what will go away. I am given to understand that people have only just commenced to bring it in.

711. *Mr. Lee.*] What is the nature of the goods traffic you refer to? Well, the outward goods as a rule consist of various skins (sheepskins and marsupial skins), potatoes, wheat, and things of that kind.

712. Any flour? A good deal of flour.

713. Can you tell the Committee where these goods are booked to? As a rule to Granville and Darling Harbour. I have a deal of grain going to Millthorpe, and some to Orange. The bulk of the grain, however, goes to the metropolis.

714. Do you say you send grain to Orange? Not a great deal.

715. Is the flour sent to Sydney? A good deal is sent to Darling Harbour.

716. Is the wheat and flour traffic increasing? Yes.

717. Is that since the rates have been reduced for the carriage of grain? I could not say; I have not taken particular notice. Last year there was very little grain in the district. As far as the rates are concerned, the wheat must go, even if we adhered to the old rates.

718. But have not the rates for the carriage of grain been reduced on this line? Yes.

719. There are special rates? On the up-grade.

720. Has that induced a large quantity of grain to be sent to the metropolis? I could not say; but I know a lot of grain goes.

721. Prior to the reduction of the rates large quantities of grain and flour went to Sydney? Yes.

722. Would the Committee be safe in assuming that under these rates the farmers can send grain to Sydney and sell it there at a profit? Yes, I think so.

723. Is there any local market? There is a local market at the present time. There is always some market here. There are buyers in Molong who buy the grain and forward it.

724. In your opinion, is the reduced rate for the conveyance of grain likely to result in greater quantities being carried upon the railway? I could not say.

725. Still, if the farmers could send their grain at the higher rates, they are more likely to send it at the lower rates? Yes.

726. Is any hay or chaff sent from here? Yes, in any sort of a season.

727. Have you been able to form any idea as to where the passengers who travel from this station come from? No.

728.

- Mr. E. Aland. 728. Do any number of them come from Parkes, Forbes, or Condobolin? In my opinion, the majority of them come from Parkes and the Molong district. Some, of course, also come from Manildra, Garra, and Meranburn.
- 24 Feb., 1890. 729. Do you know if there is any traffic to speak of between Forbes and here? I have no idea.

Henry Harold Septimus Chippendall, Esq., sworn and further examined:—

- H. H. S. Chippendall, Esq. 730. *Chairman.*] I believe you have some fresh statement to make to the Committee? In answering a question as to the amount of leasehold area which would be available in a short time, I desire to say that my reply had reference to the parishes through which the proposed railway passes. The leasehold area of the runs is, of course, very much larger.
731. Taking 7 miles of the line on each side, can you give us a rough estimate of the aggregate area of the leaseholds? I could not say without scaling the maps. I know that the leasehold area of Brymedura is about 40,000 acres.
732. How far would that be from the line? A portion of it would be within a few miles.
733. Will you furnish the Committee with an accurate account of the numbers of acres held in the leasehold areas in your district? Yes. I will have it made up and furnished at some future date.

Mr. John Black, miller, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. Black. 734. *Mr. Dowel.*] What position do you hold? I am a miller. I have a mill here.
735. How long have you resided in the district? Twelve years.
736. I believe you are an alderman and a Justice of the Peace? Yes.
- 24 Feb., 1890. 737. Do you know the proposed route from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I know it up to Parkes.
738. Have you been over the country? Yes.
739. I suppose you know it all very well? Yes.
740. What is the character of the country between Molong and Parkes? Well, as far as I am a judge, I should call it a very good country. There are barren patches and good patches all the way along. It will compare with any other 50 miles between here and Sydney. It is fair average country.
741. Would it be correct to say that some of it is exceedingly good? I think the first 15 miles is exceedingly good. I call it A1.
742. Further on from that there is the Bumberry Range? Yes; the country there passing over the mountains is pretty rough.
743. What is the character of the country from the Bumberry Range to Parkes? I do not think you could find much better than you see when you get over the range all the way into Parkes. Away to the north-east of Parkes it is also good.
744. Is the wheat you buy here of good quality? Yes.
745. Were you engaged in milling before you came here? Yes.
746. Is the wheat as good as the wheat you were in the habit of grinding before? Better, I think.
747. Is there a good area of wheat under cultivation? Yes.
748. How many steam threshers are there in the district? I could not say. Most of the wheat is taken off by strippers.
749. How many are there? There must be hundreds.
750. How many mills are there in the district? I do not know; there are two in this town.
751. How many at Parkes? One.
752. Do you know of any mill between Parkes and Molong? No.
753. Are the mills to which you refer of large size? A middling size.
754. What quantities of wheat would come into a mill in a good season? I could not say. We do not use up all the wheat grown in the district. Up to last Saturday night, I have sent over 1,000 tons away during the last few months. I sent the biggest part of it to Granville. In the early part of the season I sent some to Bathurst.
755. What is the price of wheat at the present time? 3s. a bushel.
756. From what you know of the proposed route, can you say what places would be served, principally, by this line? The whole of the country to the west and north.
757. But will you name some places within a radius of 10 miles of the line? I am not so well acquainted with the country to the right and left. I know the good country goes parallel with the line to the north.
758. There is Peak Hill and Alectown, for instance? There is fine country through there; there is a good deal of leasehold area, but the leases will expire directly.
759. A lot of selectors are coming there, I understand, and a large number of persons in that direction will be served by the construction of this railway? Yes.
760. Can you give us any details as to the population that would be served by the line? No.
761. Are the holdings in this district large or small? Most of them along this route are small—from 200 to 300 acres up to a section, or 1,000 acres.
762. I suppose you know a large number of the farmers along this line? The best part of them.
763. Are the improvements on these holdings of a permanent description? Yes.
764. The holdings are not likely to revert to pastoral purposes? No; they are held chiefly by farmers with families, who are anxious to make homes for themselves.
765. What are the principal products of the district? Wheat. Of course, maize is grown, but it is not a reliable crop. Most of the farmers combine a little grazing and dairying with their farming.
766. Are oats and potatoes grown here? It is not a great district for potatoes and oats, but a good bit of hay is grown.
767. Are there any vineyards in the district? Some small ones.
768. Is the land suitable for vineyards? I believe it is.
769. What is the average crop of wheat? Some farms get 40, 30, and 20 bushels; other go down to 12 and 10. I suppose the average this year will be from 17 to 20 bushels.
770. Do you know anything about the timber in this district? In the immediate neighbourhood of Molong it is good only for firewood.
771. Do you know the land comprised in the leasehold areas in the district? No. 772.

772. But is all the land you have been over suitable for agricultural purposes? Plenty of it is. Of course, there are patches of bad land.
773. From your knowledge of these leasehold areas, do you think it is likely that when they are open to selection they will be taken up in a *bona fide* manner? They are sure to be.
774. I suppose during the time you have resided in this district you have come into contact with a large number of persons who have discussed the question of these rival routes? Yes.
775. In what way has public opinion been expressed? Well, all the people on this side of the country are in favour of the line going from Molong.
776. Do they think that the route, as staked out, is the best? Certainly.
777. Do they think it will serve the largest number of persons? I believe it will myself, although it is against my interest, I believe, to advocate a line from here.
778. Do you know what the cost of the line is estimated at? £6,000 a mile, I believe.
779. Do you think there will be sufficient revenue from the goods and passengers to pay the interest on the capital and the working expenses? It would hardly be expected that a new line should pay from the start. After a few years I have no doubt it will, because a railway to some extent makes traffic for itself.
780. You know the character of the settlement in this district—do you think it is likely that the farmers would put more land under cultivation if the line were constructed? Yes.
781. You think there would be more grain crops? Yes.
782. Is there much dairying in the district? It is carried on in a small way.
783. Are there any butter factories here? No.
784. Do you think that the Commissioners, in estimating that the revenue derived from the railway will be £11,254, have under or over-estimated the amount? I do not think they have estimated it sufficiently high.
785. You think their estimate is a low one? Yes.
786. Do you think the Government will be justified in constructing this line upon the supposition that it will involve an annual loss of £15,000? Well, it would open up the country, and in time it would pay; it would increase the value of land—Government land as well as private property.

Mr.
J. Black.

24 Feb., 1890.

Joseph Wren, Esq., J.P., sworn and examined:—

787. *Mr. Lee.*] You are an alderman of the Municipal district of Molong, and a Justice of the Peace? Yes.
788. How long have you been here? Thirty-four years.
789. What is your occupation? For twenty years I was in charge of Brymedura and other stations; but for fourteen years I have been farming.
790. Are you farming at the present time? Yes.
791. Are you a conditional purchaser? Yes.
792. In what direction from the town of Molong does your town lie? It is about 8 miles in towards Cudal from the Parkes road.
793. Do you know the route of the proposed line from Molong to Parkes? Yes.
794. Does it pass through your land? The original line is about 4 miles from my farm.
795. Are you acquainted with the land round about Molong? Yes.
796. And with the land in the immediate neighbourhood of Parkes? I have been over it hundreds of times. I know the land there, but I do not know much about the population.
797. Do you also know the country between Parkes and Forbes? Yes.
798. What have you been producing during the last fifteen years? Wheat, oats, hay, barley, and maize.
799. Which is the chief crop? Wheat.
800. Is wheat a tolerably certain crop in this district? Yes.
801. Is the rainfall sufficiently large for the cultivation of land here? Except in exceptional seasons. In twenty-three years I have only known one year in which we have not had a fair average season, as far as wheat is concerned. That was the crop before last, and even that was not quite a failure.
802. Do you ever have a total failure in the crops? Never.
803. Then, notwithstanding the most adverse seasons, you have a crop of some kind? We never had on an average less than 12 bushels per acre until the season before last.
804. Would 12 bushels per acre be a bad return? Yes.
805. What is the average? As high as 20 and 22, up to last year.
806. Is more wheat grown here than can be consumed? Yes.
807. What is done with the balance? It is sent to Sydney, and to other places between here and Sydney.
808. But chiefly to the metropolis? Yes.
809. What do you do with your corn? There is generally sufficient local consumption. Sometimes a little is sent away.
810. Are there any potatoes? There has not been a great crop of potatoes. They grow potatoes well here, but they are not cultivated to any extent on account of the low price and the trouble of getting them away.
811. Can you give me any idea of the average area cultivated by the selectors? From 30 acres up to 400.
812. Are there as much as 400 acres under wheat in one man's holding? Yes.
813. Is the tendency in this district to increase or decrease the cultivation in favour of grazing? To increase it.
814. Consequently, the surplus must be larger every year? Yes.
815. At present the line from Molong to the main Western line gives you an outlet for your surplus? Yes.
816. And the construction of a railway from here to Parkes would be of no immediate benefit to the farmers round about Molong? Yes, it would, when it gets out 8 or 9 miles.
817. Supposing it were decided to construct this line on to Parkes, would there be a still further increase in cultivation? I am sure there would.
818. Is the land sufficiently good to admit of its being cultivated generally? Yes.
819. Is the rainfall good all the way through? Yes, right on to Parkes.
820. Is it your opinion, then, that larger areas will be cultivated, and that a larger amount of traffic will be furnished for the railway? Yes.

821.

- J. Wren, Esq., 821. Can you tell the Committee anything about the country from Dulladerry Creek to Flagstone Gap?
 J.P. Yes. As the line runs it is a rough country, but a little to the left—about 1 mile from the main line—
 24 Feb., 1890. it is splendid country, as good as any within 6, 8, or 9 miles of Molong.
822. Do you know the country from Flagstone Gap to the point at Bindogandri, where it passes through Thomas Ashbole's selection? There is good land on both sides of the range—on the Parkes side and the other side, but I have not been up there for some years. I could not say where the land you speak of is.
823. Cutting a straight line from that point, and running south to the permanently-staked line a distance of 7 miles, can you tell us the nature of the country between these two points? No; I have not been over that country lately.
824. Are there any more large reserves in this district? Yes.
825. Notably gold-fields reserves? Yes.
826. Do they interfere with settlement? Yes.
827. Do you think they embrace much good land? Very good land; a large proportion of it is good.
828. Would it be settled upon if available? Yes.
829. Do you know the route taken by what is known as the blue-line survey? I cannot say that I know much about the survey on the other side of Bumberry. I do not know where the line goes there, although I know the country very well. I could not tell you on which side of the line the cutting would be.
830. But up to the point you do know, do you think the permanently-staked line would serve the people better than the blue-line survey? I could not say. I do not know the blue line.
831. Have you any suggestion to make of a practical character, showing what way the original line can be improved, or in what way any better line can be found? I believe it will be a good thing if the line could be taken from Bocoble Gap to Manildra. I think a line in that direction would suit the whole district. Consideration would also be shown for the people at Cudal, and other places in that direction. It would place the line more in the centres of population and agricultural areas.
832. Are the farmers in your neighbourhood likely to be permanent men? They are all permanent selectors.
833. I suppose you have heard of dummied in this district? Of any amount of it.
834. The land that is dummied usually reverts to pastoral purposes, does it not? Yes.
835. But the men who are cultivating their land can be looked upon as permanent selectors? Yes.
836. Have you any other information to give to the Committee? Well, I was appointed by the Railway League to collect statistics in order to refute statements made by those who are advocating another line. The district from which my statistics are gathered commences 4 miles west of Molong, extends 9 miles along the proposed line through Garra to Mandagery Creek, near Manildra, and 2 miles to the south and 4 miles to the north of the proposed route, embracing 111 holdings. A portion of the Brymedura holding is in that area.
837. In the statistics you have collected, is the whole area of the pastoral leasehold of Brymedura included? Only a portion of it.
838. The enrolment of school children which you hand in you will swear to be correct? Yes.
839. I see you give 7,355 acres under wheat, 846 acres under hay, 978 acres under corn, 64 acres under freehold; 161 acres under orchards; the total area of freehold and conditionally purchased land, 42,484 acres; the total area of leasehold, 39,289 acres; horses, 756; cattle, 1,310; sheep, 24,783—and the total number in families, 689? Yes. Those figures are correct.
840. Will you read the enrolment of school children within the same area? Sandy Creek, 36; Peabody, 25; Garra, 56; Manildra, 45; Gregra, 49; Bocoble, 29—total enrolment, 240. I may say that I have collected the number of farms and leaseholds north of the line immediately outside of 4 miles. The holdings are 139, and the children number 567. In 1885, the total area under cultivation between Molong and Bumberry, 20 miles from Molong, was 7,950 acres, producing 135,150 bushels of wheat. In 1889, this area had been increased about double; 9 miles now give 7,350 acres under wheat, 846 under hay, 978 under corn, 64 under barley, 161 under orchards; or a total of 9,399. This is within 2 miles south and 4 miles north of the Molong-Parkes route. I was asked a question just now about dummied. In this particular part of the district there has been very little; I do not think there has been more than one or two cases in the whole distance between here and Parkes.
841. Have you anything further to say? Well, I believe that if the line were constructed from Molong to Parkes it would assist the district much better than if it were taken in any other direction. It would go through the centre of the district, and would benefit all parties. If the Bocoble Gap deviation was made, the line will be within 5 or 6 miles of Cudal in a straight line; there is a road to Cudal in that direction. The distance, if the deviation is not adopted, would be about 8 miles. I think the Committee should also have some regard for the large tract of good country lying some 10 or 12 miles to the north of the proposed line.
842. *Mr. Dowel.*] You say you know the country between Parkes and Forbes very well? Yes.
843. What is it like? It is level country all through. There is some pine scrub, but it is fairly good country.
844. Would there be any difficulty in constructing a railway there? I do not think there would be any difficulty until we got within a short distance of Forbes—that is, until you reach the flooded country.
845. Can you tell us anything about the country between Forbes and Condobolin? Yes; it is all good country, but liable to be flooded.
846. Would the produce from that part of the country be brought to a railway-station at Forbes or Parkes? Yes.
847. Do you know the country between Condobolin and Wilcannia? I know nothing further than 20 miles below Condobolin.
848. Do you think that if the railway were brought within 6 miles of Cudal the Cudal people would use it? Yes.
849. You think it would answer their purpose very well? I think so. The principal cultivation is between Cudal and this line.
850. Is Cudal one of the principal centres of the farming population? No; very little farming is carried on within a few miles of Cudal, excepting between Cudal and Manildra.

851. So far as you know the line as staked out, you think it will serve the largest number of persons? Yes. J. Wren, Esq., J.P.
 852. Will you name the centres of population it will serve, taking the whole line as staked out to Parkes? Garra, Gregra, Manildra, Gumble Flat, Wallagolong, Cumnock, Dilga, Rocky Ponds, Mandagery Creek, Meranburn, Dulladerry, Coate's Creek, and Goimbla. 24 Feb., 1890.
 853. These centres would contribute considerable revenue to the railway. Yes.

Mr. John Francis Wynne, hotelkeeper, sworn and examined:—

854. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am an hotelkeeper at Molong.
 855. How long have you resided there? Thirty-five years.
 856. During those thirty-five years have you travelled much over the district? Yes.
 857. You know it intimately? Yes.
 858. Have your travels extended to Cudal and Toogong? Yes.
 859. So that you can compare the Molong district with those districts? Yes.
 860. Has the cultivation of wheat and other produce steadily increased in those districts? It has increased very fast.
 861. Particularly since the railway has been carried to Molong? Yes, very largely.
 862. You think the continuation of the line will still further develop the agricultural resources of the district? Certainly.
 863. Can you give us any idea as to the points from which the traffic which converges at Molong comes from? Well, chiefly from the direction of Parkes. We get a little traffic from Wellington way.
 864. A large proportion of the heavy goods comes from this direction, I suppose—all cereals, for instance? Yes.
 865. Is there any traffic between Molong and Forbes in the way of flour? We send flour to Forbes. I have taken flour to Forbes and got £60 a ton for it, but not lately.
 866. I suppose the Parkes people have cut this market out? Yes.
 867. Starting from Molong, how far does the really good country extend towards Parkes? There is good country right away to Dungeon Hill at Bumberry.
 868. How far is that? About half-way from here to Parkes—about 25 miles.
 869. And from Bumberry towards Parkes? From there into Parkes it is all splendid country again.
 870. For what distance does the bad country at Bumberry extend? The width of the range, I suppose, would be about 4 or 5 miles.
 871. Do you know that this line is to be considered a grand trunk line to serve the valley of the Lachlan? Yes.
 872. The proposed line of railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes would form three sides of a square as it were, starting from Borenore to Molong, and from Molong to Parkes, and from Parkes to Forbes—that would be three sides, as it were, in opposition to one side *via* Cudal? Yes; that is if you go to Forbes—but what about Parkes?
 873. I am regarding the line as a traffic line to serve the valley of the Lachlan;—why should people be asked to send their goods by three sides of a square instead of by the more direct route *via* Eugowra and Cudal? If the line is to serve the Wilcannia people it should not go near Forbes at all.
 874. But I am speaking of the Valley of the Lachlan and Condobolin? Still, I think it should not go to Forbes taking a direct line.
 875. Do you know that from Sydney to Forbes, *via* Molong, the distance is 285 miles, whereas *via* Cudal the distance is 268 miles, making a difference of 17 miles in favour of the Cudal route? Yes, that may be so, but it would not be the case if you were to go direct from here to Forbes.
 876. In that case you would be leaving Parkes? Yes.
 877. What is the distance from here direct to Forbes? Well, I have often had breakfast here, and been at Forbes in the evening.
 878. Would it be further from here to Forbes than from Borenore? Eight or 10 miles shorter from here. The proposed line takes in Parkes.
 879. With regard to the agricultural capabilities of the country, do you think the country about Molong is superior to that about Cudal? No, I do not. The land is equal in every respect; but at the same time the land about Cudal and Toogong is owned by one or two persons, whereas the land about Molong is owned by hundreds.
 880. A very much larger area here is in freeholds belonging to farmers than on the other line? The first 19 or 20 miles from Borenore, on the other line, is owned by two people—the Keenans and Smiths, principally freehold-owned. Excepting two public houses and a few farms, the whole land is freehold until you get close to Cudal.
 881. A mere sheep walk? There are a few boundary riders. The road traffic supports two small hotels in the 18 or 20 miles.
 882. Are you aware of the relative amounts of traffic, taking the traffic between Molong and Parkes, and Orange and Forbes? I have often heard it stated, but I could not give you the particulars.
 883. We took certain evidence the other day at Orange on that point, and we want to have it verified? The statements made to you, I believe, are quite correct, as far as the coaching is concerned; but between here and Parkes there are a great many special conveyances running. The majority of the people living at Parkes—farmers and squatters—use their own waggonettes and conveyances to bring them to the railway station, so that really the coach traffic is no criterion.
 884. But what about the other traffic—the goods traffic? I could not tell you about that until I had seen the traffic returns at Borenore.
 885. The Railway Commissioners have made, apparently, a careful estimate of the probable cost and receipts of the proposed railway. They have given the annual cost as £26,065, whereas the estimated traffic returns are £11,264, making a loss to the country of nearly £15,000 a year. Do you think the Committee will be justified in recommending the construction of the railway at a cost of £15,000 per annum to the community? I understand that railways are made for the purpose of opening up country, and causing population to settle on or near them.
 886. That is true to a certain extent; but railways, after all, must be constructed on lines which are likely to pay, if not immediately, in the near future? I have no doubt in my own mind that this line, if constructed *via* Parkes, and on to Forbes, will be one of the best paying lines in the west—it will be better than

Mr. J. F.
Wynne.

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- Mr. J. F. Wynne.
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- than either the Mudgec or the Bourke line. As far as I know of the population likely to settle, I believe that before long we shall have, at Peak Hill, another population like that at Broken Hill. All the traffic from that centre would go on to the Parkes line.
887. How do you think this loss of £15,000 per annum to the country will be made up? I think that after a short time the line will be a paying one, and will return good interest on the outlay.
888. In how short a time? I should say within three years.
889. You do not think we should have to put up with a loss of £15,000 a year for more than three years? No, I think not. There is one thing which will make up for some part of the loss which I may as well mention. At the present time the train which comes in from Molong lies idle from the time it arrives in the morning until twenty minutes to 7; that occurs every day. During all those hours it is doing nothing. If the proposed railway were constructed the engine and the staff of men could be turned to use and would be earning something for the railway. That would be one way of assisting to reduce the liability upon the line. Then there is a great increase in settlement to the north of Parkes;—some of the finest land in the colony is there. It quite makes one's mouth water to look at that fine land, and at the present time a great deal of it is not being made any use of.
890. But a good deal of it is shut up as a gold-field reserve? That, I have no doubt will be thrown open after a time. The mining population at Alectown and Peak Hill would all assist to make this part of the railway pay.
891. How far is Peak Hill from the proposed railway line? It is about 28 miles from Parkes.
892. How far is it from Dubbo? About 48 miles.
893. How far is it from Molong to Peak Hill? About 52 miles by the circuitous route we go.
894. All the traffic goes *via* Dubbo? No; it is commencing to go from here. A coach is starting to run from here now. If the railway is constructed to Parkes that would be the nearest railway point to them. They could do all the business there and the passenger traffic would go that way, too.
895. I suppose there will be another source of revenue to the railway when these leasehold areas are thrown open for selection? Every inch of the land between here and Parkes will be selected or taken up for agricultural or pastoral purposes. The farmers find it very profitable to run a few sheep. Every inch of Dungeon Hill would be taken up if it were not a timber reserve. I understand the timber is very good and valuable.
896. Can you speak personally as to the value of the timber? I know it is good; some of it is carted in here and is sent down Orange way. There is a sawmill which cannot a quarter supply the demand about 20 miles from Molong.
897. This Committee was informed that the timber about Dungeon Range, although valuable to the eye, was comparatively valueless when it was cut down? Perhaps the party who told you that would take you on to stony ground, but in the gullies I think you would find the timber sound. To the north of the proposed line there is some splendid timber; a lot of it is brought in and sent down to Orange and Bathurst. Away to the north of Parkes there are trees 40 and 50 feet high, straight as an arrow, without a branch out of them for that distance. Then there would be another source of revenue to this railway from a large mine at Delaney's Dyke; some immense machinery is going up there and I think the mine will be the means of bringing a large amount of traffic to the railway. Then there is the tin mine—as soon as that is in work some hundreds of thousands of tons will be sent away from there.
898. You think the line we are investigating will best serve the interests of the whole district? I think that the proposed deviation from Bocoble Gap will suit better. It ought to suit the Cudal people splendidly.
899. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know the country between Forbes and Condobolin? I have never been below Forbes.

Mr. John M'Groder, hotelkeeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. M'Groder.
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900. *Chairman.*] What are you? Hotelkeeper and I have a produce store.
901. Where do you reside? Molong.
902. How long have you been here? I have been here all my life pretty well. I was born in Molong.
903. You have an intimate knowledge of the whole of the country round this district? A very intimate knowledge.
904. And also of the country between Orange and Forbes? Yes.
905. Do you know where these proposed lines of railway run—the one from Molong to Parkes and the one from Borenore to Forbes? Yes.
906. Which line of these two will serve the greater number of people if constructed? I do not think there can be two opinions about it. I think the Molong to Parkes and Forbes line is much the best.
907. What makes you say that—what is your reason? My chief reason is that when you get out 3 or 4 miles from Molong there is nothing but a net-work of farms. They continue for about 20 miles, and they are all *bona fide* selections.
908. Are there many farms to the north of the proposed railway from Molong to Parkes? Yes.
909. And those farms will not be served by the construction of the line from Borenore to Forbes? No.
910. Do you know Cudal? Yes.
911. How far is that from the nearest point on the Molong to Parkes line? The township of Cudal is about 6 or 7 miles distant.
912. In a direct line? I think there is a nearer point than that again—that is from Manildra.
913. Are there many farms round about Cudal? When the line leaves Borenore there are a few farms, and after you go 2 or 3 miles you come to Keenan's station property—it is a sheep station. Then I think you come to Hughes' public house. There are about four farms between Keenan's and Smith's property. The Smiths own Boree-Nyrang and Boree-Cabonne. There are very few farms there. Some shepherds and employes of Mr. Smith took up some land at Boree-Cabonne, but they sold out to Mr. Smith. The consequence is that there are few farms from where the line comes into Keenan's property until you get into Cudal.
914. Do the farms extend to the north of Cudal towards the proposed line? The principal farms go from the north of Cudal right on to the Molong line.
915. Do you believe that those persons who are called the Cudal farmers would be materially benefited by the construction of the Molong to Parkes line? Most undoubtedly; the principal part of the Cudal farms would be within 2 or 3 miles of the line.

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J. M'Groder.
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916. Do you know the country south of Cudal? Yes. I have some knowledge of it.
917. Is it a large agricultural district? It is not very large, but there are a good many farms on it.
918. Are there more farms on it than in the district which will be served by the railway from Molong to Parkes? Nothing like it; there is no comparison.
919. Do you know Toogong? Yes.
920. Are there any farms there? No. Mr. Jago Smith owns from just the other side of Cudal into Long's Corner.
921. From Borenore right into Toogong, with the exception of a few farms at Cudal, the land is in large holdings? Yes; very few farms.
922. In the hands of four men? Yes.
923. Then you have no hesitation in saying that the line, if constructed from Molong to Parkes, would be the best line to construct in the interests of the general public? Yes.
924. Do you know the timber reserve near Bumberry? I do not know the boundaries of it.
925. But you know the timber there? Yes.
926. What class of timber is it? Principally ironbark.
927. Have you seen the trees cut down? I have seen the timber come to the railway-station.
928. Is it good timber? Splendid timber.
929. We have had it in evidence that it is perfectly useless;—would you believe that statement? If that evidence was given it is false evidence. I never saw better timber. I saw some of it go to Blayney.
930. Have you seen much of it? Yes.
931. You are not speaking of one or two sticks, but of a large quantity of the timber? I saw heaps of it waiting to go away two or three years ago.
932. Have you seen any big logs? All the timber I saw was posts and rails.
933. Then you could not say if the trees were hollow or not? When I was over that country seven or eight years ago, I had the impression that it was the finest belt of timber I ever saw. I am speaking of the Dungeon.
934. You believe that it is first-class timber? I believe that if a railway is constructed from here to Parkes there will be a large timber industry started. I believe sleepers could be obtained there to construct, not only this line, but hundreds of miles of other lines of railway. I believe ample timber could be found here, instead of fetching it from Dubbo and other places. I believe a large trade would be done in fencing-stuff in parts of the country where timber is scarce.
935. You have had large experience of the carrying business? Yes.
936. Have you anything to do with it now? No.
937. Do you supply teamsters from your produce-store? Yes.
938. Can you give us any idea of the merchandise traffic between here and Parkes? I have not made any calculation, but there is continuous traffic backwards and forwards.
939. You have heard that there will be a loss of about £15,000 a year upon the construction of this railway. Do you believe that if a line is shown to pay working expenses immediately that would be a fair reason for constructing it? I believe that if a line can be shown to pay working expenses immediately that is a good reason for its construction. I do not agree with the estimate of the Commissioners that there will be a loss of £15,000 a year. I cannot see where the loss would come in.
940. Do you think they have under-estimated the returns? Yes.
941. In what way. The passenger traffic is estimated at £4,000 a year? I think they have under-estimated the traffic. I do not think they have considered the Borenore or the Cowra traffic. It would take 90 per cent. of the traffic that now goes to Borenore, and 50 per cent. of what now goes *via* Cowra; it would take all the traffic from the Lachlan Valley.
942. You think the estimate of the Commissioners is based entirely upon the traffic going from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? Yes. I do not think they could have considered the Cudal traffic at all.
943. Is the country for a considerable distance after you leave Molong, going towards Parkes, of a rocky nature? No. I have been in the Parkes District lately. I have been to the north of Parkes, to Alec-town and Peak Hill—the whole of that country is likely to be taken up, and I think it will some day carry a large population.
944. What traffic is there with Peak Hill? No doubt if a line is constructed to Parkes it will command all the traffic to Peak Hill. Of course, it must be borne in mind that round about Parkes there are 60,000 acres of gold-field reserve. Further to the north, however, there is the Coobang Run. Although it is in the Central Division, and will not be thrown open for selection for some years, it will be available for future settlement. It is one of the finest pieces of country I ever saw. The country to the north of Parkes is a magnificent country. I believe that if this line is constructed it will be found that Parkes will be one of the most thickly-populated districts of New South Wales. There is selection all the way—*bona-fide* selection—the holdings are well fenced in and ringbarked, and there appears to be a most prosperous class of settlers.
945. Are there any large holdings on the line from Molong to Parkes? The only place I know of is Mr. Leslie's, at East Billabong. I think he has two 5-mile blocks, but I do not think there is more than 2,000 acres of freehold property in the lot.
946. Do you know if there is much purchased land on the Brymedura holding? I do not think there is much.
947. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you give the Committee any information about the mineral resources of the district through which the line would pass? Of course the most important mine in the immediate neighbourhood is Delaney's Dyke. There is a ten-head stamp-battery there, but they will have thirty head of stampers at work shortly. Then there is mineral land at Red Hill. No doubt that will be opened out soon. From there to Parkes I do not know of any other. There is a flag quarry right on the line, so to speak, only a few miles from here.
948. Have you any copper in the district? Several mines have been worked for copper, close to the line, but they have not been developed to any extent.
949. What is the population at Delaney's Dyke? There are not above twenty or thirty at the mines at present, but when extra machinery is provided there will, I have no doubt, be an increase of population.
950. Do you know the country between Forbes and Condobolin? Yes.
951. Of what character is it? It is good country.

- Mr. J. M'Groder. 952. Is the settlement likely to feed a railway to Forbes? Undoubtedly; but if a line is constructed to Parkes, I do not think the traffic will go to Forbes.
- 24 Feb., 1890. 953. It is proposed to construct a line to Parkes and Forbes? Even if you construct a line to Parkes and Forbes, I think the main traffic to and from Condobolin and Burrawang would come through Parkes. Condobolin is closer to Parkes than Forbes, and a good deal of the traffic must come to Parkes. The traffic will either come on the line at Parkes, at Forbes, or at an intermediate station.
954. You know the country between Condobolin and Wilcannia? No, but I believe it is very good country.

Mr. John Lohan, agent for Messrs. Wright, Heaton, & Co., sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. Lohan. 955. *Chairman.*] What position do you occupy? I am agent here for Wright, Heaton, & Co.
- 24 Feb., 1890. 956. How long have you been here? Four years since last January.
957. *Mr. Lee.*] Had you been living in any other portion of this district before you came here? At Orange.
958. How long had you been there? All my life.
959. Are you a native of Orange? I am.
960. Were you acting for Wright, Heaton, & Co. there? I was a clerk in the office.
961. Are you prepared to give the Committee any statistics? Well, I have made up different returns, for the accuracy of which I can swear.
962. Have you any by you in duplicate form? No; but I know the amounts.
963. Did you come here when the railway was opened? Yes.
964. Will you give the Committee some idea of the extent of the forwarding business during the first year the line was opened? In the first year we paid for freight between £400 and £500—that would be freight to Molong and Sydney and intermediate stations. At the present time we are paying £1,000 a month.
965. Does that £1,000 per month embrace inward and outward freight? We pay nothing on the outward freight—that is all paid at the other stations.
966. But you send outward freight, I suppose? We send it away; but we pay no freight on it at this end.
967. So that, really, the £1,000 a month represents only the inward business? Yes.
968. What is the nature of the goods you receive here? General store goods and station supplies—such as wire and rock-salt.
969. Do you receive any wheat or flour? Very little.
970. I mean from Sydney? Yes.
971. In consequence of the shortness of crops in this district? Yes.
972. To what portion of the country do you send any? Well, we have sent to Parkes.
973. Have you sent any beyond? No.
974. Is any portion of the goods coming through you consigned to Forbes? No.
975. Will you, briefly, give the various districts to which the goods have been consigned? Parkes is the principal district. We also have goods for Bumberry and Bindogandri.
976. Do you send any to Condobolin? No, none to Condobolin. The principal reason is that the road is not suited to bullock-teams, and the goods consequently go from Cowra and Borenore.
977. Are the roads there macadamised? I believe the country is more open for them. If we get a bullock-team once we do not see them again.
978. Does any of the traffic from Forbes or the intermediate traffic come here? No.
979. Nor is any inward carriage consigned to this place? No; some of it has reached here, but it has been forwarded back to Borenore.
980. Irrespective of the outside districts I have named, the traffic is steadily increasing upon the railway to Molong? It is.
981. I suppose your business is about as good a pulse as you can have of the traffic on the railway? Yes.
982. Do you know anything of the country between this and Parkes? I do not.
983. You are not prepared to give evidence as to the route or as to the productiveness of the country? No.
984. You say you were engaged in Wright, Heaton, & Co's. office in Orange? Yes.
985. And how does the increase in traffic here compare with the increase in traffic there? Of course everything went from Orange to Molong, Parkes, and Forbes—it was the terminus for all those places.
986. Since the line has been opened to Molong, the Parkes traffic has been sent from here? The increase in the Parkes traffic has been very large.
987. Then the construction of the line from Orange to Molong has served Parkes and the intermediate districts? Yes.
988. There is little or no traffic between Orange and Parkes by dray at the present time? No, there is none now.
989. Your firm deal largely in grain, particularly in maize, in bad seasons? Yes.
990. Have you had to import much maize here? Only for consumption in Molong.
991. Have you had occasion to consign any quantity of wheat, flour, chaff, or potatoes from Molong to other districts? We have.
992. Is there a tendency on the part of that traffic to increase? I should think it was on the increase.
993. I suppose the carting of grain from this district is almost invariably done by the producers themselves? Yes.
994. It does not necessarily pass through your hands? Certainly not.
995. Consequently, you cannot speak authoritatively as to the quantity of wheat and stuff sent from the district? I could not.
996. About how many teams load here in a month? I have made up a return. I find that there has been an average for the last six months of 250 tons a month going away on the Parkes route. The average number of teams loading would be from twelve to fourteen a week.
997. Do you know whether, in the wool season, any quantity of wool comes this way from beyond Parkes? From no distance beyond Parkes, I think.
998. Could you tell us the names of the stations that send wool to the railway here? The names of the stations are the Troffs, about 40 miles from Parkes, Coradgery, Nelungaloo, Bartley's Creek, Wanera,

Wanera, Coobang, East Billabong, Gunningbland, and Moura. A great number of selectors have lately taken up land, and of course that makes some difference.

999. Supposing a line were constructed from Molong to Parkes, which would be the nearest station along that route for the majority of the runs to use? I have never travelled it. I could not say what the various distances would be, but most of them are pretty close to the line. Webster's would strike at Bumberry, and so would Winera; East Billabong and Coobang would be about Bindogandri.

1000. Are any of these stations situated in the vicinity of Cudal, or between Cudal and Forbes? No.

1001. Do you receive any goods for forwarding to any portion between Cudal and Forbes? No.

1002. Your traffic is confined to the line influenced by the Molong railway station? Yes; we neither receive traffic nor send traffic along the rival route.

Mr.
J. Lohan.

24 Feb., 1890.

Mr. James Haslam, storekeeper, sworn and examined :—

1003. *Mr. Cox.*] Where do you reside? In Molong.

1004. What is your occupation? I am a storekeeper.

1005. How long have you resided in the district? A little over twenty years.

1006. Has your occupation as storekeeper brought you into contact with many people in the neighbourhood? It has.

1007. You must have learnt a good deal from them? Yes.

1008. Have you travelled much in the district? Over a portion of it.

1009. Which portion? I know the district as far as Meranburn pretty well. I have been to Parkes, but I do not consider that I know that end of the district.

1010. Do you know Cudal, Boree-Cabonne, and Toogong? No.

1011. Do you know the country to the north of the proposed line of railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I know a good portion of it.

1012. Is it fairly taken up by selection now? It is nearly all taken up; everything available is taken up.

1013. And when the leasehold areas are thrown open, as they probably soon will be, a large quantity of land will be taken up? I think almost all of it will be taken up.

1014. We had evidence this morning from the land agent to the effect that only some 450 acres are left in the parish of Brymedura? That is very likely a reserve. Even in this district ordinary looking land is good for grazing. If it is not fit for agriculture the farmers will take it up as an additional selection, so that they may have it for their stock.

1015. The production of wheat has materially increased since the railway was constructed? Yes, during the last seven or eight years.

1016. Have you ever made a calculation as to the cost of growing wheat? No; but I have heard calculations made.

1017. What conclusion have you come to? There is one gentleman in particular in the district who pays for all he does in connection with his farm, and who reckons that it costs him from £1 to £1 1s. per acre to sow, reap, and bag his wheat; I refer to Mr. Petersen, of Ghewang.

1018. Consequently, if a man has 20 bushels to the acre the cost would be only 1s. per bushel? That is all.

1019. Does he allow anything for the land? No; that is simply the labour of ploughing, harrowing, sowing, and taking the wheat off with strippers and putting it into bags.

1020. What is the price of wheat? Three shillings per bushel.

1021. But that would be for a first-class sample. Yes.

1022. You would not buy inferior wheat at any price? We buy it, of course. All wheat is of some value, even as fowls' feed. I have gone into figures with other farmers and have given them a liberal allowance, and the cost comes to about 25s. per acre, although many of them will not admit that it can be done at that price.

1023. Making considerable allowance, that would still leave a fair balance of profit to the farmers? Yes; it has been found by the farmers that the only way in which they can make wheat-growing pay is to grow large quantities. At one time a man with 50 acres was supposed to have a large farm—now there are many of them with 250 acres under wheat. Anything under 100 acres is regarded as a small farm.

1024. I suppose even these small farms get the best of machinery? Yes.

1025. Using human labour only they could not farm profitably? No; I think not.

1026. Would your estimate of £1 per acre include seed? It would include seed, ploughing, harrowing, sowing, stripping, and putting into bags. They use double-furrow ploughs.

1027. Then, in an exceptionally dry season, wheat-farming on a large scale will pay? Yes. In the old days a farmer ploughed 20 acres of land, loafed about the rest of the year, and said that farming would not pay.

1028. Having got the grain to market he still has a balance on the farm, he has the straw, which I suppose he can sell or can use in some manner? If strippers are used the straw is of no use; it is left on the ground. This year it would have paid them better to cut it.

1029. It forms manure? I think it must do; they burn it off, and sometimes plough it in.

1030. Does any other farming besides wheat-growing pay in this neighbourhood? Yes; oats or wool.

Occasionally you get a fair corn crop. As a rule, however, corn is an uncertain crop. Hay grows very well—we get some fine crops of hay.

1031. But the cost of carriage takes away the profit? During the last two or three years hay and wheat-growing has not been a very profitable thing. Last year the crops were almost a failure. The year before they were not very heavy, but a great portion of them was spoilt in the harvest—the farmers have had a bad time for the last three years.

1032. But in a fairly good season wheat-growing is a profitable thing? Yes.

1033. I suppose you are sufficiently unprejudiced to speak of the neighbouring districts as you know them—do you know Cudal? I have been there twice.

1034. Have you seen growing crops there? I do not think I have. I know there is good land there as well as here. I have bought Cudal wheat, and very good wheat it has been, too.

1035. Do you make any use of the limestone here? Well, lime is used, but to a very small extent.

1036.

Mr. J. Haslam.

24 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. J. Haslam.
24 Feb., 1890.
1036. What about timber? There is very good timber in the locality you heard mentioned this morning. The timber exhibited to the Committee at luncheon time was received by me as a consignment from the Meranburn sawmill.
1037. Are potatoes a profitable crop? They are not always a successful crop. It is not a good district for potatoes. I have seen good potatoes grown here, but they are not a certainty.
1038. And with regard to orchards? I believe it is a good district for orchards. I have planted five orange-trees in the bush 3 miles from Molong; two or three of the trees are still alive, though I have never had them dug round or anything else done to them—they have never been cared for from the first. I have seen some good oranges grown in this district.
1039. Would it be profitable to grow such fruit as the apple, the pear, and the plum? I should think so. The fruit grow prolifically; grapes grow here well.
1040. Is any wine made here? Mr. M'Nevin, of Cardington, used to make wine for several years.
1041. Do you think that in the event of a large tract of country being thrown open here there would be sufficient inducement for an increased farming population? I think so. In the course of a few years the land at present in the hands of large holders, deducting 25 per cent. for stony ground, will be brought under cultivation. I speak particularly of selectors. I might add that now-a-days they get 100 acres ready for the plough more quickly than in former times they could get 10 acres ready. Instead of taking out all the stumps as formerly, they take out the small saplings, ring-bark the large trees, and plough between—they get a quick return from the land, and are able to spend their money afterwards in taking out their large trees. That plan has been found to work very successfully. Some men in the district have from 600 to 800, Mr. Bradley, at Garra, has 1,500, and Mr. Boardman has 1,400 bags of wheat.
1042. The Railway Commissioners, speaking of the proposed line, say—"We are of opinion that an extension from Molong to Parkes could not be recommended except as the means of opening up an admittedly good agricultural district around and north of Parkes, but we would rather favour a line from Cowra or Young to Forbes, and from thence to Parkes, which would run through fairly good country, and give the residents the choice of either the southern and western lines for business purposes." Do you agree with that? The Commissioners also say—"On leaving Molong, after the first four miles, the character of the country changes, being of a rocky nature for a considerable distance?" The best part of our district lies at Garra—there is a regular garden there. You find farm after farm joined together and producing large crops of wheat. Leaving Molong for the first 2 or 3 miles there is stony ground. Garra commences at a distance of about 5 miles from Molong. Any man looking about him can see that immediately you get outside the common, and, indeed, before you get outside of it, the country is of a good character. I know almost every holder in this list collected by Mr. Wren—they live almost exclusively between here and Meranburn. If what the Commissioners say is true, these men must have been fools to take up the land.
1043. Of course you are aware that this proposed railway is to be a grand trunk line to the valley of the Lachlan, consequently it is not for this Committee or for the country to consider the interests of any particular section of the people. The question is not whether the people of Cudal will be served or not—the great question we have to consider is the promotion of the greatest good for the greatest number. We want to avoid any mistake in initiating this line. Mistakes have been made in the past, and our great object is to prevent such mistakes in the future.—we should therefore like the gentlemen we examine to throw off any prejudice with regard to any particular locality, and to look at the matter from a broad point of view. We want to determine which is the best line to serve the valley of the Lachlan? That I could not say, I do not know enough of the other line to offer an opinion.
1044. The Commissioners think that there will be a loss of about £15,000 a year to the country consequent upon the construction of this railway. Unless you can see your way clear to make up this loss in the immediate future; do you think the Government will be justified in expending this large amount annually? Unless there was some immediate prospect of making up the sum, I should say the Government would not be justified in doing so.
1045. Do you think there is an immediate prospect of the line paying? It is evident that the settlers included in the list handed into you by Mr. Wren must contribute a large amount of revenue to the railway. So far as the Commissioners are concerned, I might as well inform the Committee that they were reported to have driven through from here to Parkes in one day in a covered trap. I am informed that the day being dusty they went along with the curtains down—that would account for their not seeing the line.
1046. Is there any other information you desire to give the Committee? Mr. Sharkey said in Sydney, I believe, that the amount of traffic on the other line was so great that men were constantly metalling the road, while the traffic on the Molong line was so small that all the traffic was taken by a four-horse van twice a week. I want to contradict that statement. As a matter of fact I had two ten-horse waggons between here and Orange. Mr. Black had two similar teams, and Mr. Parslow had a seven-horse van. All these conveyances were going to and fro from the town alone, to say nothing of the out-side teams.
1047. Would that be at the time to which Mr. Sharkey refers? Yes; apparently. If his evidence is worth anything at all, it should be all truthful. If one portion of it is wrong we can value the remainder at the same price.
1048. I see Mr. Sharkey also says in his evidence that very little of the land in the vicinity of the line passing Molong is fit for settlement beyond Meranburn? I know there is cultivation beyond Meranburn. I think it can be proved that there is a large amount of cultivation there.
1049. This was written in 1883? I know there was cultivation there then.

Mr. John Robards, miner, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. Robards.
24 Feb., 1890.
1050. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a miner residing in Molong.
1051. Have you lived there long? Thirty-four years.
1052. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you give any information about the mineral resources of the district? There is a little mining going on at Delaney's Dyke. We have had several shows of copper, and there are some tin mines about fourteen miles from Molong.
1053. Is Delaney's Dyke likely to employ a large number of men? I think so.

1054.

Mr. J.
Robards.

24 Feb., 1890.

1054. What do you think is the population engaged in mining at Delaney's Dyke? I think there are about twenty persons.
1055. Where are the tin-mines to which you refer? I have not been there for twelve months. I do not know what persons are there now.
1056. Have you visited the ground to find whether tin is there or not? No.
1057. Is the copper industry likely to become a large industry, and to supply any revenue to the railway? I think so; there are good indications of copper within 2 miles of the town.
1058. Has anything been done to test these mines? A copper hill was worked some years ago.
1059. Was copper obtained? Yes, some was got.
1060. Where have you worked yourself? Mostly about the Dyke. I have prospected at Main Horse Ridge, between Garra and Delaney's Dyke.
1061. Do you know the district through which this railway will pass to Parkes and Forbes? Yes.
1062. You have explored it? Yes.
1063. I suppose there are a few parts of the district with which you are not acquainted? I know it all pretty well.
1064. Can you give any further information as to its mineral resources? I do not know that I can.
1065. Do you know the Parkes District? When the first rush took place at Billabong I was there, but never dug there.
1066. Have you been to Peak Hill? Yes.
1067. What distance is that from Parkes? Thirty miles.
1068. Do you think there would be much traffic from Peak Hill to Parkes if the railway were constructed? I am sure there would.
1069. Do you think it would be a permanent field? Yes.
1070. And carry a large population? The greatest drawback is want of water.
1071. You think the mineral resources are so good that a large population will eventually be carried there? Yes.
1072. More especially if the railway is constructed? Yes.
1073. Speaking generally of the whole district, from your experience of thirty-two years as a miner, you think the mineral indications warrant the expectation that a large mining industry will spring up? I think so; I think there will be a large population right through from Parkes to Alectown; in a direct line from Parkes to this place there will be a large population.
1074. Speaking of the country between Molong and Parkes now, would you call it rich in minerals? I like the look of the country in some places. I have obtained some fine gold in several places, but none payable. I got fine gold at Dulladerry Creek, at Coate's Creek, and at Goimbla.
1075. Have you done any carrying in your time? That has been my principal occupation.
1076. What is the character of the country between here and Parkes, and what is the nature of the settlement? The country is very good, and the settlers are from small to moderate holders.
1077. What do you call small? From 200 acres up to a section.
1078. Is the land they are working good for agriculture? For the first 17 or 20 miles; then it is not so good for a few miles.
1079. But you have seen sufficient of the country to know that a large population may settle upon it? It is nearly all settled for the first 20 miles; then there is a blank for a few miles.
1080. Would you call it a large population? Yes; the farms are pretty close to one another.
1081. Do the farmers all seem to be thriving? Yes.
1082. Do they combine grazing with agriculture? Yes.
1083. What is their chief crop? Wheat and corn.
1084. Are there any fruit-trees or vines growing in the district? I have seen some gardens, but have not taken much notice of them.
1085. You have been over the whole of the staked-out line? Yes; I drove an engineer, Mr. Alexander, over the line just before Christmas last.
1086. You had a good opportunity to see where the line went? Yes.
1087. Do you think this would be the best line to serve the majority of the people? I think so.
1088. I suppose you know all the centres of population within a radius of 10 miles of the line? Yes.
1089. What places will be served by the construction of the railway? Well, there would be Cudal, if the line is taken by Bocoble Gap, which would come within 6 miles of Cudal.
1090. But when the Cudal farmers had their produce on their waggons is it not most likely they would go to Borenore? I do not see why they should cart their produce 12 miles to a railway when they can get it there in 6.
1091. Would it pay them to take the loading off the waggons and to pay the additional railway carriage? I think so.
1092. There are a large number of farms in the Cudal district? I have not been there for twelve or fifteen years. I could not say now what the population is there.
1093. I suppose you have come into contact with a large number of persons in this district in your time, and have heard frequent discussions as to these various rival routes? Yes.
1094. What do you take to be the consensus of opinion as regards the merits of the rival lines? Well, opinion is pretty well divided, I think.
1095. Have any public meetings been held in this district, or have any petitions been sent in? Not lately.
1096. You have told us about the settlement between Molong and 20 miles out. Now, is there a large population settled further on? There is a considerable population settled to the north, in from Bumberry, and south of the Flagstone Creek.
1097. Have you observed the timber in the district? Yes.
1098. Would you call it good or bad? There is a good deal of good timber in the district—ironbark, for instance.
1099. Is the district capable of turning out timber fit for fencing and for railway-sleepers, and for culverts? Yes.
1100. You think that if mills were established and a railway were constructed, the timber trade would develop? Yes.
1101. At what distance would the bulk of the timber be from the line? What I take to be Mr. Kennedy's blue line, runs right through a portion of it.

- Mr. J. Robards.
24 Feb., 1890.
1102. Have you paid particular attention to the timber? I have done. I called Mr. Alexander's attention to it when we were passing through it.
1103. But I mean as regards its quality? I have seen slabs at Delaney's Dyke, 2 in. x 8 in., that appeared to me to be first-class timber. A number of loads of it have come into the town.
1104. Do you know Forbes? Yes.
1105. Have you been down to Condobolin? Yes.
1106. Does the country between these two places appear to you to be of a good character? Yes.
1107. Do you know the country further on towards Wilcannia? No.
1108. Is there any other information you would like to give? I forgot to mention an ironstone lode. I think it is a continuation of a blow of copper now being worked at Garra, on the north side of the Mandagery Creek. The lode I am speaking of is on the south side of the Mandagery, and close to the Parkes Road.
1109. What is the quality and quantity of the stone? I heard Mr. Blakefield say years ago that he had had an assay made showing 75 per cent. Mr. Bennett is working there now.
1110. Is it a large lode, or a blow? It crops up in two or three places about a chain or two in length. The width varies from a few feet up to a chain.
1111. Is it likely to be a valuable discovery? I think so.

Mr. John Lohan, sworn and further examined:—

- Mr. J. Lohan.
24 Feb., 1890.
1112. *Mr. Lee.*] You spoke of £1,000 a month as being the freight you pay on the inward goods; do these goods include the goods imported for the use of the town? Yes.
1113. Can that be taken as a fair estimate of the value of the goods brought to Molong station for the use of the town of Molong, the town of Parkes, and intermediate places? Oh, dear, no; there will be a lot to be added to that.
1114. How much? I suppose you can add about £200 a month.
1115. Are you in a position to state the money value of the outward freight per month? No.

Mr. William Croasdaile Finch, land agent, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. W. C. Finch.
24 Feb., 1890.
1116. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a land agent, residing at Molong.
1117. How long have you been here? Three years lately. It is upwards of thirty years since I first came to the district. I have not been continuously here.
1118. Can you give any evidence as to the reserves and other land in this district likely to be thrown open in a month or two? No.
1119. What evidence do you wish to give? Well, I could describe the country from here all the way to Parkes along the surveyed line.
1120. What class of country is it to the north of this line? From here to Meranburn, 16 miles, or further than that, a distance of say 6 miles, it is all good agricultural country with the exception of the Lord's Gap Range—a narrow range of hills going towards Bocoble. Immediately you get over the range you come to Garra; then the land is first class for a good distance on both sides, north and south. At Meranburn, on the north of the line, the hills come in close to the creek, but there are open flats, good land, in between the hills.
1121. Do you know the country about Bumberry? Yes.
1122. Do you know the forest reserve concerning which we have had so much evidence? Yes.
1123. What class of timber is there in it? It is principally ironbark; there is some stringybark there.
1124. Is it good? As far as I can judge, the ironbark is good.
1125. You do not know of your own knowledge the quality of the timber—you have not used any so good in town? I have not used it myself, but I have seen a good deal of it used for fencing. It is first-class timber for fencing. I have seen some logs being carted into Parkes to the saw-mills.
1126. Were the logs pipey? No; they were solid, quite sound.
1127. What class of country is it after you pass this place into Parkes? From Flagstone into Parkes it is good agricultural country.
1128. The whole of it? Not the whole, but a great part of it. There are a good many farms on the lower end of Flagstone Creek; the upper part is rough.
1129. How many miles of the proposed route *via* Molong would pass through poor country—that is, country not fit for agriculture? Well, as I have said, there is Lord's Gap Range, which is only a small range to go through; then on this side of Dulladerry Creek there is a pine ridge, but it is not of any extent; the first real rough country the line goes through is between Dulladerry Creek and Bumberry, Croker's Range.
1130. Between Bumberry and Flagstone it is rough? Yes.
1131. Do you know the whole of the country on the line from Borenore to Forbes? Yes.
1132. Would this country bear favourable comparison with that country? I think so.
1133. Would it be quite equal to it? I think so—in fact I think it is superior.
1134. Which line would serve the greater number of people? The line from Molong to Parkes.
1135. Why do you say that? There is a large population between here and Parkes, and in the neighbourhood immediately surrounding Parkes, especially on the north-east and north-west sides, that is, in between Parkes and the head of the Bogan.
1136. Is there not a larger population on the other line, between Borenore and Forbes? I do not think so.
1137. I understand you to say you believe this line, if constructed, would serve a greater agricultural area than the other line? I think so.
1138. Have you any idea of the value of these holdings of agricultural land per acre? I could not tell you.
1139. Are there many of these farms changing hands—have any changed hands lately? No.
1140. The original holders are still working there? A few have changed hands, but not many.
1141. What is good agricultural land in this district selling for? I do not think a great deal has been sold lately.

Mr.

Mr. Edward George Finch, Inspector of Stock, sworn and examined:—

1142. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am Inspector of Stock in the Molong District.
1143. How long have you been here? Twenty-eight years.
1144. Have you been long in your present position? Between four and five years.
1145. *Mr. Lee.*] How far does your district extend? Towards Parkes about 25 miles, to the Lachlan on the south, and to Wellington on the north.
1146. You do not go on to Forbes? No; Eugowra is the furthest along the Orange and Forbes-road.
1147. Then your occupation brings you into contact with the settlers a good deal—is the settlement in your district of a satisfactory character? Yes; there are chiefly small holdings between here and Parkes, that is holdings from 50 to 100 acres up to 1,000 acres.
1148. Have you any reason to believe that these settlers are not *bona fide*? No.
1149. Do they go in for much stock? Yes; they combine stock with farming, chiefly sheep.
1150. I presume you would have a very good opportunity to judge as to whether this settlement is of a proper character, or whether the settlers are simply there representing someone else? Yes.
1151. I suppose your occupation takes you about the country a good deal? Yes.
1152. Have you ever been over the railway route from here to Parkes? I have not followed the line right along; but I have been backwards and forwards across it.
1153. You have been to and fro on the road at all events many times? Yes.
1154. You have a fair idea as to which way the line is going? Yes; I know pretty much where it is surveyed.
1155. Do you think it is going on the right track? I think so.
1156. Do you think deviations could be made which would better serve the people between here and Parkes? No; I do not know that that could be done, unless the proposed deviation through Bocoble Gap is adopted. I do not know that that would make a great deal of difference to most of the people.
1157. Do you know Dulladerry Creek? Yes.
1158. Are the stock increasing in the district? Yes; this year there is an increase in horses, cattle, and sheep in my returns.
1159. Are they fat stock or store cattle usually in this district? Well, we have small lots of fat stock.
1160. Are many stock sent from the district? Yes.
1161. By road or train? Some by road to Orange and Bathurst, and chiefly by train to Sydney.
1162. I suppose that fat stock are sent to Sydney? Yes.
1163. And the store stock to any of the other markets? During the drought, but not from here—very little from here.
1164. Were you here in the recent dry season;—did the stock suffer? Many had to remove their stock to places where there was grass.
1165. Did they send any number by train for that purpose? Not from Molong. Some of them were travelling stock going to Albury, and down south, trucking from Dubbo; they would pass through part of my district.
1166. Were many stock sent away by train during the dry season? No; I do not remember many.
1167. Were any stock sent into the district by train during that season? One station got between 30,000 and 40,000 chiefly by train.
1168. The train is used as a means of transporting stock? Yes.
1169. Both for fat stock and, in time of drought, for transporting poor stores to a more favourable climate? Yes.

Mr.
E. G. Finch.
24 Feb., 1890.

Mr. John Burgess, auctioneer and commission agent, sworn and examined:—

1170. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am an auctioneer and commission agent.
1171. Have you been long in Molong? I have been in the town thirty years, and in the district nearly forty years.
1172. *Mr. Cox.*] During that time you have become thoroughly acquainted with the district? Yes.
1173. You know the country between this place and Meranburn? I do; I lived for ten years close to Meranburn—Davy's Plains.
1174. All the available land is taken up there? Yes, with the exception of the reserves.
1175. Are there any leasehold areas which will fall in this year? Yes.
1176. With the exception of the reserves and leasehold areas to which you refer, no land is now open for selection? There may be some land fit for grazing purposes, but not for agricultural purposes.
1177. Consequently a railway constructed between Molong and Forbes would have no more traffic upon it than is now wanted by the agricultural settlement, unless people were induced to farm to a greater extent than they now do? Every year they are clearing more land; they commenced on a small scale, and, as their means admit, they enlarge the area.
1178. Presuming that all the available land is taken up, a very small proportion of that land is cultivated? Yes.
1179. For what reason? They are so far from a railway that they cannot make wheat-growing pay.
1180. Supposing they had a railway, would it not help them to clear the land? I do not know about that; but it would make wheat-growing pay, and they could pay labour. It is uphill work for one or two men to clear.
1181. Do you know the Cudal and Borenore country? Yes.
1182. Is that country fairly taken up by settlers? Yes.
1183. Is there much available land there? None.
1184. I presume a large quantity of the land, however, is fit for agricultural settlement? Yes; but I do not know of any available with the exception of that in the reserves.
1185. All the land which could be farmed is not being farmed now? No; most of it is used for stock. The greater portion is in large holdings. Between Borenore and Cudal there are four or five farms near the marked line, and there are a few within 3 or 4 miles of Cudal; after that there are very few indeed along the line.
1186. To the north and south of these large estates, how is the land taken up? It is taken up mostly on the north side. In towards the Parkes line there is a large tract of very good country, called Grega, that is all in the hands of small holders.

Mr.
J. Burgess.
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Mr.
J. Burgess.
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1187. South of the Borenore and Cudal line there are places called Barton and Bowan;—is the land there taken up by large holders? Well, there is Davy's Plains, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Cudal, and adjoining that there is another large holding of 4,000 acres, which is held by Mr. Couch; and near him comes the Cargo gold-field reserve.

1188. Are the holdings in the parish of Bowan large or small? Davy's Plains has an area of nearly 3,000 or 4,000 acres of purchased, independently of the lease; Couch has 4,000 acres.

1189. Are there any leasehold areas there? It is all selected land.

1190. There are no leasehold areas? I do not think so.

1191. So that you think the railway *via* Molong and Parkes would accommodate a larger number of agriculturists than that *via* Borenore and Cudal? I am sure it would, because on the Borenore line the holdings are very large, and it is not likely that they will be cut up. There has been a great increase in the farming population in the Parkes District; nearly all the land from Parkes to the Bogan River is taken up. There are a great many new settlers from Victoria and other places.

1192. Your chief objection to the Cudal and Borenore route is that it passes through large estates, and would not benefit a large number. I do not think it would. It is a hard line to construct. From the Boree country to Long's Corner there is a bluestone formation, which is very hard to work, and from Long's Corner to Eugowra the country is of very little use.

1193. Is there more bad country between Long's Corner and Eugowra than between Meranburn and Parkes? I think so; the mountains there are so high and rugged, there are no good patches in between. On the other route there are some good patches on the rugged hills.

1194. *Mr. Dowel.*] Being an auctioneer, can you give any opinion as to the value of the land? That would depend a great deal on what improvements there are; but from 25s. to £2 5s. an acre is the general average.

1195. Is that for agricultural land? Yes.

1196. That is exclusive of the balance to be paid to the Crown? Yes.

1197. Is the settlement in this district of a permanent character? I think it is.

1198. Are the holdings, as a rule, small or large? There are no large holdings on the line the Committee are considering; if there are any they must be near Parkes.

1199. The land is not likely to revert to pastoral purposes? No.

1200. Do many of the farmers combine sheep-farming with agriculture? Most of them do.

1201. That appears a most successful mode of farming? Yes. They mostly have some fallow ground; when they are not making use of it they find sheep the most profitable thing they can put on it.

1202. Knowing both of these routes, which do you think is the best in the interests of the largest number of people? The Parkes line. It would serve the whole of the valley of the Lachlan. If it comes the proper way it should not go into Forbes. We should keep clear altogether of the river and strike Condobolin.

1203. Do you know the country about Condobolin? I have been through to the Cobar country and across, but not to Broken Hill.

1204. Is that good country? Yes.

1205. Would it contribute revenue to a railway? Yes; I think Mount Hope and other mines will become very good mines.

1206. What is the character of the country on the Lachlan River? It is good grazing country, but not agricultural country. All cereals grow too rank in wet seasons and fall down, and they will not stand dry weather in the dry seasons.

1207. Supposing a railway is constructed to Parkes, would the wool from this pastoral country come to Parkes? Yes.

1208. Live stock and produce generally? Yes.

1209. Which does not come to Molong at present? It comes to Cowra, on the other line, at the present time.

1210. You think the Parkes line would be the most payable, and would be most beneficial to the residents in the district? Yes.

1211. Do you know the character of the country between Condobolin and Wilcannia? No; but I know it upwards from Condobolin through the Upper Bogan.

1212. Coming into contact with the residents of the district I suppose you have discussed this line with them? Yes.

1213. What is the consensus of opinion on the subject? There is a great difference of opinion. A great many persons speak from the point of view of their own benefit, and do not think of the country as a whole. I am not speaking for myself; I have no motive or interest whatever; I am speaking from the point of view of the best interests of the country. Persons have given evidence on this matter who are connected with land syndicates on the other line.

1214. But I am speaking of people in this district? The Cudal people say their line is the best, because they would get the most benefit from it. Making every allowance for personal interest, however, I think this line would be the most beneficial so far as the country is concerned, and if it were constructed to-morrow I should have no hesitation in saying it would commence to pay from the day it was opened.

Mr. William Joseph Windred, hotel-keeper, sworn and examined:—

Mr. W. J.
Windred.
24 Feb., 1890.

1215. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am an hotelkeeper and general dealer, residing in Molong.

1216. Have you been here long? On and off, I have been in the Molong, Orange, and Cudal districts for twenty-six years.

1217. You must have a good knowledge of the country? Yes; my business takes me through it.

1218. What is the nature of the information you wish to give? I do not think sufficient mention has been made of the north side of the proposed line. I was a resident at Cudal for eight years, and have been on this side for twelve years. I do not know much about the other side of the line when it gets away from Merildra; but I know all the rest of the country pretty well.

1219. Are there many farms to the north of the proposed line? From 12 to 20 miles out it is thickly-populated country, and there will be still more when the leasehold areas are thrown open. I know plenty of persons who are waiting to take up land.

1220. Is the country to the north of the proposed line good agricultural land; is it as good as the land to the south, down towards Cudal? I should think they were about equal. It is land which could be taken up for almost every purpose.
1221. When you speak of the country to the north of the line, what do you particularly refer to? I mean from about Dilga to Parkes, and from Parkes through to Alectown. Last week I was all over the Rocky Ponds country.
1222. Do you know the country to the west of Dilga? Yes; the Rocky Ponds.
1223. What sort of country is that—good agricultural country? There is a good deal of settlement on it.
1224. But there is a great amount of unalienated land there; I suppose the country is pretty rough? On the south of the Dilga country it is rough—there is a range running through there; but the other land is as fine agricultural land as you could find in the country.
1225. Do you know Benya? No.
1226. Do you know the forest reserves near Rocky Ponds? No.
1227. The country between Rocky Ponds and Parkes? I have been over it years ago, but I cannot say that I know it well.
1228. The country directly south of Rocky Ponds going towards Bumberry? No.
1229. Is it not rough country? It is rough through there; there are places, however, which could be cultivated.
1230. Do you know Bumberry? Yes; I have been there.
1231. Do you know the forest reserve there? No; but I know the Dungeon, if that is what you are referring to.
1232. Is there any good timber there? I know more of this side of Bumberry than I do of the other side.
1233. What sort of timber is there at Dulladerry Creek? Pretty good.
1234. Plenty of it? Yes, it is ironbark. I have heard it said that the timber there is rotten; but if some of those who say so had shed as much perspiration as I have shed in splitting it they would form a very different opinion.
1235. You have worked that timber then and you know of your own knowledge that there is solid timber there? Yes.
1236. Is it fit for sawing? Yes?
1237. Should you say it was marketable? Yes.
1238. Would not that timber be of assistance in contributing to the railway revenue? Yes.
1239. Would it bring much traffic on to the line? A good deal, I think. Of course, if you get on to the stony ridges you get hollow timber; but on the flat ground you get very solid logs.
1240. Do you know the proposed line from Borenore to Forbes? I know the Cudal country. I have lived at Forbes for eighteen months.
1241. Do you know the land about Eugowra? I have been through it; all the land I was through was mountainous, except the frontage.
1242. Is there any timber in that district? That I cannot tell you.
1243. What is the distance from Cudal to the nearest point on this line? It is about 7 or 8 miles to Moranburn, where it is proposed to put the station. I lived halfway between the two places for six years.
1244. Are the principal farms in the Cudal district to the north or south of the township? There are a lot on both sides. I believe the principal ones are to the north. I was at Cudal before there were half-a-dozen farms at Bowan Park, and now there are a good few farms on that side. All the land from that down is in the hands of Jago Smith and others. The bulk of the agricultural land is on the north side, I think.
1245. *Mr. Lee*] I understand that you know the country pretty well between here and Bumberry? Yes.
1246. Do you know the route the rival line takes? I have a general idea of it. I know the country at Job's very well. It is very good land for cultivation—good grazing land, also. As you get away past Job's there is a fair, good, open country; there are large ridges in it, but it is good for cultivation.

William Ross, Esq., sworn and examined:—

1247. *Chairman*.] What is your occupation? I am doing nothing in particular at present. I have been engaged at squatting. I am living in Molong at present.
1248. How long have you been here? A little more than five years.*
1249. *Mr. Cox*.] Do you know much of the surrounding country? Yes; I know the general character of it.
1250. What distance from Molong, out westward, towards Parkes? I know it 80 miles out that way.
1251. Do you know the country west of Borenore and Cudal. No. I have not been much in there.
1252. Then you cannot say whether the line *via* Cudal or that *via* Parkes would best serve the inhabitants of this locality? I could not.
1253. Looking at the matter from a broad point of view, the question is how best to serve the greater number of people—we must not consider this or that locality? I think the line from here to Parkes would best serve the largest number.
1254. For what reason? In the first place it passes through a good country. It is generally equal to any land the railway is running through yet. I do not see, however, what right you have to go to Forbes to take the line down to Condobolin. Coming from Condobolin, people would be at Parkes as soon as they would be at Forbes, and all the distance between the two places would be saved.
1255. But would it not, at that rate, be rather foolish to go to Molong at all, having regard to the angle which has to be made in order to reach Sydney? We already have a line here from Orange, and it is more direct from here to Parkes than through Borenore.
1256. But I am speaking of the Lachlan valley generally? There are 20 miles from Parkes to Forbes of nearly level country; but if you are considering the people out further west, as I have said, I do not see why you want to go to Forbes.
1257. Do you know that the line from Forbes *via* Molong is 17 miles longer than the line *via* Cudal? I hear it said that is so, but I cannot say it myself.

31 (a)—E

1258.

* NOTE (on revision) :—I am but a little over five years living in Molong, but I have been in this district over forty-one years (within 25 miles of Molong). I am all but the father now of the district—few or none know it better. From here to Condobolin, from thence to near Bourke, viz., Nyngan, Cobar, all were alike a few years ago pretty familiar to me. I also know the general character of the country from here to Cowra and thence to Forbes. So I have no hesitation in saying that the line from here to Parkes is the proper route for a railway. As for the Cudal route, it would suit a few people about Orange and Cudal, but not the colony in general. The line from here will pay for construction at £5,000 exceedingly well. I am an old surveyor, and can work such problems with any man in the colony. This £15,000 of loss on this line is but a supposition, and such I cannot see or yet believe in.

Mr. W. J.
Windred.

24 Feb., 1890.

W. Ross,
Esq.

24 Feb., 1890.

- W. Ross,
Esq.
24 Feb., 1890.
1258. Are you aware that the Railway Commissioners have made an estimate showing that the country will lose £15,000 a year by making this line? I cannot see how they arrive at that conclusion. I do not think the line will cost £5,700 per mile from here to Parkes. I think it will be one of the cheapest lines we have made, from what I know of the country.
1259. Will the country be justified in incurring the expenditure? I think so. I think the line will give a very much better return than is estimated. Then, again, we should not have to pay so much money for the land on this line as will have to be paid for the land on the other line.*
1260. Is there any other information you desire to give? With regard to the stock trucking from here, I desire to say that there is far more stock trucked from here than is supposed, but the yards are in a very inconvenient site, and the owners object to them very much. I have had experience of the yards for the last two years, and I know what has come in and what has gone out. The trucking yards are badly constructed.
1261. Have any representations been made to the Commissioners on the subject? Yes; an officer was here the other day looking at the yards.
1262. You think that if the traffic were more fostered it would increase? Yes; to the north of Parkes there is plenty of land for many miles, right away to the head of the Bogan. As I have said, the stock-yards are a very great drawback, the sheep and cattle get knocked about so much before you can get them in.

George Cochrane, Esq., J.P., sworn and examined:—

- G. Cochrane,
Esq.
24 Feb., 1890.
1263. *Mr. Lee.*] You are a Justice of the Peace, residing at Borenore? Yes.
1264. How long have you been residing in the district? Nineteen years.
1265. What is your present occupation? I am a farmer and a grazier. My chief holding is in the Molong District, although I live at Borenore.
1266. Are you a conditional purchaser? Yes.
1267. Do you know the proposed railway from here to Parkes? I cannot say; I have been over the whole route, but I know the country it passes through pretty well.
1268. Have you simply ridden over the route? Yes, before the country was fenced in. I have a general knowledge of the country and its capabilities.
1269. You are intimately acquainted with the land in the vicinity of Borenore, I suppose? Yes.
1270. Do you know much of it thence towards Cudal? Yes.
1271. What are the relative qualities of the land in this immediate district and in the districts of Borenore and Cudal? On the Molong and Parkes line, until you get to the other side of Meranburn, it is open good country—good agricultural and grazing country; then the line descends through Croker's Range; it is not quite so good there, but it is all valuable for some purpose or other. When you get through the ranges you fall into the head of the Billabong; from the Billabong into Parkes there is no better land in the colony for agricultural and grazing purposes. On the other side, starting from Borenore, there is fairly good country until you get to Long's Corner, on the other side of Toogong, but the line passes through large freehold estates, and there are few farms upon it. There are a good many farms on both sides of Cudal, but there are very few after you pass that place. Although there are some at Eugowra, there is a great deal of inferior country about Eugowra. Between Eugowra and Forbes there is good country, but it is subject to flood.
1272. Are there as many selectors and settlers on the various parts of the Cudal route as there are on this route? Certainly not.
1273. Is there as much land available there for the people to settle on in the future as there is on this line? No.
1274. But supposing the large estates were cut up? That might make a difference, but we have no guarantee at present that it will be done.
1275. At present, however, there is no large quantity of Crown lands available? No; there are a few reserves.
1276. Are there any pastoral leaseholds? I am not sure; there may be some leasehold at Davy's Plains.
1277. If these were to fall in shortly, would they not be taken up? There is no doubt about that.
1278. I suppose that, having as much patriotism as most people, you would not like to see the country construct a line which would be of very little benefit to the people? Certainly not; I should recommend the line which would pay the best.
1279. Now, as a patriot, tell us which line you think should be constructed in the interests of the country? Without doubt the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes; I make that reply without any hesitation.

Mr. Joseph Jefferis Morris, District Court Bailiff, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. J.
Morris.
24 Feb., 1890.
1280. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am bailiff in the District Court.
1281. Have you been here long? Since 1854.
1282. Have you held your present position long? About thirteen or fourteen years.
1283. *Mr. Dowel.*] What was your previous occupation? I was a policeman first, and subsequently, in an interregnum, I was a farmer.
1284. Have you a good knowledge of the district through which the line will pass? A tolerably fair knowledge. I have not followed the line closely. I do not know the staked part of it.
1285. Do you know the country from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? Yes.
1286. You have heard to-day's evidence;—do you endorse what has been said as to the good quality of the land? I think so, generally.
1287. And also as to the extent of the settlement? Yes.
1288. Is the settlement of a permanent character? I think so.
1289. Are the settlers in a fairly prosperous condition? I think the greater portion of them are.
1290. Do you know anything about the rival route? I am acquainted with that part of the district.
1291. Is the country there similar to the Molong country? A part of it—between Borenore and Long's Corner—the character of the land is tolerably good.
1292. Do you know anything of the district of Forbes? I do not know anything beyond. I have not been to Parkes for many years.
1293. Have you any new information to give? Well, the people in this district have been expecting this railway for the last ten or fifteen years. Many persons selected confidently expecting that a railway would be constructed, and if the line should be made from Molong to Parkes, I have no hesitation in saying that a very large addition will be made to the cultivation of the district.

Mr.

* NOTE (on revision):—This line, when made, will, I am certain, pay as well as any line yet constructed, and far superior to some that are constructed to the interior.

Mr. John Rubie, farmer, sworn and examined :—

1294. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer, residing about 9 miles from Molong, on the Mr. J. Rubie, Parkes Road.
1295. What size is your farm? I think 640 acres. I have 250 acres under cultivation this year. 24 Feb., 1890.
1296. What is the principal crop? Wheat.
1297. What sort of crop did you have? A very good crop.
1298. What is the average crop on your farm? About 20 bushels to the acre. If I could have cropped the whole this year I would have had 30 bushels, but it was knocked about by the storm.
1299. Do you usually have pretty good crops on your farm? I never had a bad one until last year.
1300. That was an exceptional year all over the colony? We always had good crops in the district up to last year.
1301. Taking one year with another, does your crop average anything like 20 bushels to the acre? I cannot say it does. Some years we get from 12 to 15 bushels, but on good and cultivated land you can get 20 bushels.
1302. What we want to get at is the average crop, taking one year with another? I should say 16 or 17 bushels.
1303. Is your farm a fair average of the farms round about you with regard to the quality of the soil? It is better than some, and not so good as others; I suppose you would call it an average farm.
1304. Do you know the country between here and Bumberry? I have gone along the public road coming from Parkes, but I know the lay of the country pretty well.
1305. Will your farm bear comparison with the ordinary run of land right through to Parkes,—is your land better or worse than that land? It is not by any means the best. There is land at Manildra Flats and Coate's Creek which is superior to mine.
1306. Do you make a fair living off your farm? Yes. I have had a great deal of expense, though. I am sorry to say, I had to get into debt through making necessary improvements on it, but I can make a living on it, and I hope to make a still better one.
1307. Do you keep any stock? Yes, but only dairy stock.
1308. If this line of railway were constructed from Molong, would it do much good to you and neighbouring farmers? I think we should be as well off again, not only in my vicinity, but further along the line. To begin with, we should put half as much again under cultivation.
1309. And you would be able to get your grain and produce to market more easily? Yes.
1310. Have you reaped any advantage from the construction of the Molong railway? Yes.
1311. And you imagine that if the railway were extended on to Parkes it would be of equal benefit to the farmers and you? Exactly.
1312. Have you a pretty good knowledge of the farms, as a rule, around this district? I know them pretty well. There are very few with which I am not acquainted.
1313. Are the farmers in a prosperous condition, or are they heavily in debt? I cannot speak about their indebtedness, but judging from appearances I should say they are all very comfortable.
1314. There is no cause to fear that the farmers are in such a condition that they are likely to give up farming? No; I think it is likely they will increase.
1315. Have you noticed whether they have increased the area under crop within the last few years? We all have increased as much as we could, in anticipation of this railway being made, and it is a disappointment to a great many that it has not been constructed.
1316. Are you not getting a better price for your wheat than you did before the railway was here? Yes, a good deal.
1317. Do you know that on the only run where there is any chance of much selection taking place—the Mendagery Run—a great many selectors have sold out to the squatters? A few have done so, but only those who have not much mind to work. A number seemed disinclined to do any work.
1318. You think these weeds have nearly all gone from the district? I hope so. There is a good deal of land called mountainous between here and Parkes, much of which is superior to the flat land. Some of the stone ridges would make excellent vineyards. Within a mile or two of Molong there are ridges which, if trenched and planted with grape-vines and fig-trees, would produce some of the finest fruit grown in the colony. I do not think sufficient importance has been attached to the mineral resources of the district. I know there are millions of tons of ironstone here, and I have very little doubt that some of the stone between here and Parkes will be found to contain gold.

Henry Samuel Marsden Betts, Esq., Mayor of Molong, sworn and examined :—

1319. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am Mayor of Molong.
1320. What is your occupation? I am a grazier. I have resided here on and off for twenty-five years. I have been requested by Dr. Ross to give some evidence as to the place I know least. H. S. M. Betts, Esq. 24 Feb., 1890.
1321. Do you confine yourself to pastoral pursuits? No; I have done a good deal of farming as well, being close to the railway.
1322. Can you make money at both pursuits? Yes.
1323. Do you find the two combined more profitable than one alone? Yes; my time is fully occupied. Were it not for cultivation, I should not do as well as I do.
1324. Do you find any occasion to use manure? Not the least; the land is too rich.
1325. So that your pastoral pursuits are not carried on in conjunction with your agricultural pursuits? No.
1326. What do you grow? Lucerne, wheat, and hay.
1327. Your chief occupation is sheep-farming? Yes; I cultivate to fill up my time.
1328. This interest has been a successful one in the neighbourhood? Yes.
1329. All who have followed it have done very well? Yes.
1330. Are you aware whether the selections taken up on pastoral holdings have been largely purchased by the lessees? I do not think largely, but they have to some extent.
1331. Does not that go to prove that farming is a profitable occupation? Yes.
1332. If it were not a profitable occupation the selectors would only be too glad to sell to the pastoral lessees? Yes. A few who have not cultivated the soil properly have cleared out. If they cultivate and expect to get good crops and do not get them, then they are disgusted, and are very glad to clear out.
1333. But all these farmers make a good living? I think so. 1334.

H. S. M.
Betts, Esq.
24 Feb., 1890.

1334. They have occasionally to contend with bad seasons? Yes.
1335. But as a rule they are fairly prosperous? Yes.
1336. Is there a considerable desire to select upon the leasehold areas and reserves which it is expected will be thrown open? I have heard so.
1337. I suppose you have heard the estimated cost of the line to Forbes *via* Parkes, and that the Railway Commissioners have estimated that the annual loss will be £15,000;—do you think there is any prospect in the immediate future of the line being made to pay? I think so.
1338. In what way would the revenue be made up? Both from sheep-farming and from agriculture. I think there will be a great deal of produce taken to the railway which is not grown now extensively owing to the want of railway communication.
1339. You think production will be increased very largely? Fully 100 per cent., I should think.
1340. How long will it take to produce that result? It would be hard to say. It would depend on the time the line was in construction. As soon as the line was constructed the district would commence immediately to increase the area under cultivation. I have no doubt the railway would at once commence to make good returns.
1341. Although we are told that the line *via* Parkes to Forbes would not pay, it has also been stated that the line *via* Cudal would commence to pay immediately after its construction? I do not think that is the case. I think this line is just as capable, if not more capable, of paying than the Cudal line.
1342. Do you know the country between here and Parkes? For about 20 miles.
1343. I suppose it is first-class agricultural land? With the exception of a few pine ridges.
1344. Are there many people who would benefit by that line of route to the north of the line who are not benefited by the extension already made to Molong? I think they would commence to benefit directly you pass Garra, 7 or 8 miles from Molong.
1345. You think the line will begin to gather traffic at that point? Yes.
1346. Do you know the route surveyed *via* Borenore and Cudal? I only know a portion of the route.
1347. Do you know the number of large estates through which that line passes? It goes right through three or four of them, I believe. The line to Molong I may say would drain a larger area of country. The people at Garra and Cumnock, for instance, would come in. When you get to Cudal you get into the Cowra and Camowindra country. A very little south of Cudal the people begin to go to Cowra.
1348. What route will best serve the bulk of the alienated land? Looking at the map, I should think the Cudal line would.
1349. Who owns the larger portion of the country through which this line passes? Although it is alienated, it is in large estates. Toogong is nearly all private property; then there are Davy's Plains, Borec-Nabonne, and Boree-Eyrang.
1350. The Molong line passes through no station property? I believe not.
1351. Do you know how much land has been purchased by the lessee of the Brymedura Estate? I have no idea.
1352. The owner has not taken the same advantage of his opportunities as have the owners of other leases? No; I do not think so. With regard to the land I now occupy, within two and a half years the whole of it will be cut up and sold in farms, I believe. There are 5,000 acres, and it is on the Ironbarks-road.
1353. It is in contemplation, you say, to cut it up and throw it in the market? I believe at least a half of it will be cut up. I have noticed that in two years I am to give up the other half, so I suppose that will be sold also.
1354. What is the value of that land? Some of it is amongst the finest agricultural land you could possibly get. The flats will produce 70 bushels of corn to the acre.
1355. The sale of that land would tend to increase the population? It would increase it considerably. I also think the mining interest would be largely developed if we had a railway; Copper Hill and places further on would be developed.

Mr. George Cochrane, Esq., J.P., sworn and further examined:—

- G. Cochrane,
Esq.
24 Feb., 1890.
1356. *Mr. Lee.*] I believe you have some further statement to make to the Committee? I forgot to tell you that I know of 270 acres of land which have sent away by the bag 5,800 bushels of wheat.*
1357. That is the produce of this year? Yes.
1358. Where is it situated? On the Mendagery Creek.
1359. What was done with the wheat? Most of it came to Molong.
1360. Was it sold here? Yes; it passed through Mr. Black's hands.
1361. Do you send your grain to the metropolitan markets? Not directly.
1362. Or to any markets outside of Molong? We sometimes send to Cudal; but it is not a good market.
1363. Could you, with the existing rates for grain, send your wheat to Sydney and sell it at a profit? Yes; and we should be still better able to do so if the proposed railway were constructed.
1364. Would the line come close to the farm of which you have been speaking? Yes; it comes within a mile of one of my boundaries; I should save about 15 miles of haulage.

Andrew Ross, Esq., M.D., M.P., sworn and examined:—

- A. Ross, Esq.,
M.D., M.P.
24 Feb., 1890.
1365. *Mr. Dowd.*] You represent this district in the Legislative Assembly? Yes.
1366. How long have you resided here? Thirty-three years.
1367. You have had a large experience of the whole of the district traversed by the proposed line? Yes.
1368. Is the report of the Railway Commissioners with regard to this part of the country correct? I think it is not. Some portion of the line is of a rocky character, but it does not extend for any considerable distance. There would be a large amount of settlement as soon as the leasehold areas are thrown open in July. As you have already heard to-day, there is a great amount of settlement here already, and there is a large amount of produce taken off the land.
1369. The Commissioners say that after leaving Molong the character of the country changes, being of a rocky nature for a considerable distance between Molong and Parkes, and that, therefore, but little revenue can be expected from local traffic, the settlement *en route* being limited? I do not believe it is correct. As the representative of the district, I place no reliance upon it.
- 1370.

* NOTE (on revision):—The 270 acres abovementioned are a portion of my own farm.

1370. The Commissioners go on to say:—"We are of opinion that the extension from Molong to Parkes could not be recommended except as a means of opening up an admittedly good agricultural district round and north of Parkes, but we would rather favour a line from Cowra, or Young, to Forbes, and from thence to Parkes, which would run through fairly good country, and give the residents a chance of either the Southern or the Western line for business purposes;"—do you think that report as a whole is a fairly correct one as regards the capabilities of this district? I do not think the gentlemen who take, so to speak, a bird's eye view of the district can be so well versed in its resources as those who have spent their lives in it. In the first place these gentlemen get their information from secondary sources. I do not think they have taken into consideration the revenue that would come upon the railway which now goes from Forbes to Cowra.

A. ROSS, Esq.,
M.D., M.P.
24 Feb., 1890.

1371. Do you think they are right in recommending that the line should be taken from Cowra or Young to Forbes? I do not think so, because the country, I believe, is subject to flood, and would be expensive in maintenance, if constructed. I have seen the flood-marks at Eugowra, on the Mendagery. The Belabula River often overflows.

1372. You know that the railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes would be 11 miles less in construction than the Cudal route? I should put it down at 13, because the line is already constructed to Borenore. It would save so much construction, compared with the other route.

1373. You think it has the advantage that there would be 11 miles less of construction? I certainly think so. There would not only be a saving in expenditure but in the working expenses of the line afterwards.

1374. I observe that on one occasion you furnished the Minister with certain statistics, and you said, among other things, that if the Cudal route were adopted it would be found to pass through 30 miles of private land;—is that correct? It is, I believe, about that from Cheeseman's Creek to Long's Corner. I have never measured the road, but to the best of my belief it is about that distance.

1375. Would that line pass through much country which is liable to be flooded? It would, I believe, from Eugowra, that is, from the Southern Cross into Forbes.

1376. You said on one occasion that the line would be longer than the other route, and would serve fewer people;—is that correct? I am not a competent judge; I am not an engineer or a surveyor. I only go by what appears in official documents, and the quotations in the documents to which you refer were made from official sources.

1377. But from your knowledge of the district you would say the information you give is to the best of your belief correct? I could not say positively.

1378. Do you think there are more people on the Cudal line? There may be a trifle more, but I do not think the line *via* Cudal would benefit the Canowindra people. I have always understood that the residents of Canowindra have preferred the line going from somewhere in the vicinity of the Sheet of Barks, through Canowindra, and thence to Goolagong and on to Eugowra and Forbes. They advocate that line for the purpose of bringing themselves nearer to the metropolitan market. If the Cudal line were adopted as a means of getting their produce to the metropolitan market they would have to go north to get to it, and would not be going towards the market at all.

1379. As a representative of the people, having a certain sense of responsibility for the expenditure of public money, do you think this Committee would be justified in recommending the construction of this Molong to Parkes railway? I have every reason to believe from my long residence here that it would be a good paying line. I have known the people here for years. They are a good class of settlers, and I believe they will support the line if it is constructed. Besides that, when the line goes to Parkes it will take the Upper Bogan, the traffic of which now goes to the Dubbo station.

1380. But that would be robbing Peter to pay Paul? Yes, but if that traffic went to Dubbo it would be going north in place of east, and towards the metropolitan market.

1381. Would the construction of a line to Parkes materially increase the settlement and tend to produce revenue? I think so, considerably. The line has done so since it has been extended to Molong.

1382. Has more land been put under cultivation? Well, the line would open up the country better.

1383. You have heard the evidence given to-day as to the richness of the soil and the capabilities of the district, so far as the growth of cereals and fruit is concerned; do you endorse that evidence? I do.

Henry Harold Septimus Chippendall, Esq., sworn and further examined:—

1384. *Chairman.*] I understand that you desire to give further information about the leasehold areas within a radius of 10 miles of the proposed line? I have scaled the maps, and I should say the area would be about 30,000 acres. So far as the Cudal line is concerned, I could show the Committee the maps applying to that portion of the district, if it would be of any value.

H. H. S.
Chippendall,
Esq.
24 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Jonathan Atkinson, senior-constable, sworn and examined:—

1385. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am senior-constable, stationed at Molong.

1386. Did you collect the returns of wheat production handed in by Mr. Wren? I compiled them for the whole of the Molong electorate.

1387. You know the proposed railway from Borenore to Forbes? I do not.

Mr. J.
Atkinson.
24 Feb., 1890.

1388. The returns of wheat, I see, give the total area cultivated at 22,049 acres, the total area under wheat at 16,363 acres, the total yield of wheat at 292,300 bushels, the average of wheat per acre at 17½ bushels;—are these figures correct? Yes.

1389. Then again the acres cultivated in the districts of Cudal and Toogong are said to be 13,410, the acres under wheat 10,766, and the number of bushels of wheat produced 206,399;—are they correct? Yes.

1390. Then as regards Canowindra, the acres cultivated are said to be 3,137, the acres under wheat 2,265, and the total number of bushels produced 42,104; these give the following totals:—16,547 acres cultivated, 13,031 acres under wheat, and 248,503 bushels produced. You are sure that these figures are correct as applying to these particular districts? Yes.

1391. Now the totals given for Molong are as follows:—Acres cultivated 22,049, acres under wheat 16,363, and the number of bushels of wheat produced 292,300;—are they correct? Yes.

1392. Are the statistics for Cudal, Toogong, and Canowindra so collected that they represent the whole of the land right up to the railway? The boundary of the collecting district of Molong, Cudal, and Toogong is the Boree-to-Parkes road, which is close to the proposed railway.

1393. And the quantity shown here as from the Molong District is the north of that road? Yes.

TUESDAY,

TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at The Assembly Hall, Manildra, at 4.15 p.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Charles MacDonell Stuart, Esq., civil engineer, sworn and examined:—

C. M. Stuart, Esq. 1394. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am a civil engineer. I have been in the service of the Government for the last seven years.

25 Feb., 1890. 1395. Where are you now stationed? I am stationed in Manildra. I am surveying a deviation from Bocoble Gap through to Meranburn.

1396. Will that deviation make the line longer than the original surveyed line? They will be as nearly as possible the same length.*

1397. What grades will you have? The worst grade will be 1 in 60.

1398. Will that deviation bring the line in closer proximity to Cudal than the original surveyed line? It will bring it about half of that distance.

1399. What is the distance between the township of Cudal and the nearest point on your line, as surveyed? I could not exactly say, but I have been told 4 miles. I think it is more like 6.

1400. Where does your junction take place at the Parkes end? Just this side of Meranburn, about 1½ miles from here.

1401. You have no engineering difficulties? No serious difficulties.

1402. Are you permanently staking the line? No.

1403. It is a flying survey? It is something better than that. I am doing it in such a way that a very little more will make it a permanent survey.

1404. You are confident, however, that the line will reduce the grade to 1 in 60? Yes.

1405. What is the ruling grade of the original survey? I believe it is 1 in 40.

1406. Do you know whether, from where your junction takes place at Meranburn on to Parkes, there is a grade on that portion of 1 in 40? I do not know—I have not seen the place.

1407. You have not been over it? No.

1408. Would the construction of this line, with your deviation, serve the people of Cudal? I think so, fairly. It would certainly serve them better than the old line, it would bring them so much nearer.

1409. Can you state the distance from the railway line at which people are likely to be served by its construction? No.

1410. *Mr. Lee.*] Have you any plans? Yes; I have a plan of my deviation, as far as it is finished.

1411. Do you recognize the maps containing the survey of the staked line from Molong to Forbes? Yes.

1412. Will you describe your deviation, commencing at a certain point, and indicate the prominent points where it touches the original line again? Starting at Bryant's Flat, opposite 216 miles 20 chains, on the old line, you go up the flat and get to a summit at block 92; there is a gradient up to here of 1 in 60. From that point you run down with a gradient of 1 in 66 to Bocoble Gap; you pass through the gap and rise to another summit at allotment 56; you run from that at a gradient of 1 in 60 down to Petersen's, you follow the flats from Petersen's until you get to Flash Jack's Dam with a flat gradient; from Flash Jack's Dam down to Manildra you have a gradient of approximately 1 in 60—that will be the ruling gradient; then you cross the Mendagery Creek, and you rise from that until you meet the old survey at about 1¼ miles beyond the creek, at a ruling gradient of 1 in 60. This point would be 228 miles 20 chains; it is about half a mile this side of Meranburn.

1413. The length of the deviation is as nearly as possible the same length as the permanently-staked line? 1¼ miles longer.

1414. What was your object in leaving the permanently-staked line, and going so great a distance from it? To try and get a better gradient, to avoid the hills at Lord's Gap; the gradient there is 1 in 40.

1415. Have you examined the permanently-staked line from Molong to Manildra? No.

1416. Have you examined it at Lord's Gap? No; I have only been over the gap.

1417. Are you prepared to say whether that grade can be reduced? No, I am not. Mr. Alexander is supposed to have examined it thoroughly, and he suggested this route.

1418. What is the greatest distance from the bow of your deviation to point 224 miles of the staked line? Three miles.

1419. Could you recognize that point indicated in the deviation? It is just at Wren's house.

1420. Consequently your deviation will be 3 miles closer to the Cudal residents than the permanently-staked line? Three miles in a direct line, and rather more by the road.

1421. You have already sworn that the distance from that point is approximately 6 miles? I spoke only from hearsay.

1422. Have you made observations as to the nature of the country, and the character of the settlement you have passed through? All the ground that is fit for cultivation is settled upon.

1423. Would your deviation serve as great a number of the residents of the district as would the permanently-staked line? If you combine the Cudal people with it I should say it would. It is not as convenient to the people living at Garra. I presume there are more people living at Garra than there are on this deviation.

1424. But your deviation will be a considerable distance from the people living north of the permanently-staked line;—it would not be so convenient to them? No.

1425. Are the bulk of the residents on the northern or the southern side of the staked line? I could not say.

1426. Your main object was to obtain a better line, I presume? Yes.

1427. You did not have in view the interests of the public? No.

1428. You were endeavouring to improve the existing line? Yes.

1429. *Mr. Dowel.*] How long have you been engaged in this work? Since the end of the first week in January. I expect to get it finished about the 20th March.

1430.

* NOTE (on revision) :—Should have said 1¼ miles longer.

1430. You say you have improved the grades, and got them down to 1 in 60? Yes.

1431. What have you done with the curves? The worst curve is 24 chains radius;—that is, as far as I have gone. I may have worse.

1432. Have you been over the permanently staked line from the point of your deviation to the end of it? I have not been over it at all.

1433. Do you think the cost of the line you are now working on will be anything more than the cost of the permanently staked line? I think the cost and the length would be about the same, but I happen to get a better gradient and better curves.

1434. Those are the advantages you claim? Yes.

1435. At any point of your deviation have you made provision for any siding or station? No further than that the stations will go where the grade is best suitable for them.

1436. At what mileage do you propose to put platforms and stations? Opposite Petersen's place, on the flat—at about 223 miles.

1437. And you think, from such information as you can gain, that that would be a good and useful locality to serve the residents of Cudal? Yes.

C. M.
Stuart, Esq.
25 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Daniel M'Innes, storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

1438. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a storekeeper, at Meranburn. I also have the Post-office.

1439. *Mr. Lee.*] How long have you been living there? Thirteen and a half years.

1440. Have you lived in any other part of the district? No.

1441. What is the population of Meranburn? That I can hardly tell you, but my son will be able to give you full particulars.

1442. What is the class of settlement in the district? Farming and grazing.

1443. What kind of farming? Wheat-growing principally.

1444. What is done with the produce? It is taken to Molong chiefly.

1445. For consumption in Molong? It is generally bought by millers and sent into Sydney.

1446. Is your market in the other direction, out towards Parkes? No; they grow sufficient at Parkes to supply themselves.

1447. And the produce that is raised for sale in and about your district finds its way to Molong for consumption or for shipment to larger markets? Yes.

1448. Do you know the proposed railway route from Molong to this point? I have been over the best part of the road.

1449. Have you been over the line itself? I have not followed the staked line itself.

1450. Do you know the settlement between here and Molong to the north of the permanently staked line? About Garra and round about there.

1451. It is under consideration as to whether a deviation should be made from the permanently staked line, 2 miles this side of Molong, by way of Petersen's selection, to Meranburn, passing close to Wren's selection? Yes.

1452. Do you think that line would be a greater benefit to the larger number of selectors? I could not say for certain. I have not been over that part of the road for some time.

1453. You are not prepared to give any evidence as to that deviation? No.

1454. Supposing the line were constructed according to the permanent survey, how would it suit the people in your district? Either would suit our district. The only thing is that the survey, as at present staked out, would suit the people of Garra better—that is, the people to the north of the line.

1455. I am speaking of your own district—you have no feeling one way or the other? No.

1456. Supposing this line were constructed, would not the farmers and others in your district be likely to use it? Decidedly.

1457. For what purpose? For carting away their produce.

1458. How do they get their produce to market now? By teams.

1459. Are the roads good? Some of them.

1460. Do the farmers own the teams? Some do; some are engaged teams.

1461. Suppose the line were constructed, would not the farmers still cart their produce to Molong, or would they use the railway? They would send it by train, of course.

1462. Why? Because it would be cheaper.

1463. And would they get their goods back by train from Sydney? I should think so; I know I would myself.

1464. Do you happen to know the number of letters passing through your office in the course of a year? I made out a list yesterday of all the letters posted.

1465. Do you keep the rain gauge officially for the observatory? Yes.

1466. And the returns you are able to give as to the fall of rain we can accept as being accurate? They are the daily returns.

1467. In 1889 you had 120 wet days, giving 29 inches 28 points? Yes.

1468. In January, 1890, you had five wet days, giving 64 points, and in February, 18 wet days giving 7 inches 50 points? Yes.

1469. I see you had 6,305 letters posted, 108 parcels, and 3,321 newspapers? Yes.

1470. You had 169 money orders received, representing a value of £342 7s. 9d.; 21 savings bank deposits, of the value of £99 11s. 3d.; twenty-nine money orders paid, of the value of £118 1s. 3d.; three savings banks payments, of the value of £12 10s.—are these figures correct? Yes.

1471. What is your average rainfall? I have only had the gauge since April the year before last.

1472. During your long residence you must have observed the rainfall—has it been sufficient to enable the farmers to cultivate their land? Within a year or two I cannot say for certain, but I think they have only missed their crops for two years. On one occasion, that is the year before last, the crops were absolutely spoiled by the rain. In the other year the land was cultivated, but the drought spoilt the crops.

1473. Has there been such a thing as a total failure of the crops? No, I do not think so, although we have had almost a failure.

1474. What is the average return of wheat per acre in the district? For this season it would be from 30 to 20 bushels.

Mr.
D. M'Innes.
25 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. D. M'Innes.
25 Feb., 1890.
1475. Is this considered a good season? Yes.
1476. What is the general average? From 15 to 17 bushels.
1477. Is agriculture on the increase in your district? Yes.
1478. Do the individual farmers cultivate a larger portion of their areas than they did five years ago? Decidedly. They produce wheat and even maize, when the climate is suitable.
1479. Are the farmers gradually increasing their agricultural areas? Yes.
1480. They are not putting stock in the place of agriculture? No; each farmer is increasing the area for agricultural purposes each year.
1481. Are the settlers of a permanent character? Yes.
1482. They are not holding for purposes of speculation or on behalf of others;—in other words, they are not acting as dummies? No. Most of them hold their own farms and have been living here for years.
1483. I suppose farms do occasionally change hands? Yes.
1484. What is the average price per acre obtained when they do sell? It is according to situation—sometimes it is £1, sometimes 30s., and some ask more.
1485. It would depend to a certain extent upon the number of years they had held the land and upon the amount of improvements made? Yes.
1486. The price you give will be exclusive of the unpaid balance to the Crown? I have known as much as £3 per acre given adjoining the township.
1487. *Mr. Dowd.*] What is the rate of carriage from your township to Molong? About 1s. a cwt.—£1 per ton.
1488. What is the size of the holdings, generally, in this district? They are of all sizes—from 80 to some thousands of acres.
1489. Who holds the thousands of acres? Well, Mr. Cockram, who combines agriculture and grazing. Then there is Mr. Charles Miller.
1490. On which side of the line are these properties situated? Some on the south and some on the north.
1491. But at what distance from Molong? Cockram's is about 18 miles and Miller's about 15 miles.
1492. These are the only large holdings on the whole line from Molong to Parkes? No, there is the Brymedura station; there are some thousands of acres of freehold there. Then Mr. Gosper, living some 7 miles from here, has a good large holding of from 1,200 to 1,500 acres.
1493. Are these areas to which you refer leasehold areas from the Crown, or freehold properties? Most of those I am speaking of are selections, with the exception of Brymedura station.
1494. Are there no Crown lands through which the line would pass or which would be served by it? On the Brymedura station, I believe, there is a large quantity of land in the leasehold area.
1495. Which as you are aware will be thrown open for selection in a few months? Yes.
1496. Will it be taken up? I am sure of it. I know a number of people who are now ready to have a try for it.
1497. Are they *bona fide* men likely to cultivate the soil? Yes.
1498. You think this line would be the means of increasing traffic on the railway, and therefore contributing to its revenue? Decidedly.
1499. Are all the holdings you know of, of a permanent character? Yes.
1500. They are not likely to revert to pastoral purposes? Not that I am aware of. We cannot tell what the future may bring forth, but I do not think so.
1501. They have every appearance of remaining permanent holdings? Yes.
1502. Do you know the character of the soil? As far as I have seen it is chiefly red loam.
- 1503-4. Is it suitable for vineyards and orchards? Yes. I can prove that myself from my own garden. It has occurred to me that in speaking just now of Cockram's selection, I should have told you that he has a leasehold attached to his holding. Cockram's sons are, I believe, working it.

Mr. Charles Augustus Miller, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. C. A. Miller.
25 Feb., 1890.
1505. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer and grazier residing at Manildra.
1506. Are you an old resident? Yes, I have been here for 18 years.
1507. *Mr. Cox.*] What is the extent of your holding? 4,000 acres, partly purchased land and partly leasehold.
1508. Do you cultivate largely? We have done in the past, but not for the last few years.
1509. What is the extent of your cultivation? We have none in this year at all.
1510. What do you graze? Sheep, and some cattle.
1511. Why did you cease cultivating your land? We found that it paid better to grow wool and cattle than wheat.
1512. Do you not think it is desirable to combine the two things? If a man has grown up sons, or if labour were cheaper it might pay, but if a man has to employ labour I do not think it is cheaper—that is my experience.
1513. You think that only those farmers who can employ their own labour can make a profit out of wheat? That is so, until labour gets cheaper.
1514. Do you know that there are some farmers in this district cultivating 300 and 400 acres? Yes.
1515. Do they not find it profitable? I could not say, I do not think they do.
1516. Do you not think it could be made profitable by the employment of machinery? It is possible. I should prefer, at the present price of wool, to graze sheep.
1517. Do you think railway communication would tend to make wheat-growing more profitable? I think it would.
1518. We have had it in evidence that it costs £1 a ton to take wheat from here to Molong—is that the case? It costs 1s. a bag.
1519. That would be only 10s. a ton? Yes, but if you get goods out you have to pay 1s. a cwt.
1520. When you were engaged in agriculture did you keep a correct return of your outgoings and incomings? Yes. For the first few years when we first came up here prices were much better, but since wheat has gone down to 2s. 6d. per bushel we find that it does not pay, and we have therefore ceased cultivating it.
1521. Is that price all you get by delivering wheat in Molong? Yes; and then we have to run the risk of seasons.

1522. The previous two years were calamitous to the farmers? Yes.
1523. So that the loss or one year is the gain of another? Yes. We do not think there is much in it.
1524. Do you know the Cudal country? I know a good part of it, from Borenore to Toogong, and from Eugowra into Forbes.
1525. You know the country between Orange and Cudal? Yes. Some of it is very good country, and some of it is very mountainous.
1526. Hilly and rocky? Yes—unfit for cultivation.
1527. How many persons are engaged in agriculture in the Cudal district proper and in the Manildra district? It depends upon where you draw the line of the Manildra district. The Cudal people claim right up to us.
1528. How far is Cudal from Manildra? Eight miles by road.
1529. In the estimates made of the produce from these two districts, where is the line drawn between the two? At the Parkes-road.
1530. So that the Cudal people claim up to the Parkes Road? Yes; all the way.
1531. Did you hear the evidence given just now by Mr. Steuart. It is proposed by him to make a deviation, carrying the line 3 miles east of the present line;—would that benefit or damage the Manildra people to any extent? It would not damage them—it would make the distance no greater. It would be all the same to the people here.
1532. Is the place where we are now sitting the centre of the Manildra district? Yes.
1533. Is there much cultivation from this place inward towards Parkes? There is a good bit. You do not see it on the road, but there is a good bit off the road.
1534. How far does this good arable land extend towards Parkes? It is good land for 8 miles; then there is a ridge to the left of it, but there is a large tract of good land at Reedy Creek and Mowra.
1535. That is towards Toogong? Yes.
1536. How do these people living 8 miles beyond fare with regard to their agricultural produce? I think they bring it into Molong.
1537. Does that make much difference in the expense? It nearly doubles it. It is a bad road also.
1538. They have great difficulties to contend with in getting their produce to market? Yes.
1539. If the line were constructed from Borenore to Cudal, and thence to Eugowra, would it serve those people we are now speaking of? I could not say—I do not know where the line goes. There is rough country between these places and Mandagery and Toogong.
1540. Is there a range? Yes.
1541. How far would this proposed line run from your property? About 1 mile.
1542. That is the present staked line? Yes. My property is on the north of the proposed staked line.
1543. The deviation would be still further away? No, because it goes into the old staked line.

Christian Miller, Esq., J.P., sworn and examined:—

1544. *Chairman.*] You are a Justice of the Peace? Yes.
1545. What is your occupation? I am a farmer and general dealer residing at Manildra. I shall have been here for about eighteen years next September.
1546. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know the permanently-staked line from Molong to Forbes? Yes.
1547. Do you know what is termed the rival route *via* Cudal and Eugowra? I know a portion of it.
1548. You have a considerable knowledge of the whole district? I think more than anyone else in the district.
1549. Which route do you think should be constructed in the public interest? Of course this line answers my purpose, but if I were living at Bourke or Goulburn I should say it is the line which ought to be constructed in the public interest. It is the proper road to Parkes.
1550. From your knowledge of the various people settled on the land, which line do you think would serve the larger number? We live on the Dividing Range, as it were, and we have an influx from both sides of the range. The district proper is really hidden from the public road. The high ground, I take it, would make a line cheap in construction, and we should have feeders on each side for some considerable distance.
1551. Which route would serve the greater number of persons? I have no hesitation in saying that the proposed line would do so, because it strikes the centre as it were.
1552. What centres of population will it serve between Molong and Parkes? Garra, Burrawong, Gregra, Meranburn, Coate's Creek, Bindogandri, and thence to Parkes, besides Dilga and those places lying 15 and 17 miles to the north. Gumble is also to the north.
1553. These persons could not be served by railway in any other way? No. Wellington is much further than this place would be.
1554. Taking a circumference of 9 or 10 miles, the persons resident in the localities you have named would use the railway? Yes. It would also serve Bulderodgery.
1555. Do the places to which you refer contain a large population? Yes. I have witnessed the growth of all these places; I am one of the pioneers of the district. Taking into consideration the few years the place has been settled, I think the population is a large one. If railway facilities were offered to the place, I think it would progress in five years as much as it has progressed in the past eighteen.
1556. Is nearly all the land in these districts occupied? Yes. I think this district contains the most *bona-fide* settlers you could find.
1557. Not only is there a large population in the places to which you have referred, but the intervening country is occupied by *bona-fide* settlers? Yes; even the Brymedura Station is all conditionally purchased.
1558. I suppose they have done a bit of dummies there? It is possible. I think it is all purchased. I heard the previous manager say they had given up the leasehold.
1559. As regards the character of the country, I suppose you had some considerable experience in such matters previous to coming here? Yes; since 1857, at Bathurst.
1560. Would you call this country good, bad, or indifferent? I think it is a good average country, taking the climate combined with the soil. It will compare favourably with any other district.
1561. What do the farmers produce? Wheat, oats, maize, and fruit. We can succeed with potatoes early and late—in fact, this year I am going to prove that we can grow three crops instead of two.

C.
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1562. If this line were constructed, would there be any traffic in stock upon it? Yes. I have trucked myself from Molong 2,000. There would also be traffic in store stock.
1563. Will the railway increase that description of traffic? I do not know that it would diminish. As we are still so close to the metropolis, I think agriculture will out-do stock.
1564. But when there were greater facilities for sending stock to market, would they not be availed of? Yes.
1565. You know there is a large quantity of wool grown in the Parkes district;—would it come upon this railway? A great deal of the wool all along would. I am told that this year, and I know it for a fact, that wool has gone to Narromine, Borenore, and Cowra, on account of the bad state of a short piece of road here. The whole of that wool would have gone to Molong *via* Parkes, had there been a railway.
1566. The freight would have represented a considerable amount? Yes. There would be a lot of wool that now goes to Borenore *via* Forbes.
1567. Do you know anything of the land between Parkes and Condobolin? Not to any great extent. I know the Bogan and Forbes and Young very well. I have been down the Lachlan as far as Hillston.
1568. A large quantity of legitimate traffic would be brought to the Parkes station? Yes.
1569. You know the country between Parkes and Peak Hill? Yes.
1570. Is there considerable settlement in that country? Yes, and the right sort of settlement—farmers combining grazing with agriculture.
1571. A large number of people are permanently settled in that direction? Yes, with fair-sized holdings, that is, holdings up to 20,000 acres. I have always contended that these men are the best colonists, and they supply the fattest and best stock for market.
1572. Knowing the country so well, do you think the Peak Hill traffic can be legitimately brought to Parkes? It can go nowhere else.
1573. Do you know anything of Peak Hill itself? Not as a mining township, but I have travelled through it with stock. A person travelling with stock sees as much of the land as anyone can, and being a farmer and grazier, I have taken notice of it.
1574. During the last few years you have come in contact with persons with whom, no doubt, you have conversed about this line? Yes.
1575. What is the general opinion expressed? That this is the best line.
1576. You yourself are of that opinion? Yes.
1577. You think that all interests will be best served by its construction? Yes, and I should say so if I were an inhabitant of Queensland.
1578. Do you know what it is estimated to cost? I think about £6,000 a mile.
1579. Do you think the country is justified in incurring that expenditure, in face of the Commissioners' report that there will be a loss of £15,000 per annum? I should think that is over-stated from what I know of the country. There are no bridges or creeks to speak of, and I do not think the line will cost so big a sum per mile.
1580. Do you think the revenue for the line will exceed £11,000 per annum? When a line has feeders on both sides for many miles it seems to me it must pay. The persons to whom I refer have to avail themselves of the railway. The Parkes end is a very good end, and taking all things into consideration I do not see how the line can help paying.
1581. But you must consider also that the line includes the Forbes end as well;—I suppose there will be some considerable traffic from Forbes? Yes; I do not think the Commissioners' estimate is any too high.
1582. What does the passenger traffic on this line represent? I am a contractor for conveying the mails this year from Molong to Parkes—that is, I am one of two. I bought in, and after the tender was accepted two coaches ran here daily, and I have often seen them full of passengers. Mr. Nathan gave us £300 to have nothing to do with the contract; I believe if we had asked £600 we could have got it.
1583. In your estimation, then, the passenger traffic would be a considerable item? Yes.
1584. Can you say anything about the merchandise traffic? That has also been heavy.
1585. There are a large number of waggons and teams going to and from Parkes? Yes.
1586. In addition to the traffic you know of, would not a large amount of wool traffic be brought to Parkes which does not go there now? Yes.
1587. Do you think the live stock traffic will represent £800 in twelve months? A lot more to the good, I think. It would represent the Bogan and places north from here. There would be more traffic from Parkes alone than there is from Molong at present.
1588. Then you think the Commissioners' estimate for Molong should be increased? Yes.
1589. Knowing the district as you do, you think that although the line may not at present pay interest on capital and working expenses it would nevertheless do so ultimately? I am confident it will surpass all expectations.
1590. You think that in a short time it will pay? Yes.
1591. Now with regard to the price of the land? I have myself given within a short distance of this place £4 10s. per acre for 100 acres of conditionally-purchased land; the balance to pay would make it £5 5s., I have been offered £2 in cash per acre for 1,000 acres. If I offered to sell I think I could get £3. I know a man who paid £2 5s. for a good-sized holding ten years ago.
1592. *Chairman.*] Is land more valuable now than it was ten years ago? Yes; it is increasing in value. When we get a hard year there is a bit of a check, but this year will give land values a great impetus.
1593. Did the tender you put in for conveying the mails allow you to carry the mails with a one-horse vehicle if you chose? Yes; but there have never been less than four horses running.
1594. Although you could carry the mail itself with a one-horse vehicle, the passengers necessitated a four-horse coach? The mail could not be run with one horse. It is always carried by four horses. Even fifteen or sixteen years ago the carriage from here to Molong was £1 per ton; we pay 1s. a cwt. for flour.
1595. *Mr. Dowell.*] The land has increased considerably in value since you first came to the district? Yes.
1596. You think it would be still further increased by the construction of the railway? I think it would more than double itself in value.
1597. Then suppose the line did not pay, would the settlers be prepared to give an additional rate for the mere convenience and advantage derived from the railway? If the farmers had to pay on the freight per

per train the rate they pay the carriers now, the Government would be paid handsomely, and would have a large profit. The farmers would still produce as they have done heretofore.

1598. *Mr. Cox.*] Taking into consideration the Western line and the Cowra line, how would you best serve all the people in between the Molong and the Cudal line? I think the Molong extension would serve the greater number.

C.
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Mr. William Williams, farmer, sworn and examined:—

1599. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a farmer and publican, residing at Meranburn. I have resided there for seventeen years.

1600. Have you a good knowledge of the country? A fair knowledge.

1601. Do you know the proposed route of this line? Yes.

1602. You know where it is staked? Yes.

1603. Do you know anything about the proposed line from Borenore to Forbes? Yes.

1604. Which line should you think would serve the greater number of people? I think the line to Parkes and Forbes, from Molong.

1605. Do you know that by going *via* Molong to Parkes and Forbes people would have to travel 17 miles further to get to Sydney than if the line were taken the other way? I did not know that. I always understood that the line ran down Flagstone Creek, within 2 miles from Parkes, and direct to Forbes.

1606. But going to Orange from Parkes and Forbes you would have three sides of a square? Yes.

1607. Taking that into consideration, do you think the Molong to Parkes line would be the best line to construct in the interests of the general public? I do.

1608. Do you think Parkes is as important a centre of population as Forbes? Yes.

1609. Is there as large a population at Parkes as at Forbes? That I cannot say. I know a good deal of the country on the right and left of Parkes.

1610. Do you think Parkes has a greater outlet round it than Forbes? I think it is a better agricultural country than Forbes.

1611. Do you know Cudal? Yes.

1612. What is its population? That I do not know.

1613. Do you know there are more people living there than there are about here? I believe there are.

1614. Do you think this railway would serve the people of Cudal, if constructed? I believe it would.

1615. And the people of Toogong? Yes. The Flagstone Creek route would not be a great distance from Toogong. It is a bit of rough country, but still I think the road could be macadamized through there right enough.

1616. Do you know whether the country between Cudal and Toogong is better for agricultural purposes than the country about Manildra? No. I think the country at Manildra and Gregra is about as good as any I have seen in my travels.

1617. Is the population about here increasing or decreasing? Increasing, I believe.

1618. That is to say, there are more people living here than used to live here? Yes.

1619. Have you noticed any increase in population in the last year or two? Yes. Our school seems to tell us there has been an increase. There are something like sixty in attendance here; there were only about fifteen or sixteen some two or three years ago.

1620. Is the agricultural industry here paying—are the people satisfied with it—are they living well by it? Fairly, I think. I grew 400 bags of wheat this year.

1621. From how much land? I could not exactly say. I reckon the crop went about 18 bushels to the acre.

1622. What did it cost you to put it in? I disked a good quantity of it in. I do not think it cost me over 15s. an acre on the whole.

1623. Will you state the cost of disking and the cost of seed, and so forth? The seed cost me 5s. 3d. a bushel, and I put in one bushel to the acre.

1624. What did the disking and putting in cost per acre? About 2s. an acre.

1625. Did you reap it or strip it? I stripped it.

1626. What did that cost per acre? I had my own machine and horse. Perhaps it cost 2s. an acre.

1627. What would be the expense of bagging and carrying it off the ground? About 5s. an acre.

1628. That makes only about 14s. 3d. per acre;—would there not be any other expense? Not that I am aware of.

1629. What quantity of land had you under this crop? I should say approximately about 120 acres, but I could not be sure; I know I cut 8 acres, and it turned sixty-nine bags; about 40 acres were cut for hay.

Mr. Daniel Percy M'Innes, assistant storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

1630. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your occupation? I assist my father in his store at Meranburn.

1631. What information do you desire to give? I collected the statistics in this district.

1632. Did you go from farm to farm? Not in all cases; I met some on the road.

1633. You have not taken your statistics from any official returns? No.

1634. Are you aware that the residents of Cudal are also collecting statistics? Yes.

1635. Are any of the names in the list you produce contained in the Cudal statistics? I think so—some halfway between. I collected the statistics 5 miles on each side of the proposed line.

1636. Where did you start? At Mandagery Creek, past the bridge. I went as far as Coate's Creek, and I collected them 5 miles on each side of the permanently-staked line. Mr. Stuart had not started with his deviation when I took these statistics.

1637. When did you take them? In October.

1638. You think some of these names will be found in the Cudal list? About three or four, I think.

1639. Have you any reason to believe that any of these figures are incorrect? No.

1640. Were they given to you willingly? Yes.

1641. Were the people aware for what purpose you required them? Yes.

1642. I see you give the number of holdings as 72, the number in families as 433; the acres in holdings, 37,055; the acres under cultivation, 4,120; sheep, 23,119; cattle, 749; horses, 512; pigs, 227—they are correct? Yes; I ought to add that Mr. Ashcroft would not give me his statistics, as he had given them to the Cudal collector, but he was nearer Manildra than the former places.

1643. I see your schools are Manildra, Fair Hill, Meranburn, and Gosper's Downs? Yes.

Mr. D. P.
M'Innes.
25 Feb., 1890.

Mr.

Mr. Richard James Gosper, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. R. J. Gosper.
25 Feb., 1890.
1644. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a farmer and grazier, residing at Meranburn.
1645. *Mr. Cox.*] What is the size of your holding? It is a little over 2,400 acres. I have 150 acres under wheat and oats this year, and about 40 acres under corn; altogether I have about 200 acres under cultivation.
1646. How much wheat per acre do you get? I have only threshed this year a small part of my crop as yet; I expect to get about five bags per acre.
1647. Do you think it will go 20 bushels to the acre? Yes; it is not a large crop; it is not a general crop.
1648. I suppose a good crop of oats would more than double it? Yes.
1649. What else do you do with your land—do you keep sheep on it? Yes—sheep and cattle.
1650. Which do you find most profitable—cultivating the land or keeping sheep? Having regard to the difficulties of getting to market, I think grazing is the most profitable occupation.
1651. If you had a railway immediately to your door, I suppose agriculture would be more profitable? Yes.
1652. You would make more per acre? Yes.
1653. Do you take into consideration the risk you run occasionally of losing the crop altogether? We have a suitable soil for all seasons. We have a soil which, if properly cultivated, would scarcely ever give us a failure in a crop. A failure would be a very great exception.
1654. What do you think you can clear per acre by cultivating it? It is just according to the seasons.
1655. But taking this year, something over £1 per acre, I suppose? I reckon we will clear 30s. an acre this year from arable land.
1656. Do you know the Cudal country? Not a great deal of it.
1657. Do you think agriculture would increase if you had railway communication? Yes, greatly.
1658. There is ample land suitable for the plough if people could get to market with their crops? Yes; the area under cultivation would be more than quadrupled.
1659. Are there good timber forests in this neighbourhood? Yes; as good timber as you will find in any part of the colony.
1660. Have you had much to do with splitting or sawing? I have a saw-mill. I have been working timber nearly all my life.
1661. Have you a steam saw-mill? Yes.
1662. How much do you turn out a year? If we keep going regularly we cut from 800 to 1,000 feet a day.
1663. Have you a market for it at Parkes? The market generally goes eastward. We send timber to Orange, Molong, Cudal, and Blayney. It is principally ironbark and pine.
1664. Is the ironbark sound timber? Yes.
1665. Is it not pipey, or hollow? No.
1666. Is it a fact that in cutting the road across the Dungeon nearly all the timber that was cut there was found to be worthless? I believe not. I never got any in the ranges, but I have been close to them. You can see some timber at my mill which has been grown just this side of Bumberry, and judge for yourselves.
1667. If the timber was pipey on the top of the range there would be plenty under the range sound? There is plenty of country with good profitable sound timber.
1668. Is there enough timber to last there for many years to come? For a generation.
1669. There will be no difficulty in getting ironbark sleepers to run from here down to Menindie? Not the slightest.
1670. *Chairman.*] If the railway were here, would it not create an industry in this timber business? I am sure it would.
1671. You would do a larger trade if you had facilities for taking your timber to market? Yes.
1672. *Mr. Dowel.*] What do you pay for carting timber to Molong? 3s. per 100 feet.
1673. Is this timber on a reserve? Some part of it. There is a good deal of pine country under reserve. Some timber has gone from here for Blayney this morning—girders for bridges, &c.—that cannot be got in other places.
1674. What lengths are they? 30 odd feet, about 1 foot square—12 x 12 and 14 x 14.
1675. You can get lengths of that timber up to 30 feet? Yes.
1676. No longer? Oh, yes, you can get longer. We have got them 30 feet odd.
1677. Do you know that some of the timber bridges in this colony take girder lengths of 30 feet? Yes.
1678. But you think the whole of the timber for bridges and sleepers can be got at a reasonable distance from the proposed line? Anything required for this line can be got upon it.
1679. And a large quantity of timber 12 x 12 and 14 x 14 can be obtained to send away? Yes.

Mr. William Heper Cockram, grazier, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. W. H. Cockram.
25 Feb., 1890.
1680. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a grazier and agriculturalist. I have been here for nineteen years.
1681. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you live? At Mackay's Creek, which is about 4 miles from here and 17 miles from Molong.
1682. How long have you been growing wheat there? About sixteen years.
1683. What have you done with it? I have sent it to Molong by teams.
1684. Has it paid you to do that? It pays, but not a great deal. By putting in a great quantity we make a little out of it.
1685. Do you know the route of the proposed line? I believe I know the principal parts of it.
1686. How far is it from your place? It is only about a mile from my land.
1687. Would the line, as surveyed at present, benefit you and others in your immediate locality? Yes.
1688. Would it benefit the greater number of people residing in this locality? I believe it would.
1689. How would it serve the residents of Cudal? It would be about 7 miles to the nearest point on the line.
1690. But how would it serve them? I should think fairly well.
1691. If you are able to cart your grain 17 miles to Molong, would not the Cudal people be able to cart their grain 7 miles to the railway-station? I should think they ought to. 1692.

Mr. W. H.
Cockram.
25 Feb., 1890.

1692. On the other hand, supposing it were decided to construct the line *via* Borenore, the same remark would apply with equal force to you and your neighbours—if the Cudal people can cart theirs 7 miles, you could cart yours to Cudal? Yes, that is true, but I think the Parkes line would benefit the colony generally.

1693. Why? Well, as regards settlement, I have travelled the Parkes country with a threshing machine, and I have also threshed in the Forbes district.

1694. What distance can a farmer advantageously carry his wheat to market? If the roads are good he can cart a middling distance, but if the roads are bad he cannot make anything out of it.

1695. Are the roads always passable in your neighbourhood? No.

1696. Are there any macadamised roads other than the main roads? There is very little macadam on the road between here and Toogong.

1697. It matters not which route may be determined upon, it will be absolutely necessary for the farmers to cart their grain to various railway stations from various points? Yes.

1698. And, consequently, these roads will have to be kept open and made? Yes.

1699. It is, then, only a question as to which is the best route to adopt to serve the greater number of settlers? Yes.

1700. You will admit, I presume, that it is impossible for the country to take railways to every farmer's door? Of course.

1701. Do you know the Cudal country? Yes.

1702. Do you know the number of settlers in the locality? I believe most are on the other side of Cudal—in the Barragin country.

1703. Do you know whether there is any large amount of land available for settlement there? No.

1704. Is there any large extent of land available for selection between Molong and Parkes? There is a good bit fit for selection. It is not available at present, but it will be thrown open directly, I presume.

1705. You are aware that the object of constructing a railway into the valley of the Lachlan is not to serve only the Molong and Parkes people, but also the Forbes people and the people west of them? Yes.

1706. You will admit that residents of Forbes and to the west of Forbes, about Condobolin, should be put on the same footing as other residents? Yes.

1707. Having that in view, which route do you think would be the best in the interests of the country? This one, I maintain.

1708. Why? On account of the population—the farms at present existing; the farming population about Parkes is increasing very fast.

1709. What has been the progress of Molong during the past five years? Agriculture has increased, and stock also has increased.

1710. Do you wish the Committee to understand that, in your opinion, the construction of the line will induce settlement—that it will cause people to take up more land? Yes.

1711. To increase the size of their cultivation areas and to purchase more stock? Yes.

1712. You think that ought to be the outcome of railway construction? Yes.

1713. Has it had that effect upon the lines already opened? I believe it has.

1714. Do you know the country between Orange and Molong? I do.

1715. Has railway construction had the effect you name there? It has had the effect of increasing the value of the land.

1716. But has it increased the area under cultivation and the number of stock? That I cannot say. I was not acquainted with the line before it was surveyed.

1717. Then, in the absence of any previous knowledge of the kind, what makes you think that the construction of this railway would have the effect you name? Look at the land on the other side of Orange, at Spring Grove. There is a vast difference between the population there now and the population that was there before the construction of the line.

1718. Are there any outside influences there to induce rapid settlement? There was mining there in the first instance, but there has been mining there for many years.

1719. So far as the farmers in your locality are concerned, it would not trouble them much which way the line went, so that it went close to them? I do not think it would; it is only a matter of a small distance.

1720. But the object of our investigation is to ascertain, on behalf of the country, the best route to select in order to serve the majority of the settlers? I maintain that this is the best line.

1721. Would not a line from Condobolin to Forbes, and thence to Parkes, serve the great majority of the population? I do not know that part of the country.

1722. But can you give any reason as to why the line should go all the way to Parkes—take your magnificent agricultural district;—supposing the railway were extended from Molong to that district, would it not answer all purposes? I do think so.

1723. You think the line should go to Parkes? Yes.

1724. And beyond Parkes? Yes.

1725. Although you do not know the country? Yes; I have been beyond Parkes several times.

1726. Have you any interest there? No.

1727. Do you think the permanently-staked line which you have heard referred to would serve the majority of the farming population between Molong and Meranburn? I believe it would.

1728. Do you think it fairly suits the convenience of all on either side of the line? I believe it does; it cuts the population in two.

1729. You think it will bring the residents on either side within easy distance of the railway? Yes.

1730. And that it is likely to be used by them? Yes.

1731. *Mr. Douel.*] Are there any industries, besides agriculture, in this district? Yes. I have a little experience in timber.

1732. Do you think that would develop into a large trade? Yes.

1733. Is the quality of the timber good? Yes. We have sawn a good bit ourselves.

1734. What distance is the timber from the staked line? It is pretty well on the line.

1735. There would be timber available immediately adjoining the line? Yes.

1736. What is the character of timber in the tract of country to which you refer? Ironbark, principally.

1737. Suitable for what? For bridge or house building, fencing, or sleepers.

- Mr. W. H. Cockram. 1738. Is there any other industry, besides the timber industry, other than those which have been named? There is a little dairying, but it is not carried on to any extent.
- 25 Feb., 1890. 1739. There are no butter factories? No; although a good deal of butter is made among the farmers.
1740. You are not acquainted with the mineral resources of the district? No.

Mr. Michael O'Donnell, farmer and storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. M. O'Donnell. 1741. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer and storekeeper.
- 25 Feb., 1890. 1742. Where do you reside? Sometimes here, and sometimes on the farm.
1743. Where is the farm? Two miles out.
1744. What is its area? 236 acres.
1745. Have you all of it under cultivation? 110 acres.
1746. What crops do you grow? Wheat and hay, and corn.
1747. Could you give the Committee any idea of the quantity of wheat you take off it? About 20 bushels to the acre.
1748. How many acres have you under wheat? I could not say.
1749. How much hay do you have per acre? About 25 or 30 cwt.
1750. Your corn is still in the ground? Yes.
1751. Are you likely to have a good crop? Some of it is pretty good.
1752. As a rule, is this climate suitable for the growth of corn? Not every year.
1753. But it is for wheat? Very suitable.
1754. Is this part of the country as good as any other for growing wheat? It is as fine agricultural country as any I have ever been in. I grow grapes, and part of my land is under orchard; it is well adapted for the growth of fruit.
1755. How do the grapes grow? There is a heavy yield this year.
1756. If this railway were constructed you would do a good business in fruit? We should do fine business if we had a railway; it is what we have been expecting for a number of years.
1757. Do you know where the proposed line is staked? Yes.
1758. Do you think that that line will benefit a greater number of persons than any other line which could be made in the district? I do not know so much about that, but I consider that the justice which has been promised to us should be meted out to us.
1759. Who promised you the line? We were promised it when Sir Henry Parkes was in power before. We have been looking to the rising sun for this railway for fourteen years.
1760. Have the Forbes people been promised a railway? Yes, by this route.
1761. Have the Cudal people been promised a line, do you know? I do not think so, except when Sir Henry Parkes was out of power.
1762. When did Sir Henry make his promise about this railway? He made it when he was first in power—before he went home to England.
1763. Did the House agree to the construction of any one of these railways, do you know? To the best of my belief, the money was put upon the Estimates and borrowed.
1764. Do you know much of the country about here? Yes.
1765. Is there Crown land? None, except at Brymedura.
1766. Do you know the country from here to Bumberry? Part of the way.
1767. Do you know whether there is any Crown land to the north of the line before you get to Bumberry? I do not.
1768. Do you know whether there are any farms there? There are farms all along the road. There is some beautiful country a little back from the road.
1769. Do you mean that the farmers are on each side of the macadamised road, or that they are on each side of the railway line? On each side of the road.
1770. Where do you send your wheat to? Molong.
1771. How do you get it there? With my own teams.
1772. Do you grow much fruit? Yes.
1773. Do you send any fruit to market? I sell it about the neighbourhood.
1774. You do not send it to Molong? No; I think Molong is glutted with fruit.
1775. Would it pay to send it to Sydney? If the railway were here.
1776. Do you know anything about the timber industry here? As far as my experience goes, very good sawing timber can be got about Gosper's mill.
1777. *Mr. Dowel.*] Did you hear Sir Henry Parkes make the promise of which you speak for the construction of this railway line? It was reported, when he was first in power, that we were promised this route.
1778. Did Sir Henry come here? He was in this very hall.
1779. He did not promise the railway then? No; it was promised years before. I may say that the grapes and pumpkin I exhibit were grown upon my land.

Mr. Jeremiah O'Brien, sawyer, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. O'Brien. 1780. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a sawyer.
- 25 Feb., 1890. 1781. Where do you reside? At Meranburn.
1782. You are with Mr. Gosper at the saw-mill? Yes.
1783. You are a practical sawyer? I am a blacksmith by trade, but I have been sawing this last six years.
1784. Yours is a steam saw-mill? Yes.
1785. Where do you get the principal part of your timber? About 5 miles from the mill, towards Bumberry.
1786. Is there an unlimited supply of timber there? I think so.
1787. What is the quality of the timber? Good.
1788. What kind of timber is it? Ironbark, stringybark, red box, red gum, and pine.
1789. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you get good large logs? Yes, as a rule.
1790. Is the timber very pipey? No, it is not. I have some I can show you in the morning at the mill. It is perfectly sound, and it is 22 feet long.
1791. It is good solid timber, as a rule? Yes.
1792. Have you a good market for this timber? Yes.

1793. Where do you generally send it? To Molong and Cudal. We have even sent some to Gunning-bland, 12 miles on the other side of Parkes. We had an order from Eurambia, from Mr. Ormsby, to saw about 3,000 feet. We had to reject the order; we could not cut it, we were so pressed with orders.

Mr.
J. O'Brien.
25 Feb., 1890.

1794. Is there any other mill in this district? No.

1795. What do you attribute the rush of trade to just now? I put a great deal down to speculation, on account of the railway.

1796. Do you ever send any of this timber towards Sydney? To Orange; we have just delivered 9,000 feet to Orange. When the Post and Telegraph Office was built at Cudal the contractor was getting timber from Eugowra. I supplied him with timber for the Molong goods shed. I supplied him with four pieces 30 feet long.

1797. Is this timber fit for railway-sleepers? There would be an unlimited supply of them.

1798. What could you cut them for? I could not say without railway communication. There would be no difficulty in supplying the sleepers; if the railway were here we could get an unlimited supply.

1799. Have you been in this timber country yourself? Yes.

1800. What area does it cover? As far as I have been over it, it covers 14 miles each side of the proposed railway.

1801. What distance the other way? You can go from 4 miles above our mill to below the Dungeon and get ironbark all the way.

1802. Do you think you could square by axe sticks 40 or 50 feet long, 12 x 12? Yes. I had it brought into the mill the other day 36 feet long, and there was not the sign of a pipe in it.

1803. Could you not get it larger and longer than that? No doubt, if we went out and looked for it. I have seen logs 36 feet long which I could have squared 14 x 14.

WEDNESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at Packham's Hotel, Bumberry, at 11.30 a.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX. | WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Mr. Henry Packham, farmer and innkeeper, sworn and examined:—

1804. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer and innkeeper; I am also postmaster.

1805. How long have you been in this district? About sixteen years.

1806. Have you seen much increase in the population during the last two years? Oh, yes. When I first came here there were only one or two persons here.

1807. There has been a recent increase? Yes.

1808. What description of population have you? Farmers, principally; some are graziers, and some are farmers only.

1809. Has any land been taken up lately for farming purposes? Not a great while ago a good bit was taken up. Many inquiries for land have been made, I believe, within the last twelve months. A selection was taken up not many weeks ago down on the creek here in the Bumberry parish.

1810. Has more land been put under cultivation lately than was under cultivation a few years ago? A great deal.

1811. Could you give the Committee an idea of the number of acres under cultivation within a few miles of you? I think some 1,500 acres. It has been cleared for cultivation, at all events.

1812. What is the general size of the holdings? I hold 200 odd acres. Some hold 400 and 500, and some as much as 600 and 700.

1813. What is the average? About 500 acres, independently of the conditional leases.

1814. Is there a large leasehold area in this neighbourhood? We are in the very heart of it.

1815. If it were thrown open for selection, would it be selected? A good deal of it.

1816. What run is it on? East Billabong.

1817. There is a good deal unfit for selection? Yes.

1818. Do you know that there would be a certain quantity taken up if it were thrown open? I am certain of it.

1819. What crops are grown here? Wheat and hay, principally.

1820. What is the average yield of wheat? About 20 bushels.

1821. This is a good year? Yes; the average this year will go more, although the rust has interfered a little.

1822. What do you do with your hay? I sell my hay to Cobb & Co.

1823. What do the other farmers do? They take it to Parkes and Molong. If we have more wheat than the Parkes millers will take, we take it to Molong. If we have more than is required at Molong, it goes on to Sydney.

1824. I was speaking of hay; but as to your wheat;—what does it cost to send wheat from here to Molong? About 9d. a bushel.

1825. What is the average price of wheat? The last few years it has averaged about 3s.

1826. You are not getting that price now? Not this year.

1827. Out of the price you name you pay 9d. carriage to Molong? Yes, and about 6d. to Parkes; but going to Molong there is back carriage, and going to Parkes there is none.

1828. Do you think that if you had a line through to Parkes and Molong, more land would be put under cultivation? I do. Not, perhaps, just at this spot, but there are places where you could get hundreds and thousands of acres of land fit for cultivation. We are just here in a sort of so-called barren wilderness, a part of which has been cleared.

1829. And this is where you grow 20 bushels to the acre. Yes; and they are running about 30,000 sheep on this so-called barren wilderness.

Mr.
H. Packham.
26 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. H. Packham.
26 Feb., 1890.
1830. Are not the wheat paddocks you speak of right up to the road? Yes; but down the road farther on you cannot see them. In some places you can see the stacks going along, but you cannot see the land. When Sir Henry Parkes was here a great crowd assembled. He said, "I see a great crowd here; where do they all live?" I could not show him the houses. I could only point in the directions in which they lay. A lot of land lies back over one of the ridges. You cannot see it from the road, but it is magnificent land for cultivation.
1831. What class of timber is there? All sorts.
1832. Any ironbark? Plenty.
1833. Good ironbark? Not first-class. It is getting an old place now, and the first-class timber is getting taken out, but there is plenty yet.
1834. How far is it from here where the good ironbark is? There is ironbark all along the road, almost from Manildra to Parkes.
1835. How far off the road on either side does the ironbark extend? At some places the road goes through it; at others it does not.
1836. But how many miles into the bush would you go before you got through the ironbark belt going cross-ways? At some places 4 or 5 miles; at other places 2 or 3 miles.
1837. You have not had anything to do with cutting this timber yourself? Yes; I got it for all the culverts along the road.
1838. Is it full of pipes? Some of it is pipey. As a rule the best timber has a small pipe in it, although the Government will not have it in their works.
1839. Can you get it without the pipe? It is very hard to get.
1840. Is there any other timber about here? Yellow box, white box, stringybark and red gum.
1841. Any pine? Yes; black pine here, and further on white pine.
1842. Is it good timber? For building purposes.
1843. What about the box? That is also good timber for building.
1844. Is it sound timber? Some of it is and some of it is not. You will find the same kind of thing in all timber.
1845. Is there any industry here besides the farming and pastoral industries? Not at present.
1846. You have no saw-mills here? No, there is nothing of that sort.
1847. How long have you been keeping an hotel? For about ten years.
1848. During that time, have you noticed any increase in the traffic? There has been an increase for the last two years.
1849. A perceptible increase? It is not a large increase, but the traffic is gradually increasing.
1850. More passengers and more goods traffic? Yes. If that had not been the case I should not have had the house open now. I have had it open now for two years.
1851. Are we to understand that you closed it at one time, because there was not sufficient business? Yes.
1852. But you find it pays you now, on account of the increased traffic? Yes.
1853. Do you think that this railway line will greatly benefit the people here if constructed? Yes.
1854. Do you think it will be largely patronised? It might not benefit me, but it would benefit the public at large.
1855. Do you know the country between here and Cudal? Yes.
1856. Is it good country? Yes. But when you leave the road between here and Cudal it is not so good.
1857. How far is it from here to Cudal, across? 22 miles, or thereabouts.
1858. Do you know any of the country here to the north of the staked line? I think so; but there are so many lines that I do not know the staked line you are inquiring about.
1859. I mean the line going *via* Flagstone Creek; do you know the country north of that line? Yes.
1860. Is it country suitable for agriculture? Not a great deal. We are in the heart of the worst of it, where you are at present.
1861. Does it improve when you leave the Dungeon? Yes.
1862. And also when you go towards Manildra? Yes.

Mr. Alfred Townsend, farmer, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. A. Townsend.
26 Feb., 1890.
1863. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer.
1864. Where do you reside? At Bumberry.
1865. How long have you resided here? I have been living here now for the last three years, but I have been here, on and off, for the last fifteen years.
1866. *Mr. Lee.*] Are you a free-selector? No. I am looking after a place for my father.
1867. Is he a free-selector? Yes.
1868. What area does he hold? About 1,700 acres altogether.
1869. That would be conditionally-leased as well as the conditionally-purchased land? Yes.
1870. Does it come up to the Parkes-road? Yes.
1871. Is that the land we saw as we passed through? Yes.
1872. To what purposes does your father turn that land? To agriculture and grazing.
1873. What kind of agriculture? We grow wheat, oats, hay, and corn.
1874. How long has he been cultivating it? Most of it the last twelve years, or more.
1875. Has he had the same land continuously under wheat? Very nearly the same, on and off.
1876. Does he restore the land by adding manure? No; we keep sheep on the land.
1877. Do you combine the two things, then? Yes.
1878. What is the result of your agricultural pursuits? We have grown 400 bushels of maize off 8 acres of land—that is sometime back—we had 50 bushels to the acre.
1879. What is your average wheat crop? We have gone up as high as 30, but the average, taking one year with another, would be 18 bushels.
1880. Have you had a total failure of the wheat crop? No, not with us.
1881. Have the seasons been such that you have been able to cultivate the land every year? Yes.
1882. Are you troubled with the rust at any time? This last year has been the only year.
1883. Did it diminish the yield? We do not know; we have not threshed yet, but I should think so.
1884. What do you do with your wheat and maize? We send it to Parkes. We have sent some to Molong. 1885.

1885. But you look upon Parkes as your market? Yes, because it is the nearest.
1886. How much nearer is it than Molong? Twelve miles nearer, I suppose.
1887. Has the occupation your father has followed for the past twelve years been a profitable one? Yes.
1888. Wheat-growing has been profitable to him? Yes; it has paid him very well.
1889. I presume that if your father's occupation had not been a profitable one you would have given it up? Yes.
1890. It is fair to assume that he would not have continued the occupation if it did not pay him? Yes.
1891. Am I right in assuming that the occupation has been so profitable that your father is likely to continue it? Yes.
1892. Have the farmers in this part of the district a tendency to increase their area under cultivation? They are increasing it every year.
1893. Is there a tendency to decrease the quantity of cultivated land and to put on more stock? No; I do not think so; more land is cleared here every year.
1894. Do you, of your own knowledge, know that wheat and maize growing is a profitable occupation? - It has been with us.
1895. Has it been so with other people? Yes, I think so; they manage to live very well.
1896. Can an ordinary farmer—one of the class of men who go selecting,—take up land here, and in the process of time clear and cultivate, and make a comfortable living? Most of them are doing so.
1897. Do any of them remain on the land for the term of residence and then sell to the pastoral lessee? Odd ones sell out, but as a rule they do not.
1898. Do you know the prices at which land has changed hands? No; I could not say.
1899. What immediate benefits do you anticipate from the construction of the railway? I think we should have a better market. I suppose we should cultivate 500 acres if we had a railway here.
1900. That is, it would be worth your while to cultivate that area? Yes.
1901. How much do you think it worth your while to cultivate now? We cultivate 200 acres now.
1902. Why do you not cultivate more? I do not think the market is good enough.
1903. You think the supply would be in excess of the demand? Yes; we generally hold our wheat. We held about 1,000 bushels here last year, and we sold it eventually for 6s. a bushel—it was a dry season.
1904. And your grain is transported by team to Parkes or Molong? Yes.
1905. Do you grow much hay? Yes.
1906. What do you do with it? We generally send it to Parkes—mostly into the western country—where less hay is grown.
1907. Is the soil suitable to the growth of hay? Yes; we have grown 3 tons to the acre.
1908. Do you think it costs 9d. per bushel to take your wheat from here to Molong? I should think so—very nearly.
1909. The inference is, that if you had better and quicker communication, with lower rates, you and other farmers would cultivate larger areas? Yes; we have the land to cultivate, if we had the means of communication.
1910. And every penny per bushel you could save on the carriage would be so much profit to you? Yes.
1911. Have you worked among the timber in the district? I have not done any work myself, but I have seen a lot done.
1912. Have you been in parts of the country where railways are constructed? Yes.
1913. Do you know the kind of timber used for sleepers? Yes.
1914. Do you know the size? Yes; but I do not know the exact measurements; it is about 4 x 8, I think.
1915. Is there much timber in this district suitable for sleepers? Yes, ironbark and red gum.
1916. Is the timber sufficiently large and sound to give any quantity of sleepers? Yes. I was speaking to a gentleman here the other day, a contractor from Cowra, who said that he had come up from there for logs.
1917. Have many sleepers been obtained from here? Not that I know of as yet; but most of the timber here is very good.
1918. Is it sound? Most of it is sound; the very large trees might be a little pipey, but the small trees on the flats are pretty sound.
1919. Could you get ironbark sticks here, 40 feet long, squaring from 9 to 12 inches? It is quite possible you might; that I could not say. I know they have got sound logs 32 feet long.
1920. Do you know the country at present included in the pastoral leasehold here? Yes.
1921. I mean on the East Billabong run? I think I know it; but I could not tell where the dividing line is.
1922. Is there any Crown land available at the present time for selection? Yes, there is some Crown land here.
1923. Is free selection on the increase? Yes; some selections have been taken up lately.
1924. Are they new selections, or additional conditional purchases? The persons who have taken up the land are residents in the district.
1925. Are they old selectors? No. They are going in for a bit of land for themselves for the first time.
1926. Do you know anything of the country beyond Parkes? Yes; I have been down Condobolin way.
1927. Where were you born? I was born near Molong.
1928. You have been in this district most of your time? Yes.
1929. You are old enough to have noticed whether there has been an increase or decrease in the population in the district within the last ten or fifteen years? There has been a large increase lately.
1930. Does the district appear to be opening up permanently? Yes.
1931. Are there many so-called selectors in the district better known as dummies? I could not say as to that.
1932. Is the settlement about here of a *bona-fide* nature? It has been, as far as I know.
1933. You do not know of any selectors who are selling out to a pastoral tenant? No.
1934. *Mr. Cox.*] You say that taking one year with another 18 bushels per acre is a fair average for your wheat? Yes.
1935. What crop did you reap in 1888 in the time of that terrible drought. We had only 60 acres in that year, and we reaped 60 bags—we had about 4 bushels to the acre.

Mr. A.
Townsend.
26 Feb., 1890.

Mr. James Sharp, farmer, sworn and examined :—

- Mr. J. Sharp. 1936. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer.
 26 Feb., 1890. 1937. Where do you reside? On Rocky Creek.
 1938. How long have you been residing there? On Rocky Creek 5 years, on Bumberry 19—24 altogether.
 1939. *Mr. Cox.*] What occupation have you been following most of that time? I have been farming and carrying.
 1940. Do you find farming more profitable than carrying? It would have been all along if we had a market to go to.
 1941. Where has your carrying been done—between Parkes and Molong, or further down? I used to carry to Orange, before the railway came to Molong.
 1942. How many acres have you under cultivation? I had only 30 in this last year.
 1943. Had you never more than that quantity of acres in? Never more than 40.
 1944. Do you not find it sufficiently profitable to cultivate more largely? When you have to pay so much to take the grain to market, and when the market price is so low, we do not think it does.
 1945. What do you do with the quantity you grow? It goes to Parkes.
 1946. What is the fair average price of wheat at Parkes? They are offering 2s. 9d. this year; last year the price was 6s. and 7s. per bushel.
 1947. That would be very profitable? Yes. If the price were only 5s. it would be profitable enough.
 1948. Do you keep any stock? No.
 1949. You give your whole attention to farming and carrying? Yes, farming, not carrying now.
 1950. Do you know anything of the Borenore and Cudal line of country? Yes.
 1951. Do you think that country, taken as a whole, is equal to or superior to this? No; but I do not know them both equally well. I have been in the Orange district forty odd years. Taking the country down there as a whole, I do not think it is as good as this.
 1952. Is it a well-populated country? Yes. It is not so here just for these few miles, but all the rest of this line is thickly populated. When you get down a few miles further you will find it so. There are over 100 persons within a few miles of this place.
 1953. Which of the two routes do you think would have the greater population? I think this line, taking it all the way through to Molong.
 1954. On account of the large population of Parkes? There is a great population round about Parkes for miles and miles.
 1955. Do you think the land about Parkes would beat the land about here for the growth of wheat? I do not know that there is much difference between the land here and the land at Parkes. I do not know that the land is better at Parkes for the growth of wheat. I do not know that it could be much better than it is about here.
 1956. In the event of a large population settling at Parkes, would it shut up your land here? No, I do not think so.
 1957. You could always compete against Parkes? Yes.
 1958. Have you a better rainfall among these hills than there is at Parkes? We have more odd showers than they have at Parkes—the hills draw them.
 1959. That gives you an opportunity to grow wheat here when they are parched up in that country? It will grow here when it will not grow anywhere round about. I have seen 18 bushels grown here, when out Cudal way the wheat would not grow above 6 inches high—they could not even cut it for hay.
 1960. What did you grow in 1888, in the terrible drought? I cut all mine for hay.

Mr. Charles Townsend, selector, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. C. Townsend. 1961. *Chairman.*] You are uncle to one of the previous witnesses? Yes.
 26 Feb., 1890. 1962. *Mr. Dowell.*] How long have you resided in the district? For twenty years, off and on. I have been for sixteen or seventeen years settled down here. I keep a few cattle, and I do some farming.
 1963. You are a selector? Yes.
 1964. What is the extent of your holding? About 800 acres.
 1965. Where did you reside previous to your coming here? Down at Orange.
 1966. You know the whole of the country in this district? Yes.
 1967. Do you know the route from Molong to Parkes and Forbes suggested for this railway? Yes.
 1968. Does the line pass through good country? Yes. There is not much difference between the three lines between here and Parkes.
 1969. What is the character of the country through which they pass here? Timbered country, well cultivated in patches.
 1970. Is the land good for agricultural purposes? There are patches in it.
 1971. What occupation did you follow previous to coming here? I used to be carrying backwards and forwards to Sydney, over the mountains.
 1972. Will this country compare favourably with any country you have travelled over? I think so. In most seasons when the crop has been very scarce in other places they have generally had a little crop here.
 1973. Generally speaking, you consider this country will compare favourably with any other country you knew in the olden time? Yes.
 1974. Can you tell us whether this soil is suited to the growth of vines or orchards? They do very well if you attend to them for twelve months—that is vines.
 1975. Have you any experience of vine-growing? Yes. I have grown about a quarter of an acre of grapes, but a lot of cattle got in among them, and I have not troubled about them since. They yielded very well for the first two or three years they were in. The grapes round Parkes yield finely.
 1976. Have you any special knowledge of timber in the district? Yes; I have split a lot, and put up a lot of fencing.
 1977. What is your opinion of it—is it good or bad? It is good lasting timber—pretty tough; fine fencing timber.
 1978. What is the character of the pine in this district? There is any amount of it, but it is not very heavy pine. There are patches of it, but the timber is not very large. 1979.

1979. Is it good sound pine? Yes. There is a great scrub of small pine all growing up.
 1980. Can you get sticks 15 to 18 inches through? Yes, in patches.
 1981. Have you been in the habit of carrying for this particular part? Yes, backwards and forwards.
 1982. What is the rate of carriage from here to Molong? 2s. 6d. and 3s. per cwt. In the wool season 2s.; sometimes 1s. 6d.
 1983. Have you observed much traffic when you have been upon the road? Yes. There is a quantity of stuff coming this way from Molong.
 1984. Does the goods traffic appear to be increasing? Yes; the inhabitants are also increasing.
 1985. Do you know the country beyond Parkes? Not far out; but I think I ought to mention that there is a good deal of agricultural land at Reedy Creek, about 3 miles off the road.

Mr.
C. Townsend.
26 Feb., 1890.

Mr. John Schnabel, farmer, sworn and examined:—

1986. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer.
 1987. Where do you reside? At Bumberry.
 1988. How long have you been here? Twelve years.
 1989. Have you been farming all the time? Yes.
 1990. How much land have you under cultivation? About 40 acres; my holding is 100 acres.
 1991. What do you grow, principally? Wheat and corn; I have a good-sized garden.
 1992. How much wheat did you grow last season? We expect 250 bushels.
 1993. Off how much land? About 16 acres.
 1994. What is your average crop of wheat? The average would be from 15 to 20 bushels an acre.
 1995. Where do you find a market for it? At Parkes.
 1996. Does the price at Parkes rule higher than the price at Molong? Sometimes it is more at Molong, and sometimes less.
 1997. But it is easier to get to Parkes? Yes.
 1998. Do you know whether there is more land under cultivation here than there was a few years ago? Yes, three times the quantity.
 1999. Are the farmers putting more land under cultivation every year? Yes, they are improving their holdings every year.
 2000. What do you grow in your garden? Apples, peaches, pears, and grapes.
 2001. What kind of fruit is it? Very good.
 2002. What do you do with it? Some we take to Parkes, and some we use ourselves.
 2003. You do not grow enough to send it to market? No, but I am improving my garden every year.
 2004. And would you grow fruit more extensively if you had a railway? Yes.
 2005. You think you would then get a market to the eastward? Yes; I have no doubt we should.
 2006. Do you know whether there have been more people living here within the last year or two than used to live here? Yes. When I came here first, and the school was opened, there were 12 or 13 school children on the roll—now there are nearly 40.
 2007. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you produce any vegetables in your garden? Yes, all kinds.
 2008. Do they appear to do well? Pretty well—yes.
 2009. Do you anticipate that if a railway were constructed you could grow vegetables, as well as fruit, for market? Oh, yes.
 2010. Do you know the surrounding country? Yes; up and down the road for about 10 miles round.
 2011. You consider the character of the country pretty good? Yes; there is very good soil, and if there is only a fair season, Bumberry is a good growing place.
 2012. *Mr. Lee.*] You are a German, I suppose? Yes.
 2013. Did you know anything of the growth of the grape in your own country? Yes.
 2014. Do you think the grape would ripen here sufficiently to make wine? Yes.
 2015. Have you made wine? No; but the grapes are quite ripe and good enough to make it.

Mr. J.
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Mr. Henry Packham, sworn and further examined:—

2016. *Chairman.*] I believe you have some further information you desire to give the Committee? As I told you, I occupy the position of postmaster here, and I thought you might like to have a return as to the number of letters, packages, and papers posted here for 1889—it would enable you to form some idea of the population. The number of letters posted was 4,557, the number of packages 30, and the number of papers 147.

Mr.
H. Packham.
26 Feb., 1890.

THURSDAY, 27 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Parkes, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

John Alexander Rose, Esq., Mayor of Parkes, sworn and examined:—

2017. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am an auctioneer.
 2018. I believe you are also Mayor of Parkes? Yes.
 2019. Have you resided long in this district? Fifteen years on the 2nd of last January.
 2020. Have you noticed much progress in the district of late years? I have.
 2021. Will you please give in your own way any evidence you wish the Committee to accept? I may state that statistics have been gathered often during the past ten years, and have been printed at considerable expense without any good result. Upon this occasion the signatures of many of the new selectors have been

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been obtained, with particulars of their holdings. Our case has appeared to us to be so good that we have incurred no expense for printing. I may explain at the outset that the reason why more wheat is not grown here is that there is no local markets and that it will not pay to cart it to Molong, at an expense of not less than 1s. per bushel. The postal return, which will be supplied, will give you some idea of our rate of progress, while the returns of Cobb & Co., the mail contractors, will show that the road is largely used. The difference between the area of land selected, as shown from the sheets taken from the books in the Lands Office, and the area gathered by collectors is caused by many returns not having been sent in. I may state here that the electoral roll lately taken by the police shows that there are 396 more names on the roll in this portion of the electorate. Of course, as the Committee are aware, considerable areas of land have been alienated in the neighbourhood of Forbes under the repealed Acts, but that land is now for the most part in the hands of the monetary institutions of the colony and of a few individuals. I will give the Committee some particulars concerning one station for sale—it is a fair sample of many cases of the kind near Forbes. Little or no selection has taken place at Forbes during the past five years. The station to which I refer is Wandary, for sale by Strickland Brothers, Forbes. It is situated about 3 miles from Forbes, on the Lachlan River, in the Central Division. The area is about 24,652 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres, consisting of 1,481 acres of freehold; 14,345 $\frac{1}{2}$ acres of certificated conditional purchases; 4,300 acres of leasehold, at an annual rent of 4 s. 6 d. per acre; 3,100 acres of resumed area, at an annual rent of 70s. a section; 546 acres of conditional lease; and 880 acres of annual lease. The country is of deep rich black plain, with open box forest; it is very heavy-carrying country, and fattens very fast. It is watered by 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles of frontage in a straight line to the Lachlan River, Trungle Creek and Muddy Lagoon. There are fourteen tanks and several never-failing wells, constituting an abundant supply. The first-class improvements are, homesteads, large eight-roomed house, with pantry, kitchen, laundry, bath-room, office, &c., stables, harness-rooms, buggy-rooms, woolshed, and huts for twelve shearers. The stock consists of about 21,240 sheep. There are about twenty-two head of working horses and seventy head of mixed cattle. It is all securely fenced and subdivided into over twenty paddocks by first-class wire fencing. The price is £50,000, and the terms may be arranged. Wandary is said to be infinitely the best property for sale in the Lachlan district. Its fattening qualities are proverbial. During the whole of the severe drought of 1888 and 1889 it was the mainstay of the Forbes district of fat sheep, besides sending others to other markets. It is well adapted for cheap irrigation, and the soil is A1 for the cultivation of wheat and grain of all descriptions. I do not know that I need read you any further particulars about the station, but the particulars I have read will give you some idea of the size of the holdings in that district. I may state that I received a requisition early in January in the following words:—

Sir,—We are suffering most materially from the want of railway communication to this district, and we beg that you will call a public meeting at Parkes some time in January, so that we may be enabled to express our views on this important question.

The requisition is signed by about 200 persons.

2022. *Mr. Lee.*] Are all these signatures those of selectors? They are the signatures of men to the north, west, and north-west of this place. I also received the following communication from Mr. Balcombe of Coradgery. He was asked to come and give evidence, but he had to go to Melbourne. You will see what the firm say in this letter:—

Dear Sir,

I am sorry I will not be able to attend the reception of gentlemen forming the Committee *re* railway, but beg to inform Mr. Rose that we will guarantee, the first year, £600 worth of carriage from Sydney and to.

H. & A. BALCOMBE.

They are only medium sheep-owners—there are many larger, and of course a great number smaller. I can give you some of the actual totals of the police returns. The reason I took them out was that I thought the returns of the Government would not be ready. I think the officer in charge of the police will admit that they are correct. The returns themselves will be handed in by the police officers. There are 1,950 acres under wheat, yielding 59,000 bushels. There are 3,659 acres under other crops, yielding 3,496 tons of hay, 1,400 bushels of oats, 900 bushels of barley, and 54 tons of potatoes. There are 467,376 sheep, 4,583 cattle, 2,503 horses, and 815 pigs. Already there is nearly twice the acreage ready for wheat-sowing, and the area will be trebled if means are given to get the wheat to market. This is a correct return of the whole of the land alienated since the coming into operation of the Land Act of 1884 up to the 31st January, 1890. It is taken from the office of the Parkes district. I may state that nineteenth-twentieths of this land is taken up to the north-west and west of Parkes. The total area is 858,814 acres.

2023. *Chairman.*] Is this area taken up in large or small areas? The greater portion of it is taken up in areas of 2,560 acres, but a considerable portion is in less areas; all the new men have endeavoured, where possible, to get 2,560 acres.

2024. Do you know these men personally? Yes, every one of them.

2025. Do you think they are *bonâ fide* settlers on the land? I have every reason to believe they are.

2026. Do you not think they have taken up the land for the purpose of speculation? I think I may safely say that they have not.

2027. *Mr. Lee.*] Out of the total of 232,410 acres conditional purchases, 15,704 acres are conditional lease? Yes.

2028. I see by this return that there is a great increase in the last year? Yes.

2029. I see that in the first year you have given us—1885—there were 42,868 acres conditionally purchased? Yes.

2030. But in 1886 it fell considerably? Yes; that year was a dry year; it fell to 17,690 acres.

2031. What is the reason of that? I think the selectors began to get frightened at the outlook. I daresay the probability of some alteration being made in the Land Act had something to do with it.

2032. Still there is a large increase in 1887—it goes up to 53,439 acres? Yes.

2033. In 1888, however, it fell off again to 32,898 acres? Yes; there was dry weather again.

2034. But there is an immense increase in 1889—the area is 85,515 acres? Yes.

2035. Do you attribute that great increase in any measure to the new Land Act? No; I do not think so. You will notice in connection with the area taken up in 1889 there is only one month of 1890, when the present Act had been in operation only two months. I think the men who came over here at first were so satisfied with the country that they wrote to the different centres from which they had come, asking their friends to follow them.

2036.

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2036. You do not think that this was owing to the fact that, although the new law was not actually passed, the selectors felt certain that it would be passed? No doubt they thought it would. No doubt that had something to do with the increase.

2037. You think that the facilities given to the selectors by this particular Act has induced a large increase in the acreage under free selection? Yes; and as far as we have gone, even since the last day of January of this year, more than the average area has been kept up. 19,000 acres were taken up last Thursday. I am prepared to say that the figures I have handed in are correct.

2038. I see that the totals are 232,410 acres of conditional purchase, and 615,704 acres of conditional lease, or a total of 858,114 acres? Yes.

2039. Have you any other information you desire to give the Committee? I have another return. Possibly the officer in charge of the police can tell how the difference arose between the actual area returned to him as cultivated, and the area returned by the holders. I am not prepared to swear as to the cause of the difference, but possibly the officer in charge will be able to give you good reasons for it. The area cultivated is nearly 3,000 acres larger than the area shown by the police returns. The reason, I think is this—they had a larger area ready to be cropped, but they did not care to put it all under crop this season; that is the only reason which I can give for the difference. I hand in a complete return, as far as I could get it, of all the holders of land round about Parkes. Of the sheets which I hand in as exhibits—I may state that the names on Nos. 1 to 18 are all located to the north, west, and north-west of Parkes. The returns from Bullock Creek, Burraburra, Gobendary, and Mungery are not here. The population at each place is large, and the area of land alienated is great. The attached sheets, which I hand in as exhibits, have the signatures of the holders, with the exception of sheets 21 and 22 which are copied; the originals were destroyed with wet. They were in pulp when they came here, and I had difficulty in obtaining particulars from them.

2040. *Mr. Cox.*] I see there are no grain returns here? No; they will be found in the returns taken by the police. The wheat return is only about 60,000 bushels. There are witnesses who will say why the return is not greater. I hand in a return showing the number in the family, the number attending school, the area of holding, the acreage cultivated, and the number of sheep, cattle, horses, and pigs. This gives a grand total under each head respectively of—1,493; 340; 707,985; 7,773; 265,785; 4,807; 2,333; and 912—these figures in detail have been furnished by the holders themselves, under their own signature.

2041. *Chairman.*] Is there any material increase in your population? Yes.

2042. What would be the percentage of increase in a given time, say, during the last twelve months or two years, in the town? I will go back four years. About four years ago the population of the town was about 1,700, to-day it is about 2,700; four years ago, the population of the district, including the number I have already given you for the town, was 4,000; to-day, it is between 6,000 and 7,000.

2043. How far does that calculation extend towards Forbes? About half-way.

2044. In what direction has the principal increase in population taken place? I wish to emphasise this—no increase has taken place on the south between here and Forbes.

2045. Where has the principal increase taken place. To the north-west, to the north and west, and in the town itself.

2046. Is mining progressing with you? It is, very much.

2047. What mines have you in payable condition here? Practical miners will follow me who will give you that information.

2048. If this line were constructed, do you think the traffic from Peak Hill and Alectown would be concentrated in Parkes? Yes; but I may mention that in the returns I have given, I have not taken in Peak Hill.

2049. How far is that from here? About 30 miles.

2050. How far from Dubbo? About 44 miles. The road between here and Peak Hill is better than the road between Dubbo and Peak Hill. The traffic would come here, if there were a railway near here.

2051. Putting aside all personal feeling in this matter, which line do you believe would serve the greater number of people—the line from Molong, the line from Borenore, or the line from Cowra? There is no doubt that the extension of the line from Molong would be considerably in favour of the population in this district, as well as of the population out north and west—the whole of those portions of the electorate are progressing. There is not much progression in other parts of the electorate, except that which takes place among themselves. There are no new people coming into many portions of the electorate, but in the portions to which I have referred large numbers are coming in weekly and monthly.

2052. You advocate the construction of this line in preference to either of the other lines? Yes; and if I had nothing to do with the place I should still advocate it.

2053. Do you think the country would be justified in constructing the line if it could be shown that by its construction it would lose £15,000 a year? I think we can prove that the country will not lose anything like it. The postmaster is not here just now. Before he left for Sydney I asked him to take out some figures—they are an exact copy of some figures which will be sent to the Postmaster-General. They show a great increase in the postal revenue, and that, I take it, is an evidence of an increase in the community. So far as the telegraph office is concerned, the receipts for July, August, and September, 1887, were £57 8s. 3d.; the receipts in the same months of 1888, were £66 10s. 3d.; and in the same months of 1889, £118 0s. 4d. The revenue, as shown by the Postmaster-General's report for 1888, was £297. The estimated revenue for the quarter ended September of the present year is £472; the number of messages transmitted, as per the Postmaster-General's report for 1888, was 4,617. The number of messages, estimated from business done for the quarter ending September, 1889, for the present year is 7,288. The Post Office revenue for 1888, as per Postmaster-General's report, was £750; the cash remitted for stamps for the quarter ending September, 1889, was £260. The estimated revenue for the present year is £1,040. The number of letters for September, 1888, posted at Parkes, was 7,992; packets, 210; and newspapers, 1,871. On the same basis, the total for the year 1888 would be 95,904 letters, 2,520 packets, and 22,452 newspapers. The number of letters posted in September, 1889, was 10,645; packets, 249; and newspapers, 5,174. Upon the same basis, the letters for 1889 would be 127,740; packets, 2,988; and the newspapers, 62,088. The number of mails despatched weekly is seventeen, and the number of bags, not including any private bags made up weekly, is seventy-five. So far as the Money Order Office is concerned, the money-orders issued for the quarter ending September, 1888, were in number 354; the amount was £1,008 14s. 7d.; the number paid was ninety-six, and the amount £426 2s. 4d. For the quarter ending September, 1889, the number issued was 459; the amount paid £1,289 17s. 3d.; the number paid was 140, and the amount £526 19s. 1d. I have another return of Cobb & Co.'s traffic for ten

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ten months in 1889. For some reason I could not get it for the whole year. I do not know whether instructions were given that it should not be given, but I could not get it. I have it from the month of January up to the end of October. The money received during that time at the Parkes end, which, in my opinion, is clearly the smallest end of the line as far as traffic is concerned, was £1,014 14s. 9d. Taking it for granted that the same rate of traffic would be kept up for the remaining months, the total for the year would be £1,215 7s. 2d. Then there is all the money taken at the Molong end. A considerable portion of through traffic cannot be here, because the money does not reach the hand of any person here.

2054. *Mr. Lec.*] From whom did you receive that return? I received it from the agent of Cobb & Co.'s stationed at Parkes. I also wish to remark in connection with the traffic upon this line, that the reason so many more horses are required upon another line in this district is, that that line is 30 miles longer than the Molong line. I have a memorandum here showing the number of sheep, from which wool now goes to Molong *via* Parkes, and the number of sheep from which the wool would come to Parkes to be conveyed by train, should the railway be made—the return also shows the probable revenue.

2055. Will you read a few of the figures? The sheep, from which the wool now goes to Molong *via* Parkes, number 548,000; the sheep, from which the wool would come to Parkes, if the extension is made from Molong to Forbes *via* Parkes, number 1,113,000.

2056. Are you including Forbes? I have not taken 1 oz. of anything belonging to Forbes.

2057. Are you keeping in your land district? Yes. I may say, however, that the wool from Burrawang at present goes to Sydney *via* Forbes, but if the line is made from Molong to Forbes, through Parkes, every ounce of that wool will come here. I have taken only one station on the Bogan. I take it for granted that the wool from all the sheep there will all go to Narromine, although I know it will not be the case. Allowing ten bales for 1,000 sheep, which is reasonable, although the wool this year went more, it will give 11,130 bales. Allowing six bales to the ton you have 1,855 tons of wool. At 70s. per ton, the rate through to Sydney, you will have a revenue of £6,492 10s. I reckon that there will be 50,000 fat sheep on the line, at 1s., or £2,500; 2,000 fat cattle, at 10s., or £1,000. As to goods—supposing there are 90 tons a week, or 4,680 tons for the year, at 60s. a ton, that would give you a revenue of £14,040. That is, of course, right through to Sydney. I take credit for £3,000 for mails, and as to grain, I reckon 100,000 bushels, at 6d. per bushel, or £5,000. I take it for granted that if the population in and around Parkes is 5,000; one-fifth of that population will travel once a year. I think that is a moderate estimate. One-fifth of the population, at 60s., gives you £3,000. I take credit for miscellaneous traffic to the extent of £5,000, and I make a total of £40,032. I take credit for one-third of that, considering my small figures for the new portion I made. I anticipate that the rates charged on the new portion will be considerably more than the rates charged on the portion now made. I admit that it will be in a position to pay a greater rate.

2058. *Chairman.*] You know from your personal experience that one town does not like to be imposed upon more than another, and that the rate for a certain distance is a certain amount. You will expect to be treated the same as the people at Bourke or at other places are treated in proportion to the distance? I think we are entitled to this credit, on account of the low figures I am giving—a third of the figures I have given will be £13,344.

2059. What will one-fourth of it be,—if these estimates of yours are not as high as they ought to be, that is not any reason why you should take a third of the distance instead of one-fourth? A fourth will be £10,008.

2060. Your figures are very low—it will certainly be more than 6d. per bushel on wheat—your estimate should be £10,008? Up to this point.

2061. That is about £1,260 under the Commissioners' estimate? Yes, as far as Parkes.

2062. How do you account for that? They have added a considerable portion for revenue between here and Forbes that I have not taken in.

2063. Do you think the Commissioners have included in their estimate the traffic from Forbes to Sydney? I am sure of it. I take it for granted that the report is correct.

2064. Then, according to your statistics, the Forbes district would only return about £1,000? Yes; that is up to the limit of the Commissioners' estimate; but I think there will be considerably more than that.

2065. Your estimate is for the traffic on the Parkes line, quite independently of Forbes? Yes.

2066. Whereas the Commissioners' estimate of £11,264 includes both Parkes and Forbes? Yes.

2067. Do you think that the Forbes traffic would be equal to the Parkes traffic on the railway? I think their returns to-day will be as great as ours.

2068. Then you will have a total of £22,000 instead of £11,000? It will be nearer £20,000 than £11,000.

2069. Then you would not show a loss of £15,000 a year on the line? I am satisfied there will be no loss upon it.

2070. Do you know that the Commissioners make the interest on the capital expenditure and working expenses amount to £26,000 a year? I am satisfied that their estimate of £11,000 is totally incorrect.

2071. *Mr. Lec.*] What do you estimate the traffic will be in connection with Forbes and Parkes, and the country between here and Molong? I think that after the railway had been running six months the revenue would exceed £20,000.

2072. *Chairman.*] Suppose this line were constructed there would be no other means for the Forbes people to get their produce to market? Unless they liked to cart it to Cowra.

2073. These estimated returns must include the total returns of the Forbes traffic as well as yours? I think so.

2074. Are you not over the estimate in putting it at £20,000? No. I know from the great progress this portion of the district is making that the revenue must be very much bigger.

2075. Have you anything to add to the information you have already given? I should like to give some arguments as to why this line should be constructed.

2076. You know Young? I have been there.

2077. Do you know the position it holds with regard to Parkes and Forbes? Only by looking at it on the map. I have never travelled the country between Young and Forbes.

2078. Do you know whether a line direct from Young to Dubbo would pass through Grenfell, Forbes, and Parkes? I believe it would.

2079. Would not that line serve Parkes and Forbes equally well with the proposed line? I think it would, but that is a line which must be constructed, even if this line is made. If the line you refer to is constructed,

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constructed, I believe it will carry more stock than any other line in the colony. I was going to remark, in connection with the distance of new construction, that 71 miles would give us railway communication from Molong. From Borenore to Forbes and Parkes there would be 86 miles of construction; from Cowra to Forbes and Parkes 84½ miles. I think that as the line is now made to Molong there can be no two opinions but that this is the correct extension to make. Of course, the argument will be raised that the line from Borenore to Forbes will give them a few miles less to have their goods conveyed, compared with this route; but we must look at every side of the question, and we should have so much further to take our goods. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

2080. Is the population of Forbes greater than that of Parkes? The population of the town must be greater, but it is not getting greater, except by reproduction among themselves. We are increasing outside, in addition to our own natural increase.

2081. Would not the construction of this line increase the haulage for the Forbes people by about 17 miles? About that.

2082. It would increase the line by that length for all the people to the west of Forbes—for the Condobolin people for instance? If you adopted the other line a greater hardship would be inflicted upon the places to the north and north-west of Parkes.

2083. Is there no traffic between here and Condobolin? Not much at present. Some years ago we had good markets at Condobolin, Nymagee, Mount Hope, and Cobar. The railway now conveys goods as far as Nyngan. The Cobar and Nymagee people get their goods from there. Condobolin, for the last few years, has been growing broadstuffs of its own, possibly enough to supply itself. Some years ago, I myself sent hundreds of tons of produce to Cobar and Nymagee.

2084. How far is Condobolin from here? About 60 miles.

2085. How far is it from Forbes? I am not prepared to say of my own knowledge. I have travelled from here to Condobolin, but I have not travelled from Forbes to Condobolin. There is a better road from here than down the river—a more passable road at all times.

2086. If this line were constructed, would not the people of Condobolin have to pay for 17 miles further haulage on their goods for all time? No.

2087. You think they would send from Parkes instead of from Forbes? There is no doubt about it.

2088. Is not Condobolin the centre for the Lachlan Valley traffic? No.

2089. Is it not the centre to which traffic gravitates in the Lachlan Valley? Not at present; it may ultimately do so.

2090. Where does the traffic of the Lachlan Valley go to? Some goes there and some comes here.

2091. In coming here from a point direct west, would it not come through Condobolin? Within a certain number of miles it would come through Condobolin, but a portion may drift away through Hillston.

2092. What I wanted to know was the important township beyond Forbes and Parkes in the Lachlan Valley to which most traffic would gravitate in order to come eastward? Condobolin, of course.

2093. Then, if Condobolin is the centre, would it be served by this railway if they had to pay the extra 17 miles of haulage? No, certainly not; but they would not have to pay that haulage—the traffic would come to Parkes instead of Forbes.

2094. You said just now that the wool which would come upon this railway would be from 1,113,000 sheep? Yes.

2095. Do you know that in a petition which has been sent in, a statement has been made that the wool from 5,000,000 sheep would be served by a railway to Forbes? It is quite possible, but I do not know where they are coming from. I do not think they are in the district. I have taken credit for nothing but what I know would come here.

2096. Where are the principal part of the sheep to which your statistics refer? They are all north, west, and north-west. There are a few to the east and about 1,000 to the south. I have gone out as far as Trundle—that is about 14 miles. I have no doubt that they have taken credit at Forbes for everything all round. I have only taken credit for everything that must come here.

2097. *Mr. Lee.*] Can you tell us how many flour-mills there are in this district? There is only one in the Parkes portion of it.

2098. How many banks are there in the town of Parkes? Three.

2099. What is the population within the municipal boundaries? About 3,000.

2100. What is the annual amount of your rates? Last year they were only about £500. They are very much greater this year.

2101. How long has the town been incorporated? For about five years.

2102. Is the population increasing within the municipal boundary? Very much.

2103. Is the capital value of taxable land increasing? Yes; in the last twelve months it has increased 300 per cent.

2104. Is the value likely to still further increase? Very much.

2105. That is an evidence of increased and improved buildings? Yes. I might remark that we have had little or no public money spent here. We have been left to go the best way we could. A lot of public money has been spent elsewhere, but I will not say anything about that.

2106. *Mr. Douel.*] You have handed in a return showing the holders of land in the district;—do you think they will contribute materially to the revenue of the railway? Every one of them.

2107. In your capacity as auctioneer and stock agent, can you inform the Committee whether many stock pass through Parkes from Queensland? An immense number.

2108. Is it not possible that some portion of this stock, in times of drought, would use this railway, thus creating a revenue? A great number of them would use it.

2109. In your position as Mayor you have come into contact with a large number of residents, and have had an opportunity to gauge public opinion as to the route which should be adopted? Yes.

2110. What is the consensus of public opinion on the subject? Of course, they all say here that this is the correct line. At the same time we have residents who own property at Forbes, who also say that it is the correct line.

2111. Have the public meetings which have been held been in favour of this line? Always.

2112. I understood you to say just now that there would be 17 miles longer haulage to Sydney if this line were constructed? To serve the Forbes people—from their standpoint.

2113. Is there not 11 miles less of construction upon the Molong line? Yes.

Mr.

Mr. Mark Coleman, gardener, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. M. Coleman.
27 Feb., 1890.
2114. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your occupation? I have several occupations. I am principally gardening at the present time.
2115. How long have you resided in the district? Twenty-eight or twenty-nine years. Part of the time at Forbes, and the remainder of the time at Parkes. I have lived at Forbes eleven years and here about eighteen years.
2116. Have you come here prepared to furnish any statistics to the Committee? No statistics whatever. Mr. Rose has been supplied with them all.
2117. On what particular point do you wish to give evidence? One point upon which I should like to give some evidence has reference to the flooded country. I see by the evidence given to the Committee in Sydney that one of the Government engineers has been led astray, or has been confusing one line with the other. This gentleman was reported to have said that on the line from James' Dam to Forbes there was flooded country, requiring culverts and embankments, whereas any one here knows that there is not an inch of flooded country upon the whole distance from Parkes. There are a few little gullies where the water backs up in times of flood, but the road is never flooded, except for a short distance crossing these low gullies. The survey from Cowra to Forbes and the survey from Borenore to Forbes junction with the Parkes line is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles on this side of Forbes. They have to come to this particular point to get into Forbes in order to avoid the flooded country.
2118. That is to say, the country in the immediate vicinity of Forbes is liable to floods? There is no other way of coming in, except by way of this junction.
2119. Do you know the country between this and Molong? Yes; I have travelled it at different times.
2120. Have you ever been off the road? No, I cannot say I have, except on one occasion, when the surveyor was here, surveying through the gap.
2121. You know the track from Forbes to Eugowra and Borenore? Yes.
2122. Have you been along it often? Only once or twice.
2123. What is the quality of the country on that line, as compared with the quality of the country on the line to Molong? In my opinion, there is very little to choose between them. I think there is good and bad country on both lines. In travelling this way the difference is that you travel over the rough country, leaving the good country on either side. Going the other way you travel through the gaps, and through the best land, leaving the hilly, ridgy country away from the line.
2124. Are you a property-owner in Parkes? Yes; I have town property in both Parkes and Forbes—suburban property also.
2125. Does the railway survey in either case affect your property? Yes.
2126. Does it pass through it? Part of the survey of the line from Molong comes through the lower portion of two pieces of suburban property. The present survey is through it, but the line may, perhaps, be made without going through it.
2127. Are you gardening on a large scale? I have 6 acres.
2128. What do you do with the produce of the garden? We generally get rid of most of it locally. The year before last was a bad year, and there was not much to get rid of. We sent some fruit this year to Orange, and to Peak Hill and Alectown. I sell a good deal of my own fruit in a shop I have in the town.
2129. How does fruit flourish in this district? If we only get a moderate season it flourishes as well as it does anywhere.
2130. What kinds of fruit do you grow? Oranges, lemons, peaches, pears, and apples.
2131. Do grapes grow to perfection? They could not be grown better.
2132. Do you grow for wine? Yes; I make wine every year.
2133. Is there a market for local consumption? Yes. Very little wine is made here, except that which I make myself. The year before last I made about 600 gallons.
2134. Which line would best serve the larger portion of the community—the line from Borenore or the line from Molong? My opinion is that the public generally would be best served by the line from Molong. In the first place the number of people to be served is much larger. There are a large number of settlers who have taken up land to the north, to the west, and to the north-west of this place. They are all, I think, good *bona fide* settlers—men who would produce and cause traffic.
2135. Do your oranges grow well here? We have good oranges in good seasons; but the seasons have been bad here lately.
2136. Do you think that if either of these lines were constructed it would give a proper outlet for the produce of the district? Yes.
2137. So far as your individual interest is concerned, would a railway constructed from Young to Forbes, through Grenfell, and on to Parkes and Dubbo, answer your purpose better? I have no doubt it would answer general purposes as well as my own. Of course, it would be a good way round to get to Sydney.*
2138. But it would be an advantage, as far as wheat and local produce is concerned? I can hardly say that. I think the Molong line would be more advantageous to the general public, on account of the metropolitan market for grain.
2139. You look upon the metropolitan market as being the best for grain? Yes.
2140. Which would be the best line for wool? I should imagine the Molong line. The wool must go to Sydney.
2141. There would be less haulage than by the cross line? Yes.
2142. And the same argument would apply to passenger traffic? Yes.

Mr. Angelos Pholoros, storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. A. Pholoros.
27 Feb., 1890.
2143. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your occupation? I am a storekeeper at Parkes.
2144. How long have you been residing in this neighbourhood? Since I came to the colonies, about eleven years ago.
2145. I presume you have seen Parkes go up and down more than once? I saw Parkes go up eleven years ago, when there was gold-mining. When the gold-mining came down, the place came down also. I saw it afterwards far better than I had ever seen it before.
2146. What is the cause of its present prosperity? I attribute it to the large quantity of land taken up. Many selectors have come here from Victoria. They are wealthy men, and they have spent many thousands

* NOTE (on revision):—I meant the line in question would open a market, *via* Dubbo, to the back country.

thousands of pounds in this place. Then there is the mining and the increased agriculture. These three things have contributed to the prosperity of the place.

Mr.
A. Pholoross,
27 Feb., 1890.

2147. Have you prepared any statistics? I have been for some time agent for Wright, Heaton, & Co. in this town, and I have prepared you some statistics in reference to the traffic. Now, as to the goods coming from Molong to Parkes: They amount to 3,448 tons for the twelve months ending December last. The goods going down—that is, hides, skins, beeswax, and many other things of that kind (I do not include wheat and wool)—were about 1,500 tons. I cannot swear to the quantity of wool going from Parkes, but I think there were about 6,000 bales.

2148. It has not all passed through your hands? No; but I think about that quantity went to the Molong station. The principal thing to which I wish to draw your attention is the condition of traffic at present, compared with what it was three or four years ago. At that time we had about six or seven teams to draw our goods from Orange and Molong. Many a time they had to wait there a week or two for a load. At the present time we have about seventeen teams—that is, fourteen carriers and three private teams. These are constantly going without any delay, and they are all from 5 to 6 ton teams. We cannot keep the station clear of goods. It is often crowded with Parkes goods. In the month of December there were 404 tons of goods at Molong station. Out of that 404 tons there were 112 for Molong, 42 for Cumnock, and 250 tons for Parkes. I also wish to give you some little proof of the increase of my own business. I used to pay to the Government from £100 to £200 trainage per year; at present—I cannot swear to £1 or £2—it is close upon £1,000—that is, for goods up and down, and it is quite irrespective of Wright, Heaton, & Co.'s business. In proof of it, I can show you the way-bills and railway vouchers.

2149. If you could tell me what the trainage would be from Molong to Parkes, I could tell you what amount of trainage would be paid from Parkes and Molong? I reckon that the Parkes line will pay the Government about £8,000, independently of wool and grain. I am referring to goods coming only to Parkes. My estimate is independent of the passenger traffic. There are a lot of goods coming through this way for the squatters; then there is the Alectown and Peak Hill traffic. I think Mr. Rose was wrong in the distance he gave you—it is 15 miles from here to Alectown, and 30 miles to Peak Hill.

2150. Does it pay the people of Peak Hill to pay the road carriage from Molong to Parkes and then from Parkes to Peak Hill, a distance of 80 miles, instead of paying only for the 50 miles of road carriage from Dubbo? It would pay better to bring it from Dubbo, if the roads were not so bad. In wet weather they are obliged to bring the goods through from Molong.

2151. Are not your roads bad in wet weather? Not so bad as theirs.

2152. You said that there had been a large influx from Victoria, and that men with capital were settling down in the Parkes district? Yes.

2153. There is nothing which tends to diminish the number of people coming here? Nothing except the difficulty of getting land. There is a great deal of land shut up in the gold-field reserve. If that were thrown open I am sure plenty of selectors would come here.

2154. Do you think a great impetus would be given to the material prosperity of the town? Yes.

2155. I suppose the same difficulty arises in regard to people settled in the town? There are a number of allotments which people cannot take up for residence on account of their being reserved in the gold-field. If they take up the land they never get it. They sometimes have to wait ten or fifteen years before they can get it from the Government. If the Government would sell the land by auction, not one inch of ground in the town would be left.

2156. What would it realize per acre? The town allotments are from £14 to £15 for a quarter of an acre. If the upset price is £15, people run it up to £50 or £100, according to the position.

2157. The demand is much greater than the supply? Yes.

2158. Do I understand that land has brought extreme prices in the town of Parkes? Very large prices.

2159. Can you give me an instance? The other day a gentleman sold several allotments. He had three reserved, and they brought about 50 per cent. more than the price he put upon the land.

2160. Do you know of any other instance in which land in the town has been sold at a high price? The Union Bank bought from 38 to 50 feet of frontage for £1,000, it may be a little less.

2161. Does that adjoin "Foster's Hotel"? Yes.

2162. Is not that an excessive price to give for land here? Considering the business doing in the town, it was not thought too dear.

2163. If the Government would throw open more of the land, such a price would not be obtained? I do not know; there are plenty of people taking up land here. Every day you find people looking for quarters and unable to obtain them.

2164. Have any representations been made to the Government, setting forth the disabilities under which you labour? Yes, but the Government take no notice of it.

2165. Do not the Government want money? There is plenty of money in this town if the Government want it; there is plenty of land to be sold here.

2166. You know the country between this town and Forbes, and between this town and Molong? Yes.

2167. Do you know the country between Forbes and Borenore? Partly.

2168. Do you know the country between Young, Grenfell, and Forbes? I never was there.

2169. Have you been over the country between this place and Dubbo? No.

2170. Is there any other statement you desire to make? I heard you asking a question of another witness as to whether this railway, if constructed, would pay expenses. From what I can see of the progress of the place, if the railway were constructed from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, I am prepared to swear that it will not only pay expenses, but will, within a few years, pay the cost of the railway. I am sure that £26,000 would be received from this district.

2171. You have seen this district rise up to a high state of prosperity and descend again to very low depths? Yes.

2172. Do you not think that is likely to occur again? No.

2173. What about the bad seasons? The selectors we have here are doing very well. I know that as a fact. They have dealings with me, and I know how they stand. In case of drought they are well supplied with water. They have dams and have spent a lot of money upon their holdings. The stock might be a little injured in time of drought, but nothing to speak of.

2174. How did they get through the terrible drought of 1888? They did get through it.

2175. Did they suffer much loss? Not much.

- Mr. A. Pholeros. 2176. They have recouped it since? Yes. I know the case of one selector who, whatever he lost in the drought, cleared this year £1,200.
- 27 Feb., 1890. 2177. If they could do so well without a railway, do you think they would do much better with one? I believe that if a railway were brought here it would be one of the most wealthy places in New South Wales.

Mr. John Medlyn, miner and hotelkeeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. Medlyn. 2178. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a miner and hotelkeeper.
- 27 Feb., 1890. 2179. How long have you been here? About fourteen years.
2180. *Mr. Dowel.*] You have a pretty general knowledge of the district? I have a knowledge of a good part of it—that is, for about 15 or 20 miles out.
2181. What occupation have you chiefly followed since you have been in Parkes? Mining.
2182. Is the Parkes gold-field a large one? Yes.
2183. Can you state the number of acres on the gold-field reserve? No; I was not aware that I was expected to give evidence on that point.
2184. Is there any alluvial mining going on in your town? Well, there is the Tichborne, M'Guinness, and other leads.
2185. Has it been of a profitable character? Yes; we have had rich leads.
2186. What is the description of mining now being carried on? Reefing; very little alluvial.
2187. Can you give us any information as to the reefs? There is the Dayspring, down about 300 feet or a little over. I visited it a short time ago. The reef was fully 6 feet wide and is very easily worked. I was informed that it crushed 7 dwts.—a handsome return for such a reef.
2188. Was that without the pyrites? That also would yield considerably, although I have not heard the returns.
2189. Have you heard of any assays from pyrites? I have heard of some, although I do not exactly remember them. I have heard of from 30 to 40 oz. to the ton—for instance, there is Mr. Haselhurst's claim.
2190. Is that a profitable mine? It has been and is still, I believe. It is in the hands of a company now and is paying well. It is a substantial reef, keeping down well, and likely to go to a great depth.
2191. What is the yield from that reef? I do not know. I have heard that it crushed from 1 oz. up to 20 ozs. to the ton.
2192. Are there any other special reefs to which you wish to direct attention? There is Quayle's claim, adjoining Haselhurst's on the same line of reef. It goes down to about 220 or 230 feet. The reef is going down, and is keeping good as it goes.
2193. From your knowledge of this country, are you of opinion that the reefs are of a permanent character? I think it will be one of the largest reefing fields in the colony—equal to Bendigo or Ballarat.
2194. Are the reefs of great extent? Yes; the reefs extend, although they are not payable, up to Peak Hill. There is a reef at Alectown which would pay now, if there was machinery on it.
2195. You think the country between Parkes and Peak Hill is auriferous? Yes; I think there will be a great gold-mining industry there.
2196. Have you visited Peak Hill? Not within the last two years, but I have prospected there.
2197. Do you know the country intervening between Parkes and Peak Hill? Yes; I have done a good deal of prospecting there.
2198. And it all appears to you to be of an auriferous character? Yes; it would be a large reefing district.
2199. Can you say how many miners are employed in this district? I could not say.
2200. Is the number now larger or less than it was a few years since? I think it is double what it was a few years ago.
2201. Have you seen the mining industry here in a more prosperous condition? At the time of the alluvial mining; but, since there has been reefing, I do not think it has been so prosperous.
2202. How many batteries have you in the district? Two—one with twenty head, and another, the Huntingdon, equal to fifteen or twenty head.
2203. Have you a sufficient number of batteries to meet the requirements of the district? We might have at the present time, but there would have to be more.
2204. How much a ton do they charge at these batteries? The price would average from 8s. to 10s. a ton. Some stone would crush for less. The batteries crush by the hour.
2205. Do you know that there has been a considerable demand for land in the gold-field reserve? Yes.
2206. Do you think it desirable that the reserve should be cancelled for the purposes of settlement? I think a portion of it might be cancelled, with great care and consideration. I should be very careful in cancelling it in the vicinity of the reefs.
2207. Have you been over both routes of the railway? I have not been over both.
2208. Have you been over the route from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? Yes.
2209. You know the country? Pretty well.
2210. Is it of a good character? Very good.
2211. Suitable for what purposes? For agriculture.
2212. Is it suitable to the growth of fruits? Yes. There is splendid fruit almost all the way along. The Parkes district is a great fruit-growing district.
2213. Do you know the condition of the settlers in this locality? Yes.
2214. Do they appear to be in a prosperous condition? Yes; they are all getting on very well, judging from appearances.
2215. If a railway were constructed would they put more land under cultivation? Yes; I should say you would have double the area under cultivation within twelve months.
2216. Is it not a fact that there are a large number of other reefs being worked besides the two to which you have referred? Yes. There is the Koh-i-noor, the Bonnie Dundee, the Gladstone, and the Bushman's Hill.
2217. As an experienced miner, you think the reefs are of a permanent character, and are likely to give employment to a large number of persons? Yes; they are employing more every month. There is the deep shaft on the Bonnie Dundee line of reef, which, in my opinion, will open up the field to a great extent, and will give employment to a great many more than other reefs which have been proved to be payable.

2218. Had you been working on any other gold-fields previous to coming to Parkes? Yes; in New Zealand and Bendigo.

2219. Making a comparison between the fields upon which you have worked and this particular field, do you think Parkes will compare favourably with other places? Judging from the formation of the country, I think the Parkes reef will turn out equal to those at Bendigo, such as the Garden Gully and Husslers. There is the same formation there as can be found in these reefs.

2220. Has settlement in the town and district of Parkes improved lately? Very much within the last three or four years.

2221. You can see a great improvement? Yes. There is a piece of property I bought four years ago for £450, for which I was offered, and refused, £2,000.

Mr.
J. Medlyn.
27 Feb., 1890

Mr. Sydney Ephraim Close, auctioneer, sworn and examined:—

2222. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am an auctioneer.

2223. Where do you reside? At Parkes.

2224. How long have you been here? Nearly eight years in the town of Parkes.

2225. Have you been in business as an auctioneer all that time? Yes.

2226. What is your opinion of the progress of the town since you have been here. It has made wonderful strides during the eight years I have been here. I have known the place ever since it has been a town. I have resided in the district twenty-one years.

2227. Have you noticed whether this progress has been marked within the last year or two? It has been marked since 1884 or 1885.

2228. It has been gradually progressing each year? There has been an improvement in the value of all properties in the district up to the present time.

2229. Can you give us some idea of the value of allotments in the town several years ago, compared with their present value? I can speak of one lot which I bought five years ago at public auction for £250. I have refused £1,000 for it during the last five or six months.

2230. That is not an exceptional case? No.

2231. Would that be a fair average taking into consideration the improved value of the other properties? I think so.

2232. To what do you attribute this increase in the value of property? To the increase of population we have had during the last few years. In 1883, if you went out west, north, or north-west you could ride all day without meeting a person; now you cannot go a mile or couple of miles without seeing some place—it is all new settlement. There is land out there of which it would take at one time 30 or 40 acres to carry a sheep, but since the land has been selected and improved it would carry a sheep to 2 acres.

2233. What class of improvements has made that difference? The land has been scrubbed and ring-barked.

2234. Has there been any water conserved? They could not occupy the land otherwise, because they are so far away from the creek, the improvements in the water-line have been in the way of tanks, principally.

2235. Have you seen much improvement in the area under cultivation in the last year or two? Yes, nearly every selector is cultivating, more or less.

2236. What is the average value per acre of a small selection for agricultural purposes, say a selection of from 300 up to 640 acres? A great deal would depend upon the locality in which the selection was situated—whether it was ridgy country or in flat country.

2237. But take what you term the best agricultural land in its natural state? From £3 10s. to £4 an acre.

2238. Without any improvements? Yes.

2239. Do you think it is as valuable as that? Yes, I have given a higher price for it myself.

2240. Do you know the class of country on the leasehold areas which will shortly fall in? Yes.

2241. Do they contain any land of the quality you were just speaking of? The principal part of those areas is further from town. When I said £4 per acre, I was speaking of land at a comparatively short distance from town.

2242. At what distance? 4 or 5 miles from the town.

2243. The actual value of it for farming purposes, 10 or 12 miles away, would be reduced? Yes. I know the land in the leaseholds to which you refer.

2244. Will you describe it? It varies. Some of it is very rough and densely timbered, with underbrush as thick as it can possibly be. In fact I know an instance in which a family took up a large area adjoining the leasehold, and to which the leasehold is similar, where they had to clear a place to put up a house.

2245. Is that the general run of the leasehold areas? That is an exceptional case.

2246. Will you describe the rest? Some is very fine country, and some is good open country. I should reckon the market value of it at about £2 per acre.

2247. For agricultural purposes? Yes.

2248. You are satisfied there is a good deal fit for agricultural purposes? Yes.

2249. Have you any idea as to the proportion of good and bad land on these areas? I think myself it would be about half-and-half. Those who come into the field first would, of course, get all the good land.

2250. Do you know the number of acres which would be thrown open? I do not.

2251. Do you think the construction of this railway will materially increase the value of property outside the town as well as in it? I think so.

2252. Have you any knowledge of the proposed route of the railway from Borenore to Forbes? I have travelled that line.

2253. Do you know the country between that line and the proposed line from Molong to Parkes? Not all through, but I know a considerable portion of it.

2254. From your knowledge of the country, which line do you think will serve the greater number of people. I want you to consider the country to the north of this line, and the country which will be served south of the line from Borenore to Forbes, leaving the centre of the land to be served by either line? I certainly think the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes would serve the greater number of people.

2255. Do you know anything of the country between here and Peak Hill? Yes.

2256.

Mr.
S. E. Close.
27 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. S. E. Close.
27 Feb., 1890.
2256. What class of country is it? Principally good agricultural country.
2257. It is at the same time mineral country? Yes, it has been tried all the way through to Peak Hill.
2258. And it is all the gold-field reserve now? Yes.
2259. Have you any other information to give the Committee? I heard you ask another witness as to the value of town lots. I had a sale on the 1st of the month, and I could tell you the size of the land, its situation, and the price it brought. The first was a lot of 56 feet frontage to Clarinda-street, but outside the town altogether—it was sold for £60; it contained 39 perches. The next block of 39 perches sold for £43; the next block, 48 perches, for £45 5s.; then 38 perches sold for £46, 38 perches again for £48, and 38 perches again for £52 10s.; that was all the land in that locality. The next blocks were at the other end of the town—they were blocks of 13 perches, at the extreme end of the town, on the southern side—one sold for £68 15s.; a block of 12 perches adjoining sold for £66 10s.; a block in the third street from the main street, of 1 rood, sold for £93 10s. The next block of the same size sold for £133—that was in Hill-street; the next block was in the same street but further on; it sold for £170 10s.
2260. All these sales have taken place lately? Yes.
2261. Can you tell the Committee whether any of these blocks would be materially affected by the construction of the railway line—would the railway station be near any of them, or would there be anything of that kind inducing a higher price? No, I do not think so. The railway itself would not go through any of them, and the railway station would not be near any of them; the proposed place for the railway station would not be within 400 yards of the nearest.

Mr. Thomas Bridle, selector, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. T. Bridle.
27 Feb., 1890.
2262. *Mr. Lee.*] You are a selector? Yes.
2263. How many acres do you occupy? 2,560. One of my sons holds 1,153 acres, and the other, like myself, has a full block.
2264. Where is your place situated? Nearly at the head of the Bogan, from 36 to 38 miles from here.
2265. How long have you been there? Four years.
2266. You have not yet complied with the residence clause? No.
2267. Had you been living in the district prior to your becoming a selector? Only about two months before.
2268. Where did you come from? The Tumut.
2269. Had you been living in that district? Yes, off and on for thirty years.
2270. Do you cultivate much ground? No, I cultivate about 10 acres of wheat or hay, that is all.
2271. Have you tried to grow wheat, or grain? No.
2272. Why? It would not be worth our while to grow it, on account of the distance to take it to market.
2273. It would be cheaper to buy flour and to cart it out than to grow wheat? Yes, considering that it would have to be reaped and then threshed with a flail.
2274. Do you grow sufficient hay for your own consumption? I have not done so yet.
2275. What are you grazing? Sheep.
2276. Which way do you send your wool? By Parkes one year, and by Narromine the next.
2277. Which is the cheapest? At present, Narromine.
2278. You know the proposed railway route? Not from Molong to this place; but I know the district to the west and north-west of this.
2279. Will the construction of the proposed line bring you closer to a railway than you are at present? Yes, a little closer; it will save extra railway freight. It will be better for me to bring all my produce to Parkes.
2280. As being the shorter and less expensive route? Yes.
2281. The whole of your produce, at present, must find its way to the Sydney market? Yes.
2282. No matter who you sell to in the district? Exactly.
2283. Are there many selectors in your part of the country? Yes; all the land available for selection in my part is taken up, although four years ago I was by myself—there was not one selector within 8 or 9 miles of me.
2284. Is there much land available for selection? There will be when the leasehold areas of the runs are resumed, but not until then—there will be a great deal then.
2285. How much will be available then? I do not know the extent of the runs. There are thirty selectors where I am, on the run, and I suppose there will be room for as many more when the leasehold area falls in.
2286. Are these runs in the Central division? Yes.
2287. Consequently the leasehold area will not be available for some years to come? No.
2288. Is there any Crown land at the present time outside of the pastoral leasehold? There are some small reserves, that is all.
2289. All the other land is gone? Yes, all round that part of the country.
2290. Your district, for a few years to come, is pretty well filled up? Yes; but in another locality, where the land is not so much talked of, there is land available, for instance on Boolgandramine, and on the Troughs. There were four or five different lots taken up there not long since.
2291. What run are you on? Genanagie.
2292. Is it a sheep run? Yes.
2293. How many sheep are carried by the lessee? I cannot give you the exact number; but I think about 35,000 this year.
2294. How many sheep have you and your sons? At the present time not many—about 2,500.
2295. Do you say you have thirty neighbours on the one run? Yes.
2296. How many sheep have your neighbours? The number varies from 1,500 to 2,000.
2297. Will they average 500? Yes, they will go closer to 1,000. I should say that at the present time they would average from 800 to 900.
2298. In the aggregate, then, thirty selectors have about 34,000 sheep? Yes.
2299. While the lessee has 35,000? Yes.
2300. Had you any sheep in 1888? Yes.
2301. Was that not a very dry year? Yes. I had 4,000 sheep then.
2302. How did they stand the dry season? Water was our only difficulty.
2303. Was the grass short? No.

2304. Did you lose your sheep from starvation? A few old ewes.
2305. Had you to remove any to better pastures? We removed 1,200 just as the drought was breaking up.
2306. Do you happen to know how the lessees' sheep fared—were his losses heavy? Yes; there were great losses on that station. I heard that they lost 5,000 or 6,000.
2307. Had they to travel their sheep? No.
2308. I suppose I need hardly ask you whether you are a permanent, *bona-fide* settler? I had every intention of being so when I first came, and I am of the same opinion still.
2309. As far as you can judge of the seasons and the quality of the land, do you think you will make a good living off your selection? Yes, not only a living but a good deal beside.
2310. Do you think you will do as others have done in the dry country—that is, stick to your place for years and then have to sell it? I have not the slightest thought of doing so. I see no reason to suppose that I shall have to do so. I can not only live upon the land, but I think I can do well there.
2311. Are there many dummies in your locality? I do not believe that on that resumed area there is one dummy. I am positive there is no dummy belonging to the station. There are two exceptions, concerning which I do not know very much, but so far as all the rest are concerned, I feel confident that they have taken up the land with a view to make it their home.
2312. So far as the construction of this line to Parkes is concerned, the only difference it can make to you is that it will make Parkes your terminus instead of Narromine? Oh yes, it will make more difference than that; it will give me less freight, and you must also consider the distance to the railway.
2313. But I thought that so far as cultivation is concerned you would be as far away from the railway station as you are now? No; it would make a difference.
2314. What difference? I do not know the exact distance from Narromine; but I think that if there were a railway to Parkes it would be 10 miles shorter to come here than to go to Narromine.
2315. Consequently Parkes would be your railway terminus? Yes.
2316. Would it be sufficiently close to enable you to grow grain and cart it to the railway? Yes; I should feel encouraged to start the cultivation of grain, if there were a railway at Parkes.
2317. If a line were made across from Forbes to Dubbo, how would that suit you? Of course that would suit me best, because it would come within 15 miles of me.
2318. Are you near Peak Hill? About 14 miles in an easterly direction.

Mr.
T. Bridle.
27 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Edward Nathan, sworn and further examined:—

2319. *Chairman.*] I believe you wish to make a statement to the Committee? Yes; I am informed that the Mayor of Parkes, Mr. Rose, told the Committee this morning that the local agent of Cobb & Co. at Parkes had informed him that he had taken, from January to October, 1889, £1,141. I told this to Mr. Cottingham in the presence of Mr. Harwood and Mr. Strickland, and Mr. Cottingham said that Mr. Rose had sworn a lie.* As the Committee will be in Orange in the course of a few days, I will give them an order to look at our books. That will prove to you that the statement made to you this morning is not true. We never took the money named by Mr. Rose, in even fifteen or seventeen months, from Parkes. Mr. Cottingham tells me that he never gave anyone any information about the matter; in fact I do not know the actual receipts myself without going over the books. Mr. Cottingham used stronger language than I have used, and denied *in toto* that he had told Mr. Rose or any other person breathing his cash receipts. The firm's books in Orange will show that the Committee had been told a palpable untruth. The highest money ever taken between Molong and Parkes in one month was taken when the diggers were running, and that was between £70 and £80. The Committee also have our permission to go to the bank where our money is deposited.

Mr.
E. Nathan.
27 Feb., 1890.

John Alexander Rose, Esq., sworn and further examined:—

2320. *Chairman.*] You have heard what Mr. Nathan has said with reference to Cobb & Co.'s receipts at Parkes? Yes; the figures I supplied as being the returns of Cobb & Co. were brought up to my place by Mr. Cottingham.
2321. *Mr. Dowel.*] Is the handwriting you produce that of Mr. Cottingham? Some of it is; I think a portion of it is in the handwriting of his wife. When he is examined by the Committee, I do not think he will deny that. Mr. Nathan has said that to the best of his belief the highest monthly return was about £70 or £80. The figures I have here show for one month £97. If you like, I can give you each month as it has been given to me. The figures are not mine, and it is a matter of indifference to me. I am sure Mr. Cottingham would not give me the figures if they were not correct. The total given by Mr. Nathan is not correct. The total I gave this morning, as far as I can recollect, was £1,041—not the amount stated by Mr. Nathan.

J. A. Rose,
Esq.
27 Feb., 1890.

Mr. John M'Grath, sheep farmer, sworn and examined:—

2322. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a sheep farmer, residing at Genanagie.
2323. What holding have you? 2,360 acres.
2324. Has any land been taken up by your family? None.
2325. How long have you been a resident on this station? About three years last November.
2326. What use do you make of your land? I graze sheep, principally.
2327. Is it all fenced in and improved? Yes, now.
2328. Is there sufficient water? There is not a permanent supply yet, but there is a pretty fair supply.
2329. How many sheep have you? 1,060.
2330. What number do you expect to be able to keep when the land is fully improved? About 1,500 ewes—about one sheep to 2 acres.
2331. Do you think that is a fair instance of the grazing capabilities of the whole of that part of the country? I think that would be a fair estimate.
2332. You have not an exceptionally good selection? No; it is an average selection.
2333. How many selectors are there on that run? About thirty altogether, I think.

Mr. J.
M'Grath.
27 Feb., 1890.

2334.

* NOTE (on revision):—The fact is, that Mr. Cottingham has not taken that amount from all the roads during the time—that is, Parkes to Molong, Forbes, Cowra, Grenfell, Young, and Condobolin.

- Mr. J. McGrath.
27 Feb., 1890.
2334. Are their holdings improved? Some are, but some have only lately come to the district; some have only fenced in and have not stocked.
2335. When they are all improved, do you think the grazing capabilities will be at the rate of one sheep to 2 acres? About that.
2336. What is the average holding of these men? They nearly all hold 2,560 acres—all with the exception of six. There are about thirty selectors on the resumed area.
2337. You are speaking of the resumed area of the Genanagie holding? Yes.
2338. I make the area you named about 70,000 acres? Yes.
2339. And that you keep 35,000 sheep? That would be about it.
2340. Do you know the number of sheep on the leasehold area? I do not.
2341. Which is the best part of the run? I think the leasehold area is the best. They have taken in the permanent water.
2342. As far as the grazing capabilities are concerned it is equal to the resumed area? Oh, yes; but the leasehold area is more improved.
2343. You really believe that in the course of a few years, when all these holdings are fairly improved, the land will carry the number of sheep you have just stated? I believe it will.
2344. Where do you send your wool to? I sent it to Narromine last year.
2345. In the event of a railway being constructed to Parkes where would you send it? To Parkes—that being nearer to Sydney.
2346. Although the land traffic would be the same, the railway haulage would be considerably less? Yes.

Mr. John Cusack, selector, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. Cusack.
27 Feb., 1890.
2347. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a selector, residing at a place called Trundle, about 40 miles to the north-west of Parkes.
2348. *Mr. Douel.*] How long have you been in the district? Nearly five years.
2349. Have you any local knowledge respecting other portions of the district? I have a fair knowledge of the country between Condobolin and Young.
2350. What is the area of your holding, and what use do you make of it? It is 2,560 acres. At present it is running sheep. I have some cattle.
2351. Is it improved and fenced in? Yes; it is fenced in.
2352. Is the land in your immediate vicinity occupied? Yes; by selection. Of course the squatter occupies the leasehold.
2353. What is the character of the country? There is good land out there, both for agricultural and pastoral purposes.
2354. Have you put any land under agriculture? Ten acres, I think, on my place.
2355. What crop do you put in? Wheat, but for a hay crop only.
2356. Was it for your own consumption? Yes.
2357. Is your experience sufficient to satisfy you that the land might be turned to good advantage under agriculture? I am satisfied that it will grow an excellent crop in a fair season.
2358. How far is your holding from Parkes? About 35 miles direct, but as we go, about 40 miles.
2359. Suppose a railway were constructed, would you bring your produce to market? I should.
2360. Is there any particular point upon which you desire to give information? No. All that I desire to say is, that the district I am in is a rising district. I could give you a good deal of information about it. Even out there we shall soon have a town. The only place that is left available for settlement is a reserve on the main road. Within the last two years we have had a public-house, a store, and a blacksmith's shop; a church and school were erected more than two years ago; now another public-house is going up, and I believe another church is about to be erected. Men who own some of the land fronting the main road are able to get a rental of £1 per acre per annum. I believe the Government contemplate establishing a telephone station there.
2361. Your experience in the district convinces you that it is a rising and thriving place? Yes, certainly. When I came here first there was only one selector between here and Condobolin, but now upon one run alone I can count sixty-five—I refer to Burrawang.
2362. Do you know the country between Forbes and Condobolin? I do. It is very good country indeed.
2363. Is it fairly settled upon? Yes.
2364. In large or small areas? On the direct road from Forbes to Condobolin there are a good many men holding from 320 to 640 acres.
2365. Suppose a railway were constructed to Forbes, would these people in Condobolin and along the valley of the Lachlan use the Forbes railway station? It would be just as easy to go to Parkes as to Forbes. As far as I know the country, by keeping out in this direction you avoid the flood waters.
2366. Under these circumstances Parkes and Forbes will be the two towns at which traffic will converge? Yes; they cannot get to any other place.
2367. Do you know the country between Condobolin and Wilcannia? No.
2368. Have you grown vegetables in your district? Yes; they grow very well in a good season. In this season most excellent vegetables have been grown in the district.
2369. Are there any orchards or vineyards planted in that direction? No; but there are gardens, with a few vines.
2370. Generally speaking, the character of the settlement would be permanent? Yes.
2371. Do you think the soil is sufficiently good to induce the present occupants to remain there? There can be no question about the soil. Of course the climate might be improved upon. The soil is as good as you could see anywhere.
2372. Have you had a fair rainfall right through? Last year we had 13 inches—it is the driest year I remember. I had plenty of water—enough to last me six months longer than the drought. I think a few settlers who had just come, and who could not make water, had to leave, but that was all.
2373. *Chairman.*] Do the selectors or the lessees carry the greater number of sheep on a certain area? I was told on the Burrawang run there is a 90,000-acre paddock, of which Mr. Edols holds a third now. On the total area I believe he had more than 20,000 sheep. I know that there are selectors on the land now who had 10,000 a man with four blocks. I refer to the Berry Brothers.
2374. In your case, do the selectors carry more sheep to the acre than the lessee? I think so, decidedly, because the selectors as a rule have improved their land and have scrubbed it.

Mr.

Mr. James Drake, selector, sworn and examined:—

2375. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a selector, residing about a mile and a half from Mr. J. Drake Trundle.
2376. In the same district as the last witness? Yes.
2377. What is the size of your holding? Eight hundred acres.
2378. Have you any children or brothers adjoining you? No.
2379. What do you do with your holding? I am doing nothing at present. I have not been here a great while. I think it is a little over two years since the "confirmation."
2380. What have you taken up the land for? With the prospect of a railway coming to this district. I intend to farm it. I do not think it would pay me to run sheep upon it alone.
2381. How many miles are you from Parkes? Thirty.
2382. If a railway were constructed, would it pay you to farm at that distance, and to cart your produce into Parkes? I am sure it would.
2383. What sort of land is it? The land I have is the general run of the country. I do not suppose it is any better or any worse than anyone else's land. It is a fair average holding. It is nearly all fenced in. I have 6 acres grubbed.
2384. Have you had any crop in? No.
2385. What do you think of growing? I was going in for wheat and maize.
2386. You think you would be in as good a position as people who are within a few miles of Parkes? I should not be in as good a position, because I should have to cart further to the railway.
2387. What sort of road is there between here and Parkes? A bad road, at present.
2388. How would you cart in wet weather? We should have to wait until it got dry. Going over a portion of the road this morning, it took my horse all his time to get out of it.
2389. The size of your holding would make it of no use for any other purpose than agriculture? No.
2390. You have not taken up the land for the purpose of selling out again? No.
2391. You intend to reside on it? Certainly.
2392. You think that with the construction of this railway you would be able to grow crops upon it, and that it would pay you? Yes.
2393. Have you ever done any farming before? Well, I have acted as a farm labourer in Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales. I have farmed upon soil which is far inferior to the general run of the district I am now in. If farmers elsewhere can make farming pay I am sure I can.
2394. How far are you from Peak Hill? About 40 miles.
2395. Then Parkes will be your natural market? Yes. I have travelled all around the district, and I must say I never went over a better sample of country in the colonies.
2396. How long have you been in the colonies? About fourteen years.
2397. Do you reckon you are a good judge of agricultural country? I have had a very large experience. I have been in the best farming districts in Victoria. I have ploughed the soil, reaped the crop, and put it into the machine afterwards. I have never seen better crops in Victoria than I saw at Kadina, about 30 miles from here.
2398. Do you mean wheat crops? Yes. I saw them stripping one crop in a paddock where they said it would average from 27 to 30 bushels to an acre. I could quite believe that, from the way it was coming out of the winnowing machine. I had been standing there hardly any time, before they had to put on another bag.
2399. You believe that the greater portion of this district would go in for agriculture if there was a means of getting to market? I am sure of it; it is a certainty. Most of the 2,560-acre men have nothing to do half the year, and they are not the kind of men who will sit down for six months; they will till the soil, and get something out of it.
2400. All this good land is to the north-west and north of this township? Yes.
2401. Were you here in the drought of 1888? Yes.
2402. What was your experience during that year? Very few of the men had made any provision for a dry season—in fact, they had no time to put in any tanks.
2403. Did you see any of the crops about here at that time? Yes; I saw two crops, if not three. I saw Skinner's, which was a very fair crop, considering the season. I saw two others. I know that Francis stripped 12 bushels off his portion.

Mr. J. Drake.
27 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Henry Alfred Croft, grazier, sworn and examined:—

2404. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At Trundle.
2405. How long have you been there? Since 1882.
2406. What is your occupation? I am a grazier.
2407. Are you a free-selector? I am a conditional purchaser. I hold two 1,280 acres. I and my family hold 2,560 acres.
2408. You have heard the evidence given by other residents of Trundle? Part of it.
2409. Is there any particular point upon which you desire to give evidence? None whatever.
2410. To what use do you turn your land? Largely, grazing sheep.
2411. What is the outlook in that part of the district? Very good.
2412. To what do you look in the future as your chief means of support? Grazing and agriculture, if we have a market.
2413. How far are you from Parkes? Thirty-two miles.
2414. Is that not too great a distance over which to cart grain to a railway? No. Usually, the settlers consider that if they are within 20 miles of a railway, and can make one day's stage with a load of wheat, they are all right. This line would be within 32 miles of us.
2415. Is there any nearer point on the line than Parkes which you could touch? No.
2416. Do you know anything of the route of the line between here and Forbes? Yes.
2417. Have you seen that country in very wet weather? Yes. I have known it for the last twenty-eight years.
2418. Have you known it to be in a flooded state? Only at one place, and that is about 1½ mile this side of Forbes, which is known as Thomson's Lead.

Mr.
H. A. Croft.
27 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. H. A. Croft.
27 Feb., 1890.
2419. Although you have been a conditional purchaser for only a few years, you have been a resident in the district for a number of years? Yes.
2420. You have seen something of the seasons? Yes.
2421. Have you seen the country almost deserted in consequence of the drought? Yes.
2422. As that has happened before, may it not happen again? I do not think so. There is better provision now, so far as water is concerned—more water has been conserved.
2423. Have you known times in which many stock have perished in the district from starvation? Yes.
2424. I suppose the stock get so weak that they are unable to travel? Yes.
2425. Do you think that if that kind of season were to happen again, and there was a railway here, it would be made use of by the stock-owners to send their starving stock to more favourable pastures? I could not say. In some parts of the district there would be plenty of grass and water, when in other parts stock were perishing for the want of it.
2426. Supposing that in the near future the country were thoroughly opened by the railway, you would be able to send stock from Dubbo to Werris Creek, and thence into the New England country;—do you think it likely that the owners of starving stock would send their sheep in that direction? Certainly, if they had the opportunity.
2427. Would it pay them to do so? Yes.
2428. Can you assure the Committee that many thousands of stock have perished in consequence of their being unable to get away? Yes.
2429. Still you think that the same straits are not likely to occur again, inasmuch as better provision of water has been made? Yes.
2430. Do you not think, however, the district is likely to suffer in the event of our having a long drought? Yes. No doubt we should suffer indirectly, but I think we could hold our own here, situated as we are now. I am judging from my experience of the drought of 1888.
2431. How do you conserve water? By tanks.
2432. About what size? Two thousand yards would be about the average.
2433. How many months' supply would that hold? A tank of that sort would supply from 1,200 to 1,500 sheep for twelve months.
2434. An ordinary selector of about your standing would have about that number of sheep? Yes.
2435. If he had two years' drought, where would he be? I have never known a season without having a stray shower, and with tanks well supplied with drains, 1 inch of rain would give a good supply. Where you depend on the natural courses it will all disappear in two or three days.
2436. As a rule, water is conserved in good seasons? Well, you could not conserve it in bad.
2437. Could you make provision for bad seasons? Yes.
2438. Consequently, you would make provision for what in your judgment would be as long a dry season as you would be likely to have? We should try to do so.
2439. But a two years' drought is an unusual drought? Yes.
2440. Consequently, you would, as a rule, provide for one year's drought? Yes.
2441. In which case a two years' drought would be disastrous? Yes.
2442. Could you cultivate land in your district in a dry season? Fairly well.
2443. Would there be any certainty of getting a crop? I saw a fair crop of good land in 1888.
2444. But the season might have been moderate when the ground was tilled and planted? No doubt it was a fairly moderate season when the seed was sown.
2445. Having the knowledge of the country which you possess, and knowing the object of our inquiry, can you conscientiously say that the line proposed from Molong to Parkes and Forbes is the line which will serve the largest number of people in this district? I could not say that. I can only tell you of the progress of my own district. In 1882, I was the only selector within 15 or 20 miles.
2446. Do you think the railway could be carried in a better direction—that is, in a direction which will better serve the interests of this part of the colony? No.
2447. Supposing you were constructing a line yourself, expecting it to be a paying speculation, into the Lachlan Valley, which way would you take it? The nearest route.
2448. Which would be the nearest route? From Molong.
2449. Going into the valley from Forbes? I mean as far as Trundle is concerned.
2450. But I mean a railway having in view the opening up of the Lachlan Valley? I think the route *via* Parkes would be the best, having regard to the settlement outside of Parkes itself. You can start from Parkes, and to my knowledge there is only about 9 miles of a blank in the line of settlers all the way to Condobolin; there is a continuation of settlements, all adjoining one another.
2451. If the line were constructed to Forbes, would not the residents of Condobolin be more likely to use Forbes as a railway terminus? Beyond Condobolin people might, but the people to the north would not.
2452. Are there many selectors between here and Condobolin? Almost all the way; there is a blank of only 9 miles, and that is about 15 miles from Parkes.
2453. A fair proportion of selectors, then, would be as close to Parkes as to Condobolin? Yes.
2454. How would they stand between Condobolin and Forbes? There are no selectors between those places.
2455. What is the character of the country? It is very good grazing country, but most of it is flooded country.
2456. Is it cultivated to any extent? Only on the banks of the river.
2457. Is the land between Condobolin and this place cultivated to any extent? No.
2458. It is used chiefly for grazing? Yes.
2459. But it is more largely settled upon than the country between Forbes and Condobolin? Yes.
2460. You regard yourself as permanently settled in this district? Yes.
2461. Is your occupation a profitable one? Yes; it has been for the last two years.
2462. Have you had a sufficiently lengthy experience of the dry seasons in this part of the country to be able to form an opinion as to whether your occupation can be carried on profitably for a term of years? Yes.
2463. You are quite satisfied upon that point? Yes.
2464. What applies to you will apply to others? Yes.
2465. If you can make it pay others can? Yes.
2466. Do you think there is any probability that in the course of a few years you will find yourself subject to such droughts and other drawbacks of that kind that you will be glad to sell to the pastoral tenant?

Four years ago I was in difficulties and tried to sell out, I offered my land for 15s. an acre, and could not get a buyer. I was the only selector in the district until 1884, that is on the north portion of the Burrawong run, it consists of about 16,000 to 180,000 acres. All that resumed area is now taken up, and there is not a block left on it to my knowledge.

Mr.
H. A. Croft.
27 Feb., 1890.

2467. I suppose you remember Parkes when it was a very small place? I remember it from the first.

2468. Has it increased of late years? Very much during the last three years.

2469. How do you account for that? The increase of population—the increased area of land taken up to the north, to the west, and to the north-west.

2470. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have the settlers in your district improved the country to such an extent that their lands will now carry more sheep than the lessee carries? Yes; in the paddocks I selected there are supposed to be 96,000 acres. I had it on the authority of the overseer, that there were from 8,000 to 12,000 sheep there. That was as much as the station could carry. It is called "Trundle Paddock." Since the place has been selected and improved, I suppose you would find there something like 60,000 sheep. I do not consider that it is more than a third stocked as yet, in fact a great many selectors on it have no stock whatever. Those with a few stock would carry, in a fair season, a great many more.

2471. Generally speaking then, the selectors have improved the carrying capacity of their holdings? Yes. In the drought of 1888 there were three brothers holding selections in one of the scrubbiest places in the country—they were pretty good judges of the soil. They paid 3s. 6d. an acre to get the land rung and grubbed. All through the drought they carried 6,000 and 7,000 sheep on their three blocks.

2472. Are you of opinion that produce from the holdings to which you refer would be brought to Parkes, in the event of a railway being made here? Certainly.

Mr. James Fox, grazier, sworn and examined:—

2473. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your occupation? I am a grazier, residing on the Bolderodgery pastoral holding, about 18 miles to the north.

Mr. J. Fox.

2474. Do you know the country between Molong and Parkes? Not particularly well.

27 Feb., 1890.

2475. In the event of a railway being constructed to Parkes and Molong, would it be nearer your place than Parkes, at any point? No; Parkes would be the nearest place.

2476. You are a grazier only? Yes. There is no market for produce if we go in for agriculture.

2477. You have not tried agriculture? No; only on a very small scale.

2478. What is the area of your land? 1,000 acres.

2479. How long have you had it? Since 1886.

2480. Is it well improved? Yes.

2481. What stock do you keep on it? I am renting some country adjoining, upon which nearly one sheep to the acre has been kept for the last two years, on an average.

2482. Did you suffer much from the drought of 1888? I had no losses.

2483. What was the cause of the losses in that year? Want of water.

2484. So that if you have made due provision for water you can defy any ordinary drought? Yes. It is very good land when it is ring-barked and water is made. It is as good agricultural land as any I have ever seen.

2485. Will it be profitable for cultivating your land in the event of a railway being constructed to Parkes? I should cultivate very largely. Neighbours of mine have put in crops this year and last year.

2486. Where do you expect to find a market? Parkes will be our market, I suppose, in the first instance. We are depending on a railway for the conveyance of our produce further.

2487. Would it pay you to grow grain at your place and to send it to Sydney? Yes.

2488. At how much per bushel could you grow it? I think it could be grown at 3s. a bushel.

2489. Deducting 9d. for trackage that would still leave a profit? Yes. We could not grow it under 2s. 6d.

2490. If you got 3s. 6d. in Sydney you could grow it at a profit and grow it largely? Yes.

2491. What sort of crops did your neighbours get? From 20 to 30 bushels per acre.

2492. In a season like this, or in a fair average season? In a fair average season.

2493. It would pay you to cultivate in the event of your getting a fair price? Yes.

2494. You keep nearly a sheep to the acre? Yes.

2495. What is the profit on a sheep? 3s.

2496. You can make much more by cultivating? Yes. My neighbours have been paying attention to the subject. This year and last they have been growing crops. The whole of the Bolderodgery resumed area, about 70,000 acres, has been taken up and selected since 1885, principally by agriculturists—men from Victoria and the Riverina.

2497. Has it not struck you that your market should be out west and north rather than to the coast? It would depend upon circumstances, sometimes it would pay to send flour to Nyngan and to the north, it would depend upon the price.

2498. How much further to the west can grain be profitably grown down the valley of the Lachlan? I think it can be grown about 40 or 50 miles west of Parkes, out the Troffs way.

2499. So that west and north there is an enormous area capable of being cultivated profitably? An immense area. A large area has been taken up within the last few years.

2500. In the event of a railway being constructed it would be largely taken advantage of by agriculturists? Yes, we have the right sort of men in this district—they have taken up larger holdings, so that they can eventually combine grazing with agriculture.

2501. Is there any further information you desire to give the Committee? I should like to impress on their minds the large area of land which has been taken up to the north and to the north-east—all the available land on Coobang, Bolderodgery, Genanagie, and Coragery. They are all something like 30 miles from Parkes, and every available acre has been taken up.

2502. Are you aware that a large area of land round about Parkes is locked up in a gold-field? Yes; and there is a great deal in railway reserves.

2503. Do you think that in the interests of the country this land should continue to be locked up? No; especially under the more recent Act, having regard to the rights given to the diggers.

- Mr. J. Fox. 2504. It is an immense loss to the country, you think, to have this immense area locked up? Yes.
 2505. In the event of a large portion of this land being thrown open, you imagine a material addition would be made to the welfare and prosperity of Parkes? Yes.
 2506. Do you know whether any steps have been taken to apply to the Government to have this land thrown open? Yes, I believe so. I think it would realize a very large figure if it were put up at auction.
 2507. Has any land been sold by auction here within the last few years? Only town allotments; very few in the country.
 2508. Are you aware what the allotments realized? No.
 2509. The land round here, having an exceptional value, would fetch more than that upset price, if it were sold at auction or proclaimed as special areas? Yes; certainly.

Mr. James Grimmett, selector, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. Grimmett. 2510. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a selector.
 2511. In this district? Yes.
 2512. *Mr. Dowel.*] How long have you resided here? About four years.
 27 Feb., 1890. 2513. In what part of the district is your holding? On Bolderodgery, at Kadina.
 2514. Is the country in your district pretty well occupied? Yes.
 2515. Are the holdings of a good character? Remarkably so.
 2516. Are they well improved? Yes.
 2517. Is a permanent population settled there? Yes.
 2518. What is the population engaged in? Grazing, combined with agriculture.
 2519. What crops are generally grown? Wheat, corn, and oats. The oat crops were remarkably good this year, also the wheat crops.
 2520. What was the yield of those crops? About 40 bushels of oats to the acre, and from 27 to 30 bushels of wheat.
 2521. Does that agree with your experience of the past four years? It has been my experience for three years.
 2522. Have you any of your own holding under cultivation? Eighty acres.
 2523. What have you grown? Wheat and corn.
 2524. What distance are you from Parkes. Twenty miles.
 2525. In what direction do you lie? Direct north.
 2526. Supposing this railway were constructed from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, would all the settlers in the district to which you refer be served by it? Yes; they would bring their produce to Parkes.
 2527. Have you a good knowledge of the country round about here? I have in the immediate district, but not at a great distance from Parkes. I have travelled within 30 or 40 miles of Parkes.
 2528. Are you of opinion that the people will be served by the construction of this line? I am sure they will go largely into cultivation within that radius. I think they would combine agriculture with grazing; that is what they are talking about—that is what I think will be their future occupation.
 2529. What would be the cost of the carriage of wheat from your district to Parkes? If times were hard I think we could get it done for about 3d. a bushel. If a farmer carted his own produce it would not cost him more than 1d. a bushel; he could cart it with his own team for 20 miles at that price. I have carted my produce this year to Quin's mill with my own team, and I have done it inside 1d. a bushel.
 2530. Since you have been cultivating have you found any difficulty in disposing of your crops? No difficulty so far, but the demand has not been so very great.
 2531. Do not you think that the putting in of a few more thousand acres would glut the market, and that there would be no sale for the produce here unless there is a railway to convey it? Certainly.
 2532. Under these circumstances you will not cultivate any more until you are satisfied that the railway will be brought to Parkes? Yes, that is the opinion of almost every individual in my district—they are just waiting for a railway to be constructed and then they will go into cultivation largely. There are one or two who have been very sanguine in the past who have believed that the railway would come at some time, and who have gone in for agriculture. I shall have 100 acres in this year, and I hope to see a railway to take the produce down to Sydney.
 2533. Then I understand that the construction of a railway would be of material advantage to all the settlers in your district? Yes.
 2534. It will very much stimulate the agricultural industry? Yes.
 2535. What is the quantity of the grain you grow? I believe it is equal to anything grown in the world.
 2536. And you have no fear about competing with people in other districts? None whatever. We could compete with any district in the world in the growth of grain, and I say that, having been connected with agriculture for the last twenty-five years. My experience in the district has not been so very large, but I believe we can grow here crops which for quantity and quality will be equal to anything grown in any wheat-growing country in the world.
 2537. Have you had any flour made from your wheat? I have. I have sent some to a baker at Peak Hill. I sent there a good quantity which had been ground at Quinn's mill. One baker told me it was the best new flour he had ever made up in his life, and another said it was quite equal to anything he had ever made up.
 2538. Then the quality of the flour made from your wheat is very good? First-class.
 2539. Do you know anything of the Peak Hill country? Yes.
 2540. Do you think the Peak Hill people would do business with Parkes if a railway were constructed? If a railway were constructed they certainly would. The greater part of their business would be done with Parkes.
 2541. What is the distance of Peak Hill from Parkes? About 30 miles, and it is about 35 miles from Dubbo.
 2542. Have you been over the country between here and Peak Hill? Many times.
 2543. Do you know its character? I know it well; it is all chocolate loam of first-class quality. There are a few patches of a sand-stony nature, and some of slate; but the land is suited for agriculture and pasture combined. It is a fairly watered country.
 2544. What is the timber like? Yellow box and pine, and there is a good deal of ironbark on some of the ridges.
 2545.

2545. Is the pine good? Yes; very good.
 2546. Were you cultivating in 1888? Yes.
 2547. What crop did you get? I got 8 bushels to the acre that year, and I got 7s. 6d. a bushel for it.
 2548. So that it paid you? Very well indeed.
 2549. Have you heard that in 1888 some of the farmers were gathering what little wheat they had with their hands and putting it into bags? I never heard of that.
 2550. Getting as much as two and three bags of straw and wheat combined to the acre? I think that is a false report.
 2551. If a Government official told you that would you be inclined to believe him? No; I think it is a misrepresentation.

Mr. J.
Grimmett.
27 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Joseph Westcott, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

2552. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer and grazier.
 2553. Where do you reside? At Kadina.
 2554. What is the size of your holding? I have a small farm—about 1,700 acres.
 2555. How much have you under cultivation? About 100 acres.
 2556. What have you on the rest of the land? Cattle and sheep.
 2557. How many sheep? About 3,000.
 2558. Have you any rented land besides that? No.
 2559. How long have you had that number of sheep? I bought some some little time ago. I have not had 1,000 of them very long. I carry about 2,500 all the year round.
 2560. Do you constantly carry that number? From 1,000 to 2,500.
 2561. What do your improvements consist of? The land is fenced, ringbarked, and scrubbed.
 2562. Have you many artificial waterholes on it? I have an undercurrent running through my farm. I do not know the extent of water in it.
 2563. You have had no difficulty with water? None whatever. There were over 10,000 sheep all through the drought of 1888 watering at my place.
 2564. How long have you had this land? I have been living here about sixteen years.
 2565-6. Do you intend to extend your agricultural area? I do.
 2567. Do you think that farming would pay you better than sheep, when you have land that would carry such a large number? Farming would pay me very well on account of my having a family, if I could only get away the produce.
 2568. The reason you have not more than 100 acres under crop is that you have not a ready market? Yes.
 2569. If there were a railway here, so that your produce could be sent away from the district, it would pay you to farm more? Yes; I could go into any extent of farming then.
 2570. Your land is quite good enough for farming? Yes. I have just done threshing 45 hushels of oats to the acre.
 2571. Had you any wheat in this year? Yes; it returned from 25 to 30 bushels to the acre.
 2572. Is not yours an exceptional piece of land? It was chosen by myself, and I have had some little experience.
 2573. You must be a pretty good judge to choose a piece like that? I think I am. I was brought up to farming, and I have some idea as to what a piece of land is worth.
 2574. What part of the old country do you come from? Devonshire.
 2575. What other parts of this colony have you been in? I landed in Melbourne in 1859, but since 1862 I have been in this district.
 2576. Did you do any farming in Victoria? No; I was at the gold-fields there.
 2577. Do you know much of this district beyond your own place? I know it pretty well for 100 miles round.
 2578. You know that there is also a projected line from Borenore to Forbes? Yes.
 2579. Which line of these two do you believe to be the best in the interests of the general public? The line from Molong to Parkes. On the northern side of that line there is a large tract of agricultural land. I occasionally have business in Sydney, and I go by Cumnock on to the Bell River into Molong. The distance from Kadina to Molong is only 45 miles, and it is 20 miles north of Parkes; the whole of the road from Molong to Bolderodgery is settled with farms—there are farms on either side of the road. The line from Molong would assist the northern settlers about Dilga, Cumnock, Goodritch, and Bolderodgery; it would serve all the farms there.
 2580. How far would Goodritch be from this proposed line? It would be the furthest of any of the places I have mentioned. I reckon it would be fully 25 miles from the nearest point on the line.
 2581. How far is Goodritch from Wellington? About 30 miles.
 2582. You do not know anything of the country south of the other line towards Canowindra? I have been over that country.
 2583. From your knowledge of that country do you think that the country you speak of, to the north of the proposed line, is equal to it? I am satisfied that it is equal to it for purposes of agriculture.
 2584. You think it would be quite as much settled upon, and that quite as large an area would be put under cultivation? I believe as much, or more. I have been through the district twice this spring, and I saw large and heavy crops.
 2585. Have you ever known a total failure of the crops in your district? Never.
 2586. Even in 1888 you still had something to gather? I reaped a fair crop in that season, but of course, not half the crop I reaped this year.
 2587. Do you know the rainfall in your district? I am not quite sure about it. I do not keep a register.
 2588. *Mr. Lee.*] You know Bolderodgery? Yes.
 2589. There appears to be a large quantity of Crown lands there? Yes.
 2590. Is the pastoral holding pretty large? Yes.
 2591-2. Are you sure that there is a continuation of farms all the way through from Kadina to Molong? Yes. But I may state that there is a large leasehold area at Bolderodgery and at Warraberry.

Mr. J.
Westcott.
27 Feb., 1890.

Mr.

Mr. Richard Wright, mining manager, sworn and examined :—

- Mr. R. Wright.
27 Feb., 1890.
- 2593-4. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am mining manager of the Bushman's Hill Company.
2595. *Mr. Lee.*] Where is that mine situated? About half-a-mile from where you are sitting, due north.
2596. Has it been in work for any length of time? It was worked twenty-six or twenty-seven years ago, and I believe some £40,000 or £50,000 worth of gold was taken out of it.
2597. How long have you been managing the mine? A little over eighteen months. I have just finished cleaning up from a new make of stone, quite different from anything that the original workers got; it gave a yield of 2 oz. 4½ dwt. to the ton.
2598. How many tons of stone? There were 12 tons at the trial.
2599. What depth are you working at? About 140 feet, underlay measurement.
2600. This mine, in particular, is showing every sign of permanence? Yes, I am satisfied on that point.
2601. Is it being worked profitably to the shareholders? It will be.
2602. Is there any special reason why the mine was knocked off some years ago? I do not know; I was here seventeen years ago.
2603. As mining manager? Yes.
2604. What was the state of the field then? My opinion is that they did not understand the formation of the country, and I do not think the majority of the people understand it now.
2605. You have had considerable experience since then on other gold-fields? Yes, since that time I have been endeavouring to get capital to come back here and test the place. I am trying to prove that I am right in my idea as to the formation of the country. I am quite satisfied that we have a belt of country from half-a-mile to 2½ miles in width, which will show anyone who understands mineralogy or geology that we have a formation running from Forbes upwards—it is alluvial upon the river flats; it shows itself at the Pinnacle, and from that point to Tom Ingly you have a dyke formation. It may seem exaggeration on my part, but I am quite satisfied that I am right in my idea. You have a formation of from half-a-mile to 2½ miles in width, with leaders running through and intersecting it in all directions. You may be under the impression that you are working in a particular reef, but if you drive a few feet to the north or south you will cut another one—you will say "I have got another reef." You have no such thing, you are working in an immense dyke formation. When people understand this formation I am satisfied that they will come back to this district, and that in fifty years time you will see no less than 10,000 men at work in it.
2606. How far does this formation extend through to the north? It extends through from Cooper's Creek. If the land on either side of this belt of auriferous country for 40 miles were absolutely barren, and would not grow a pumpkin, I am satisfied that the district from Forbes to Tom Ingly, from its mineral resources alone, is sufficiently rich to demand a railway.
2607. In your opinion then, the auriferous nature of the country in itself would be sufficient to justify the Government in extending the railway system to Parkes? Yes, we have had convincing proof of that within the last twelve months. Look at the Hazelhurst property. I am given to understand that there are twenty-five men now working on it; when in full work forty men will be employed. I have an interest in a mine in which Melbourne capital is involved, where they propose putting in twenty-five men. A little south of that there is the Koh-i-noor, and between Koh-i-noor and Hazelhurst there is the Parkes Deep Sinking Company, Freeman and party, Moulden and party, and the Gladstone Gold-mining Company. These companies are in existence to-day. Then there is Quayle's on the other side, the Bushman's, the Dayspring, and Burt's. All these mines are at work. I am quite satisfied that within twelve months there will be twenty-five men employed in almost every one of these mines.
2608. Mining has revived of late years? Yes.
2609. Is there much alluvial mining being done now? There is a great revival at the Peak and Alectown.
2610. From your previous knowledge of this district many years ago, and the knowledge you have subsequently gained, you are of opinion that its auriferous deposits are very great, and that there is every probability of its sustaining a large population? Yes. Judging from the description I have heard of Delaney's Dyke, if anyone would come underground with me who has seen the dyke, I think I could show it to him here; there is a very similar formation, 40 feet wide, at the head of the old London lead. It is in this belt of auriferous country I have been speaking of.
2611. What is the formation you have here? Quartz.
2612. *Mr. Cox.*] As a practical miner, are you aware that there is a large extent of the country barred from selection in this neighbourhood—some 160,000 acres? I did not know that.
2613. Presuming that to be the case, would it not be to the interests of the community that it should be thrown open, reserving only those particular pieces of country of which you have spoken? If it were necessary for agriculturists to have it, most certainly. The miners, I understand, are protected under the new Act.
2614. You know of no reason why all this grand piece of country should not be thrown open at once for settlement? Certainly not.
2615. You, as a digger, have no objection to the land being thrown open to selection? I think you would have to reserve a tract of country 5 or 6 miles wide.
2616. Suppose you did that, and that you threw open all the rest, would not that be advantageous to the community? I have not given the matter my consideration. If the miner is protected, and can get on to reserved land or selected land, then, of course, you could throw it all open.
2617. *Mr. Dowel.*] You are aware that the discovery of gold caused Parkes to spring into existence? Yes.
2618. Are you aware that the gold-field reserve, to which reference has been made, comprises 166 square miles? No.
2619. Are you quite sure that it is desirable that all this land should be thrown open to selection? I would not throw open the whole of it for selection, certainly not.
2620. But you said just now that you would? If you would be robbing the miner in any way, or would be putting him to any trouble, I should say no. If the miner would have no trouble in getting on to the land when he wanted to look for gold, I should say let it be thrown open.
2621. You know that under the recent Land Act, to which reference has been made, the miner will have great difficulty in getting on to the land? Then I would not throw the land open for selection. I would keep it a reserve.
2622. You have prospected a good deal in this country? I have taken a good deal of notice of the country, as I have been through it, and I have worked in many places in it,

2623. From your general knowledge, should you say that the country round here for a radius of 20 miles was auriferous? Certainly.
2624. Still, you think that the mining interests should be sacrificed to the agricultural interests, and that the land should be selected in preference to the miners having full possession of it? I should say give the miners full possession of it.
2625. What is the width of some of these reefs? 40 feet.
2626. What is the width of the reef in the mines to which you have referred as being worked at the present time? The formations are from 4 to 7 feet.
2627. What is the width of the reef in the mine of which you are the manager? It will average about 1 foot of stone.
2628. Is the ore of a refractory character? No.
2629. Do you know the pyrites of the district? No. The Dayspring, I believe, contains a fair percentage.
2630. What is the distance from Tomingly to the Pinnacle? I believe the distance from Parkes to Tomingly is 45 miles; the distance from here to the Pinnacle would also be 45 miles—a distance in all of 90 miles.
2631. You anticipate that in the course of a few years there will be 10,000 miners in this district? I am sure of it. I think thirty years time will see that number employed between the two points I have named.
2632. You believe in the permanence of the mining industry of the district? Yes. The mineral resources are developing themselves, and are proving themselves to be of greater value every day.

Mr.
R. Wright.
27 Feb., 1890.

FRIDAY, 28 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Parkes, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq. | CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Mr. Francis Nicholls, farmer, sworn and examined:—

2633. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer.
2634. Where do you reside? On the Coobang Creek.
2635. Have you resided there long? Fourteen years.
2636. How far is it from Parkes? About 4 miles.
2637. Are your neighbours all farmers? All farmers. They are there as thick as they can stick. The whole of the land is taken up. My holding, including my son's, is 1,200 acres.
2638. In what way do you utilize it? We farm. I started farming about fourteen years ago, and I have had a good deal of experience as to the quality of the land. I have about 100 acres under crop. I am combining farming and grazing. I have sheep, horses, and cattle. My sheep number about 600.
2639. What cattle have you? About twenty head of cattle.
2640. And horses? About twenty.
2641. Is that the ordinary quantity of stock you carry? That is about it.
2642. Will you give us your idea of the capabilities of this part of the country? Yes. I have machinery; I go out stripping, threshing, and chaff-cutting, and I have an opportunity to see other people's crops as well as my own. I know pretty well what the yield has been for the last fourteen years. I heard some questions asked about the drought of 1888. We had one bad year beside that, in fourteen years. Even in those years we grew as much as the general average in South Australia. That is what I like this place for; in the greatest drought we get a fairish crop.
2643. Then in the bad seasons you would average 8 or 9 bushels? That is my experience, and it is the experience of my neighbours as well as mine. We have gone up to 40 bushels to the acre. With the exception of two years, I have seldom had under 18. About six years ago there was a dry year, and the crops then were much the same as they were in 1888.
2644. Have you done any farming in any other part of the colony? In Victoria. I was born and bred a farmer in England. I know what good land is when I see it.
2645. What comparison does this land bear with the land you were farming in Victoria? I never saw two districts more alike than this district and the Ovens district, for the produce of wheat and fruit, also minerals. I have been mixed up a little in mining in the thirty-eight years I have been in the country.
2646. Do you think this portion of the country is in a progressive state? There can be no mistake about that.
2647. Have you seen a large increase in the population since you have been here? I have seen it go back, but it is gradually increasing now. I am settled upon one of the old farms. You may say, "How is it you are not making a better show?" We found we were growing more than we had a market for. To my own knowledge there have been hundreds of tons of hay destroyed for want of a market. I have known cases in which persons have had to throw off half the stack through the mice getting into it. The wheat has stood for two or three years for want of sale. I have a neighbour who has thrown all his land out of cultivation for the last two years, because there is no market. He has gone in for dairying and grazing.
2648. If you had this railway would you be able to pay the cost of transit to market where there would be always consumption? I do. I pledge my word, if I live, that if this line from Molong to Parkes is made, I will have 2 acres under cultivation for every 1 I have at the present time. I am expressing the intentions of the other farmers in the district, judging from my conversations with them.
2649. You think that the market price for farm produce in Sydney and other places where there is a large consumption, will be such that you will be able to grow here at a profit? I wish I could send away a few hundred tons of hay and chaff at the price which is now ruling in Sydney. I may say that I have spent twenty-eight years in the neighbourhood of Forbes, a few years at Grenfell, and the remainder of my time at this place,

Mr.
F. Nicholls.
28 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. F. Nicholls.
28 Feb., 1890.
2650. Is the Forbes district equal to this district for agricultural purposes? I think not. I tried a small piece of cultivation at Forbes myself. As soon as the dry weather sets in, the soil commences to bake and crack; it will not stand the dry weather as well as the soil in this district.
2651. Mr. Dowel.] You have had considerable experience in threshing;—how many steam threshers are there in this district? As far as I know there are no steam threshers in the district. Mine is a horse thresher. As I said before, farming has been going backwards rather than forwards through the want of a market. I would have a steam-thresher instead of a horse thresher next year, if I thought the railway was coming here.

Mr. James Maher, miner, sworn and-examined:—

- Mr. J. Maher.
28 Feb., 1890.
2652. Chairman.] What is your occupation? I am a miner. I have an orchard and vineyard 2 miles out of Parkes.
2653. Mr. Dowel.] How long have you resided in this district? Fourteen years.
2654. What occupation have you followed? Mining and farming.
2655. Have you a selection? No; but I have an orchard and vineyard.
2656. What is the extent of your holding? About 2 acres.
2657. Have you prospected the country round Forbes? No; I was on both routes with Mr. Sharkey for eighteen months.
2658. You know both routes? Yes; all but two sections on the other line.
2659. Were you employed by Mr. Sharkey? Yes.
2660. He was then in the Government service? Yes.
2661. Have you had many opportunities to explore the country? Yes, a good deal. I was on both sides of the line during the time I was with Mr. Sharkey.
2662. Having been over the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, will you tell the Committee what is the character of the country generally on that line? It is very good country. I have done a good deal of farming, and I have not seen better. To my mind this line has four advantages. It is well timbered for 22 miles with ironbark. In the next place it cannot be beaten for stone for making culverts; there are blocks of stone on the Flagstone Creek line of from 5 tons to a cwt.; it is a sort of freestone. Then, again, the country is never liable to be flooded, and it cannot be beaten for agriculture. There is not above 6 miles which can be truthfully described as barren country.
2663. The line is settled fairly well then? Fairly well. There is only a break of a few miles, and if the railway were constructed all the land would be taken up on both sides if it were available for selection.
2664. Does the settlement to which you refer appear to be of a permanent character? Yes; the farmers are all *bona-fide* selectors.
2665. You were with Mr. Sharkey on the survey from Borenore to Forbes? Yes.
2666. Can you give the Committee any information about that line? We surveyed from Borenore to within half a mile of Cudal. In that portion of the line you come across Keenan's swamp, about 15 miles from Orange.
2667. Did you go over the survey through the swamp? Yes, I was over every bit of it. The marked line goes through some very bad country. There is no bottom at some places. No trial holes were put down, but we could not avoid the swamp. We had to cross about 12 chains of it, and on a part of that I think there is no bottom. Mr. Sharkey was standing by while we were chaining this place, and he got bogged up to his breast. It took both of us to pull him out.
2668. Having noticed that swamp, did you see any signs of flood marks? Yes; I took particular notice of all the flood marks as we came along.
2669. Is that part of the country liable to be flooded? Yes.
2670. Did you notice the height of any of the marks? Yes; I noticed that in some places the railway, unless it ran pretty high, would be covered.
2671. Do you know of any country through which the line could be taken to avoid the swamp to which you have referred? No, except under great expense.
2672. Do you know that at certain times the traffic on the road from Forbes to Eugowra has to be abandoned? I was at Murga with a team, and could not get by for a week.
2673. Is that often the case? Pretty often, I think.
2674. Have you heard of the height to which the water rises in flood time? Mr. Sharkey has the records of some of the places, but I cannot remember them now.
2675. Which of the two lines do you think it is advisable to construct? I would take the Flagstone Creek line in preference to the other line. We crossed the Mandagery Creek five times, from Long's Corner to Eugowra.
2676. Independently of every other consideration, you consider that the line from Molong to Parkes is the safest and best to construct, from an engineering point of view? By all means.
2677. Did you take any particular notice of the country on the Cudal line? Yes, I took particular notice. From Long's Corner to Eugowra, at places, the land is not more than a quarter of a mile wide, from range to range; that lasts until you get the Forbes side of Goimbla.
2678. Have you seen the settlement of both lines? Yes, right through.
2679. On which side does settlement exist to the largest extent? I think on the Molong line. In the first place there are three large land-holders from Borenore to Eugowra, and there are not many *bona-fide* selectors that I know of.
2680. Can you give the Committee any further information as to the settlement? Well, I think the land from Eugowra to Forbes is also likely to be flooded, although I never was along the line there. I know the country from here to Condobolin, and out north for about 50 miles round.
2681. Supposing the railway were constructed to Parkes, would the Condobolin traffic come here? Yes.
2682. Do you know the country between Forbes and Condobolin? The road on the river is always liable to be flooded; it is a very bad road in winter time.
2683. Do you know the road between Parkes and Condobolin? Yes.
2684. Which is the best route—from Condobolin to Parkes, or Condobolin to Forbes? From Condobolin to Parkes you pass through better country, and it is not likely to be flooded.
2685. Does it contain as large a proportion of settlement as the other road? It is now well populated by selectors.
2686. Is the character of the soil good? Yes.
- 2687:

2687. You have told the Committee that you have had considerable experience in mining? Yes.
2688. Have you prospected the country in these parts? Yes.
2689. Do you know the country between here and Peak Hill? I have been to the 10-Mile Ridges—no further.
2690. What is the character of the auriferous belt you can speak of from your own knowledge? It is a sandstone and slate formation.
2691. Do you know of any good yield of gold being obtained? Yes, at Alec Flat.
2692. What is the population there at the present time? I could not say. I suppose there would be between 700 and 800 *bona-fide* miners as nearly as I can remember.
2693. Do they trade with Parkes? Principally with Parkes, I think.
2694. From your knowledge of the country between here and Peak Hill, should you say it was likely to sustain a large mining population? Yes; it is very likely to do so, I think.
2695. Do you know of any particular yields of gold being obtained in this district? The reefs have turned out well; they have given from 8 to 10 oz. to the ton.
2696. Has the alluvial been rich? Pretty fair. There is M'Guigan's, the Tichborne, and the Wapping Butcher.
2697. Are the principal portion of the miners engaged in alluvial sinking or reefing? In both, pretty well, I think.
2698. What is the position of the miners;—do they seem to be doing fairly well? Some are making a fair living, I think.

Mr.
J. Maher.
28 Feb., 1890.

Mr. John Charles Quin, miller, sworn and examined:—

2699. *Chairman.*] You are a member of the firm of M'Gee and Quin, and you have flour and saw-mills? Yes.
2700. *Mr. Lee.*] Can you give any information respecting the wheat received at your mill? Yes.
2701. Have you the information in the shape of a return? Yes. In 1887 we received 27,582 bushels of wheat; in 1888, 21,707 bushels less than the year before.
2702. Why? In 1887 we were doing a big business at Mount Hope. We were sending stuff there that year—flour, chaff, bran, and pollard. That ceased, and that is the reason of the falling off.
2703. Had the bad season anything to do with it? A good deal of the wheat was spoiled that year, and a lot went to Molong. The bad season had something to do with it.
2704. Then the wheat was not good enough for Mount Hope, but it was good enough for Molong? Bad wheat will always sell in Sydney. The farmers take it down themselves to Molong. We would not buy.
2705. What about 1889? That was a poor year. We received 14,500 bushels. That was the quantity which went through our mills. This year, up to date, we have received 11,700 bushels.
2706. Has the threshing been completed in the district? No. The steam thresher is starting at Bum-berry at the end of this week.
2707. How many pairs of stones have you in your mill? Two pairs. It is a combination mill—stones and rollers.
2708. Any other mills in the district? There are no other mills at Parkes.
2709. Are you able to buy all the wheat produced by the farmers in this district? I have not been doing so up to now. Last year there was not enough. We had to import some from New Zealand and other places.
2710. The crops were short in consequence of the drought? Yes.
2711. Can you estimate the number of bushels in the district this year? About 50,000, I think.
2712. Is this a good year? It is a fair average year. We have had better years.
2713. Is there a larger area of land under cultivation this year? There is a larger area than there has been for a few years. The district over-produced some seven or eight years ago.
2714. What is the quality of the wheat round about here? Very good.
2715. What do you do with the wheat after you have grown it? Our market is local, to the west and north-west? We send flour as far as Mount Hope, Alectown, and The Peak.
2716. Do you send away to Sydney? It will not pay—it would cost us about 1s. 3d. a bushel.
2717. The larger portion of it would be taken up by the dray carriage? Yes; we could not get it down from here to Molong for less than 9d. a bushel.
2718. What is the distance from Molong to Sydney? About 216 miles; and it is 50 miles from here to Molong.
2719. How many bags of wheat would go to a ton? About ten bags—that is, 40 bushels.
2720. What are the present rates for the carriage of grain on the railway? I do not know.
2721. Are you aware that the Commissioners have made a special rate for the conveyance of grain? No.
2722. You have already sworn that it would cost you about 1s. 3d. a bushel on your wheat from here to Sydney, 9d. of which would be for the carriage from here to Molong, and 6d. for trainage thence to Sydney. I cannot understand that very well, because under the Commissioners' rate the trainage to Molong would not be more than 4½d. a bushel? We had New Zealand wheat up from Sydney, delivered on our waggons at Molong. It cost us close upon 6d. on our waggons there. That includes Wright Heaton's commission and incidental expenses.
2723. That explanation is very necessary. Now, supposing a line were constructed to Parkes, bringing you within 266 miles of the metropolitan market, and you could forward your wheat from here to Sydney for 4½d. a bushel, would a large trade grow up in consequence? Yes.
2724. Could wheat be grown here and sent to Sydney at that rate at a profit to the growers? At a large profit.
2725. What profit? I can give you some idea from the returns in my own paddock in 1886. We have not grown largely since then. In 1886 we had two paddocks—122 acres. The cost of sowing and ploughing, including the seed, was £120 16s. 8d.; the stripping cost £83 10s.; or a total cost of £204 6s. 8d. We got 2,254 bushels of wheat. At the time it came into the mill we were giving 3s. a bushel. It would amount therefore to £368 2s. The wheat averaged, for 122 acres, about 20 bushels an acre. There were about 14 bushels over.
2726. Then you made a profit of about £164, or £1 7s. 2d. per acre net? Yes.

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Mr.
J. C. Quin.
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2727. If you could forward your wheat to Sydney by train at a profit, would you be likely to compete in Sydney with the imported flour? We could compete with flour and wheat as regards quality with any market in the world.
2728. But in the open market, under a rate of 4½d. per bushel from here to Sydney, would you be able to compete with the imported wheat? Yes.
2729. And with wheat from the southern and northern districts? Yes. If wheat in 1886 had been 2s. 6d. instead of 3s. per bushel we should have had a profit of £102 8s. 4d. on 122 acres.
2730. Can this district be relied upon as a wheat growing district? Yes; we have had only one failure since I have been here, and that was not a total failure.
2731. You think the grain crops can be relied upon? Yes.
2732. Is not the cost of stripping high? Of course, farmers could produce wheat at a less cost, putting in their own labour and the labour of their families; but we have had to pay 8s. per day for wages. There is one man who has been with us for years to whom we are paying £2 10s. a week. The amount we paid for labour sent up the cost of our stripping.
2733. Of course, as a dealer in grain, you know that the market fluctuates very much? Yes.
2734. Do you know that if we happen to have a magnificent season the price becomes very low, and that it is difficult to get a market? Yes.
2735. Under a low rate of carriage, would the outer markets offer a market to you under ordinary conditions, supposing the supply was very great? Under all conditions we should have a market here for wheat.
2736. Do you not know that there are districts in the country with no railway communication where grain has to be held for one or two years, because it cannot be got away? Yes.
2737. If you had direct railway communication to Sydney, do you think that the yield, no matter how much it might be, would filter into our market, or that it would be held in the district? From my experience of the district, I think it would go to market. I do not think there is any doubt of our getting a market. All these new men were in the first instance going in for wheat growing very largely. They thought the railway would be given at once, but now they find it is almost as far off as ever. I may say that on three farms—Burgess', Woods', and my own—there are 350 acres of ground, cleared and fenced. This was done eight or nine years ago, at a cost of from £2 5s. to £3 10s. per acre. In the first year or two it was under wheat, but since that time the market has been so glutted that it has not paid to put it in. No doubt this would be all under wheat if we had a market. We had a better local market this year than we had had for some time.
2738. In consequence of the great cost of getting the grain to Molong for shipment, there is only about sufficient grown in the district for local consumption? That is all.
2739. And if greater facilities were given there would be a larger area cultivated? I believe it would be one of the largest wheat producing districts in the colony.
2740. And the rates would enable you to make use of the railway and to send the surplus to the outside markets, leaving the producers still with a good profit? Yes.
2741. Then, as to other items of produce, such as hay, chaff, bran, and all that sort of thing, I suppose that would also find its way to the places which required it? Yes.
2742. Would the railway bring you into contact with the markets of the west? We should have to go into Orange.
2743. But that would be approachable? Yes.
2744. Supposing there was a bad season in the far west, and a great demand arose for forage, would you get a share of the trade? Yes.
2745. That would be another outlet for your produce? Yes.
2746. But you cannot compete for it now on account of the dear carriage? No; the 50 miles of cartage stops the produce from going that way.
2747. *Mr. Dowel.*] What are your appliances for making the flour? A combination mill.
2748. What quality of flour is made out of Parkes wheat? Very good.
2749. Have you tested it by public competition? Yes.
2750. How did you come off? I came off second best here this year, but I did not know there was any competition. I did not prepare for it.
2751. Have you put the Parkes wheat and flour into competition with wheat and flour in other parts of the world? Yes; we sent some home to London, and we got a certificate and a medal.
2752. Have you put your wheat into competition with other wheat in the Colony? Yes; at Parkes this year we got beaten at the show by the Molong flour.
2753. Not in the wheat? No.
2754. What wheat was the Molong flour made from? I do not know.
2755. But yours was made from Parkes wheat? Yes.
2756. Does it ever happen to you to have a large surplus of which you cannot get rid? Often.
2757. Have you any large surplus now? Of bran and pollard, but not flour.
2758. You would dispose of it if you had a railway? Yes.
2759. What is the average price of wheat in Sydney all the year round? I do not know the average, but I think about 3s. 6d. We have not been doing business with the Sydney market.
2760. If that rate were maintained steadily, do you think you would be able to hold your own? Yes, and make money.
2761. What is the highest rate you have paid for wheat in your district? 6s. 6d.
2762. Where is Wallengudgery? 361 miles from Sydney, or nearly 100 miles further from Sydney than Parkes.
2763. Are you aware that wheat can be sent from that place to Sydney for 5d. a bushel, or nearly one-half the rate you have to pay, although you are 100 miles closer? I was not aware of it.
2764. If you could get your wheat sent to Sydney at 4½d. a bushel you would be in a better position than those further along the line? Yes.

Mr. Frank Cottingham, hotel-keeper, sworn and examined:—

Mr. F.
Cottingham.
28 Feb., 1890.

2765. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am an hotel-keeper. I am also agent for Cobb & Co.
2766. Could you tell us the returns of passenger traffic to Molong for the past twelve months? I could if I balanced them up, but I have not done so.
2767. Have you furnished any returns to any one? I did, some three or four months ago. Two gentlemen called upon me and got them written out.
- 2768.

2768. You had no idea at the time that Cobb & Co. had any objection to your allowing it to be done? None whatever. Mr. F. Cottingham.
2769. Consequently you furnished certain returns, thinking there was no harm in your doing so? I gave them the books. I believe my wife copied the returns out. They were never balanced up. 28 Feb., 1890
2770. Do you know the handwriting in the book produced? Yes; it is the handwriting I think of a cousin of my wife's.
2771. Do you know that it is the book from which Mr. Rose read the returns with which he furnished us? No.
2772. Do you believe that if those returns are copied from your books they are correct? I believe they are, but there are a lot more here than the Molong district. There is the Euabalong, Grenfell, Cowra, and Young traffic. I do not say it is all in this, but it is partly so.
2773. Could you state, approximately, what percentage of the returns would come from the other places? I could not exactly say.
2774. Suppose that in March you took £310, how much of that money would go to these other places outside of the Molong traffic? In all these returns I should think about a fourth of the money had gone the other road—that is, as near as I can bring it.
2775. Is there a coach traffic from here to Cowra? There is one to Forbes, another from there to Cowra, and another to Condobolin.
2776. You think that fully a fourth of these returns would go to that other traffic? Yes, reckoning parcels, passengers, and everything.
2777. Have you not had the coaches pretty full from Molong within the past twelve months with miners and speculators going to Alectown and that way? For two months they were very well loaded.
2778. At any rate, these figures from the book, you believe, are correct? Yes; but there has been a misrepresentation to this extent—the whole of these returns are not between Molong and Parkes.
2779. They include business done in your office with other branches? Yes.
2780. The total would be 911, according to your estimate, instead of 1,215? It would be something near that, I think.
2781. Have you made up any exact return of the traffic between Molong and Parkes? Only monthly.
2782. Could you let us have it? Yes, I copied it out when I heard that the information would be required. It is from January, 1889, to October, 1889, inclusive.
2783. I see that in January the amount is £58 14s., in February £40 10s. 6d., in March £55 2s., in April £73 7s., in May £47 4s. 6d., in June £38 10s. 6d., in July £40 2s. 6d., in August £56 6s. 3d., in September £77 6s., and in October £85 9s.? Yes; they are correct.
2784. *Mr. Lee.*] Do these returns include any special amounts that were received for carriage? I do not think so.
2785. Did you receive any special amounts yesterday? No.
2786. Does the return include any special coaches? None; it is for general traffic.
2787. Is there much passenger traffic between Parkes and Molong, outside of your coach traffic? There is a good deal of private traffic.
2788. Does your firm provide for any considerable amount of private traffic? They have specials.
2789. There would be a good number of specials in twelve months? Not a great many—perhaps one a month.
2790. Are there many private conveyances of any description running between Parkes and Molong? Yes; I believe there were two or three coaches running from Parkes at different periods of the ten months at a reduced rate. They took two days, while the company carries in one.
2791. Still they all carried passengers? Yes.

Mr. Robert Nicholl Leslie, grazier, sworn and examined:—

2792. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a grazier, residing at East Billabong. I am the managing partner of the East Billabong holding. Mr. R. N. Leslie.
2793. What is the area of your holding? About 60,000 acres. The leasehold area and the resumed area are about equally divided. There are 20,000 sheep. The whole of the run is not enclosed. 28 Feb., 1890
2794. Do you expect to carry more when you are fenced? Yes.
2795. Have you much improved in the shape of water conservation? Very little; the run is naturally watered.
2796. How far is it from here? Thirteen miles east of Parkes.
2797. Is there much land fit for agriculture on the leasehold area? I should say about half.
2798. Would this railway increase the value of your holding? As a pastoral holding it would not. It would affect the land values of the purchased land for agricultural purposes, but it would do a slight damage to the pastoral holding I think, if you except the benefit derived from the easy transit of wool.
2799. *Mr. Lee.*] How do you send your wool at present? By dray, to Molong station. It is 50 miles from the shed to the railway station.
2800. Is there a tolerably good road? A fairly good road.
2801. Do you get your supplies back by the same road? Yes.
2802. Do you know the railway track between here and Molong? Fairly well.
2803. And the country between here and Molong on either side of the proposed line? Yes.
2804. Do you think the survey has taken the right track? I do, decidedly. A great number of farmers and agriculturists would be served by that line.
2805. Do you think the greater number would be served by it? I do.
2806. Do you know that in some parts the settlement is very thick? Yes.
2807. Do you happen to know anything about the survey, at Garra, for instance? Yes.
2808. Do you know anything about the rival route—the Cudal route? Not the surveyed line, but I know the route. I know the country fairly well.
2809. How does that country compare with the land along this track? There is some very good land along the other track, and also some very bad land, but the bad land lying off the road does not appear to any one travelling along the road. I think the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes would be decidedly the best, on account of the flooded nature of the road on the other side by way of Eugowra. In fact, I have known wool teams during wet seasons to bring wool round this way which, in other years, would have gone *via* Forbes to Borenore.

- Mr. R. N. Leslie.
28 Feb., 1890.
2810. In order to avoid the water? Yes; they could not travel the other way.
2811. Do you know Keenan's Swamp? I have passed it on several occasions; I do not know much about it.
2812. What special advantage would this line be to you as a pastoral tenant? None whatever, any more than that we should have an easy means of transit for our wool and goods. We should not benefit in any way, because the line only passes through a small portion of the leasehold area; it does not touch any secured land of ours.
2813. Of course you are looking forward to the day when the leasehold areas will fall in? Yes, of course; from that point of view the line will damage us.
2814. There will be a big scramble for land then? Yes.
2815. And the more the district is opened up between this and then the more people will come in? Yes.
2816. Individually, you have a very small purpose to serve indeed by the construction of the line? Yes.
2817. Of course you know on public grounds there seems to be a necessity that the line should be sent into this rich country, and into the valley of the Lachlan. It must be apparent to you that the line cannot be carried to everybody's door. The object of this Committee is to ascertain as nearly as possible which will be the best way to serve the people and to develop the country;—Which of the three routes do you think offers the greatest attractions to the greatest number of people, and would be most likely to reimburse the State for its outlay, and lead to the development of the county? I know very little of the proposed line from Cowra to Forbes. Between the two lines—the one from Borenore to Forbes and the one from Molong to Parkes and Forbes—I am decidedly of opinion that the Molong route would serve the greater number of people.
2818. The district is progressing just now? Yes.
2819. How do you account for it? I think it is due to the large amount of settlement during the last few years. We have had a number of men come from Victoria with a little capital, and settled on the land to the north and north-west of Parkes. I believe they are combining grazing and farming, or intend to do so. I attribute the progress of the district to that principally.
2820. Principally to that, and not so much to the mining industry? No; not so much to the mining industry.
2821. Still the mining industry is reviving? Yes; within the last two or three years.
2822. Have you had any experience in other parts of the colony? On the Murrumbidgee.
2823. How does the class of settlement here compare with the class of settlement there? Very favourably, I think.
2824. So far as you can see, the farmers here appear to be of a very *bona-fide* character? Yes.
2825. A large number of settlers have brought money with them? Yes; all had some little means when they came here—from £2,000 to £5,000, say.
2826. Do you find among the settlers the class known as "black-mailers"? I have not.
2827. I mean the class of people who have been in the habit of going from run to run and selecting, with the object of harassing the pastoral tenant, and compelling him to buy them out? I have not seen any.
2828. Your experience is that the men really settle down and make homes of their own? Yes.
2829. Do you find them bad neighbours? No; on the whole very good.
2830. Mr. Dowel.] What distance is the staked-out line from your head station? About 5 miles.
2831. In what way would this railway injure your pastoral property? During the time of construction we should have a lot of navvies all over the place, and we should have to remove the sheep out of certain paddocks. Then the line, when constructed, would open the land up to settlement, and people would be coming here who would not otherwise have come.
2832. But would not the railway cheapen the carriage of your produce to market? Yes.
2833. If the line were constructed to Parkes, would a large quantity of wool from the surrounding districts be brought on to it that now goes elsewhere? I believe it would.
2834. You think a large revenue would be derived from the carriage of wool? Yes.
2835. Have you any other information to give? A statement was made by a member of the Committee yesterday, I believe, in reference to a petition sent down from Forbes, in which it was stated that if the line were constructed from Borenore to Forbes the clip of 5,000,000 sheep would be guaranteed. I wish to point out that the whole of the Forbes and Parkes districts are included in one sheep district, and the returns for the whole of these two districts are only 1,500,000 sheep. If they also take credit for the sheep in the next district, which would be Condobolin, there would only be about the same number of sheep in that district as in the Forbes district, which, in my opinion, would gravitate to this centre. Taking credit for the whole of the Parkes, Forbes, and Condobolin districts, you would have a total of only 3,000,000 sheep. The better part of the Condobolin traffic would come here, however. It stands to reason that all these are worked as economically as possible, and it would save the haulage of 15 miles, and the teams would have at the same time a better road to travel. Under the circumstances, the wool-growers of that district are not likely to send their wool to Forbes.
2836. Is there any other district beyond Condobolin which would be affected by the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I think not.
2837. The figures you have given include all the sheep likely to be served by the railway? Yes; a few in the Molong district might be served.

Mr. William Metcalfe, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. W. Metcalfe.
28 Feb., 1890.
2838. Chairman.] What are you? I am not following any occupation at present.
2839. Mr. Dowel.] Where do you reside? At Parkes. I have resided there about fifteen years, with the exception of a break of fourteen months.
2840. Where were you living previously? At Goolagong.
2841. You know the whole of the district through which the proposed line is to pass? Yes.
2842. How long were you living at Goolagong? Some time; I was mining there.
2843. Have you done any mining at Parkes? I have been speculating in mines here. I have been doing some mining also. I have been hotel-keeping for six years.
2844. You are generally acquainted with the route of this line? Yes; I have been along the route several times.
- 2845.

Mr.
W. Metcalfe.
28 Feb., 1890.

2845. From Borenore to Forbes? Yes.
2846. What is the character of that country? There is some good country on the route and some bad country. It is of a different formation from the Parkes country. You will see, as you are going through to Cudal, that the line passes through a valley—the ground rises on each side. There is not a great extent of valley either. It is very different country from the country on this side. If a selector took up 640 acres, he could not plough from one boundary to the other. There is only a portion of the land good for cultivation. You will get 20 or 30 acres good, and then you would have a break with rocky and stony ground. You would have to have several farms in one, as it were.
2847. Which route would be the most advantageous to construct having regard to the public interests—I mean both as regards cost of construction and number of people who would be served? I think the line from Molong to Parkes would be the far superior route. There are less engineering difficulties, and it passes through better country. I may say that a considerable portion of the Cudal route is very rocky. There is some very good land to the north, at the Borenore end of the line, and then as you go into Murga there is rough country. It is also rocky at Eugowra. There is some good land when you get from 4 to 6 miles out of Eugowra towards Forbes. The country, however, is flooded; the flooded country runs 10 miles, to a farm once kept by Mr. Stain.
2848. You have no doubt in your mind that the Molong-Parkes line would be the best one to construct? None whatever; it will benefit the country at large.
2849. There would be a larger revenue from that line than from the Cudal line? I do not think that that will be so at the present time; but in the course of a few years there will be a great deal more revenue upon this line than you will have upon the other. I have been talking of this line to parties from Victoria and other places, and they have often told me that in their opinion, railway communication, with this would be one of the best districts in the country. If they had a railway they say they would be prepared to go in for wheat growing on a large scale.
2850. Why do you think the revenue at first would be larger on the Cudal route than on the Molong route;—is not the country as well settled on the Molong route as on the other route? Yes.
2851. Under any circumstances, however, you strongly favour the route from Molong to Parkes? Yes.
2852. Do you know the country lying between Parkes and Cudal, and Forbes and Condobolin? Yes. When you leave Forbes, at about 16 miles you come to Gunning Gap; you then come into flooded country. From there to Condobolin it is all flooded country, with the exception of a pair of broken mountains that go in a little bit from the river. I have seen where a bullock team went down and got smothered. This flooded country runs back for a distance of 7 miles from the river out towards Burrawang homestead; then you come on to the dry country. I can produce witnesses who can prove there were ten days when the mails could not go on the road. From Condobolin, they had to be carried by Burrawang homestead up here to Parkes, and thence to Forbes.
2853. Will you give some information about the route from Parkes to Condobolin? I know it very well. The route passes through fairly good country; it is open box and pine country—something similar to that which you see about Parkes.
2854. Is it fairly settled upon? Fairly.
2855. Do you know the population of Condobolin? No; I have visited the place, but I could not give you any idea of the population.
2856. Are there only a few houses there? It appears to be pretty nearly as large as Parkes—not quite so large. There are several public-houses and stores.
2857. What occupation do the people round about Condobolin follow? Chiefly pastoral.
2858. Combined with agriculture? Very little.
2859. Do you know anything of the country between Condobolin and Wilcannia? No; but I know it as far as Mount Hope.
2860. Do you think any traffic could be brought from Mount Hope and Condobolin into Parkes if this line were constructed? I think there would be some.
2861. Do you think the Mount Hope and Condobolin people would make Parkes or Forbes their terminus if a railway were constructed to these places? When the Mount Hope mine was working they brought some of the copper through here and some on to the Macquarie. If we had a railway here the distance would be much shorter, and I think they would be almost certain to bring their produce here.
2862. You have had considerable experience of mining? Yes.
2863. What are the mineral resources of this district? There is good quartz and alluvial. We also have some copper, but it has never been worked to any extent to prove whether it is payable or not.
2864. Do you think the gold-field is of a permanent character? Yes.
2865. Have you had any experience in gold and other mining before you came to Parkes? I have been to New Zealand, Gulgong, and Home Rule.
2866. You feel competent to give an opinion? As far as my judgment goes, I have every belief that this will be a permanent gold-field.
2867. What is the area of the gold-field reserve? I have an idea, but I could not give you the exact mileage.
2868. In the interests of settlement, is it desirable to revoke any portion of that reserve? I would not revoke it unless an Act were passed enabling the miners to go on to the revoked portion and mine for gold with their miners rights. Under any other circumstances, I, for one, would oppose the revocation.
2869. Has the mining industry progressed in this district? Considerably, in the last few years. After the alluvial gold was wrought out the miners went away. In the last few years, however, they have taken more to reefing, and mining is reviving very much.
2870. Do you know the country between here and Peak Hill? Yes.
2871. Is it auriferous or otherwise? Auriferous. I have been to Alec's Flat. I have a mine there myself. There is some very good gold there. I think it is likely to be a permanent field; it is spreading out there. They are getting fresh finds.
2872. You think there are large auriferous deposits, and that the mining industry is likely to be permanent here? I have every confidence in it. It runs from here 7 miles out. I am speaking now of the reefing; then it goes 7 miles to Alec's Flat; they get it again at the Ten-mile Ridges, and then it goes on to Peak Hill; there is another 10 or 15 miles, and then it goes to Tomingly. There are gold-bearing reefs right through the country.
2873. Would these mining centres be served by the railway? Yes.
2874. Would they contribute considerable revenue to the line? Yes, a good deal.

James Miller, Esq., Mining and District Registrar, sworn and examined:—

- J. Miller,
Esq.
28 Feb., 1890.
2875. *Chairman.*] What position do you hold? I am Mining and District Registrar.
2876. Can you give us an idea of the miners rights and mineral lease applications in this district? Yes. The miners rights issued in 1889 numbered 958; and in January and February of this year, 533.
2877. To what do you attribute this extraordinary increase? In the first instance, it was in consequence of the rush at Alectown, and, subsequently, in consequence of the greater development of the quartz reefs in the district.
2878. What mineral licenses have you issued? I have issued only three since I came here; but 174 applications have been made for gold-mining leases.
2879. When were they made? Since Parkes was made a separate division. That was fifteen years ago. The areas are from 1 to 22 acres. The total acreage would be 945 acres.
2880. How many leases have been applied for within the last six months? Twenty-four.
2881. Principally from Peak Hill? None of the Peak Hill applications come to this office.
2882. From the figures you have given, I should imagine that this particular district is improving? It is rapidly increasing.
2883. Are there many leases on which work is not now going on? I am not aware of any.
2884. Have many leases been cancelled, after the application was made to you? A few have been cancelled and have been taken up again.
2885. By the same parties? Not always.
2886. Do people hold the land from year to year without fulfilling the labour conditions? Not within the last six months, but it has been done here.
2887. Have many of these leases been worked in the district? A good many of them were worked as mining tenements previous to the applications for lease. A great amount of quartz reefing has been going on under miner's rights.
2888. That accounts for the small number of applications for leases? I think generally the leases are applied for when they find they are worth floating. They apply for the leases so that the concerns may be floated into profitable companies.
2889. Have you any returns that would be of value to the Committee? I may state that the gold bought by the banks in Parkes in 1889 amounted to 8,427 ozs. 10 dwts. 12 grains—that includes alluvial and quartz gold. I do not know the number of miners in the district, but at Christmas I estimated there were 1,000 men in and around Parkes.
2890. Including the miners in and around Peak Hill? No, that is beyond my division. My division extends from Bartley's Creek to the Bogan. These quartz reefs are all within 40 miles of Bartley's Creek, north and south, east and west 12 miles.
2891. How long have you been here? Since last June.
2892. Have you seen any increase in the mining industry? Yes; in 1888 the miners' rights issued in the Parkes division were 521, while in 1887 the total number was 378.
2893. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you say whether any gold has been obtained on this gold-field which is not included in the returns compiled by the banks? I do not know, but I should suspect so, because the quantity of alluvial gold stated to have been purchased by the banks, does not correspond with my return from the puddling machines. Some of the gold, I take it, therefore, has not gone through the banks.
2894. A considerable amount of gold may have been obtained which has not gone through the banks? Yes.

Arthur William Tempest, Esq., bank manager, sworn and examined:—

- A. W.
Tempest,
Esq.
28 Feb., 1890.
2895. *Mr. Lee.*] You are manager of the Joint Stock Bank at Parkes? Yes; I have been manager of the bank for the last twenty-one months.
2896. Does your bank purchase gold? Yes.
2897. Have you prepared any statement to the Committee? I have a statement showing the amount of gold which has passed through the hands of the banks for four years.
2898. How did you obtain the statistics from the other banks? They were given to me to-day by the other managers.
2899. You are giving evidence on behalf of the banks, then? Yes. There passed through the banks in 1886, 5,844 ozs.; in 1887, 5,429 ozs.; in 1888, 4,354 ozs., and in 1889, 8,339 ozs.; or a total for the four years of 24,016 ozs., which at the lowest valuation would be worth £90,000. I direct special attention to the figures for 1889—8,389 ozs., valued at £31,000—that is at a very low valuation, viz., £3 1s. There is a good deal worth more than that, but perhaps that is a fair valuation taking the gold all round.
2900. This is alluvial as well as reefing gold? Yes.
2901. Within what radius would the gold be obtained? Within 16 miles of the town of Parkes.
2902. So that it is possible that gold obtained outside that distance may filter into Forbes and Dubbo? Yes, Dubbo gets most of it. It gets most of the Peak gold now.
2903. It does not follow that this return of gold embraces the whole of the gold obtained within the police district of Parkes? No.
2904. It is only the portion which goes through the banks? Yes; it is from Parkes proper—from the township and immediate district.
2905. *Mr. Dowel.*] Are you in the habit of visiting Peak Hill? I go out sometimes. I have been out four or five times.
2906. Is there a considerable population settled there, mining? About 1,500, I think, and the population is rapidly increasing.
2907. If a railway were constructed to Parkes, would the Peak Hill diggers do business with the Parkes people? I think we should get a fair percentage of the trade. I do not suppose we should get it all.
2908. Do you know the country between here and Peak Hill pretty well? Fairly well, all of it.
2909. Do you know all the mining centres along that road? There are only two—Alec's Flat and the Peak.
2910. What is the population of Alectown? I think I am safe in saying that there are 800 people engaged there in mining operations. Of course the rush drew a great many of the miners from Parkes out there.
2911. Have you visited and inspected the mines yourself? I have seen them all nearly.

2912. Did they present to you the appearance of permanency? I think so. Of course, when a banker visits the place he has, to a certain extent, to go by what the miners tell him, and from what the miners say there is a permanent field at the Flat and at the Peak.

2913. You have seen a considerable amount of gold at various times? Yes.

2914. You have been pointed out some exceedingly good spots, I suppose, on these mines? Yes.

2915. Is it not a fact that several companies send their gold direct, without going to the banks at all? I hear one company—the Haselhurst Company, of Parkes—does so. The gold taken out of their mine should be credited to this district; but Orange claims the output, at present.

2916. You do not get credit for it at Parkes? No.

2917. As a banker, can you say whether the district presents the appearance of progress and prosperity? I do not think there is a district in the Australian colonies progressing as rapidly as we are. Weekly, new arrivals are coming here from Victoria and other parts of Australia, and are settling here. With them they bring large sums of ready money. That certainly speaks volumes for the district. They are selling out from homes in which they have lived for twenty, thirty, and forty years in other places, in order to take up land here and in the surrounding districts.

2918. You consider that settlement of a very desirable character is going on here? Yes.

2919. You have come into contact with a good many of these settlers? Yes.

2920. Do they speak favourably of the results of their labours so far? Yes; I have not heard any of them grumbling. The only trouble they have seems to be this difficulty about the railway.

2921. What is the value of land? It has increased considerably in the town and district of late years.

2922. The population has been materially added to since you came here? It has increased, I suppose, about 50 per cent. in twenty-one months.

2923. Do you think the new arrivals are here for speculative purposes, or for *bona-fide* purposes? I think they are *bona-fide* residents.

2924. As a bank manager, you think that the residents of the district and the inhabitants of the town are in a fairly prosperous condition? Yes.

2925. Do you think business will be improved and settlement increased by the construction of a railway from Molong? Certainly I do, and I take into special consideration the outside country.

2926. Of which you know a great deal? Yes; and which, I am sorry to say, the Committee will have very little chance of seeing.

Mr. Robert Thornbury, grazier, sworn and examined:—

2927. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a grazier and dealer in stock.

2928. What evidence is it you wish to give to the Committee? I have been in this district twenty-eight years—that is, in Forbes, Parkes, and Condobolin. On several occasions I have known large floods on the Lachlan. I have known people travelling from Condobolin to Forbes, to come round by Burrawong and Parkes and thence on to Forbes. It has been impossible to travel along the Lachlan River on account of its flooded state. The plains for about 9 or 10 miles out from the Lachlan have been covered with water from 2 to 4 feet deep. In 1879, I travelled from Condobolin to Forbes, and tried to come up the river road on horseback, but it was impossible. I then came round by Burrawong, and thence on to the Carriboblin woolshed. I then found that I could proceed no further in that direction. I went into the water until the horses were swimming, and then I had to turn out on to the plain and skirt round the edge of the flood waters and so on to Forbes, leaving the Lachlan Valley some miles to my right. On another occasion I recollect that the only communication with Forbes—that is, with the town proper—was by boat. I forget the exact date, but it was previous to 1879.

2929. Your statement shows that the country between Forbes and Condobolin is subject to floods? Yes.

2930. The line of railway we are now considering does not go there at all. Could you tell us whether any part of the Borenore and Forbes country is so flooded that it would be impracticable to take a railway along there? From the Southern Cross to Forbes it is all flooded country. The Lachlan River overflows its bank at the Southern Cross.

2931. Where is that? Twelve miles from Forbes, towards Borenore.

2932. Does this line between Parkes and Forbes pass through flooded country? Not between here and Forbes. There may be slight floods, but there is nothing to interfere with the railway line. It is all comparatively high ground.

2933. Is the country between Canowindra and Forbes liable to floods? Part of it.

2934. But none of the railway line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes is at all subject to them? With the exception of small floods in the creeks there would be nothing to interfere with the railway line.

2935. Do you think this part of the country is likely to contribute traffic and revenue to the proposed railway? Most decidedly.

2936. To a considerable extent? Yes.

2937. What would it consist of? All the wool, I take it, would be brought into Parkes and Forbes. Of course, all the traffic from the north-west would come to Parkes.

2938. Within a radius of how many miles would the traffic be brought to Parkes? Within 40 miles.

Mr. William Aloysius Holbert, Public School Teacher, sworn and examined:—

2939. *Chairman.*] What position do you hold? I am teacher of the Parkes Public School.

2940. *Mr. Dowel.*] How long have you resided in this district? Two years and two months.

2941. Have you any statistics prepared with reference to your school or the schools of the district? I have the number of pupils enrolled at the Parkes Public School, and the average attendance there.

2942. What is the number of children attending the Public School? The number of boys on the roll for the quarter ending 31st December, 1889, was 110, and the number of girls on the roll for the same quarter was 98, making a total of 208. The average attendance of boys for the same quarter was 78·6, and of girls 61·8, giving a total average attendance of 140·4.

2943. Can you say whether this number shows an increase upon that of previous years? No; I could not say that—it does not show an increase.

2944. During the time you have been in charge of the school at Parkes, has the number of children increased? The average attendance has not increased.

2945. Has it decreased? No; what I have given you there is the same as the quarter before I came.

2946.

A. W.
Tempest, Esq.
28 Feb., 1890.

Mr. R.
Thornbury.
28 Feb., 1890.

Mr. W. A.
Holbert.
28 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. W. A. Holbert.
28 Feb., 1890.
2946. Can you give us any reason why the attendance of children at the Public School has not increased in these two years? There has been a private school established within the last four or five months. I should say there might be twenty-five children attending it. There is also a Convent school; I do not know the attendance, but I should think it is pretty large.
2947. Are the schools you have enumerated the whole of the schools in Parkes? Yes; I think so.
2948. Do you know of your own knowledge whether there are any schools outside of the town within a radius of 10 miles? Yes.
2949. How many? I could not tell you the number, but I know there are several.
2950. Have you visited any of them? I visited one.
2951. *Chairman.*] You know the rainfall? No; that is taken at the Court-house.

Mr. James Cusack, senior-constable, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. Cusack.
28 Feb., 1890.
2952. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am senior-constable, stationed at Parkes.
2953. I believe you have collected certain statistics? Yes.
2954. Will you kindly let the Committee know what they are? They are as to agriculture, stock, and crops. What I am now about to read you is in regard to the wheat growing. Several small returns came in afterwards, but I believe these are correct. There are 1,950 acres under wheat, yielding 59,000 bushels. There are 3,659 acres under crop for hay, oats, barley, and potatoes. There are 467,376 sheep, 4,583 cattle, 2,503 horses, and 815 pigs.
2955. That return you believe to be correct? I believe it to be under the actual quantity.
2956. Within what distance from Parkes are these returns collected? There is no Parkes police district, it is in the Forbes police district, and the Forbes electorate. The Parkes police collected at Gobondery and Murrumbogie—that will be north-west about 60 miles; at Trundle, north about 38 miles; at Mr. Lackey's, to the west, 16 miles; south, in the Forbes direction, 9 miles; Bulgandramine, to the north-west, Homill's and Kadina, 30 miles due north. The Parkes boundary goes within 3 or 4 miles of the Peak. That is the dividing line of the Bogan and Forbes electorates. They also collected at Warraberry, 15 miles almost east, and on the Molong road, 24 miles, as far as the Porcupine Range. That is the radius within which we collected the returns.
2957. Then nearly the whole of them are collected from the east, north-east, and west of Parkes? Yes; very few were obtained south. With regard to the private schools, you might like to know that there are in the Convent school sixty-five boys and seventy-five girls; another private school has been started this year.
2958. Did you collect the electoral roll? I am the chief collector in the Parkes portion. Some of those under me collected at Nymagee and Dandaloo.
2959. In your immediate district, has there been an increase on the electoral roll for this year. Yes; I put on 396 new names this year. At Alectown, I put on ninety-eight. I refused three for every one I put on. Some persons had been there only five months, and had no other qualification. Then there were some new selectors, who have not any qualification, who were also refused. They had not been six months in the district.
2960. Do you know of your own knowledge whether selection in this district is increasing? Yes; it appears to me to be so. New selectors are springing up everywhere.
2961. *Mr. Dowel.*] What was the number on the last electoral roll? 1,310. In the present year there are 1,615.*
2962. *Mr. Lee.*] You have sworn that the increase is 396? That is the new names added. I have had to strike a number off the old roll.
2963. *Mr. Dowel.*] What is the number on the electoral roll at Forbes? I have not got the whole portion; I have only the Parkes portion.
2964. *Mr. Lee.*] What is the actual increase for the year 1890, over that of 1889? 206.
2965. How long have you been here? Since November of last year. I came here about the middle of November.

Arthur John Kingsmill, Esq., Crown Lands Agent, sworn and examined:—

- A. J. Kingsmill, Esq.
28 Feb., 1890
2966. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your position? I am Crown Lands Agent at Parkes and Clerk of Petty Sessions.
2967. How long have you been in that position? Since last July.
2968. The Committee are desirous of obtaining information respecting the land held under conditional purchase and conditional lease;—could you furnish us with a return? I could give you a return for the time I have been here. I find that the land work is increasing tremendously.
2969. Every land day more selections are being taken up? Yes.
2970. Are many conditional leases being taken? Yes.
2971. Are there many transfers of conditional purchases? Not so many transfers as I have had in other districts.
2972. Could you state, so far as you know, in what direction these transfers are tending;—are they being made from selectors to capitalists, or are they being made from one selector to another? They are being transferred to the banks, chiefly.
2973. By way of mortgage? Yes.
2974. Many by way of absolute sale? There have been two or three small sales.
2975. The transfers are more in the way of mortgage to monetary institutions? Yes.
2976. And there are not any great number, even under that head? No; in fact the people in this district appear to be more wealthy than in any other district I have been connected with.
2977. What other district have you been in? I have been Land Agent in the Gosford and Brisbane Water district.
2978. There are not many conditional purchasers there? No.
2979. Is this the first time you have held your position in a large country district? Yes.
2980. Consequently your previous experience outside of metropolitan influences has not been very great? No; but we have to go through the same forms.
2981. But your district would be very limited? It was 30 miles long by 30 miles wide.
2982. But many portions of it would not feed a bandicoot? No.

2983.

* NOTE (on revision);—The evidence given was 1,515; but the new electoral roll shows 1,532.

2983. Will you prepare a return from your books and send it in to the General Committee, showing the number of acres alienated under conditional purchase in 1886, 1887, 1888, and 1889, and the number of acres put under conditional lease since the Act came into force? Yes; I will send that return in.
2984. Have you a map in your office showing the land alienated in the land district of Parkes? I have not, but there are the parish maps.
2985. *Mr. Dowel.*] In what part of the district to which you have been referring is the land chiefly applied for? Chiefly in Kennedy.
2986. Where is that? In the Central Division.
2987. Is it to the north of Parkes? Yes; I think it lies to the north.
2988. Have you any land in the Eastern Division applied for? Yes, some.
2989. Can you say what land is available for selection in the Eastern Division? No.
2990. But the land chiefly applied for is in the Central Division? Yes; all the land in this land district lies in the Central Division.
2991. Would not applicants for a portion of the Eastern Division come to your office? I think not.

A. J.
Kingsmill,
Esq.

28 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Edward M'Gee, miller, sworn and examined:—

2992. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a miller and produce dealer.
2993. *Mr. Dowel.*] You are a member of a firm of millers at Parkes? Yes.
2994. How long have you resided here? About sixteen years. I have been twenty years at Grenfell, and six years at Toogong.
2995. During the sixteen years you have resided in this district, have you had an opportunity of observing the character of the country and the rise and progress of the place? Yes.
2996. Will you give the Committee some information about it? Yes. I may state that during the dry seasons we have supplied Mount Hope and Nymagee to a very large extent, also Condobolin and Forbes. We have sent chaff from here to Forbes in a dry season, and there were then not nearly the number of farmers in the district that you will find here now.
2997. During the sixteen years you have been here has the population materially increased? Yes. I myself have had to get flour from Bathurst and other places. I have given as much as £3 3s. a bag. It was difficult at one time to get it, and now it is difficult to get rid of it. It is hard to find a profitable market.
2998. You over-produce in this district now? Yes.
2999. What is the cause of this over-production? It is due, partly, to the copper mines knocking off; and partly to there being more farmers in the district.
3000. Do you know the country between Molong and Parkes which will be traversed by the proposed railway? Yes.
3001. Do you know the settlement on that particular line? Most of it.
3002. Is the country fairly settled upon? Yes, I know it is, because I have been down there buying produce at different times.
3003. Have you visited the holdings of selectors? Yes.
3004. And what opinion did you form with regard to the permanence of their settlement? I could only form a very good one.
3005. They appeared to be fixed upon the soil? Yes; many have been there for years, to my own knowledge.
3006. Do you know the country between Parkes and Forbes? Yes.
3007. It is comprised in the area of the gold-fields reserve? Yes.
3008. Are there any mines at work there? A few; not a great many.
3009. What is the character of the country between here and Forbes? Very good.
3010. Is it suitable for agriculture? Most of it.
3011. If it were open for selection, would it be occupied? The greater part of it.
3012. Can you give the Committee any information as to the Cudal line? I lived there at one time. I lived 5 miles from Toogong, between that place and Canowindra.
3013. Do you consider the country through which that route was surveyed as good as, or equal to, the other route? The last part of it is good, but the land is held by a few persons only.
3014. There are a few large estate owners? Yes, nearly all the good land is freehold. There are a few settlers between Toogong and Canowindra and up to Cargo.
3015. To what purpose are these large estates devoted at the present time? Grazing of sheep and cattle, principally.
3016. Do you think the population is as large on the Cudal line as it is between Molong and Parkes? I do not think so.
3017. The country is not as closely settled? No.
3018. Do you know of any engineering difficulties in the way of the construction of a railway on that route? Only by hearsay. I know that there is rough country at Long's Corner. They cross a creek there three times. The rough country extends from Long's Corner and Murga.
3019. Is any portion of that country likely to be flooded? It may be flooded if there are heavy rains.
3020. Have you heard of its being flooded? Yes; I have been at Forbes, and I have had to be taken out in a boat for a certain distance in order to get away.
3021. Do you know whether any portion of the route from Molong is likely to be flooded? Only on small creeks.
3022. Knowing both routes as well as you do, what opinion have you formed as to the one that should be adopted in the interests of the settlers, and having regard to revenue? I think this line ought to be constructed. To begin with, it is a shorter distance.
3023. Do you know the country between Parkes and Condobolin? Yes.
3024. Is it settled? Yes; if you go that way to Condobolin. If you keep in towards the river, it is not. There are settlers all the way along the track from here to Trundle and to Burrawang.
3025. If the line were constructed to Parkes, do you think that part of the country would bring its produce here? Some would, I suppose.
3026. It would be their best market? Yes.
- 3027-8. And their best road to market? Yes.

Mr.
E. M'Gee.

28 Feb., 1890.

Mr.
E. M'Gee.
28 Feb., 1890.

3028. What would be their chief produce? Wool and agricultural produce. The greater part of the returns from the Mount Hope copper-mine would come this way.
- 3029-30. Are there any minerals in this district or in the surrounding districts which would be brought to Parkes and Forbes? Yes; there is a copper-mine within 12 or 13 miles. The assay of a sample sent down was 29 $\frac{3}{4}$.
3031. Is that mine working now? No.
3032. For what reason? Copper went down in the market. They had men working, and they had to knock off.
3033. Is it likely that if this line were constructed, and the cost of bringing the copper to market were reduced, the mine would be worked? I do not think that it would be started, unless copper went up in price. It costs a lot of money to start a copper-mine.
3034. What is the price of carriage between Molong and Parkes, and Parkes and Molong? It averages from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. per cwt. It is 4s. when the road is bad—that is on merchandise; but it is seldom 4s.
3035. Can you say if there is any considerable amount of merchandize passing between Molong and Parkes? There are always a good many teams on the road to and fro.
3036. And that traffic would be carried by the proposed railway? Yes.
3037. You know the centres of population on the staked line from Molong to Parkes? Yes; the line goes fairly well through the population.
3038. It would serve a large settlement? Yes.
3039. During your residence in this district, have you had anything to do with the mining industry? Yes.
3040. Have you visited any of the mines? Yes.
3041. Both reef and alluvial? Yes.
3042. Have you worked, practically, in any as a digger? I have done a little, but not a great deal.
3043. Have you observed any increase in the mining industry of this district? I have noticed an increase in the last twelve months.
3044. Have you observed any special increase in the size and progress of the town? Yes.
3045. To what do you attribute it? To the number of selections taken up, and also to the mining.
3046. Are the selectors who have recently come into this district a desirable and good class of settlers? Yes; I reckon they could not be beaten—they are all practical farmers. A good many of them came from Victoria. They sold out over there. They appear to like the country here better.
3047. Have you had any conversations with these men respecting their holdings? Yes.
3048. What do they say? They reckon that they want railway communication, and that they will then be able to go in for wheat-growing. At the present time most of them are pastoralists.
3049. From your observation of the produce of the district, should you say that cereals, and fruits generally, did well here? I believe it is as good a place in which to grow grapes as you could find anywhere in New South Wales. They make very good wine here too.
3050. You have had an opportunity to compare the Parkes wheat with wheat grown in other parts of the colony? Yes.
3051. What is your opinion of the Parkes wheat? I do not think you could beat it. In 1886 we sent home a sample of flour to the Colonial Exhibition, in England, made from Parkes wheat. We obtained a certificate and a commemorative medal. I have seen a great deal of flour in my time. I worked up a good deal of Adelaide flour, as a baker, years ago. I have handled no better flour than the Parkes flour. I believe no better flour is made, and I have heard other bakers say the same thing.
3052. Is it likely, do you think, that if this line is constructed it will pay interest on capital and working expenses? I think it ought to pay a lot more than that.
3053. Do you know what it will probably cost? No.
3054. It is estimated by the Commissioners that there will be an annual charge of £26,000;—do you think there will be sufficient revenue to pay that amount per annum? I could not exactly say. I know that the traffic will be very large. I do not know whether any of our lines are paying, as far as that goes; but from what I have seen of other districts, and from what I know of the large amount of traffic passing between this and Molong, I should say that this line would have quite as good a chance of paying as any other line in the colony.
3055. Would any large amount of wool be brought to the railway? Yes.
3056. Where would it come from? A good deal would come from Condobolin way.
3057. In large quantities? Yes; a large quantity has gone down on teams through here. Wool would come this way from Burra Burra, Melrose Plains, Boona West. That wool would all come through here, instead of going on to the other line. It would be nearer. That would be independently of the quantity which goes through here by team now. The Burrawang wool would also come through here. I think the Geuanagie wool goes to Dubbo at present; that also would come here.
3058. Taking a radius of 40 miles on the northern side, all the wool would come to Parkes? Yes.
3059. Would a portion of the Peak Hill traffic come here? A portion of it. We do a good deal of business now with Peak Hill. We are supplying them with flour at the present time.
3060. Would the produce grown round about Peak Hill and the intervening country come to Parkes, *en route* to Sydney? The settlement does not go out as far as Peak Hill, but the intervening country would supply a certain amount of traffic to the railway. You have also to consider the Cudal traffic. Cudal would be about 7 miles from the nearest point on this railway, and the people there would send their traffic this way.
3261. And if the line were brought within a distance of 4 miles of Cudal, it would serve them still better? I think so, seeing that people in this district would be satisfied with having a railway within 30 miles of them.
3062. You think the Cudal people would have no cause for complaint if the railway were brought within 4 miles of them? No; the outside limit of their farming district would be 21 miles from the proposed line—that would be on the Belabula River.

Mr. Dennis Toohey, hotelkeeper, sworn and examined:—

Mr.
D. Toohey.
28 Feb., 1890.

3063. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am an hotelkeeper, at Parkes.
3064. Have you observed much progress in the district? A great deal.
3065. In what respect? There has been an increase in settlement and population.
3066. What class of population is there? A farming population.

3067.

3067. Have you not seen more people here than you see now? Yes.
3068. When was that? About eighteen years ago.
3069. That was when a great deal of digging was going on here? Yes.
3070. I suppose the place went down to very nearly nothing? Yes; there was a very small population.
3071. And now the population is steadily increasing? Yes; it has been for the last four years.
3072. The increase in population has arisen principally from new settlers? Yes.
3073. Do you think there is likely to be a more permanent settlement than you would have in the case of a gold rush? Yes.
3074. Do you know whether there is much Crown land between Molong and this place which could be taken up? No; there is very little.
3075. On what portion of the line between here and Molong have you resided? At Manildra, within a mile and a half of Brymedura.
3076. Is there much agricultural settlement there? A great deal.
3077. Has it taken place during the last few years? Within the last ten years, the greater portion of it.
3078. Do you know the country between here and Brymedura? Yes.
3079. What sort of timber is there between Parkes and that place? It is principally ironbark.
3080. Have you had anything to do with the timber trade? I have used a good bit of it.
3081. Have you ever cut any yourself? No; but I have used it for building purposes.
3082. Have you seen any of it cut and sawn? I have.
3083. Have you noticed the Bumberry timber? That is particularly good.
3084. Have you noticed, as you have driven along the road, that the timber which has been cut was pipy? I know that some seven years ago some bridge builders came from the Gundagai country, and they got piles and beams on the Bumberry mountains about 12 miles from where I live. They said it was the finest timber they had ever worked. I think they got it at Coates' Creek.
3085. Do you think that the construction of this line will be of great benefit to the inhabitants of this district? I do.
3086. And do you think it will benefit people to the south of the line as far as Cudal? I think it would.

Mr.
D. Toohy.
28 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Robert Murphy, constable, sworn and examined:—

3087. *Mr. Lee.*] What are you? I am a member of the police force, stationed at Parkes.
3088. How long have you been here? About eighteen months.
3089. What is the nature of the evidence you wish to give? It is as to the number of public schools within a radius of 10 miles of Parkes.
3090. How many are there? Seven. There is one at Tichborne, 7 miles distant, one at Parkesborough, 2½ miles distant, one at Goobang, 6 miles distant, one at Trelowarren, 1½ miles distant, one at Bindogandry, 9 miles distant, one at Deep Lead, 3 miles distant, and one at Flagstone Creek, 10 miles distant.
3091. Do you happen to know whether the population in the municipal boundary has increased with the last year or two? I believe it has. During the time I have been here a great many new houses have been put up, and they are always occupied as soon as they are erected.
3092. The population has not decreased? It has not.
3093. Taking the worst view of it, it would be stationary? Yes.
3094. Can you give any reason as to why the attendance should fall off so much in the principal school in the town? I believe a number of children have gone from here to Alectown and the Peak—some are attending a private school, where I understand there are about twenty-five pupils, and some go to the Convent school.
3095. Is there any other reason? Not that I know of.
3096. *Chairman.*] You say there is an increase in the population of the town, and that there is nevertheless a decrease in the attendance at the public school? Yes; for the reasons I have given.
3097. Are we to infer that the persons leaving the town are married men with families, and that those coming in to it are single men? That may be the case to some extent. I know of some families who have left the town.

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Henry Harry Cooke, Esq., M.P., sworn and examined:—

3098. *Chairman.*] Are you the senior member for the Forbes electorate? Yes.
3099. *Mr. Dowel.*] How long have you resided in the district? Since 1862.
3100. You are one of the oldest residents, I take it? I came here as a digger from Victoria.
3101. Did the discovery of gold cause Parkes to spring into existence? Yes; it was just after the Forbes rush; the Forbes rush was in 1861, and the rush here was in 1862.
3102. I take it that you have had many opportunities of exploring the country for a good many miles round, and of observing the settlement? Yes; I should like to say at the outset that I should prefer not to be examined upon any point which would be in the nature of putting one of the rival lines against the other, I should like to give evidence as to the resources and the settlement of the district, but I would like not to give evidence of the nature I have described, from the peculiar position I hold.
3103. As an old gold digger, you have prospected, I presume, a considerable area of this country? I have been over a good part of it.
3104. Will you give the Committee what information you have as to the mineral resources of the district? Since I came here, in 1862, I have been over a good deal of the country. In the last three or four years, I have had an opportunity of seeing a great area. Being interested in mining I have observed the character of the country and its resources. From my experience as a digger, for some years I have taken an interest in that industry. From my observations of the different portions of the district I am persuaded there is no district in the colony offering such good prospects in gold-mining as this district. I was Mining Registrar for five years here. At the time of the rush here, it was my duty to register mining claims of all kinds. I think the old register will show something like twenty-five more reefs and gold-bearing veins. I suppose within 5 miles of this place there are fifty gold-bearing veins, or reefs, which will be payable when we have machinery capable of treating the stone, and of saving the pyrites, containing a great percentage of gold. There is no doubt that every one of these veins will pay.

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3105. The portion of the country to which you refer is, I presume, a dyke interlaced with veins and reefs? It has been called a diorite dyke, from a quarter of a mile to 3 and 4 miles wide. It extends from near Grenfell to beyond Tomingly, in the north. Outside of this formation there are gold-bearing reefs, but the principal gold-bearing reefs are within the formation—the richest of them certainly are. The course of the formation is north and south, and the gold-bearing reefs traverse this formation obliquely. The course of the lodes from south-east to north-west.

3106. Can you give the Committee any information with reference to the yield of gold from these veins or reefs? I know the Pioneer reef was first discovered here in 1862. It is not being worked at the present time. The highest yield was 20 ounces to the ton; it dwindled down afterwards to about half an ounce, and there it stayed.

3107. What is the size of these reefs? They vary from 10 feet to 10 inches, and less.

3108. Outside of these reefs is there any alluvial digging? The alluvial digging is somewhat patchy; it has been worked out. There is very little alluvial digging being done now in the district. It has been very rich in places. It was in working the alluvial flats that some of the richest of our reefs were discovered. The alluvial deposit in some places was from 50 to 60 feet deep. In working the alluvial, the boulders were discovered containing gold; this led the miners to look for the reefs on the bottom, or rock. The Haselhurst reef is the best of those discovered in this way. In looking round the country you will see it is covered mostly with a deep alluvial soil wherever the hills crop above the soil. If you do not see reefs you will see rocks sufficient to induce any man to search for them. There are gold-bearing reefs in nearly all these hills. They continue under the alluvium. It has been a work of years to discover most of these reefs.

3109. Is there any special difficulty in the working of these mines? None whatever.

3110. Have you had experience in gold-mining in other parts? Yes.

3111. How does Parkes compare with other mining centres where you have worked? This district has considerable advantages. I have been north, where it is difficult to get machinery on to the ground, on account of the mountainous nature of the country. It is just as difficult to get the ore to the machinery. It has to be drawn down in sleighs and bullock drays, and carted down on horseback in some precipitous places. Here the drays come right to the shafts.

3112. Butas regards the working of the mines themselves, are there any difficulties? We are not down deep enough to reach the water; we would rather we had met the water. We regard it as a boon, rather than a hindrance.

3113. Will you give the Committee any information as to the gold-mining reserve surrounding Parkes? In Mr. Warden Dalton's term of office I was Registrar, and on his recommendation this large area was reserved from sale on account of the gold.

3114. Can you say to what extent? 166 square miles.

3115. You have a pretty good knowledge of the whole of the reserve? A fair knowledge.

3116. Do you think if a certain proportion were thrown open to settlement—that is to conditional purchase and conditional lease—it would be of advantage to residents of the town of Parkes? It would have to be done carefully. Anything that would tend to limit the area available for the operation of the miners would militate against the commercial interests of the town and district. The desire of the more prominent men in the district has been to serve the two industries as much as possible, without injuring either. I refer to the industries of mining and farming.

3117. Are you aware that a large portion of this reserve is good agricultural land? Some of the best in the country, I believe, for wheat, for grapes, and for every fruit.

3118. In all probability in the future this good agricultural land on the reserve will be utilised for agriculture? As soon as it is found not to be needed for the miners. I know of places growing good crops of fruit—of places where there are very good orchards, and underneath there are gold mines. That is the nature of the country. I do not wish to be understood to say I am in favour of cancelling this reserve altogether, but I think some parts of it might be cancelled. The work would have to be undertaken with extreme care. If great care were exercised, I think a portion of it might be set apart for settlement, in special areas.

3119. On this large reserve of 106,240 acres, do you think a large mining population could be maintained? I think there will be a large mining population here for many years to come—for a far longer period than we shall live to see.

3120. You think permanence can be put in this place as far as the mining industry is concerned? Certainly.

3121. That is one reason, you think, why a railway should be constructed? Yes; and a very good reason too.

3122. Are there other minerals besides gold in the district? None which have been worked payably. There are a number of copper lodes a little way from here, and there are lodes containing silver which have assayed pretty well, but gold has more attraction for the miners, and as the price of copper has been low of late there has been little or no attention paid to that branch of mining.

3123. You know the country between Molong and Parkes and Forbes? Yes.

3124. And the route which will be taken by the proposed railway? Yes.

3125. Is it a class of country which is likely to carry a permanent population? Yes; and it has done to my knowledge for the last twenty-five years.

3126. A class of men who will combine agriculture with pastoral pursuits? Yes.

3127. Do you consider that is the best class of settlers you can have? It is a class of settlers I have always been trying to get to come here when it has been in my power to do so.

3128. Is it within your knowledge that between Parkes and Molong there is a considerable number of acres of Crown lands locked up in leasehold areas? Yes; in the Eastern and the Central Division. The land district of Parkes does not include any part of the eastern division that is included in the land district of Molong. In a short time all the leasehold areas in that division will be thrown open to settlement.

3129. You think that this land between Parkes and Molong being thrown open to selection is likely to contribute in the future a large revenue to any railway which may be made? No doubt. Every day people are coming here in search of land from the more thickly and densely populated parts of the colony. A part of a family, or perhaps a whole family, will come here and settle. I think if you had time to see these men in their homes—the great improvements they have made, and the comforts of home life around them—bearing in mind that all this has been accomplished within the last three or four years—you would

say

say that we had obtained eminently the right class of settlers. In these farms round about Parkes, I think you will see more genuine settlement—and it has taken place in the last four years—than ever existed among the best class of occupiers who preceded it.

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3130. Is the country to which you refer situated north of the line? I am referring to the country to the north, east, and north-west of Parkes, in the Central Division.

3131. From your knowledge and experience of this district, have you anything which you can add to the evidence already given? I heard much of the evidence given yesterday and to-day. I believe it is true in the main. There are some little matters as to the geography—which are not of much importance after all—concerning which I differ, but in the main, the evidence has been good, and it has certainly been true in every particular, as regards the resources and returns of the district. I know the men, and I am sure they have given truthful evidence.

3132. As regards the general policy of the construction of this line, will you, as one of the representatives of the people, having an important duty to discharge, say whether, in your judgment, it is necessary that this line should be constructed;—can you conscientiously advocate its construction? That is ground I do not wish to traverse. I will tell you why: There is a considerable amount of local feeling and jealousy between these two towns I represent—Forbes and Parkes. I have good friends in both places. I think the railway will serve a large majority of the people in this district. It will serve a larger number of persons in the electorate of Forbes than any other route I know of.

3133. Do you think the Government will be justified in expending £433,000 in constructing this line? I think the Government would be justified in spending that sum, without going into figures as to the cost of the line and interest.

3134. If the matter came before you in Parliament you would not hesitate to vote for it? I should not have the slightest hesitation in doing so.

3135. Without going into the merits of the rival routes, I will ask you this question;—do you consider that the route, as proposed, will serve a large number of settlers? As I said just now, I think it will serve the largest number of persons in this electorate.

3136. And if it does not at present pay interest on the capital, expenditure, and working expenses, it will do so in the future? I have no doubt it will. There is one matter upon which I have not yet touched, and that is the growth of fruit here. When I came to the diggings at Forbes first, the settlers were growing nothing. The land was supposed to have no value except for the growth of bullocks, sheep, and black-fellows. If you were here a day or two I could show you fruit which is equal to fruit grown in any part of the world. I am not referring to ultra English fruit, such as gooseberries and currants, or to tropical fruits, such as bananas, which do not do well here, but to grapes, oranges, lemons, citrons, apples, pears, apricots, and figs, which all do splendidly here.

3137. You think the district is increasing in population? Certainly. I used to know everyone here, but now I do not know one half of the people.

3138. Do you think the southern or northern portion is increasing most? I think the largest increase is to the north and north-west. The Forbes electorate terminates at the Lachlan River, at Forbes, and then Grenfell begins.

3139. But the largest increase, you think, is at the Parkes end of the electorate? Yes.

SATURDAY, 1 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at M'Millan's Hotel, Tichborne, at 2:30 p.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Mr. James Thomas Corbett, Public School teacher, sworn and examined:—

3140. *Chairman.*] What position do you hold? I am teacher of the Brolgan Public School.

3141. How long have you been here? It is four years to-day since I took charge.

3142. How many children have you on the roll? Sixty.

3143. What is the average attendance? There were fifty, for a portion of the last quarter.

3144. Has there been any increase in the attendance since you first came here? An increase of twenty on the average.

3145. What is the cause of the increase? I think it arises principally from a natural increase in population. There is a school further away, and sometimes the creek is up and they come down from the Welcome. There are only three at present however attending from there.

3146. What is the furthest point from which the children come to your school? Six miles. There is a boy coming from that distance, and he rides.

3147. Where do the majority come from? Within 2 miles.

3148. Are there many families about here? A great many.

3149. How do they live? The parents generally have little homesteads on the creek, and the father lives as a rule by labouring work.

3150. What is the name of the creek? The Billabong.

3151. What is the size of their holdings? From an acre to 3 or 4. Several have applied for 10-acre blocks, but I am not sure whether they will get them. Many have remained on the strength of getting them.

3152. Are there any persons fossicking about here? Yes; when they can earn money from bush work, in order to put food into the place, they generally seek for gold.

3153. If these persons were to get 10-acre blocks, do you think they would settle down and become permanent residents here? I do.

3154. You think they can get a living here? Yes; by occasionally doing bush work, provided they get the 10-acre blocks.

Mr.
J. T. Corbett.
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- Mr
J. T. Corbett.
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3155. Do you know the country round about here? Yes; I know the country out towards the Bogan, 30 miles.
3156. Is that country locked up as a gold-field reserve? I think most of it is contained in pastoral holdings and reserves.
3157. There are not many settlers in that part? No.
3158. What is the class of country to the south of this place, and how is it held? It is splendid agricultural country, I should say, but it is locked up in pastoral holdings, and then there is the gold-field reserve.
3159. Are there no selections between here and Forbes that you know of? No, except out back towards the Euro Mountain, there are two on the main road.
3160. In what direction do those mountains lie from here? Due east.
3161. Do you know the land to the west of this road going towards Forbes? No.
3162. *Mr. Lee.*] What is the width of the gold-field reserve at this point? I cannot say.
3163. Do you know the Spicer family here? Yes.
3164. What do they do? They have an orchard.
3165. Is it of any extent? It is very small—about 2 acres.
3166. In what way would the construction of a railway to Forbes benefit this part of the country? Providing that the land were unlocked it would offer facilities to persons to get away their produce. I suppose ultimately the reserve will become unlocked.
3167. I suppose the reason of there not being more people resident here is that they are really unable to obtain land? Exactly.
3168. And the few here are the remains of the miners? Yes.
3169. Is there any tendency on the part of the mining population to increase;—are there any new comers? I do not think there is much increase.
3170. Supposing that 10-acre blocks are granted under the new Act, do you think they will be taken advantage of to any extent? I think nearly every family residing on the creek will take advantage of them. They will not only obtain the blocks if they can do so, but I think they will make very good use of them.
3171. Is there any valuable land on the creek? Yes.
3172. Would it provide for 200 of these blocks? Yes.
3173. What do you think the people would be likely to do with them? I suppose they would cultivate wheat, and keep a small number of stock.
3174. Do you think their produce would feed the railway to any extent? Yes; especially if fruit were grown. I think there would be a good deal of that description of freight.
3175. Is the soil capable of growing fruit? Yes.
3176. If the ground were available there would be a large population then? Yes.

Mr. Alfred Daines, storkeeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr.
A. Daines.
1 Mar., 1890.
3177. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a storkeeper and farmer.
3178. *Mr. Lee.*] How long have you been here? Fifteen years.
3179. Were you here in the gold rush? Yes.
3180. How many men were there in the locality then? From 4,000 to 5,000 in the heat of the rush; that was the estimated population.
3181. About how many are there now? I do not suppose the population about here would amount to more than 100 or 150 at the outside.
3182. Are they chiefly miners? I cannot say that; I do not suppose there are more than twenty miners here at present.
3183. How do the remainder get a living? They work in the bush, and sometimes they go fossicking.
3184. Are they settled on the reserve in mining tenements? Yes.
3185. Where do you farm? Down at the bridge; I have 4 acres.
3186. What do you grow? Potatoes, turnips, wheat, but principally potatoes.
3187. Has the mining industry revived in this district of late years? No; it has been about the same as it is now for years.
3188. Are there recent discoveries made in the neighbourhood calculated to cause a rush? No.
3189. Is it purely alluvial mining? No, it is alluvial and quartz. There is a quartz mine working here now by Barnett and party. They have got some very good stuff out of it, but it is patchy. I cannot tell you what they are getting now.
3190. You are an old miner yourself? Yes.
3191. What is your opinion about the throwing open of this reserve? It would cause a great population to come here I have no doubt. Under favourable circumstances you can grow anything in the way of grain; it is splendid land. I have not the slightest doubt that you would have a very large population here if the land were available.
3192. In what areas would you suggest that the land should be thrown open? About 40 acres. I think anyone with 40 acres could make a living from it.
3193. Is the rainfall pretty certain? No; we are subject to lengthy droughts. When we have anything like a season we can grow anything.
3194. Suppose the land were thrown open for selection, would that not interfere with the mining industry? I do not know. It would not do to interfere with the miners. If there was not a law to provide for the miners going upon the land after it had been selected, I think the land round about here for miles would be taken up.
3195. Is this goldfield reserve used by the pastoral tenants along the route? Yes.
3196. What freight is this portion of the district likely to contribute to the railway? I think it will contribute a lot of wheat.
3197. But there is no land available for the farmers? No; that is the worst of it.
3198. Taking things as they are, supposing the line were constructed, would the freight be forthcoming? There would be very little from this district; there would be a certain amount of fruit. It is a grand place for fruit.
- 3199.

3199. The land is capable of growing fruit, wheat, and other grain, and, if available, would settle a large population? Yes.
3200. You think the land might be thrown open judiciously without interfering with the mining industry? I do not see why it should not. I have a couple of allotments over the way. I am obliged to let the miners go on to my ground whenever they like, as that is a proviso in the deed.

Mr.
A. Daines.

1 Mar., 1890.

Mr. John Leonard, farmer and contractor, sworn and examined:—

3201. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer, and contractor on the roads at present
3202. *Mr. Dowel.*] How long have you resided in the district? About fifteen years.
3203. What occupation have you generally followed? Mining, principally.
3204. What part of this gold-field reserve were you working on? Not quite a mile from here, at a place called "The Wapping Butcher."
3205. Was there a large quantity of gold obtained there? Yes, a lot of gold. Taking the general run there, they got a return of over £1,000 a man.
3206. Did the diggers lose the lead? No; they worked it out.
3207. Has much prospecting been done since to pick up the gold leads in this locality? A good deal.
3208. Is it the opinion of the gold diggers that the leads can and will be picked up at some future time? Some are of that opinion, some think they will not—the only thing to prove it is the pick and shovel. The old lead has been lost here, and it has not yet been found.
3209. How long did you follow the occupation of a digger? About twenty years; I still have an interest in mining.
3210. From your knowledge of mining, do you think any discoveries of gold are likely to be made in the immediate vicinity of this place? There is no alluvial gold of any consequence about here. I believe there is some gold; but it will take some time to find.
3211. Do you know of any reefs here yourself? Not at present.
3212. What is the size of your holding? 40 acres.
3213. How long have you held it? It is about twelve years since I bought it. The land was selected before this was proclaimed a gold-field reserve, and I purchased it.
3214. You have been an occupier for twelve years of these 40 acres of land? Yes.
3215. How much have you under cultivation? About 10 acres.
3216. What kind of crops have you been growing? Hay chiefly; I also grow potatoes and other vegetables, and some wheat.
3217. What is the average yield of the crops? I think I took about $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons of hay off this year to the acre. I believe it would have given a return of 25 bushels to the acre, if left for wheat.
3218. Have you had the rust in this locality? I never had any.
3219. What is the general crop of potatoes? I have had none lately; but in one year on 3 acres I had over 30 tons—there were 10 tons to the acre—it was a very large crop. We sold about 30 tons out of it.
3220. Have you planted any vines in this locality? A few.
3221. Do they thrive? Very well.
3222. Do they produce good grapes? They have only lately been put in.
3223. Have any of your neighbours planted vineyards? One of my neighbours has a vineyard, Mr. Spicer. I have just started a garden—everything seems to be going on very well.
3224. Do you know Spicer's land? Yes.
3225. In what condition are his vines? In very good condition. Another garden here produced very good grapes.
3226. Do you know the staked-out line between Parkes and Forbes? I have not been over it: but I know most of it.
3227. Is the land suitable for railway construction? I think it will be an easy line to construct.
3228. As a contractor and road-maker, you know of no engineering difficulties? Not the least.
3229. Can plenty of ballast be obtained? Yes, materials of all descriptions.
3230. What is the character of the timber on this line, between here and Forbes? Chiefly white box and pine.
3231. Is there any iron-bark in the locality within a radius of 10 miles? I think within that distance, if not less.
3232. There would be no difficulty in obtaining all that is necessary to construct a railway between Parkes and Forbes? No difficulty whatever.
3233. Do you know the country any distance out from this place? I have not been a great way off.

Mr.
J. Leonard.

1 Mar., 1890.

Mr. David M'Millan, publican, sworn and examined:—

3234. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a publican.
3235. How long have you resided here? About sixteen years.
3236. Have you any land here? A few acres. I purchased about 5 acres altogether.
3237. Do you grow anything? No. I have a piece of ground enclosed here, about 4 acres; I only use it as a horse paddock.
3238. You have not grown anything at all on your ground? No.
3239. You have no garden? No.
3240. Is the land about here fit for agriculture? It is.
3241. If it were thrown open to selection would a large number of persons come here to take it up? I have no doubt of it. There were three men here last night, who are only waiting to get land here. They came from some distance away. They said they would be quite satisfied to get a small holding here instead of going further back and getting a larger holding. They said they would be satisfied with 640 acres.
3242. Do you think the 10-acre blocks would be of much use to the miners? It will be very good so far as making homes for those located in the district is concerned, but it is not large enough to induce persons to come from a distance to take up land.
3243. Have you noticed any substantial increase in the population of the place within the last year or two, or any improvement in the prospects of the place? No. There has been very little revival in the way

Mr.
D. M'Millan

1 Mar., 1890.

- Mr. D. M'Millan, 1. Mar., 1890. way of gold-mining. Barnett and party, I believe, have found rich gold on a reef, but it seemed to fail; they have got dyalite rock. They propose to take a small crushing, and if they get any gold in it it will be a good thing.
3244. That is the only excitement in mining you have had for some time? Yes.
3245. Is it your opinion that there will be payable reefs round here? I do. I think there are some fine reefs in this locality. The Wapping Butcher is one of the richest leads in the Parkes district.
3246. The construction of the railway line would be of no benefit, unless land were thrown open for selection? None whatever.
3247. You know the country between here and Forbes? Yes. There are only two selectors there, I think.
3248. What is the size of their holding? Judd's is 160 acres, and Mrs. Green's about 200 acres. A portion of the land was about to be thrown open for selection. Since then a prospecting party commenced work, and it has been stopped for the present. It will be all proved between the next five or six weeks.
3249. Do you know what indication the prospecting party have? We are getting gold; we are sinking a shaft 160 feet; we are now working a puddling machine.
3250. Are you working a puddling machine before you know whether you have payable dirt? We have had 5 dwt. to the load. We have 18 inches of wash in a face of 30 feet.
3251. What is the bottom? Sandstone and slate.
3252. Is this a new discovery? Yes. It is a place which was rushed twenty-seven years ago, but there was a rumour that the prospectors had salted it, and consequently the miners all abandoned it. Since then some miners in looking over old heaps have washed as much as 6 dwt. and 8 dwt. This induced us to sink, with the result I have told you.
3253. Do you think it will prove payable? I think so.
3254. In the event of it proving payable, is there plenty of ground to create a rush? Yes.
3255. Then it may prove a very important discovery to the district? Yes.
3256. *Mr. Lee.*] The country from Parkes to Forbes is a gold-field reserve? Yes. There is an auriferous line from Parkes to Forbes. In the place I am speaking of there may be a big rush of people at any time.
3257. Under these circumstances, would it be wise to throw the land open for selection? It might be if the miners had access. It would not do to lock it up from the miners.
3258. You think the surface can be used advantageously for agricultural pursuits? Yes.
3259. The reason why the population is so small at present is, that the land is locked up? Yes.
3260. Supposing this land had not been a gold-field reserve during the last ten or twelve years? It would have been settled on, and you would not have been able to-day to obtain an inch of it. It would have been in the hands of selectors all the way from Parkes to Forbes.
3261. How is the land near Forbes, is it equal to the land here? Yes.
3262. It will grow anything that can be grown near Parkes? Yes.
3263. Until the land is thrown open there is not likely to be much traffic for the railway? No.
3264. What may happen as regards mining is quite problematical? Yes.
3265. But the ground you know to be auriferous? Yes. If the miners could have settled on the land fourteen years ago you would not have been able to get an inch of land anywhere now.
3266. *Mr. Dowel.*] What is the name of the pastoral tenant occupying the land in this locality? Mr. Thomas Thom.
3267. Do you know what rent he is assessed at? 2½d., I think.
3268. Does he occupy a large proportion of this land? It is only lately he has taken his sheep away from here; he was running them here until the last fortnight.
3269. Are there any transactions in stock in this locality? No.
3270. But does any travelling stock pass through this district? Yes. There is a good deal of travelling stock passing along this road—more than on any other road in the district, I think.
3271. What market are they generally making for? Albury *en route* for Melbourne. Of course the sheep travel north to Queensland.
3272. Have you any knowledge of the carrying capacity of the country? I have some idea.
3273. How many acres to the sheep? This land ought to carry a sheep to 2 acres.
3274. And with improvements, such as scrubbing and ringbarking, more? It would carry a sheep to the acre if improved. In a little paddock of 120 acres I kept 150 sheep for six months. It was a good season, and you could hardly notice that they had been on it.
3275. Did you rent it from the Crown lessee? Yes; at a 1s. an acre; that was my own proposition.
3276. Do you know the route through which the proposed line goes? Pretty well.
3277. You have seen most of it? Yes.
3278. In your opinion, is it a suitable one for a railway? Yes. I understand there are two surveys—the principal one is, I think, about a quarter of a mile from here. I think that route is suitable. The object in going this way was, I think, to get a good place at the creek for a bridge.

MONDAY, 3 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the School of Arts, Forbes, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq., (CHAIRMAN).

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

George Fairhurst Hutchinson, Esq., Mayor of Forbes, sworn and examined:—

- G. F. Hutchinson, Esq., 3. Mar., 1890. 3279. *Chairman.*] You are Mayor of Forbes? Yes.
3280. How long have you been in this position? I have served two whole terms, this is the third term. I have been Mayor five terms altogether.
3281. How long have you been an alderman? Since 1872.

3282. Can you furnish the Committee with any statistics? Yes. I will give you in the first place the ratable value of the property. The general rates for 1889 amounted to £913 13s. 10d., at 1s. in the £; the water rates amounted to £971 10s.; and the grants to roads, &c., to £666 6s. 3d., or a total of £2,551 10s. The number of ratepayers was 659; the estimated population of the municipal district was 3,200; the value of the property in the municipality is estimated to be £325,655. I cannot vouch for its strict accuracy, but that is the approximate estimate.

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3283. Do you see any marked improvement in Forbes during the last few years? I think it has improved wonderfully during the last few years. Our ratable values are increasing constantly. We commenced at £176 twenty years ago—in 1870—when the place was proclaimed a municipality, and now they amount to over £900.

3284. Has there been any material increase in the population of the place within the last two years? I think there has. This last year there was a falling off for a little while.

3285. Of what kind of population has the increase consisted? As far as I can see, of business people in the town.

3286. Has there been much increase in the population outside of the township? I can cite one case, so far as population and value of property are concerned. A little while ago a special area was proclaimed. There were 31 portions of 160 acres each. The whole of that land has been taken up by people living about the district. It is now all settled upon.

3287. In what direction is that from Forbes, and at what distance? It is about 3 or 4 miles distant.

3288. In which direction? To the south—on the Grenfell side—on the other side of the Lachlan River, but within the boundaries of the municipality. That land is valuable, because water can be obtained anywhere by sinking from 40 to 100 feet. The same sort of land extends towards Grawlin Plains, about 12 miles out, and it may go further for all I know. There have been several selections taken up about Eugowra lately. All the available land which can be taken up has been taken up to the west of us; it was taken up years ago. All the river land was settled upon years ago.

3289. Have you noticed that the seasons have had any serious effect on the prosperity of the town? We have wonderful vitality. We get knocked down one year, but we get up the next. The seasons do not seem to make any lasting difference—that is to say, there is no retrogradation.

3290. As Mayor of the town, have you called public meetings here to consider the construction of the proposed railway? We have had meetings times out of number.

3291. What has been the general feeling expressed at these meetings with regard to the different routes proposed? Forbes, up to late years, has been unanimously in favour of the Borenore line, going through Cudal, Toogong, Murga, and Eugowra to Forbes, and thence to Condobolin; from that we think it should go to Menindie, not to Wilcannia. That has been agitated for years, but a certain revolution of feeling has taken place of late in favour of another line—the Cowra line.

3292. What reasons are advanced in support of the Cowra line? It is argued that it is the cheapest in construction, that there will be easier gradients, and that the line passes through a splendid country. It also gives this additional advantage: that you have two markets—on the one side the Wagga, Albury, and Melbourne markets as it were, and on the other the Sydney market. Then in case of a congestion of traffic on the Western line, you can go to Sydney on the Southern line by means of Cowra, or some other point near there which may be selected.

3293. I suppose Woodstock would suit you as well? Yes.

3294. The majority of your inhabitants are of opinion that that would be the best line for them? The majority of the district, but not the majority of the town, I think. The majority of the townspeople are, I think, in favour of the Borenore line.

3295. Has that line been advocated at more than one public meeting? Of late we have not been considering any particular route. We have been in favour of allowing the whole of the evidence to be submitted to this Committee, and of letting it determine the best. We think that the line to which I have just referred is the best, on the ground of settlement, of population, and of fertility of soil.

3296. As a representative of the people of Forbes, speaking on behalf of the majority of the people, may I ask what is your objection to the proposed line now being investigated by the Committee. The main reason is this: we have been used to getting our goods by the shortest road, *via* Borenore, for thirty or forty years, and we think that is the line the railway should take now. Then we also think that the settlement of population determines the best route. Undoubtedly there is more population on either of the lines I have just mentioned—that is, on the line from Borenore, or the line from Cowra—than there is on the Molong line.

3297. The whole of the land between here and Parkes is a reserve? A gold-field reserve. I believe 7,000 acres are to be proclaimed a special area next month; the Government, I believe, have determined on that course. It is on the western side of the railway reserve between here and Parkes; it commences about 3 miles from Forbes, and extends 9 miles. That will be proclaimed a special area, I believe, in 320-acre blocks. We advocate this course for the reason that the other special area of 160-acre blocks was a success. We think 320 acres would be quite sufficient. We find that small holdings are the best for the district after all.

3298. Is not this town surrounded, as a rule, by very large holdings? There are large reserves and leasehold areas, especially to the north and south. A good many of the leasehold areas will be falling in within the next five years, and I do not think the lessees will get a renewal, in consequence of the importance of our town and district; they might get an extension of one-half.

3299. Are there any particular points which you wish to bring under our notice that I have not touched upon? I desire to refute some evidence given at Parkes. Mr Leslie is reported in the *Daily Telegraph* to have stated at Parkes, that he held 50,000 acres of leasehold land, which is carrying 20,000 sheep, and that that land is suitable for agriculture. In rebuttal of that evidence, I may say that I have been a member of the Land Board in this district since 1884. We have had to consider the appraisalment of Mr Leslie's run. It was appraised at the minimum in the first instance, but he appealed under Section 100 of the Act of 1884 for a re-appraisalment. The Board reduced the appraisalment from 1½ an acre to three-fifths of a penny for the leasehold area, and the resumed area from £2 to 16s. a section. The report of the Government officers, and other evidence, went to show, so far as the carrying capabilities of the run were concerned, that it took 15 acres to keep a sheep on the leasehold area, and on the resumed area, of course, the land was declared unsuitable for agriculture. What I am saying is perfectly correct. Land of which

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it will take 15 acres to keep a sheep can hardly be considered suitable for agriculture. As showing the barrenness of the country, you will notice the reduction made. I will give you the area:—The leasehold area is 33,359 acres; the resumed area, according to the last *Gazette*, was 29,187 acres last year. That shows that the land was not taken up by selection. There are still 29,000 acres open to selection on the resumed area, exclusive of the reserve. That shows at once that the land cannot be very valuable; if it were it would be taken up.

3300. *Mr. Dowel.*] How long have you resided in the district? Over twenty-seven years. I came here in September, 1862.

3301. What is your occupation? I have a saddlery business.

3302. You have seen Forbes make considerable progress? I have seen it in its palmiest days, and I have also seen it in its depressed state.

3303. What is the number of the largest population you have seen here? When I came here first it was 30,000.

3304. What is the population now? 3,200.

3305. Has it materially increased of late? When the old leads were worked out the population cleared just as fast as they came. We are depending now upon the pastoral and agricultural interest.

3306. Do you think the population settled upon the land is of a permanent character? Undoubtedly.

3307. They are not likely to leave? No.

3308. Are the holdings large or small? There are some very small holdings and some very large holdings, but I may state that some of the wealthiest and best people in our district are men who commenced here with 2 or 3-acre blocks—they had small gardens, and by dint of perseverance and industry they have enlarged their holdings to 30 and 40 acres. In some cases they have bought holdings outside up to 640 acres—there is Besgrove, Tozer, Shied, Reed, Reymond, J. Farrand, and a number of others I cannot think of—these men are fairly well to do.

3309. There is no probability of the holdings which the selectors now have reverting to pastoral purposes? Certainly none of those I mentioned.

3310. What is the tendency of the pursuits of these selectors—do they combine sheep-farming with agriculture? The small ones go in chiefly for agriculture and fruit-growing.

3311. What is the size of their areas? From 5 acres up to 200 or 300 acres.

3312. What do they principally grow? Various kinds of produce—wheat, hay, and potatoes.

3313. Are the crops of a good character? Yes. In fair seasons they are very prolific.

3314. What is the average crop of wheat? In some parts of the river the crops grown by irrigation are very good—those outside are not so good. It depends in a measure upon the season. We have had as high as 40 bushels an acre of wheat.

3315. You cannot say what the average crop is? The average crop, right through, taking one year with another, would be 18 bushels.

3316. You mentioned irrigation—have you any irrigation works close to the town or in it? There are several. Reymond's, Martin's, Farrand's, Gatenby's, and Edols'.

3317. Has the irrigation to which you refer proved a success? Undoubtedly. A few miles out of the town the holdings go up to 5,000 acres. The holders combine agriculture with grazing. They are within a few miles of the town.

3318. About what is the carrying capability of the grazing estates to which you refer? That I could not say exactly. I am informed that there are ten irrigation plants altogether. I should think the bulk of the estates would run from 3 acres to 6 acres to the sheep—that is as far as unimproved land is concerned,—that is, land which has not been ringbarked. Land which has been improved will run one sheep to the acre. I may mention that all the lands in the Forbes district, extending to the Condobolin district to the southward, have been more highly appraised—they have been re-appraised this last year. I speak as a member of the Land Board.

3319. How many flour-mills do the agriculturalists keep employed here? I know of only one at present.

3320. Do you know of their sending wheat to any other place excepting Forbes? I do not of my own knowledge.

3321. It all comes to Forbes? A great deal of it does? I think they sometimes send flour and stuff to Parkes.

3322. You informed the Committee just now that the Forbes people were in favour of constructing a line from Condobolin to Forbes? A good many are.

3323. What is the distance? Sixty miles—about that.

3324. Do you know the route from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, *via* Flagstone Creek? I cannot say that I am intimately acquainted with it. I have been over it only once.

3325. Do you know that the line requires 11 miles less to construct than the line *via* Cudal? Not starting from Borenore. I do not think that is true; it is 66 miles from Borenore to Forbes, *via* Cudal.

3326. Supposing a railway is constructed to Forbes, do you think there will be any traffic from Condobolin to Forbes? I think so.

3327. Of what will that traffic consist principally? There will be any number of persons travelling, and any amount of stock sent.

3328. Do you know the district between here and Condobolin? Yes.

3329. Do you know that it is held largely by pastoralists? Well, the Burrawang holding is a considerable holding.

3330. Would any quantity of wool come to Forbes? Yes.

3331. And that will give revenue to the railway? The Burrawang holding alone had about 4,000 bales this last year.

3332. Whatever route may be determined upon for the construction of a railway to Forbes you think a large amount of traffic would be brought here? Yes. Of course, if you go to Parkes, the line would be longer *via* Cudal. The Borenore line is only 1 mile longer from Sydney, going to Forbes and Parkes, than the other route.

George Henry Sheaffe, Esq., District Surveyor, sworn and examined :—

3333. *Mr. Lee.*] What position do you occupy? I am District Surveyor, stationed at Forbes.
3334. How long have you been at Forbes? A little more than five years.
3335. You produce a tinted map showing the alienated and unalienated land, and the reserves in your district? Yes.
3336. That is within the land district? Yes.
3337. What is the distance it runs in any direction from the town of Forbes? It extends 20 miles north of Parkes and 20 miles south of Forbes. In an easterly direction it extends to the Land Board district of Orange; in a westerly direction it goes about 10 miles west of the towns of Forbes and Parkes.
3338. Could you furnish the Committee with a return showing the land alienated in this district? Well, the map I exhibit shows the alienated land.
3339. Is that according to parishes? It is taken as to parishes; some are divided by the line equidistant between Forbes and Parkes.
3340. Will you take the map marked exhibit 1? Yes.
3341. Now, is there any portion of the land shown upon exhibit 2, included in the map marked No. 1? No; this is confined to the Land Board district of Orange.
3342. The land as shown on both of these maps does not overlap? No.
3343. Will you be good enough to give the totals? The totals I give you refer to the alienated reserved and unalienated land between the line east and west 20 miles north of Parkes, a line east and west half way between Parkes and Forbes, and a line east and west 20 miles south of Forbes. I will take the Parkes portion first. The alienated land there amounts to 225,770 acres—there are reserved 197,699 acres—and unalienated 211,344 acres. In the Forbes portion there are alienated 435,976 acres, reserved 197,302 acres, and unalienated 95,499 acres—these totals are only approximate.
3344. Is the large gold-field reserve between Parkes and Forbes included in the unalienated return you give? Yes.
3345. It is unalienated land of all sorts, strictly Crown land? Now I come to think of it, the unalienated land does not include the gold reserve.
3346. Could you tell us the stations in the districts of Parkes and Forbes which now hold leasehold areas? Not from memory. There is the Billabong gold-field reserve of 100,000 acres; and as far as my judgment goes, I think 80,000 might be revoked; there is a timber reserve between here and Eugowra of about 18,000 acres. I think 10,000 acres might be revoked. When the railway line is going to be constructed, timber will be required. On the Lachlan gold-fields, south of the river, 5,000 acres have recently been approved for revocation after survey; then there are large railway reserves in all parts of the district.
3347. Along the various surveyed routes? Yes. Between here and Eugowra there are about 25,000 acres reserved for railway purposes. The reserves in this district are composed chiefly of good land. In other districts I have known large timber areas worthless for any other purpose to be reserved; in this district nearly all the land reserved is good.
3348. And suitable for agricultural as well as pastoral purposes? A large proportion is suitable for agriculture, but there is no worthless land, no unused land as there is in many other reserves. I am speaking now of the whole of the Land Board district. I can give you some road distances. From Forbes to Parkes it is 21 miles by road; from Forbes to Condobolin 58 miles, that is from town boundary to town boundary; from Forbes to Eugowra, by road, it is about 20 miles; from Parkes to Condobolin by road 62½ miles—the whole of these distances are from town boundary to town boundary. They are scaled from the map, and are approximately correct. From Forbes to Marsden, to the south-west from here, it is about 40 miles. I have taken the area of the land district of Forbes at 1,124,000 acres, Grenfell 1,252,000 acres, Parkes 2,500,000 acres, and Condobolin 2,500,000 acres. These are all given roughly; they give a grand total of 7,290,000. I have noted that the land district of Forbes extends from 10 to 40 miles from Forbes—a mean of about 20 miles; the Parkes district extends from 10 to 104 miles from Parkes—three quarters of this area is as close to the Bourke railway line as it is to the town of Parkes. 5 per cent. is about all the unavailable country in the Land Board district of Forbes.
3349. Is that all the useless country in the district? It is useless, except for poor pasturage.
3350. What is the nature of the soil on the timber reserve between here and Eugowra? Very good.
3351. Was it reserved specially as a timber reserve for the requirements of the people, or is it a fancy reserve? It was reserved specially for the use of the timber.
3352. Then there is timber on it? Yes.
3353. What is the nature of the timber on it? It is chiefly pine away from the river, there is very good gum on the frontage.
3354. Is that large area still required on behalf of the general public? Part of it is on the leasehold area; it has been considered as to whether it was required for the public. Some of it is approved for cancellation as a special area.
3355. About how many acres? About 1,200 acres.
3356. You should be in a position to state whether this large area included in the Billabong gold-field reserve is required in the mining interests? I think not. I recommended the cancellation of 20,000 acres in one portion, and 7,500 in another was absolutely revoked, but re-notified, pending survey, to be dealt with as a special area. I believe 20,000 acres is ready for sale, and that the Mines Department have approved of the cancellation of it also, but it is not yet decided in what way it shall be disposed of.
3357. In what part of the district are these 20,000 acres recommended for cancellation? They extend from within 7 miles of Forbes to about 3 miles of Parkes.
3358. I suppose that in your capacity of district surveyor you recommended that this area should be revoked? Yes.
3359. Consequently you must be of opinion that it is required for purposes of settlement? Certainly.
3360. And that that settlement will be no detriment to the mining interest? I think not.
3361. The small settlement between here and Parkes is owing to what? To the whole of the land being reserved.
3362. The land at the same time being very good? Yes.
3363. Had it been opened for selection would it have been settled upon? There would not be an acre not taken up.
3364. If the land had been thrown open between here and Parkes a few years ago there would be there now a continuous line of selections? Yes, the whole of the land would have been taken up.

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3365. As to the area of conditional purchases and conditional leases in your district are they taken up to the maximum allowed under the Act? As a rule they are, in the western part of the district. Many in the eastern part are too close together. The whole of the land was taken up before.
3366. I suppose you take a turn through the district occasionally? Yes.
3367. Is there a tendency to bring the land under cultivation? I think a good deal of land would be brought under cultivation if carriage were easy.
3368. Is this land fit for cultivation within an easy distance of a market? Yes, and a large area of it would be cultivated.
3369. Do you know of your own knowledge anything as to the nature of the various settlers—do you think they are *bonâ fide* settlers taking up the land intending to make it their homes, or are they acting on behalf of syndicates or capitalists? I think a great many are taking it up solely in their own interests—almost the whole are in that position I think.
3370. If a selector will fence, improve, and cultivate his land it is strong *prima facie* evidence of his *bonâ fides*? Yes. I think the class of settlers we have now are *bonâ fide* men.
3371. Do you know the railway route from Parkes to Forbes? Yes.
3372. Is any portion of it subject to inundation? I should think not.
3373. Is there no portion of it close to Forbes subject to flood? Yes, a little piece.
3374. Do you know the flood levels? I have seen nothing during the last five years approaching these lines; we hear of floods twenty years ago, but I could not give you evidence about them.
3375. But you know the flood levels in and about the town of Forbes? Fairly well.
3376. Do you know where the line enters the town? Yes; but I think none of the line approaching this town from Parkes is subject to flood. Some of the town allotments through which the line passes will be subject to flood, but I have not seen any flood there.
3377. You have seen the Lachlan come over its banks? Yes.
3378. Does the flood enter the town? It runs through the lagoon.
3379. Will you describe the lagoon where the flood waters enter? It is a billabong of the Lachlan. The flood waters leave the river about 12 miles from here, and on the east of the town; they run round the district and back into the river about 2 miles below the town.
3380. You have seen the flood waters come round there? Yes, but only over a very little of the town land.
3381. Have you seen the flood sufficiently high to prevent horse and vehicular traffic? No; it is not a foot deep over that land in most places. There is a very slow current. The rivers here are very slow when in flood.
3382. Do you think that that portion of the line could be improved in any way? Hardly, I think; I do not think it could, coming in from Grenfell from the river.
3383. You think the line, as staked, is about the best which can be brought inside the town boundaries? I could not suggest any improvement.
3384. Do you know the site selected for the terminus in the town? No, I am not aware of its position.
3385. Do you know anything of the country between here and Condobolin? Yes.
3386. Is any portion of it subject to inundation? Yes; some of the country is subject to it, but I think it is easily avoided.
3387. The greater part of the country is very flat? Yes.
3388. Once the river comes over the bank, the water extends for some distance? Yes, but not as far as the trial line, I fancy.
3389. Do you know the country between here and Eugowra? Pretty well.
3390. Is it subject to flood? Not where the trial line is laid out.
3391. And then again from Eugowra to Cowra what is the nature of the country between those places? That I do not know.
3392. Do you know anything of Cudal? Only from passing through it.
3393. Your official duties do not take you there? No.
3394. Do you know Eugowra? I know the town well.
3395. It is in your district? All on this side of the creek is in my district—that is, the chief part of the town and the alienated land.
3396. Do you happen to know whether railway reserves have been made along all the trial surveys relating to this district? Some have not been made until quite recently. Some of the land was taken up before the reserves were made.
3397. Some of the surveys were made years ago? Yes.
3398. And were the reserves made then? Not in all instances, I think. There is a railway reserve, 2 miles wide, between Forbes and Eugowra.
3399. Is there a reserve thence to Cowra? That I do not know.
3400. Is there a reserve between Cudal and Borenore? I could not say.
3401. These reserves having been in existence for so many years have no doubt retarded settlement? Yes.
3402. Had the land been available, would it have been selected? Yes.
3403. And is it closed now purely on account of its being railway reserve? Yes. There are also timber reserves here.
3404. Does the travelling stock reserve run through any portion. Very little; it is almost all south of it.
3405. I mean along the line;—as shown by the survey on the map the travelling stock reserve runs along the line for a portion of the distance and parallel with it for the remainder? Yes.
3406. Are applications being made to you to revoke any of the reserves? Constantly.
3407. Of course all the applications for the revocation of reserves in this district made to the Minister are sent to you for report? Yes.
3408. Have you any in your office at the present time? A few; but generally all on resumed areas have been dealt with. I have 5,000 acres in one reserve to measure up now. I think I alluded to that before.
3409. Can the Committee take that as an evidence that there is a demand for land? There is a great demand for these reserves.
3410. And are they to be thrown open in special areas? Nearly all near Forbes and Parkes are in special areas.
3411. The pastoral leaseholds, as you know, are shut up for some little time to come;—do you think that
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as these leaseholds fall in they will be availed of by small settlers? All the land on the leasehold areas will be taken up, I think, as the leases fall in.

3411½. Is the land good enough for selection? Undoubtedly it is.

3412. As land has become available in the past, it has, as far as your knowledge goes, been taken up by small holders? Yes.

3413. Is there any tendency in the district to aggregate large estates? There are one or two large estates. There is a large estate at Burrawang. It is the largest in the district. I do not remember the area of it, but it is a very large one. There is a large one also at Condobolin. Then there is Wandary, near Forbes; Carrawobbity and Nelungaloo, between Forbes and Parkes—nearer Parkes.

3414. And along the other track, between here and Eugowra? There are no large estates along there.

3415. And between Eugowra and Cudal? I could not say.

3416. *Mr. Dowel.*] What is the distance between Eugowra and Parkes? I think it is 24 miles.

3417. Do you know the country between Eugowra and Parkes? Not the whole of it.

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James Wilson Taylor, Esq., Crown Lands Agent, sworn and examined:—

3418. *Mr. Dowel.*] What position do you occupy? I am a Crown Lands Agent.

3419. How long have you been in the district? About four years.

3420. Can you say what Crown land has been alienated in the district previous to 1885? About 200,000 acres in this district. I am referring now to conditionally purchased land.

3421. What area had been sold by auction up to 1885? 209,000 acres.

3422. What was the area of the pre-emptive leases? It was very small.

3423. Would they amount to 150,000 acres? I do not think so.

3424. Can you inform the Committee what area of conditional purchase has been made since 1884? About 65,000 acres.

3425. What area has been conditionally leased? About 150,000 acres.

3426. What area has been sold by auction? Very little.

3427. Do you find that there is much inquiry for land here? Almost daily—weekly, at any rate.

3428. Is the demand sufficiently large to cause persons sometimes to go to the ballot? It always is, in cases of reserves being revoked or special areas being thrown open.

3429. Have you had any special areas thrown open recently? We had a large area within 3 miles of the town, on the east of Wongajong.

3430. Can you say how many acres? Close upon 5,000.

3431. Is that land taken up? All of it.

3432. At what price? £1 10s. an acre.

3433. What was the size of the areas? 160 acres; three were of less area.

3434. What is the character of the land? It is very good land.

3435. Good agricultural land? Yes.

3436. Was it taken up chiefly by residents of Forbes? A large part of it was.

3437. By men who knew the land well? Yes.

3438. Does any portion of the Eastern Division come within your district? None at all.

3439. Yours is all Central? Yes.

3440. Could you say the number of acres locked up in your district in leasehold areas? I could not say without the reserves.

3441. But with the reserves? 524,000 acres.

3442. When do you anticipate that the leasehold areas will be available for selection or for purposes of settlement? According to the Act, in ten years.

3443. Is the statement made, that some of the land would be available in five years, correct? Quite correct, I think. Probably some of the large estates, such as Wongajong, will be refused the extension.

3444. And some of the land will be available in five years and some in ten? I think that is almost a certainty.

3445. *Mr. Lee.*] Have many of the holdings been transferred? Yes, backwards and forwards.

3446. In what proportion by way of mortgage and in what proportion by way of absolute sale, approximately? I should say, half and half.

3447. Would you infer from that that the conditional purchaser, from special circumstances, has been compelled to raise money? That is all I could infer.

3448. Have you any reason to infer that any of these absolute transfers are being made by persons who have simply held for larger men? I have not seen it myself. I have no reason to infer that.

3449. What is the general impression you have received as land agent as to the position of settlers here? My general impression is that the banks, owing to bad times since 1885, have given little advances to struggling persons, and that they are all redeeming.

3450. Have you had occasion to arrive at the conclusion that there has been any large area of land held by dummies? Not the slightest.

3451. Therefore you think the nature of the settlement is of an absolutely *bona-fide* character? Very much so. 200,000 acres of purchased land is all certificated land upon which there has been made improvements to the value of 10s. per acre, showing that £100,000 has been expended by small settlers upon improvements.

3452. Do you receive any applications for land from persons out of the colony? Very often. Last week we had inquiries from Victoria, and from the Victorian border, from persons seeking to get land.

3453. Applying to you to know if there were any land available? Just so—by letter.

3454. So far as you can see, there is a growing demand? There is no doubt of it.

3455. What is the land revenue of your district? Last year it exceeded £19,000.

3456. From all sources? Yes; £12,000 of that sum was made up of instalments upon conditional purchases alone; the balance was for first deposits, and there were a few auction sales of allotments.

3457. Have you taken out the returns for the last five years? The average would be £15,000.

3458. Some years, I suppose, would be much less? I think it never comes to less than £14,000.

3459. Would a dry season affect the returns? No, not to any extent. I have looked up my books, and I find that since 1861 over £400,000 has gone to the Treasury from this district alone. With reference to the

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the land selected lately at Parkes, I may mention that it has been taken up in large areas, and that nearly every selector who went there called at my office before he went to see if he could get land in this district. These men would have preferred to select here, but they had to go further on as we had not an acre to give them. I could not give a full area of good land in my district to any man. If a railway were made through this district, and especially from Borenore to Forbes, there would necessarily be large railway reserves thrown open. On the Borenore line there is a railway reserve 30 miles in length, and a mile each way in breadth. That would give an area of 20,000 acres available if a railway were constructed, and it is all good country.

3460. That would apply also to the construction of the Cowra line? I am not quite safe in saying that I think, but I am under that impression. Alongside these reserves often there are timber reserves. They are made for the purpose of supplying timber for the railway.

3461. Do you know the class of timber upon the reserves you speak of? There is fair gum and good pine.

3462. There is no ironbark there? I am not aware of it.

3463. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you account for there being more land available in the Parkes district than in the Forbes district? Because it has not been taken up, I suppose.

Arthur Sharp, Esq., Government Surveyor, sworn and examined:—

A. Sharp,
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3464. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am a Government surveyor.

3465. Stationed where? In the Forbes Land Board district.

3466. How long have you been in this district? Thirteen years.

3467. Have you been in your present position the whole time? I was licensed surveyor for two years after I came into the district.

3468. I suppose you have a pretty intimate knowledge of the class of country in this district? I have been pretty well all over it.

3469. Is there any material difference between the class of country round about Forbes and that round about Parkes? Yes, there is a difference. The soil about the river is of a black, loamy nature; while out about Parkes it is more sandy.

3470. After you leave the river, do you find the class of country similar to the Parkes country? Very similar.

3471. Has there been, to your knowledge, much alienation in small areas in this district during the last few years? Yes.

3472. Can you tell the Committee where most of these small areas were selected? From 2 to 4 miles to the south of Forbes.

3473. What has been the area selected to the south of Forbes? About 5,000 acres altogether, each holding being limited to 160 acres.

3474. Do you know anything of the country to the north-west of Parkes? Yes.

3475. Do you know a place called Kadina? Yes.

3476. What class of country is it there? Box and pine forest and sandy soil.

3477. Is there much land selected? Yes; all that is available.

3478. Can you tell us what has been selected there within the last few years? From 70,000 to 80,000 acres, I believe.

3479. Do you know Mickibri? Yes; I was including that when I mentioned Kadina.

3480. Do you know of any settlement within the last year or two to the west either of Parkes or Forbes? Not exactly to the west, because it is leasehold area; but to the north-west of Parkes, at Trundle, there has been a good deal of selection.

3481. How far is Trundle from Parkes? Where the new settlement is, at the lagoon at Trundle, I should say 32 miles.

3482. What distance would that be from Forbes? About 43 miles.

3483. Then there would only be 11 miles difference between the two places? About that.

3484. Is it a class of country suitable for agriculture? Yes; the soil is good enough if the climate is suitable.

3485. Do you know what the settlers generally are doing there—whether they are grazing, or whether they are going in for agriculture? They are nearly all graziers at present. There has been very little agriculture so far.

3486. What is the average size of the holdings? They are mostly the full area—2,560 acres.

3487. Could you tell us the aggregate amount of land which has been selected there? In the Trundle paddock there are about 90,000 acres. This has all been selected, with the exception of the stock reserve which goes through it, about 1 mile wide.

3488. Is there any similar settlement near to Forbes? The holdings about here are generally smaller.

3489. They are absolutely taken up for agriculture? Yes. There are a number of men who have settled to cultivate in a *bona-fide* manner. So far as I know, they are all *bona-fide* men.

3490. Are they going in for agriculture? They have hardly had time yet; they have had barely time to fence in and build their homes.

3491. What is the number of acres under crop within a radius of 10 miles of this place? I could not say.

3492. You have had a good deal of experience in the Forbes district? Yes.

3493. In which direction does most of the agricultural land lie from Forbes—north, east, south, or west? I think most to the south, on the other side of the river, in the Grenfell electorate.

3494. How far does the agriculture commence from Forbes? At the river.

3495. Is there a continuation of it in any particular direction? No; there is not a continuation. There is good land close to the Cowra-road, and also on the Grenfell-road.

3496. What class of land is there in the railway reserve between here and Eugowra? It is first-class land for agricultural purposes.

3497. You are sure it would be suitable for that? Yes.

3498. Consequently, there can be no doubt about its being selected immediately it is thrown open? No; it would be all taken up at once.

3499. *Mr. Dowel.*] When the pastoral holdings were divided in the Forbes district, did the squatters obtain,

obtain, in the leasehold areas, the principal water-frontages? Yes, especially at Burrawang. They obtained in that instance 35 miles of water-frontage.

3500. When that land is thrown open for settlement you think it will be taken up by *bona fide* settlers? Every inch of it.

3501. For the purpose of genuine settlement? Yes.

3502. Do you know the proposed railway route to Cudal? Yes; I used to work there. Until the 1884 Act came into operation it was part of my district.

3503. What is the character of the country along the proposed line? There is rich agricultural land—there is a great deal of it about Cudal especially.

3504. Is it true that the line would pass through 30 miles of private land? I do not think there is so much as that. From here to Eugowra it passes through no private land at all. I do not think it could pass through so much as you say; it might pass through 20 miles.

3505. If Dr. Ross, M.P., made that statement to the Minister it would be incorrect? I think so.

3506. Would it pass through barren hills and miles of bottomless swamp? Certainly not.

3507. You know the route? Yes.

3508. Is any portion of it liable to flood? No.

3509. Do you know Keenan's Swamp? Yes; the line keeps to the south of that.

3510. Did you ever hear of a surveyor being bogged in it? No.

3511. Did you not hear of Mr. Sharkey being bogged there? No.

3512. Do you know the distance between Eugowra and Parkes? By road 26 miles, but the road is not the shortest route.

3513. Would there be any engineering difficulties in constructing a railway from Eugowra to Parkes? Not any if they turn off 3 miles this side of Eugowra, at the foot of the mountains—from there to Parkes there is similar country to that which you find between here and Parkes.

3514. What is the distance of that line from the starting-point you have just mentioned? 21 miles, by shortest route.

3515. And the distance from Eugowra to Forbes is 23 miles? Yes.

3516. Then Eugowra would be about equidistant from both places? Yes.

3517. Do you know the country between Woodstock and Eugowra? Yes, all but the last 10 miles. I know the country between Eugowra and Canowindra, and I have been about 10 miles beyond.

3518. Would there be any engineering difficulties in constructing a railway in that direction? No. From here to Eugowra there is level country, and from Eugowra to Canowindra there is one small gap.

3519. Do you know the distance from Woodstock to Eugowra? 42 miles by road.

3520. Then the total distance to Forbes would be 65 miles? Yes.

3521. The country you know of there is of an exceedingly good character? Yes.

3522. Is it in large estates? No. Where the line would go, from within a mile this side of Canowindra right up to Forbes, there will be Crown land all the way. There is a stock reserve a mile wide from Eugowra to Canowindra.

3523. Is there any considerable population on the route to Woodstock *via* Eugowra? Yes; it would tap both sides of the river from Canowindra down.

3524. Is that country liable to be flooded? No, not a bit.

3525. And when the Crown lands are available for settlement are they likely to be occupied? Yes, with the exception of a small portion.

3526. Do you know the various routes which have been proposed to serve Forbes? Yes.

3527. Having a knowledge of the route from Molong to Parkes, also the Cudal route and the Woodstock route, which do you think would be the best to adopt in the interests of the country? I think the Woodstock route would be the best, for the reason that the line would be most easily constructed.

3528. At a less cost? Yes; and it would also be close to the main watercourse of the Western District.

3529. Do you know the country between here and Condobolin? Yes.

3530. Do you think a large portion of the Condobolin traffic would be brought to Forbes? I think all of it from Condobolin would come here. In the first place, they would follow along the watercourse, so that they might always have water in dry times.

3531. Do you know the country as far as Mount Hope? Yes.

3532. Do you know of any resources in that district which would be likely to bring revenue to a railway at Forbes? I do not think so, because it would suit them better to go across to Carathool.

3533. With their copper, and also to obtain produce? Not to obtain produce.

3534. Would they come to Forbes for their produce? I think so.

3535. Do you not think any of the copper or wool would come to Forbes? I think on consideration that some of it might come here—they could reach the railway a trifle closer by going to Carathool, but they would have considerably extra trainage.

3536. Do you know the country between Condobolin and Wilcannia? Only as far as Mount Hope, about 100 miles.

3537. Do you know the character of the country on the Billabong East run? Yes.

3538. What class of country is it? A large part of it is bad, but there is some good land which has been alienated.

3539. Is it not fit for agricultural purposes? No; most of it is the worst country I ever saw—it is wretched country.

3540. Is any portion of the line between Forbes and Eugowra subject to floods? Not an inch of it.

3541. You know where the proposed line goes? Yes. In 1879, I was here when a road was asked for by the Council to be reserved for the use of the townspeople of Forbes in flood time to bring their mails in. I reported on the application, and got all the information I could from good authority. I suggested where the road should be reserved, and I notice that they have taken the railway right outside that, and have gone so high that I am sure it must be outside the reach of any flood.

3542. Is there any chance of floods interfering with the line between Forbes and Condobolin? There might be some, because there would be a certain amount of water to contend with, but it is only shallow, and there is no current as far as I know.

3543. What depth has the deepest flood that you have known there been? About 2 feet, I suppose, in the deepest part, except, of course, in the watercourses.

3544. I suppose there would be miles of that flooded country? Not a great deal; there might be a couple of miles perhaps.

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- A. Sharp, Esq.
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3545. Can you tell us the distance between Parkes and Condobolin? About 66 miles.
3546. And between Forbes and Condobolin? 60 miles.
3547. There is 6 miles difference then? Yes.
3548. We have had a witness who has sworn that the distance from Forbes to Condobolin is 58 miles, and from Parkes to Condobolin 62½ miles, making a difference of only of 4½ miles—are you sure that you are right and that he is wrong? I am going by the road. I am not speaking of the railway line; I am speaking of the traffic road.
3549. Has that been measured and marked? It has not been measured continuously, but I have taken it off the maps.
3550. Mr. Sheaffe also has taken the distance off the maps;—would he be likely to be right? Perhaps he did not allow for bends. I have taken my distance very carefully. The distance from Forbes to Condobolin has always been known as 60 miles since I have been here. Perhaps Mr. Sheaffe took the distance from the town boundary of each place, whereas I took it from the centre of each town.
3551. But the centre will give the same difference in each case? Yes, I see; I did not look at it in that light. It used to be called 70 miles from Parkes; but I do not reckon it is above 66.
3552. Do you know the character of the country to the north of the proposed line between Molong and Parkes? Yes. For some 17 or 18 miles from Molong there is very good country on the north side, and from that it is very bad. There is a good deal of very bad country between Coates Creek and Bolderogery.
3553. That is the Dungeon Range? Croaker's Range; the ranges junction.
3554. Have you been on the other side of the range north-west towards Parkes? Yes.
3555. What class of country is it? Very poor barren hills.
3556. What sort of land is there from Bumberry to Bindogandri? There are 4 miles of bad country along the road, but when you get to Bindogandri you open out into good country. The bad country I speak of is in the ranges.

Edward Chapman, Esq., Post and Telegraph Master, sworn and examined:—

- E. Chapman, Esq.
3 Mar., 1890.
3557. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your official position? I am Post and Telegraph Master stationed at Forbes.
3558. How long? Seventeen years and a few months.
3559. Have you prepared any statistics for the Committee? Yes.
3560. Will you read them? Yes. This is a return showing the business transacted at the Forbes Post-office for 1887, 1888, and 1889 respectively. The money received for money orders and Savings Bank transactions for 1887 was £6,957 19s. 9d.; the money orders and Savings Banks warrants paid amounted to £4,475 15s. 6d. For 1888 the amount received was £9,322 6s., and the amount paid £4,582 7s. 9d. In 1889 the amount received was £10,147 4s. 5d., and the amount paid £4,027 8s. 3d. The telegraph revenue for 1887 was £921 6s. 7d.; in 1888, £923 5s. 3d.; and in 1889, £1,017 6s. 5d. The letters posted at Forbes in 1887 numbered 167,046, and the newspapers 50,634. In 1888 the letters posted numbered 189,465, and the newspapers 55,890. In 1889 the letters posted were 239,040, and the newspapers 61,305. The sale of postage-stamps for 1889 amounted to about £3,000.
3561. During the period for which these statistics were furnished was there any mining rush in the district? Not that I know of. Parkes had broken out twelve months before I came here.
3562. But during the last three years? No, not to my knowledge.
3563. Do the posts for the mining centres round about Parkes affect your returns in any way? Not in the least.
3564. Can these returns be taken as a fair indication of the steady progress of the district? Yes.
3565. Do the letters received and distributed in the district bear favourable comparison to the number posted? They are about the same.
3566. How many mail-bags do you dispatch weekly from here? We interchange with, as nearly as possible, twenty post-towns.
3567. Some daily and some weekly? Yes; and some bi-weekly and some tri-weekly.
3568. How many officers in your department are included in the telegraph branch? Four, exclusive of myself; that does not include letter-carriers or messengers.
3569. Go five years beyond 1887, what would the returns be, approximately, at that period? About one-half of what I have given, I should say.
3570. Where do you reckon the great increase has taken place? There has been a steady increase since I have been here. Every year I have noticed an increase in every department.
3571. Was there a mining population when you came here seventeen years ago? No; only the remnants of the old rush.
3572. To what do you attribute the increase in the correspondence? To increased population and settlement.

Mr. Matthew Bolton, storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. M. Bolton.
3 Mar., 1890.
3573. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? I am a storekeeper, residing at Condobolin.
3574. How long have you been there? Twelve years. Previous to that I lived in Forbes.
3575. How long were you in Forbes? Seventeen and half years.
3576. Do you know the country between Molong and Parkes and Forbes? Yes.
3577. Have you any statistics you wish to lay before the Committee? I have particulars of the amount of carriage passing to and from the district, which I obtained through the carrying agents—it is an approximate estimate of the trade to Condobolin, and the Lower Lachlan.
3578. From what agent did you obtain the information? From Wright Heaton's agent.
3579. Is the agent here? The man who acts there is here.
3580. I understand that you wish to give evidence in favour of the proposed line from Cowra to Forbes? Yes. I have been storekeeping in Condobolin for over ten years. During that time all the goods I have received from Sydney came *via* Borenore until the Cowra extension opened. As soon as the Cowra extension opened I obtained all my goods in that direction, and in comparing what I have paid with the amount which has been paid by others who had obtained their goods *via* Borenore, I find I have effected

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a saving on the carriage of from 6s. 8d. to 7s. 6d. per ton. The trainage is a little more, on account of the lengthy distance of the line, but the carriage rate from Cowra, on account of the superior character of the road, is considerably lower.

3581. Supposing a railway were constructed to Forbes, either from Cowra to Forbes, from Molong and Parkes to Forbes, or from Cudal to Forbes, would you still do your business with Cowra instead of coming to Forbes? If the line came to Forbes we should still continue that way, although the line *via* Molong is estimated to be 3 miles nearer Condobolin than Cowra. I have never had a load of goods Molong or Parkes way; and the carriage between Parkes and Condobolin, although little more than half the distance, is the same as the rate we pay on the full distance to Cowra.

3582. Do I understand you to say that if a railway were constructed to Forbes, there would not be much probability of traffic between Condobolin and Forbes? If it came to Forbes, we should, of course, get our goods through Forbes. The line to Parkes would be of no use to us.

3583. Do you think that if a railway were brought to Forbes there would be any revenue from your district? If the route which I advocate is constructed, it would benefit not only the north side of the river, but also the south side. Previous to my leaving Forbes, I was with J. & W. Thomas—they do a large business down the river on the north and south side. At the present time the south traffic is lost to this district, it goes away to the southern line. I was in Sydney the other day with a gentleman from Euabalong, and he bought all his goods and forwarded them by the Cowra line, although he was paying 160 miles of carriage as against the 112 to Carathool. He said he got his goods at a cheaper and quicker rate *via* Cowra than *via* Carathool, although he got differential rates on the southern line to balance it. There are no differential rates on the western line.

3584. Does any merchandise come from Melbourne to this part of the country? The only thing is machinery. We have a lot of tank-sinking plants about Condobolin. Nearly all the people use Melbourne machinery. It came round *via* Cowra.

3585. Setting aside all the rival routes, do you think that if a railway were brought to Forbes by any one of them, the trade of Condobolin would be done with Forbes? If the railway came by Parkes you would have the traffic from the north side of the river only, but if the railway were taken to the cross line from Blayney, you would get both the north and south sides up to a point near Lake Cudgellico.

3586. What is about the population of Condobolin? About 800.

3587. Is there much land taken up and settled upon in and around Condobolin? Since the 1884 Act came into operation a number of selectors have come from Victoria and from places on the border and have settled on all the resumed areas available. The land within a distance of 12 miles of Condobolin is nearly all taken up.

3588. To what purpose have they put the land? Chiefly grazing. As nearly as we could discover there are about 1,800 acres under cultivation.

3589. What is grown upon the land to which you refer? Wheat and hay.

3590. What do the settlers do with their crops? So far the local consumption has been in excess of the production.

3591. What are the crops like;—are they good or bad? One gentleman living at Bonar—Mr. James Dawson—I think he is about 12 miles from Condobolin, on the south, crops from 100 to 200 acres. He gives us his average for ten years, taking good and bad seasons, as 14½ bushels to the acre, although two or three times he had no crops. Coming to the north-east side there is a selector on Derrawong, about 16 miles this way. He has put in wheat four years, and he had an average during those years of 14½ bushels, although one year out of the four was a failure. He cultivates about 60 acres, but this year he will have over 150 acres.

3592. In a short time you will have a surplus production in your district, which it will be difficult to get rid of unless you have railway communication? Yes. We had a flour mill opened two years ago. That gave a certain stimulus to wheat-growing. The first encouragement given to the mill was 1,800 bags of wheat.

3593. Has the land under crop increased considerably since the mill has been opened? Yes; this year we shall have more wheat down there than we require.

3594. What quantity of wheat has been produced there this year? I cannot give you the total, but the crops are exceptionally heavy.

3595. Up to the present time you have not over-produced? No.

3596. Will there be much produce coming from Condobolin to the railway in the shape of grain? I think there would be in a couple of years time, because nearly double the quantity of land will be put under cultivation.

3597. Would any quantity of wool be brought to Forbes if this line were constructed? Yes; all down to 50 miles below Condobolin would come this way.

3598. Whatever route might be adopted to Forbes, the wool traffic would come here? Yes.

3599. And that would be considerable? Yes; there are some large pastoral holdings down our way.

3600. Do you think any traffic in stock would result from the construction of this line? Yes; but another gentleman, associated with me, would be able to give you particulars as to the stock traffic.

3601. Is the character of the soil tolerably good in this country? Exceptionally good.

3602. Are you subject to droughts? Yes; but there is an enormous amount of vitality in the district. In two good seasons we seem to recover from all the effects of one bad one.

3603. Do you know the country between Condobolin and Mount Hope? No; I have only been as far as Euabalong.

3604. Is there any further information you desire to give the Committee? I desire to say that, although I have been in business twelve years, I have never had any goods sent to me by the Parkes line, nor is there any traffic from Parkes to Condobolin. In dry weather the want of water on the road puts it out of the question. In wet weather the road is of such a soft, boggy nature that the teams cannot travel upon it.

3605. Is there any Crown land in your district available for settlement? I think there is more land available in our district than in any other. It is good land, but it is very scrubby. The scrub has to be taken off before it can be taken into use.

3606. What kind of scrub is it? Pine scrub.

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3607. Does there seem a disposition on the part of selectors to take up land in your district? Yes; particularly men from Victoria.
3608. Is settlement continually going on? Yes.
3609. It is not at a stand-still now? No; even last week three or four parties came over and went on to the borders of the district, on Melrose, which has been free from selectors all along.
3610. No matter by which route the railway may be constructed to Forbes, a large proportion of trade from Condobolin will come here? Yes; once the railway comes to Forbes.
3611. *Mr. Lee.*] I suppose the line from Cowra to Condobolin would suit you? Yes; better than any other, from the nearest point on the Cowra line upon which the Government might decide.
3612. So far as you Condobolin people are concerned, if the line came from Molong to Forbes, from Bore-nore to Forbes, or from Cowra to Forbes, Forbes would still be the depôt for the Condobolin traffic? No doubt of it.
3613. If the line were not constructed you would continue to send your dray traffic to Cowra? Yes.
3614. Although it is a longer distance down to Forbes? Yes.
3615. Of course there is a railway station there? Yes.
3616. Whereas there is none at Parkes? No; but there is a station at Molong, and that is nearer than Cowra.
3617. How far is it from Condobolin to Molong? It is estimated to be 117 miles.
3618. And from Condobolin to Cowra? 120 miles.
3619. The distances are about the same; but the Cowra Road is better? Yes, we could not get goods down from Molong.
3620. Why? In dry weather the teams could not travel that way, and in wet weather the road would not carry them.
3621. But take a happy medium? The country is of such a difficult nature, that you can go to Cowra a longer distance for a less rate of carriage. The teams believe in travelling with the river—they would travel with the river at a lower rate, than by any other route.
3622. Is that road good when the river is in flood? I have been in Forbes and Condobolin since 1861, and I have only seen the river in flood once, and that was for a week.
3623. Have you seen it come over the banks only once? I have seen it over the banks, but not to interfere with traffic.
3624. There are two roads from Condobolin to Forbes—one on one side of the river, and the other on the other? Yes: the south side is the longest.
3625. Which side is most liable to flood? Neither are interrupted by flood now—they were, a few years ago, as there were no bridges: but the Government have built a bridge from the Coobang Creek, and where the river used to break out, at a place called Bumbuggin, there is now no stoppage to the traffic—all that was required was the bridge.
3626. Why do you give the preference to a line from Forbes to Cowra? On account of the country being better, both in fine and wet weather—the teams would much sooner go that route.
3627. But I am speaking of the railway? We think it will place us in communication with both lines—south and west.
3628. A large quantity of wool is produced in your part of the country? Yes.
3629. That does not require access to both lines? No; but we estimate that this would be the shortest way, and the cheapest way, by which to get it to Sydney.
3630. Do you not know that it is 15 miles longer *via* Cowra to Sydney, than it would be *via* Cudal? Cowra is generally spoken of as the station; but we mean the nearest point upon which the Government might decide on that cross line.
3631. I suppose there is a desire in your part of the country to get an outlet, to be brought into contact with the outside markets? We are afraid that if we do not get an outlet we shall over-produce, and that will be more injurious than anything. We could not carry our hay and grain away.
3632. Your object would be to get to market as quickly and cheaply as you could? Yes.
3633. Would not the shortest route be the quickest and cheapest? Well, I cannot speak as to the actual distances.
3634. I have already given you the distances as surveyed? It is the prevalent opinion in Condobolin, that if we were connected with the Blayney and Murrumburrah line, we should be brought nearer to market, in the matter of trainage, than by any other line.
3635. But, according to your own admission, Forbes would be your depôt? It would suit us as a depôt.
3636. That is the point at which you must touch the railway—is it not? Yes.
3637. That being the case, where do you wish to send your produce—your wool must go to Sydney; you have said that you will be over-producing wheat,—what do you wish to do with that? In view of the contemplated extension of the other line we hope to be able to send it the other way.
3638. What will be the dray carriage on wheat from Condobolin to Forbes? 9d. a bushel.
3639. And would you be able to pay 9d. per bushel and ship your grain to Sydney and other markets, and then compete with other wheat there? Decidedly not; we could not do it.
3640. Your carriage would amount in all to 1s. 1½d.? Yes.
3641. Then this particular line being brought to Forbes would be of no use as a wheat line? It would require further extension to the westward to be a benefit, and no further extension is, I believe, contemplated at present.
3642. An extension from Forbes to where? Menindie.
3643. Supposing the line were constructed from Cowra to Forbes, and thence to Parkes and Dubbo, how would that suit the requirements of your district? Not at all.
3644. As a means of outlet for the wool and station produce of your district Forbes would be the best point of communication? It would bring us nearest so far as communication with other places is concerned.
3645. But would it be the cheapest way? We are singularly situated at present at Condobolin. Cowra is our nearest railway point.
3646. But if the line were constructed to Forbes? Then of course Forbes would be the nearest point.
3647. And it would give a depôt for your produce? It would.
3648. Yet you could not send your wheat from Condobolin to Forbes, and pay 9d. per bushel dray carriage?

carriage? If we did it would be handicapping the farmers very much. Nine-pence is an enormous amount to take off a bushel of wheat. You can send a ton weight from Orange to Sydney for less than half that amount per bushel.

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3649. Do you advocate the route from Cowra as a portion of the route to Condobolin and thence west? Yes, in view of a further extension west.

3650. That is your reason? Yes.

3651. Suppose the country does not agree to that, what line into the valley of the Lachlan would best suit your purpose? No other line down the valley of the Lachlan could possibly benefit us.

3652. The line under consideration from Molong to Forbes is not the line the people of Condobolin want? No.

3653. They urge the construction of the line from Cowra to Forbes with a view to its further extension to the west? That is the idea of the majority of people in our district.

3654. You are not very much interested in the rival routes from Borenore and Molong? A line coming from Molong to Parkes is of no benefit to the Condobolin District until it reaches Forbes.

3655. Can not the same thing be said of the Cowra line? No. Every mile it comes further down would benefit us in the matter of getting our goods up or sending our wool down.

3656. Although it is the longer route? From the situation of the country the other line would be of no use till it reached Forbes.

3657. Whatever the difficulties of the Condobolin people may be they want a line to Condobolin, and nowhere else? We do not ask for a line to Condobolin at present. We ask for a line from Cowra to Forbes, as being the most beneficial line in the interests of the country generally.

Mr. Humphrey William Grey Innes, produce merchant and auctioneer, sworn and examined:—

3658. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a produce merchant and auctioneer, also a selector.

Mr. H. W. G.
Innes.

3659. Where do you reside? At Condobolin.

3660. Have you resided there long? Seventeen years.

3661. Have you been in your present trade the whole time? I was for six years a storekeeper. For some time prior to that I was managing the Condobolin Station.

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3662. What kind of produce do you deal in, and where do you get the outlet? I deal chiefly in corn, chaff, and oats.

3663. Is it grown in the district? The last few years it has been, but a good deal was bought in the Parkes district during the drought.

3664. Are you able to grow sufficient for your requirements at Condobolin? Yes.

3665. Where do you get a sale for this produce? Principally from stations round about and from carriers.

3666. Carriers going to and from Condobolin? Yes.

3667. What advantage will you derive from the construction of this railway line? We are here to advocate a line from Cowra. I am prepared to give reasons why I advocate that line in preference to any other. The principal reason is that by the construction of a railway from Cowra to Forbes the two best markets in Australia would be open to the settlers on the Lower Lachlan for stock; they will have the choice of the Sydney or Melbourne market. Also, in time of drought, the owners of stock will be likely to truck at Forbes in order to reach the cold country beyond Gundagai. Going round by Molong and Orange they would incur a good deal of risk by leaving their stock in the truck so long. They would rather take their stock across to cut the Southern line about Coolaman than take them round by Molong.

3668. But if it were for starving stock, would it not be better for you to have a cross-line to the Western line, and thence to the Northern line at Werris Creek, giving you communication with the New England district? In this part of the country the stock go to the Tumut, and in that direction.

3669. Is much stock sent away during the drought? We have not had an opportunity; the owners have had to allow them to remain here to perish. They would take advantage of the opportunity if the line were constructed. I obtained statistics from the Inspector of Stock before I came away. I find that the estimated number of sheep in our district is 1,393,399. The estimated product of wool is 3,726 tons 16 cwt. The number of cattle, 6,760; horses, 2,953; pigs, 460. No doubt the members of the Committee are aware that the Government have constructed a line of stock-tanks between Bourke and Condobolin, across the back country. Hitherto those tanks have not paid the wages of the caretakers.

3670. Where did you get that evidence from? Several of the caretakers made their declarations before me as a Justice. They have made that statement monthly. From that I gathered the information that the tanks did not pay their wages. Sometimes the receipts would be as little as 8s. 4d. a month.

3671. Which tanks are those? I can mention Mowabla, Boona, and Tinda. The caretakers all made declarations before me as a Justice, and I know that the tanks have not paid one-quarter of the men's wages.

3672. Have you any other statements to make? I heard Mr. Lee ask a question as to the class of settlers in the district. I think I can give you some information on that point. I have been intimately associated with them all as a land agent. As agent I have filled up many of their applications. I have acted for them as agent before the Board. I can unhesitatingly state that nine out of every ten of them are *bona-fide* men, and that they are a class of men who intend to go in largely for agriculture.

3673. What is the average size of their holdings? Principally a full section. I have seen as many as ten sections taken up there in one day.

3674. In what direction from Condobolin are the principal portion of these selectors? There are a great many to the south. There is one large body of them, about fifteen or sixteen, on one run.

3675. To the south? Yes.

3676. What run is that? Bygalore. There are a large number on Derrawong, 14 miles from Condobolin, about north-east.

3677. That would be towards Parkes? Yes, but only 14 miles from Condobolin—about half-way between Trundle and Condobolin. Trundle is only 40 miles from Condobolin, about north-east. I wish to rebut some of the evidence offered to the Committee at Parkes as to distances. It was sworn, for instance, that the distance between Parkes and Condobolin was only 50 miles, whereas the distance is actually 66 miles.

3678. What distance is it from Condobolin to Forbes by the road? 60 miles.

- Mr. H. W. G. Innes.
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3679. You make a difference of 6 miles between the two places? Yes. In the last drought I purchased over 50 tons of produce in the Parkes District, and the greater portion of it had to come round by Forbes.
3680. Why did you not purchase it at Forbes? Because I got it cheaper in the Parkes District. I purchased it early, before there was a rush; it was all secured round about Forbes. What I bought was principally chaff. I came round by Forbes for the reason that the back road is a dry track in a drought. In dry weather you have to travel a long distance for water, and in a wet season the road is utterly impassable for teams. I have known a spring-van to be five weeks between Condobolin and Parkes with a light load.
3681. Would you be surprised to hear that Mount Hope had been supplied with flour direct from Parkes for a long time? I should not be surprised.
3682. But would not that road pass over the same class of country as the road from Parkes to Condobolin? Not necessarily when you come round by Forbes.
3683. But they happen to go direct? That might be done in a good season with good horse-teams, but still there are long stages.
3684. You are referring to bullock-teams? Yes. Another reason why I advocate the line to Cowra is that it is cheaper in construction. There would be between Molong and Parkes 69 miles and 7 chains of new construction, at a cost of £7,609 per mile.
3685. Where did you get that estimate? From the Government statistics.
3686. Have you any statistics as to the Woodstock route? The distance of new construction is 64 miles and 40 chains, and the cost is £5,500 per mile, or a total of £354,750; the grade is 1 in 60, and the height above Forbes is 597 feet. Another reason I have for advocating this line is that it opens up two good markets for stock. The owners of stock have the choice when they get to Cowra. I wish to contradict a statement made at Parkes as to mails having been sent round from Condobolin to Parkes *via* Forbes—that is utterly untrue.
3687. I do not remember that evidence? It is so reported in the Press.
3688. What is the class of country between Condobolin and Parkes—I mean for settlement—not for railway? A good deal of the land is alienated; it is red loam.
3689. Is it the same from Condobolin to Forbes? It is principally river flats—more black soil; it is more sticky.
3690. Which would be your market in the event of either of these lines being constructed—that is, the line we are investigating, or the line *via* Cowra? Do you mean for stock?
3691. Which would be the outlet for stock or anything else you wanted to send away? Sydney most likely.
3692. But what would be the nearest point on the railway? Forbes.
3693. With this exception, that you have an advantage of two markets so far as the stock traffic is concerned, that is Melbourne and Sydney, it does not matter where the railway goes after you get your goods on board at Forbes? Oh, yes. The haulage would be greater *via* Molong than *via* Cowra.
3694. But it would be less? We maintain that Cowra is a shorter distance.
3695. Is that the only other reason—that it would be shorter? Yes.
3696. What is the reason that you and other witnesses from Condobolin have come here specially to give evidence against the construction of the line *via* Parkes? Because at a public meeting of the residents of the district, which was largely attended, a resolution was unanimously carried in favour of the Cowra route. It was considered that that was the best in the interests of the country.
3697. In the interests of your part of the country? No, of the country generally.
3698. Did the speakers at that meeting take into consideration the settlers to the north of Parkes? They took into consideration the nature of the country the line was likely to pass through, and from their personal experience they believed that the line *via* Cowra would run through better country than that *via* Molong, and that it would serve more people.
3699. Do you think that if either of these lines were constructed to Forbes it would be a matter of great importance to your district? I do.
3700. No matter which way it went? Of course it would benefit the district, but not so materially as it would if it came direct down the valley of the Lachlan.
3701. That is to leave Forbes and go to Menindie? Yes, *via* Mount Hope.
3702. If you want Sydney for your market what difference does it make to you whether the line goes *via* Molong or *via* Cowra? There is the extra haulage.
3703. That is greater *via* Cowra than *via* Molong and Parkes? But *via* Cowra we have the advantage of the Melbourne market.
3704. But supposing Sydney to be your market, what difference does it make to you whether the line goes *via* Cowra or *via* Molong? We do not suppose that Sydney will be our market. We want an opportunity to take advantage of either market—particularly for stock.
3705. You have come before this Committee determined to fight against one line and in favour of another? I have come here to support the line which, in my opinion, and in that of the majority of the people of the Condobolin district, is the best line in the interests of the country. I have watched the whole discussion from beginning to end, and I have arrived at the conclusion that this is the best line, and that it is likely ultimately to pay.
3706. How would a line from Young through Grenfell suit you—would not that be better? No; I do not think so.
3707. It must be from your place to Cowra? To the nearest point on that line.
3708. Mr. Lee.] I understand you to say that one of your chief reasons for advocating the Cowra route is that it would be the shortest route to Sydney;—if I prove to you that it is not the shortest route, how will you view the question then? I should still be in favour of the route, because, as I pointed out before, it opens up two markets.
3709. The opinion of the Engineer-in-Chief is to this effect:—
- “188. Can you tell me the distance between Bathurst and Forbes by the Molong route? The distance from Sydney to Forbes by the Molong route is 285 miles.
189. What is the distance from Sydney to Orange and Cudal? 268 miles.
190. And from Sydney through Cowra to Forbes? 283 miles.
191. Then the shortest route will be that through Orange and Cudal? Yes. My principal reason for advocating the line is that it opens up the two best markets for stock.”

3710. The question you have raised as to distance you have to abandon, inasmuch as it is not borne out by actual facts? Of course, if it is not borne out by facts.
3711. You advocate the Cowra line, I take it, to come to Forbes and not to Condobolin? Ultimately it may come to Condobolin. We are not anxious for it to come there for some time.
3712. Supposing the railway were constructed to Forbes, would you be able to grow wheat in your district, to cart it to Forbes, and to forward it to the markets of the Colony at a profit? We have not yet arrived at that stage at which we can more than supply the local demand. By the time we have done that, we anticipate having a railway to send our produce west.
3713. In the direction of Menindie? Yes. The production is increasing every year in the district. One man who has had 10 acres within 10 miles of Condobolin under crop will have 100 this year, and there are several others progressing in the same ratio.
3714. The inference is that Condobolin is a wheat-growing district? Yes; I have proved that myself.
3715. Every year? In the driest year I have had a crop from which I could get something. Now and again we may get very little, but generally you would have a fair crop.
3716. What was the crop in 1888? Another witness has all the statistics about that.
3717. What freight is your district likely to supply to a railway if it were constructed to Forbes? The return I have quoted was for the year 1889. Besides the quantity of wool I have named, there would be skin, hides, and tallow.
3718. Wool would be carried in only three months of the year? Then there are large quantities of back loading. Rock salt is used very largely down there.
3719. Independently of wool and stock, there would not be very much produce carried on the railway? No.
3720. You are aware that the object of this investigation is to try to determine, if possible, which is the best way to open the important district of the Lower Lachlan, having in view the fact that there are other districts with claims quite as strong, if not stronger, than yours. Bearing that in mind, which route would, in your judgment, serve the greater number of people living in these various districts? I have taken that into consideration, and I say unhesitatingly that I believe the direct line of the valley of the Lachlan will be the best.
3721. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you give us any information as to the population now in existence on the particular line you advocate? Those particulars will be given you by another witness.
3722. Have you a personal knowledge of the country within a radius of 20 miles of Condobolin? Yes.
3723. You know the character of the country upon which settlement has taken place? Yes.
3724. You have personally inspected the country, and you know its capabilities both as regards its carrying capacity and the growth of grain? Yes.
3725. Could you give the Committee any information as to the average crops grown in your district? Another witness has all that information prepared.
3726. Do you know the number of acres selected at Condobolin since 1884? That will be given you by another witness.
3727. Can you tell us about the mail communication between Parkes and Condobolin? The postmaster at Condobolin will be able to give you that information from official sources.
3728. Do you know anything of your own knowledge concerning it? I know he told me that I got the most letters that way, and that was about two a week.
3729. Is the mail communication between Parkes and Condobolin by horseback, or by coach? As a matter of fact there is no mail between Parkes and Condobolin. Hitherto it has been carried on horseback, but last month the Government decided that as there were no letters carried they would send the mail out *via* Trundle. The line is now from Condobolin to Trundle.
3730. What is the mail communication between Forbes and Condobolin? Cobb & Co.'s mail, six times a week each way.
3731. Have you any industries established in Condobolin? That information will be placed before you by another witness.

Mr. John Bouffler, hotelkeeper, sworn and examined:—

3732. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At Condobolin.
3733. What is your occupation? I am an hotelkeeper, storekeeper, and selector. I have resided in Condobolin over ten years.
3734. Are you prepared to lay before the Committee any statistics as to your district? As to the amount of selection, the money received at the Lands Office, and the carriage done by Wright, Heaton, & Co.
3735. From whom did you obtain these statistics? They were copied from the butts of the Land Agent's receipt-book by Mr. Innes and myself.
3736. Did he hand you the books? Yes; he said that anything in those books would be authentic. We did not run up the totals, but he gave us the amount for the two years himself. He added it up himself.
3737. Will you read the information you have? The land alienated from the 1st January, 1888, to the 31st December, 1889, amounted to 235,755 acres; the total moneys received at the Lands Office for the same period were £29,000; the area of land under cultivation within 15 miles radius of Condobolin is 1,850 acres; school attendance roll at the public and denominational schools, 190; there are 8 hotels (1 of them having forty rooms), 9 stores, 2 banks, 1 steam flour-mill, 1 steam saw-mill, 1 steam wool-scourer, 4 smith's shops, 2 saddlers, 2 bakers, 1 cordial factory, 3 churches, a School of Arts, a hospital, a brick post and telegraph office, a brick court-house and lock-up, 2 racing clubs, and a well improved show ground of 27 acres; there are about 800 inhabitants, and the town is gazetted for incorporation; there is a daily mail from Sydney, and 13 mails are received and despatched weekly; the average yield of wheat for this season was 25 bushels—one farm (I refer to Mr. Dawson's) has averaged for twelve years $14\frac{3}{4}$ bushels. The flour mill was only opened in 1888, and the first encouragement given to it was 1,800 bags of wheat. The average yield of hay per acre this season is 35 cwt. At Wollongough, about 50 miles south of Condobolin, the selectors are completely isolated, their nearest railway station being Coolaman. No other route but Cowra would be of any benefit to them. In this district, called the Humbug Creek, there are about

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about 80,000 acres alienated. That is included in the estimate of alienated land I have already given. I hand in a letter which I have received from Mr. R. Macrell, of Wollongough. He says:—

Dear sir,

The following is all the information I can give you, as the time is so short. The land selected within about 20 miles round Wollongough is about 80,890 acres, and the population is about 250. The hay crop will average 2½ tons per acre, and the wheat crop from 25 to 30 bushels per acre. The quantity of wool is about 500 tons.

3738. You do not know of your own knowledge if that is accurate? No. I will now give you some particulars in connection with the business of Wright, Heaton, & Co. The estimated return of the inward traffic from Cowra is 1,200 tons, and from Borenore 450 tons, or a total of 1,650 tons. The wool produced which would go by the Cowra route is 3,926 tons—that is in the event of the railway being brought on to Forbes. At present they have to go across to Coolaman. Unless the Cowra route is adopted a quantity of this traffic would be diverted. All on the south side would be diverted, for the reason that there is no means of crossing the Lachlan between Forbes and Condobolin.

3739. This wool would go by rail if the line were constructed to Forbes? Yes.

3740. A large proportion about Condobolin, and some at a considerable distance beyond Condobolin, would have to pass through Condobolin? Yes.

3741. Forbes under any circumstances would be the depôt you would make for? Providing the extension were from Cowra to Forbes. Fully 50 per cent. of the quantity hangs upon that extension.

3742. Where does that wool go to now? To Whitton, Coolaman, Young, and Cowra—that is on the southern side of the river. I should fancy it amounted to 50 per cent.

3743. Does any of it go to Hay? Not nearer than Mount Hope; and the Mount Hope traffic will come to Forbes if you get a railway.

3744. Suppose the Cowra line is not constructed, and that a line is made to Forbes, *via* Parkes and Molong, or *via* Borenore, would this traffic come to Forbes under those conditions? Not more than 50 per cent. of it.

3745. Why? Because people cannot come from the south side of the river. If you take a point due south from Forbes, it would go to Cowra. When you come to that point it would be cheaper to deliver at Cowra. Of course the Cudal route would be better than the Molong route.

3746. But by whatever route a railway were made to Forbes, would not the traffic come to Forbes just the same? No; a great deal of it would remain in its old channel on the south side of the river.

3747. Why? That is so far as my information goes. In the event of the Government constructing a railway to some point between Blayney and Harden, at Woodstock, for instance, we could get a railway not materially longer than the other line—some 2½ miles longer perhaps, if by Woodstock.

3748. If the traffic you speak of would be diverted to the Cowra line, why should it not be diverted to the Cudal line? On account of the advantages which the Cowra line offers, so far as the southern market is concerned.

3749. What advantage is that? Well, they would have to go round by Orange and back to Blayney, in order to get on to the Southern line, if you adopted the Cudal route.

3750. You know that the route you propose is a longer route than the one *via* Cudal? I was not aware of that.

3751. As a matter of fact, it is longer? We do not advocate the junction at Cowra particularly. We should like a divergence nearer than Cowra if possible. We are given to understand from statistics that we could get a line *via* Woodstock, only 2½ miles longer than the Borenore route, with the additional advantage of being brought into contact with the southern districts. I settled in Orange thirty-three years ago, and farmed there for twenty years; I can therefore speak from a personal knowledge of the different routes advocated. There is one matter in connection with the route I advocate, and it is this—that nearly all the settlers in the neighbourhood of Condobolin have interests southward, and it would be of great advantage to them to come into contact with the Southern line. When they go away for relaxation from business, they go that way, and their business also leads them to the southern districts.

3752. So far as produce is concerned, I suppose wool is one of the chief products of the valley of the Lachlan? It is the staple product.

3753. And will remain so for years to come? Yes.

3754. To which market does that wool go? I suppose it reaches Sydney.

3755. Consequently the object of a railway would be to get it to Sydney as quickly and as cheaply as possible? Yes.

3756. If any other line than the line you advocate would take it more cheaply and more quickly, would it not be a great advantage to the settlers? No doubt it would be of some advantage to the settlers; but whether it would counterbalance the extra advantage of being brought into contact with the southern markets I cannot say.

3757. There can be no possible advantage in getting your wool on the Southern line. You do not want to get it there for the benefit of its health, or to compete with the stock traffic; your object is to get the wool to market as quickly and as cheaply as possible, and Sydney is your market? Yes.

3758. Then, as to grain, we have evidence from you that yours is a wheat-producing country? Yes.

3759. What do you do with your grain now? The production is not equal to the demand just now; we have only just started.

3760. Still, yours is a wheat-producing district? I have farmed in the Orange district twenty years, and as far as the production of wheat is concerned, I would rather go into it upon a large scale in Condobolin than in the Orange district.

3761. But at present the supply is not equal to the demand? No.

3762. You anticipate producing more than sufficient for local requirements? Yes.

3763. To which market do you eventually look? I made an estimate a few years ago, and I think we could work up to about 10,000 tons of flour going west, and a short distance north and south.*

3764. The Forbes line would be no advantage to you, so far as the disposal of surplus produce is concerned? No; only in times of drought. Last year we had a good average of production, while other places were poorly off. There is apparently less mileage to Sydney *via* Cowra than *via* Molong.

3765.

* NOTE (on revision):—The 10,000 tons of flour mentioned above is an approximate return, provided the line was extended west, from Condobolin.

3765. But Cudal is the shortest route? It is far preferable to the Molong route. The idea of those I represent is, that the advantage of extra market will make up for the extra distance. From a national point of view there would also be less cost of construction, and the line will pass through the centre of the country. Condobolin is equidistant from all the railway points.

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3766. Which points? On the Southern Line, on the Western Line, and also from Cowra. There are districts to be considered independently of those to which I have referred—for instance, there is Cudgellico, about 107 miles from Whitton.

3767. Suppose the Cowra line is not constructed, and that the line to Forbes *via* Cudal is made, would your district use that route? It would be compelled to use it, I suppose, so far as that goes.

3768. If the country puts it down, will your district use it? So far as the Molong route is concerned, if that is put down the line will be an utter waste of money, and it will not pay. The Cudal route is better, but the Cowra route is better than either.

3769. You think the line should not go from Borenore or Molong? If we cannot get the Cowra line, we shall be glad to get the Borenore line. The Molong line would be of no use to us. There is an annual loss upon the line already to Molong.

3770. What we wish to know is, whether, if the line were made from Molong, your people would use it? That line would have a disastrous effect on Condobolin, on account of the road. We could not avail ourselves of the road to go straight to Parkes—that is, in its present condition, and it would cost a great sum of money to macadamise it.

3671. But could you not get to Forbes? Yes; but then we should have extra haulage going round by Parkes to get on to the main line.

3772. Do you think the farmers of Condobolin would grow wheat and pay the lard carriage to Forbes? No further.

3773. What is the cost per bushel? With back carriage and with good roads we could get it through at 1s. 3d. per bag—in round figures, about 4d. per bushel.

3774. And, if your grain could be conveyed by rail from Forbes to Sydney at 4½d. per bushel, would you send your surplus grain there? Yes. If we could find a market there would be no limit to the production. If the price in Sydney were 3s. 3d. per bushel there would be a market. I have heard settlers say that they could produce wheat and pay expenses at 2s. 6d. per bushel on the spot.

3775. Were you appointed at a public meeting to represent the Condobolin people before this Committee? Yes.

3776. And you put the line *via* Cowra forward as the best line in the interests of the country? Yes; we look upon the production of grain as of secondary importance. The selectors who hold 2,560 acres combine grazing with grain-growing. The Cowra line would be a great advantage to selectors having small lots of sheep, while it would not pay them to drive long distances to market. They want to get them to Sydney market, and they would have a chance of diverting to another market if the junction were made at Cowra.

3777. But if you adhere to Forbes as your starting-point it makes no difference? *Via* Cowra they have three markets—Sydney, Melbourne, and intermediate districts. If the Parkes road were metalled they could, of course, take advantage of the Parkes market. From my own knowledge, however good the condition of the road, it would make very little difference, because the teams would stick to the river on account of the water. I have known teams go from Condobolin to Parkes, and from Parkes back to Condobolin, *via* Forbes. There is a difference of 20 miles in the distance. They go empty, but they cannot come back full, unless in a wet season, when there is plenty of water, and then the road is likely to be very bad.

Norman Gatenby, Esq., pastoralist, sworn and examined:—

3778. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? On the Lachlan; 20 miles below Forbes, on the southern bank.

3779. How long have you resided in the district? About three years in this district, and about fifteen years further over.

3780. What is the size of your holding? 55,000 acres.

3781. Is any portion of the area devoted to agricultural pursuits? There are some 200 acres under agriculture this year, with irrigation.

3782. Will you describe your irrigation works to the Committee? We have a 15-inch pump, a plant costing about £2,000—it throws between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 gallons of water per diem. It will irrigate about 500 acres.

3783. What have you found to be the effect of irrigation? The effects are wonderful in this district, so far as fruit-growing and lucerne are concerned. Mangolds, potatoes, onions—almost anything in fact—will grow wonderfully. We have proved it.

3784. You have very heavy crops? Yes. I have grown a large quantity of oats.

3785. What other crops have you grown? I have grown wheat, oats, potatoes, onions, maize, lucerne, sorghum, and fruits and vegetables of all sorts.

3786. Will you give us some idea of your average crops? It is hard to give it exactly; the crops are extremely heavy. We get about 2 tons of wheaten hay to the acre.

3787. Do you grow lucerne, for hay? Yes. We cut it five times during the summer, getting 1 ton, or three-quarters of a ton per acre during that time.

3788. What is the average yield of wheat you have obtained? I could hardly say that; we have threshed only a little, but I should say it would be somewhere about 40 bushels to the acre.

3789. Have you good fruit? The best fruit I have seen anywhere.

3790. What descriptions of fruit? Oranges, lemons, peaches, figs, apples, pears, raspberries and strawberries. All these fruits grow very well with irrigation. We find that raspberries grow very well indeed, with water.

3791. Do you consume on your station all this produce grown by irrigation? No; we have some stored. At the present time we have 300 tons of hay stored. There is no way of getting it anywhere else. If we could get it away we would grow a great deal more, we would get it to Sydney, and make a regular transit of it. Under existing circumstances we simply grow it and store it against drought.

3792. What would be the cost of the carriage of produce from your station to Forbes? £1 per ton, if we send any quantity.

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- N. Gatenby, Esq. 3793. That would be delivered to the railway station, if there were one here? Yes.
3794. You say that there is a probability of the area you now have under cultivation being considerably increased if there were a railway at Forbes? I have not the smallest doubt of it. There are many men willing to go in for irrigation, but they are debarred from doing so through having no outlet for their produce. There are seven or eight plants on the river, but that number would be largely increased if there were an outlet for the produce.
3795. What is the carrying capacity of your run? That is rather a hard question. If I tell you the whole truth, our local Land Board will probably put up my rent. I might say, as indicating that it will carry a great deal, that we sheared 51,300 sheep this year from 55,000 acres. It has been a good year.
3796. Is there any portion of your runs scrubbed and ring barked? It is fully improved—ringbarked, scrubbed, fenced, and watered.
3797. Are there any other stock on the run, excepting sheep? Cattle and horses.
3798. What number? Only a few now. We have sold several hundred lately.
3799. Would the wool and produce come from your station to Forbes, if there were a railway? Yes. I should mention that, so far as stock-carrying is concerned, irrigated land will carry ten sheep to the acre, on natural grasses, for eight months of the year.
3800. Do you know anything of the settlement around your particular district? There is a great deal of settlement on the southern bank. On each side of the river there is a good deal of settlement. The holdings are not very large as a rule. They are not so large as they are further on, on account of the ground being richer, and the population being longer established.
3801. Is the settlement, in your opinion, of a permanent character? Yes, permanent *bonâ fide* men, as a rule—some are not, but as a rule they certainly are.
3802. Do you know anything of the rival routes? I have heard a good deal of them.
3803. Have you been over the country which they traverse? Yes; but I only know the Molong to Parkes route well—that is a rough, rocky country.
3804. Do you know the character of the country on the Cudal route? It is rough heavy country, but it is rich. There is richer country on that route, I think, than along the Molong route.
3805. You have a good knowledge of the whole locality? I know it well.
3806. In your opinion, what centres of population would be served by the construction of the line to Forbes through Cudal and on to Parkes? I believe the Cudal line would be the better line as a whole; it would be what one might call a national line. Undoubtedly the railway would have to go to Parkes in the future, but I think the first railway should be made this way.
3807. Do you know the country between Forbes and Condobolin? Well.
3808. Do you know the country further out west beyond Condobolin? There is rich red loam beyond Condobolin.
3809. Is it your opinion that wool and other produce grown in the district would come to Forbes if the railway is taken here? Certainly.
3810. And in your judgment that would be a source of considerable revenue to the railway? I think so.
3811. Is there any other information you can give the Committee? As to the value of land, I might mention that I placed 1,000 acres of land under offer at £6 an acre some time ago to a Mr. Stewartson, of California, who wished to start the fruit-growing and fruit-drying in the district. I mention that to show the value of land and the prospects of irrigation along the river. Mr. Stewartson intended to irrigate the land; it is favourably situated for that purpose—on the bank of the river.
3812. Did you sell the land at that price? No; he did not take it, but he offered £6 10s. later on for land further up the river; that price, however, was refused.
3813. The land which you yourself irrigate is on the bank of the river? Yes; it is rich black alluvial soil.
3814. To a considerable depth? Yes.

William Gibson Dowling, Esq., Stock Inspector, sworn and examined:—

- W. G. Dowling, Esq. 3815. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am Stock Inspector.
3816. Stationed where? At Forbes. I have been here four years.
3817. Have you prepared any statistics for us? I have a few statistics here I can give you, if you like. For instance, the traffic in stock on all the roads in my district. The district extends to within 6 miles of Cowra, on the south side of the Lachlan, in an easterly direction to the Mandagery Creek, near Eugowra, on the north side of the Lachlan, in an easterly direction; westerly, it goes down to within 10 miles of Condobolin on the north side of the river, and on the south side within about 25 miles of Condobolin; the northern boundary is at The Troughs, and the southern boundary is the Tyagong Creek, which runs into the Bland. I submit as portion of my evidence an alphabetical list of stock-owners with their addresses, and number of stock within a radius of 10 miles on either side of the Lachlan, taken from their sworn returns for last year. I also hand in the stock traffic on the north and south sides of the river from 1887 to 1889 inclusive; it represents the travelling stock that go up and down the river—the traffic on the travelling stock reserve. I will also give you the number of fat sheep leaving the district. In 1887, 62,183 fat sheep left the district, chiefly to Homebush; in 1888, 42,961; in 1889, 51,000. The crossings at Forbes give an average of 750,000 sheep, and 40,000 head of cattle annually.
3818. The figures you have given as to the fat sheep show an increase in 1889 upon 1888, but a considerable decrease upon 1887? Yes; they were mostly sold as stores, and taken to other fattening districts.
3819. What is the total number of sheep in your district? 1,600,400—that would be going 3 miles above Parkes—it includes Parkes, Forbes, and Grenfell.
3820. What is the length and breadth of your district? About 90 miles long and 80 miles wide.
3821. In that area you have the number of sheep you have already given? Yes.
3822. Can you tell the Committee whether the total quantity of stock has increased or decreased during the last few years? According to the returns, it has nearly doubled in three years. The sheep numbered about 800,000 in 1886, and now there are about 1,600,000.
3823. How do you account for 62,183 fat sheep leaving this district in 1887, and only 51,000 this last year? Because this last year, I think, a greater number of store sheep left the district. The total number of sheep that left the district in 1889 was 376,731, and the number coming in from other districts was 230,705.
- 3824.

3824. You sent away 146,000 more than you brought back again? Yes. In 1887, 63,648 left the district in excess of those that came into it. In that year there were 62,183 fat sheep, and 207,460 stores; 2,097 fat cattle left the district. In 1888, the number of fat sheep leaving was 42,961, and of stores 333,977; the number that came into the district was 205,986, making an excess of 170,952. In 1889, 376,731 sheep left the district; of those, 51,000 were fat; 230,705 came into the district from other markets. The excess was 140,026.
3825. There has been a steady increase in the number, but not in the fat? Not in the fat, because in good seasons people generally sell the stores. Some years a greater number of fat sheep are sent away, in other years more stores. It depends on the market for either description of sheep.
3826. Will you let the Committee have a return as to the travelling stock on the different routes? Yes.
3827. Would a railway constructed to Forbes be of material advantage to the stockowners? It think it would, decidedly, as far as fat sheep are concerned.
3828. Do you think in times of drought many would be sent away by train to country where there is more feed? I think so.
3829. Coming through from other districts they would truck through for the mountains? Yes.
3830. Are there many sheep coming here from the north-western country? Very few; they would die before they reached here. They come chiefly from districts outside Condobolin. Sheep do not go south; they all go north; the cattle come south.
3831. *Mr. Lee.*] In the event of this proposed line being constructed into the district, do you think the small and large owners of stock would be likely to use it? Yes.
3832. Both as a means of transporting fat stock to market, and of transporting poor stock in time of drought? The line would be used for fat stock, but not, I think, for poor drought-stricken sheep, because they must travel by a direct and straight road; they will not stand being in a railway truck very long.
3833. At what point are the fat stock trucked now? Chiefly at Cowra. They used to be trucked at Orange before, of course. There are little lots trucked at Molong, but they are very small.
3834. Would the construction of a line to Forbes divert this traffic from Cowra? About midway between Forbes and Grenfell it would go to Cowra, and the balance would come to Forbes. They would truck here for Melbourne and Wodonga.
3835. Was there much stock lost in the district during the last drought? I was not there.
3836. Would the wool from the 1,600,400 sheep in the district be sent to Forbes, if a railway were made there? Some of it would go to Young, but the bulk of it would go through Forbes.

W. G.
Dowling, Esq.
3 Mar., 1890.

Mr. William Thomas, storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

3837. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a storekeeper, at Forbes, a member of the firm of J. and W. Thomas.
3838. How long have you been here? Twenty-eight years.
3839. Have you resided all that time in the district? Yes, with this exception, that I have been three times to England and back.
3840. Your business is that of a merchant and general storekeeper? Yes.
3841. By which route do you obtain your supplies from Sydney? Principally from Borenore.
3842. But, prior to the line being constructed from Orange to Borenore, by which route did you obtain them? From Orange. When we first went into business we had to send as far as Penrith by team, and we have been on that line ever since.
3843. You have always touched the Western line at its nearest point? Yes.
3844. Is there any particular information you desire to give us? I have made a memorandum, showing the quantity of goods from Borenore and the quantity from Cowra last year. We got 376 tons 3 cwt. and 2 qr. from Borenore, and 101 tons 7 cwt. from Cowra. We obtained, in sundries, from Cudal, Cowra, Eugowra, &c., that is, flour, potatoes, bran, pollard, &c., 89 tons 13 cwt., making a total of 567 tons 3 cwt. 2 qr.
3845. All the goods mentioned there, with the exception of the produce from Eugowra, Cudal, and Cowra, were general store goods? Yes, the bulk of them.
3846. Did you pay the railway freight on what you got from Cudal and Eugowra? No.
3847. What freight do you pay the Railway Commissioners annually? The amount of trainage paid by J. and W. Thomas for the year ending December 31st, 1889, was £1,661 11s. 2d. We paid to carriers £1,039 19s. 7d., giving a total of £2,701 10s. 9d. The trainage is made up as follows:—Borenore, £1,478 8s. 11d.; Cowra, £178 0s. 11d.; and sundries, £5 1s. 4d.
3848. Did the Railway Commissioners apply to you for any information on the occasion of their recent visit? No.
3849. Do you know how they obtained their information in this district? I do not think they made any inquiries as to the cost of bringing goods here by rail.
3850. Did you furnish the Commissioners with any particulars? Well, I waited upon them, and we had a talk.
3851. Do you send any produce from the district? Not a great deal. We buy wool, hides, and tallow sometimes, but not a great deal. There are other people in the town who buy those things.
3852. Have you travelled round about the district much during your residence here? My travels have been principally between here and Sydney.
3853. Have you been along the railway route to Cowra? Not much; I have been along part of the road from here to Canowindra.
3854. Do you know the Molong route? No; I have only been twice that way.
3855. Do you know the Cowra route? I have been from here to Cowra, but not from Eugowra.
3856. Are there any supplies for the town coming by way of Cowra at the present time? Some storekeepers get their goods entirely that way, but we have not been getting much. We find that we get them better from Borenore.
3857. Do the bulk of the store goods from Sydney come by way of Borenore? Yes. There is not a great deal of difference in the cost of carriage between Borenore and Forbes, and Cowra and Forbes, although

Mr. W. Thomas.
3 Mar., 1890.

Mr.
W. Thomas.
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- although the distance from Borenore is greater. There are more drays on the Borenore line, and they carry at a cheaper rate.
3858. Your business gives you a fair insight into the position of selectors in the district? Yes.
3859. What opinion have you formed as to their position? I think they are in a very good position.
3860. I suppose they have had the same difficulties to contend with for the first five years as selectors in other districts have? Yes; they are under very heavy expense, of course, in fencing and other work of that kind.
3861. Do you find the selectors are permanent men? Yes; some I have known a long time; they are likely to remain.
3862. Do you find that many clear out after residence has been complied with? Not many of late years. Some selectors came here ten or twelve years ago, and seemed to take up land in order to sell to the squatter, but they are pretty well cleared out now.
3863. The selection is now more genuine? Yes.
3864. How do you find that those settlers who are cultivating their land get on? They get on pretty well. Of course, they complain about the low price of grain.
3865. Do you think they are cultivating their land at a profit? Yes. They seem to get good returns. Of course, they would grow more if they had a market. At present they say, "It is of no use to grow wheat; there is no means of sending it to market."
3866. Do many of them combine grazing with agriculture? Yes, if they have fair-sized selections.
3867. I suppose some go in for grazing solely? Yes, what we call the large selectors; but I think most of them do a little farming.
3868. The object of our inquiry is to ascertain whether it would be prudent to construct a railway *via* Molong and Parkes to Forbes—whether, if constructed, that line will be likely within a reasonable time to pay working expenses and interest on the cost of construction;—we shall be glad to have your opinion as to whether it is a desirable route? I think the route from Borenore will pay the best, because there is more population along it and better land.
3869. You think there is more population? Yes; there seem to be more settlers.
3870. Still, you have not ascertained personally whether these persons are residing there or not? No; I only go by hearsay. I have seen some of the farms along the road.
3871. Admitting that it is necessary to bring a railway into this magnificent country in the west, and having in view the various important centres which exist within easy distance of each other, which do you think would be the best route to adopt? I should say the route from Borenore to Forbes.
3872. Over and above any other? Yes, that is my opinion.
3873. Do you think that route preferable to the Cowra route? As far as paying qualities are concerned, I should say so. I do not think it makes much difference to Forbes which way the line is taken, because the distance is about the same.
3874. It appears that no matter which way the line is constructed it is bound to come to Forbes—what I want to know is, which do you think would be the best route, having regard to the general interests of the country? The Borenore route, I think.
3875. Would that fairly serve the centres between Molong and Parkes, Parkes and Cudal, and Borenore and Canowindra? Of course, Molong and Parkes would not be pleased with it.
3876. But would it serve them reasonably,—would it answer their requirements? That I could hardly tell. In the interests of the country, however, I think the Borenore route ought to be adopted. Of course, you cannot suit all parties.
3877. Do you think a better route than either of those proposed could be found? I do not know of any.
3878. How would the railway here serve the Condobolin people? It ought to serve them very well. As far as distance is concerned, either route does not make very much difference.

Mr. Charles Prow, storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. C. Prow.
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3879. *Mr. Dowel.*] You reside at Forbes? Yes.
3880. What is your occupation? I am a storekeeper and general importer. I have resided here twenty-eight years.
3881. Have you always followed the occupation of a storekeeper? For the last twenty-eight years.
3882. Previous to that what were you doing? Mining.
3883. You were here when the first rush set in? Yes, at the very first, when the first claim was bottomed.
3884. The discovery of gold caused Forbes to spring into existence? Yes.
3885. And you have watched its rise and progress? Yes.
3886. Do you know the whole of the country about this district? Pretty well; I have travelled over it occasionally.
3887. Do you know the class of settlement in existence here? Yes. It is principally pastoral and agricultural settlement.
3888. Are there many small holdings? Yes, and a few large ones.
3889. I suppose the selectors cultivate a portion of their land, and run stock upon the other portion? Yes, principally.
3890. Are there any dairy farms in this district? Yes.
3891. Many? A good few, most of them dairy a little; but there are two rather extensive dairy farms.
3892. Are there any butter factories in the district? No.
3893. Are there any wool-scouring establishments? There are three on the river here, I think. There are two in the municipality.
3894. Are there any manufactories in the town? Nothing of any note. There are buggy factories and breweries.
3895. Do you manufacture soap? Yes.
3896. All these industries have sprung up and appear to be of a permanent character? Yes.
3897. Is the country round about Forbes liable to be flooded? It has been flooded three times to my recollection—in 1870, in 1872, and 1878.
3898. Has it done any considerable damage? In 1870 it did a little damage, but nothing very great; it would do more now, because there are more improvements.
- 3899.

Mr. C. Prow.

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3899. Still, generally, a flood is looked upon as a good thing? I believe the flood to which I referred did as much good as harm.
3900. Do you know these rival railway routes? I have heard a good deal about them; I have been at different meetings, and I have been over the Borenore route.
3901. Have you been over the Molong and Parkes country? No.
3902. Do you know the route from Grenfell to Parkes? Yes.
3903. What sort of country is it? Flat, level country.
3904. What is the distance from Grenfell to Parkes? About 65 miles.
3905. Do you think it is desirable to construct that line? There is not a great deal of traffic on that line just now; but, possibly, if the railway was constructed it may cause traffic.
3906. Does it go through good country? Very good country.
3907. Your estimate of the distance of 65 miles, I take it, is from Grenfell to Forbes, and from Forbes to Parkes? Yes.
3908. What do you allow from Grenfell to Forbes? 45 miles; and 20 from here to Parkes.
3909. Has any consideration been given to that route by the Forbes people? Yes, at times.
3910. Has it met with general approval? Yes, it has.
3911. Have you been over the route yourself? Frequently.
3912. Is there much settlement upon it? Not a great deal—the land is taken up in large holdings.
3913. Is it not likely to support so large a population as the other route? I think not.
3914. Knowing all these routes, do you think it is desirable to construct a line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, *via* Flagstone Creek—do you think there is sufficient population to justify the Government in constructing that line? No doubt there is sufficient population, but, at the same time, I believe that with the present tariff we could land our goods from either Borenore or Cowra by horse team cheaper than we could do by the railway.
3915. What do you pay by horse team from Borenore? I have some goods on the road at £2 a ton. The distance from Borenore to Forbes, *via* Parkes, is 85 miles, and the present tariff would be—No. 1 class, £1 9s. 4d. per ton; No. 2 class, £1 16s. 2d. per ton; No. 3 class, £2 9s. 10d. per ton. There is a higher class still, No. 7—that would come to £3 4s. 6d.
3916. What distance have you calculated from Borenore to Molong? 14 miles. In the wool season we get goods carried at from 25s. to £2 10s. a ton from Borenore to Cowra.
3917. If the existing railway rates are maintained the storekeepers at Forbes would be no better off for the railway than they are at the present time? They would have quicker transit.
3918. But, as regards the rates charged, you would have no advantage? If the railway came *via* Molong we should not, but if it came across from Borenore, there would be a little advantage in the shorter distance; there would be 18 or 20 miles less mileage.
3919. Suppose your merchandise came *via* Cowra, what would be the charge? About the same. The trainage is 5s. 11d. per ton more, and the carriage is a little less—that balances the Borenore charges. I have copied these figures from my trainage vouchers. From January 1st to December 31st, 1889, we received *via* Cowra 154 tons 16 cwt. The horse carriage amounted to £307 4s. 10d. *Via* Borenore we received 110 tons 4 cwt. 1 qr. 15 lbs., and the horse carriage amounted to £273 19s. 10d. I find that the amount of trainage we paid for the twelve months ending 1889 was £890 4s. 5d.
3920. Although, so far as the rates are concerned, the railway *via* Molong would not be a great advantage to you, would it not be of great use so far as the shipping of produce is concerned? Most undoubtedly—that is the benefit we expect to derive.
3921. You have come into contact with a large number of people in the district, and have discussed the topic of the railway with them? It has been the general topic for the last ten or fifteen years.
3922. The concensus of opinion is that a railway should be brought to Forbes by some route or other? Yes.
3923. Which route do the public appear to favour? I have heard a great many persons express a preference for the Cowra line, because it connects us with the southern districts? Since the cross line has been opened I have been getting most of the colonial produce, such as corn and oats, from the Tumut district. We can land it cheaper than from the Sydney wharves.
3924. But you have a large area of good agricultural land in your own district? Yes.
3925. How is it that you do not supply your own requirements? There are not a great many who grow corn; wheat and hay are the principal crops.
3926. Do you get any of your goods from Victoria? Yes; a good deal lately; principally machinery; it comes *via* Albury and Cowra.
3927. And if a line were constructed to Cowra, it would enable you to deal with greater advantage with Victoria? It would, undoubtedly.
3928. Do you think that if a railway were constructed from any of these points it would pay interest on the capital and working expenses? I feel quite certain it would. The Borenore line will pay, but I question whether the other line would pay, for the reasons I have given, because we should get our goods by the cheapest route.
3929. Would the difference of a few miles in the distance of the two lines create such a prohibitory rate that you would be unable to send or obtain your goods *via* Parkes? If we can get teams to fetch our goods at a less rate than that at which the railway will bring them to us it will be to our advantage to keep the teams going.
3930. Would you not prefer to pay an increased rate for the carriage of goods by train, than to pay the rate you are now paying by team? Yes.
3931. Then you would make use of the railway in preference to the teams? Yes; but there are many lines we get up for which we are not in a hurry, and those we should get by team.
3932. If a railway were constructed, the Commissioners, having to work the lines on commercial principles, would fix the rates at such a point that they would succeed in running the bullock and horse teams off the road? It would certainly be policy to do so.
3933. Do you not think that they probably would do so? It is most likely.
3934. Have you seen the Commissioners' estimate of the traffic in this district? I have not.
3935. Do you think that the whole of the merchandise and goods traffic, in and out, would be represented by a larger or smaller sum than £5,600 per annum? I think that is an under estimate.

- Mr. C. Prow. 3936. Do you think £800 is a fair estimate for the trucking of live stock;—would it not amount to more than that? In some years, and especially in dry seasons, when the stock could not travel.
- 3 Mar., 1890. 3937. Is not Forbes a large centre for travelling stock, fat and stores? Yes.
3938. Would not a large traffic in stock be brought into existence by the railway? Yes.
3939. And would not that traffic be represented by a larger amount than £800 a year? By a much larger amount, I should think.
3940. Do you know that the Commissioners' estimate is correct, that there will be a loss of £15,000 per annum if this line is constructed? I saw that.
3941. Do you think that will be the case? I do not think so.
3942. You have no hesitation in saying that under any circumstances a line should be constructed? I have not.
3943. And if it did not pay interest on capital and working expenses in the first few years, it would do so shortly afterwards? Yes.
3944. You think this town and district has as good a claim to a railway as any other district with which you are acquainted? Yes.
3945. Do you think it is likely that the gold-mining industry here will at any time induce a large population? It is very hard to say. We are in a gold-bearing district, and at any moment we may have an accession of thousands to our population. There is a place about 6 miles from here which looks very promising, and I should not be at all surprised to see a population of 1,000 there within three weeks.
3946. Your knowledge of the commercial position of pastoralists and agriculturalists in the district makes you think that the Government will be fully justified in constructing this railway? Yes.
3947. *Chairman.*] Do you know whether the diggings you speak of as being 6 miles from here are on a portion of land which was about to be thrown open for selection? I believe they are. Mr. Slee and Mr. Wilkinson inspected this country some twelve months ago, and were anxious to have it tried. There is a party trying it now—they are at a good depth and are getting some nice gold—it is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the road, to the east, near Strickland's dam.
3948. Do you think it would be advisable under the circumstances to throw that land open for selection? I think it would be advisable to have the ground thoroughly tested first—three shafts are sinking now—one has bottomed, and I believe they have got very good gold.

TUESDAY, 4 MARCH, 1890.

[*The Sectional Committee met at the School of Arts, Forbes, at 10 a.m.*]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Mr. Joseph Bernard Reymond, timber merchant, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. B. Reymond. 3949. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I could aptly describe myself as a jack of all trades. I am a timber merchant. I have a saw-mill and a flour-mill. I am a farmer, a fruit-grower, and, on a small scale, a grazier. I have been in the district since 1862.
- 4 Mar., 1890. 3950. During that time have you had a farm? Since 1866.
3951. And you are in the habit of growing crops? Every year since 1866. We began in that year on 320 acres. I am junior partner of the firm of Nicolas and Reymond, millers.
3952. What is the present area of your holding? 1,337 acres; but out of that area we rent 137 acres—1,200 acres are our own.
3953. How many acres have you under cultivation? In 1889 we had under crop 581 acres, 100 acres were for hay. We had 416 acres sown for wheat, 25 acres under lucerne, 11 acres of fruit trees, 15 acres of maize, and 14 acres of vines. Among the fruit trees, we had pumpkins and potatoes; but I cannot give you the area they occupied.
3954. Have you increased your area very much from one year to another? We have gradually increased cultivation every year.
3955. What kind of crops do you generally get—what is your return of wheat this year? Our average is 20 bushels right through. We have had it as high as 50; but we have had it so low that it has not been worth cutting for wheat. As forage, it fetches a good price. When we see that the crop is not going to give a paying result in grain, we cut it down for hay.
3956. Do you say that 20 bushels is the average of your own crops? Yes.
3957. What does the hay average? We have cut as high as 4 tons to the acre, and down as low as $\frac{1}{2}$ a ton. I put the average at $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons.
3958. Does the corn do as well as the wheat and hay? I have only had one crop of corn grown without irrigation. I would not advise any one in these parts to grow maize without irrigation, although higher up the river they get very good crops—that is between here and Cowra, at a place called Merriganowra. The settlers there are noted for the large yields of corn they get; the land, however, is flooded by the smallest fresh in the river, and that accounts for it.
3959. Is your farm situated on the banks of the river? We have 800 acres on the banks of the river, and 500 acres on the hills, 3 miles from Forbes.
3960. Which place do you cultivate? We cultivate in both places.
3961. Is your cultivation by irrigation? On the river.
3962. How many acres are there under irrigation? This year we irrigated only 40 acres—the lucerne and the maize.
3963. But this is an exceptionally good year? Yes.
3964. In an ordinary year would you irrigate the whole of the land? We could not with the plant we have; but we would if we could.
3965. What is the largest number of acres you have irrigated? The area we have irrigated for crop was not so large as it would have been if we had known how the season would have been. We generally begin to irrigate the crop of wheat when we see that the season looks very bad, and then with our small plant we

Mr. J. B.
Reymond.
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we cannot get over the whole of it. In 1886, for instance, the season turned very bad; in September we began irrigating the wheat. Out of 200 acres, we irrigated only 25 acres. We thought it was getting too late, and that it might bring on the rust, as it generally does, if you irrigate too late in the year. The 25 acres we irrigated went 25 bushels to the acre, and the 175 acres we did not irrigate we did not cut at all; it was a very bad year. In 1888, the season was also very bad, we did the same thing again. We began late, and the wheat we did not irrigate went 11 bushels to the acre. The irrigated land went at one place 40 bushels, and in another, over 20. In the same year in another paddock without irrigation, we get 25 bushels to the acre, but it was a low place. There is always a reason for these exceptionally good yields.

3966. In a wet season it would not do at all? In a wet season it would have to be eaten down very bare, or it would lodge. I may say that we intend to have stronger plant so that we can irrigate more. Our plant now gives 40,000 gallons an hour.

3967. What horse-power? 8-horse-power, with a 7-inch centrifugal pump.

3968. Have you far to lift the water? 32 feet.

3969. Do you irrigate on the grazing land? We have done so.

3970. What has been the result? A fortnight after it is irrigated horses and cattle can live on it. In summer time the heat is in the ground, and as soon as the water comes the grass begins to grow. In a fortnight cattle and horses can live on it.

3971. Have you any sheep? Yes.

3972. Have you ever put sheep on irrigated ground? We have not; we have put cattle and horses on it. As a rule we do not put sheep on irrigated land until cattle or horses have fed it down.

3973. Mr. Gatenby says that ten sheep to the acre can be kept by irrigation—is that correct? In a good season we can keep ten sheep to the acre without irrigation; that is in exceptionally good paddocks; we do not do that as a general rule.

3974. It would not be for the whole year? I was told yesterday by a gentleman—I cannot give you his name—that in one of his paddocks he had an average of twelve sheep to the acre. As far as my own experience is concerned, in a paddock not irrigated, from July to January last year, I had 1,600 sheep on 200 acres—that was for seven months. Of course when I took them out, the paddock was very bare.

3975. Do you irrigate the fruit garden? We did not this season.

3976. On account of the season being exceptionally good? Yes; there was rainfall enough

3977. What fruits do you grow? Apples, pears, quinces, peaches, apricots, plums, figs, oranges, lemons, almonds, and I think we have a solitary walnut tree.

3978. Do the oranges and lemons grow well? Yes; but they want well attending to and a soil that will agree with them. There is a place on the river, 3 miles down, where there is an orange orchard on a sandhill—the oranges there are doing remarkably well; they are the trees that want irrigation; they will not do without it. They want plenty of care and attention. The other things are hardy; give them water and they will thrive.

3979. Do you irrigate your vineyard? Only a small corner. As a rule we are afraid of oidium. We let the vines take their chance.

3980. Do grapes thrive in this district? They do, very well.

3981. Exceptionally well? I made last week 90 gallons of wine off one-tenth of an acre.

3982. There is no regular wine-making establishment here? No; I think we are the pioneers in that industry. Mr. Rowley is making wine for the last few years, and so is Mr. Shied.

3983. For their own consumption? They are beginning, of course. Mr. Gaynard is planting 8 acres, and he is getting a plant ready for next year. He is making wine now, I think, but in a very small way. He is getting ready to go into the wine-making business on a large scale.

3984. Have you any knowledge of wine-making? I have.

3985. Do you not think this district particularly well adapted to the growth of the grape? Yes; and for the manufacture of wine also. I would not advise anyone to go in for wine-making on black soil—that is, if you want a good quality of wine. You get plenty of it, but the quality would not be so good.

3986. You would go on the hills? On the hills or else on the sandhills. Any sandhill on the river will grow good grapes, and give a good quality of wine. The French experience is that phylloxera will not attack the vines in sandy ground. We consider that the soil, to give a good quality of wine, must have a large quantity of oxide of iron and carbonate of lime. On our hills here we have limestone quarries and ironstone in any quantity. The soil has not been analysed, but I am satisfied from my experience of it that it will grow a good quality of wine. Mr. Bodel has a vineyard of 17 acres within 3 miles of Forbes.

3987. What is the aggregate number of acres under vines near Forbes? About 50, I should think—that is, in the municipal district of Forbes.

3988. Quite sufficient to prove that the vine can be successfully grown here? Yes.

3989. What is the class of wheat you grow—is it considered good wheat? Yes. This is a warm country, and the best qualities of wheat are grown in the hottest countries. If wheat will grow at all, it will do better in a warm than in a cold climate.

3990. What class of timber do you saw at your mill? We generally saw pine.

3991. What quantity has gone through your mill for the last twelve months? I have the quantities for the last five years. In 1884 we bought—I am now talking of wheat—45,599 bushels of wheat; in 1885, a bad year, we bought 18,918; in 1886, 27,956; in 1887, 50,150; in 1888, 27,254. I have not taken the year 1889, because we had little local wheat. This year we have received up to date 43,251 bushels, that is up to the end of February. We have purchased 4,866 bushels which have not yet come in, making a total of 48,117 bushels purchased this year. 133 bags came in yesterday, which are not included in this return.

3992. Why did you go out of the district to buy wheat last year? There was not enough in the district to keep us going, owing to the drought. Some of the farmers had nothing at all. On all our farms, with irrigation, we had some 2,300 bushels, against 8,000 bushels this year.

3993. You had to get foreign wheat into the district? Yes.

3994. What was the average price you had to pay for the foreign wheat you imported? It went about 6s. 8d., delivered at Forbes.

3995. What is the price of wheat at present? Three shillings. As far as timber is concerned, we sawed last year 419,880 feet.

3996. What class of timber? Mostly colonial pine.

3997.

Mr. J. B.
Reymond.
4 Mar., 1890.

3997. Would there be a market for it outside of this district if you had means of carriage? We had an order yesterday from Cargo. We have sent timber to Orange before the railway came there.
3998. Is it a good class of timber for building purposes? It is very lasting, and the white ants will never touch it. It will last nearly as long as brick; once nailed and left, there it will stay.
3999. Is there an unlimited supply of this timber in the district? We have been cutting it for twenty-eight years, and it is always coming. As a rule we have to tell the log carriers that we have enough. We have to stop them sometimes, although occasionally we make a mistake, because the wet weather will set in, and then we run short.
4000. Do you think that if a railway were constructed here, and if you had cheaper carriage, you would have a market outside this district for that wood, and that it would become of great commercial use? I think, if it were known in Sydney that it is such a good timber for flooring, there would be a great demand for it. I had an experience of that timber compared with American timber for flooring. The boards lay alongside one another. The American wore out in no time, but our local pine has lasted since 1872. It was at the door of our mill, where the trucks are running in and out every day. The American timber there wore out in no time, and had to be taken up.
4001. This timber effectually resists the white ant? No one of experience in the colony can say that the white ant ever attacked the local pine.
4002. Have you any timber here beside the pine? Lachlan gum.
4003. Is it of any use? It is good timber for felloes—that is, for wheelwrights' work. It is also very strong and useful for building purposes, beams, &c.
4004. Is it attacked by white ant? Not at all.
4005. Is it a good timber for sleepers? No doubt.
4006. How does it stand in the ground? Very well. It is used as posts for fencing, and it lasts well.
4007. Is there a good supply of that kind of timber? There is plenty in short lengths; the longer lengths have been used for bridge building—for piles and beams. When you want to get a long length it can generally be had. When we were building our mill lately, we wanted some long beams to go right across. I was afraid that we should not get them on the river. We sent some waggons to get some iron-bark on the Molong and Parkes line, but they came back empty; they could not find any sound logs. We had to look upon the river for them, and we had to go above the Southern Cross. If you want to know the power and capabilities of our mill I can give them to you. We have two mills—a stone mill and a roller mill—quite separate one from the other.
4008. Do you think that if the line under consideration were constructed it would be of material benefit to this district? If the line were constructed from Borenore, it would be a benefit to the town and district generally. I doubt very much whether a line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes would be a benefit to us; in fact, many of us are under the impression that it would ruin us.
4009. Why? We are on the main line of traffic from east to west, and all the goods that come from the Western line for the lower part of the Lachlan come through Forbes, *via* Borenore or Cowra—the bulk of them *via* Borenore. If we had a line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, and our goods come that way, we should eventually lose the traffic down the river; because although people say that the road from Parkes to Condobolin is bad, still, when the difference in distance is 15 or 18 miles, the Government would be urged to make a road sufficiently good to carry the traffic. Then we should be cut out, and instead of being on the main line of traffic we should be only a branch line. We should have to pay trainage from Parkes to Forbes. If we wanted to send anything down the river, as we do now, we should have to pay trainage again from Forbes to Parkes—that would be double trainage which the Forbes storekeepers would have as a handicap with the Parkes storekeepers.
4010. Why would you have to pay the trainage back from here to Parkes, if you were sending goods down the river? I take it for granted that if the line came from Molong to Parkes it would go from Parkes to Condobolin at some future time, although I cannot say when. It is not likely that after going 22 miles east to Molong, and then 51 miles westward to Parkes, making a deviation of 20 miles to the south to get to Forbes, it is hardly likely, I say, that the Government, if they wanted to go to Condobolin, would construct a line which would force all the people down the river to come to Forbes on their way to Parkes, when they could go to Parkes direct. We think that unless some good reasons are shown in the general interests of the country for diverting the traffic from us, we should be left as we have always been, upon the main line of traffic to the west.
4011. Do you know whether the majority of people in Forbes believe that they would lose the traffic if the line referred to the Committee were carried out? A meeting was held in this room, at which all the leading residents of Forbes were present. Everyone was called upon to give his opinion, and it was unanimously agreed that, if they had the choice, they would rather do without the railway altogether than have one from Molong; because a line from Molong would take them off the main line of traffic, and make them in the future virtually a branch line, cutting them off from the trade of the Lachlan Valley. I do not think any attempt need be made to prove that the main line of traffic from Sydney to the Lower Lachlan is through Forbes. The Condobolin people told you that they got most of their goods from Cowra. We get most of our goods from Borenore, and the balance from Cowra. The mails from lower down the river all come through Forbes once a day. There is no mail communication now between Condobolin and Parkes; at least, there is practically none. I believe there is communication once a week, on horseback. Our getting this traffic through our town is entirely owing to our geographical position. We are the centre of a large district, and that fact has been acknowledged by all the Governments we have had until now, as they have stationed here the heads of all the administrative departments in the district. For instance, we have had the Police Magistrate, the Warden, the Road Superintendent, the Stock Inspector, the Land Court, the Sub-Inspector of Police, District Surveyor, and the School Inspector—all these officers have resided here.
4012. Do you think this town is acknowledged to be the main centre of the district? Yes; I may mention that the Warden goes from here to Temora, to Parkes, to Condobolin, to Cargo, and to Cowra.
4013. Which line do you think would serve the entire district best? In my opinion, there should be two lines—one from Borenore to Forbes, to be taken at some future time down the Lachlan, and then a line from Young to Grenfell, Forbes, Parkes, and Dubbo. I may state that these two lines would just follow the tracks made by the traffic. We have always had the overland traffic through here from north to south, and also the traffic from east to west.
4014. One of these lines would connect you with the capital of the colony, and the other would suit the overland traffic, Queensland to Victoria? Yes; I believe that is how nature intended our railways should be placed.

Mr. J. B.
Reymond.

4 Mar., 1890.

4015. If a line were constructed from Cowra to Eugowra and thence on to Forbes, how would that affect you? We would take that line if we could not get the Borenore line, because it would still leave us on the main line of traffic. We would rather have the Borenore line, though.

4016. But if you could not get the Borenore line, you would rather have the Cowra line than the Molong line? Yes; because we wish to retain the advantages which we at present enjoy.

4017. If the line from Cowra were constructed, how would that serve the people of Parkes? There would have to be a line from here to Parkes. I do not know, however, that the Government would construct both the lines from Cowra to Forbes and the line from Young to Forbes.

4018. From what railway station do you obtain your goods, and what price do you pay? From Borenore. Our firm, within the last twelve months, have had 95 tons 4 cwt. The bulk of this, however, came from Cowra. We pay an average of 1s. 6d. a cwt., but we get most of it during the wool season. We take advantage of that period.

4019. During the wool season the loading from Sydney is taken at a very low price? Yes; it is lower than at any other time of the year.

4020. And you all take advantage of it? Yes; as regards anything that will keep.

4021. I suppose that, at times, you get goods carried at a price which would be quite as low as even railway freight? I believe, at times, the price would be lower than the railway freight. If we had a railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, we could get our goods here, I think, at a cheaper rate from Cowra, than from Molong.

4022. That would be during the wool season? Yes.

4023. You have noticed the progressive nature of this place;—there has been no apparent stoppage in the progress of the place lately? No; we dwindled down at one time to a population of about 500, and when we began to till the soil we took a steady onward direction. We have been creeping lately, but we are still going ahead. I may state that before the railway was opened to Nyngan and Carathool, we were progressing very rapidly. As far as our business is concerned, we were working night and day. In a week, we sent 105 tons of flour to Hillston, Nymagee, and Cobar. There was always a demand for all the forage we could grow; but when these two lines of railway came on both sides of us, there was a sudden check in our progress, and a large area of land went out of cultivation.

4024. Will you not feel the effects of this railway extension even more, when this line is constructed to Cobar? That will make no difference; we have already lost the Cobar traffic.

4025. But would not a certain amount of trade which now gravitates southward gravitate to Cobar? I do not think so, because our trade now only goes about 40 miles below Condobolin. They would hardly come from Cobar to 40 miles below Condobolin.

4026. Do you think that if this line were constructed at Forbes, and were taken right through to the Darling, either at Menindie or Wilcannia, it would be a national line, and would be of material benefit to the colony? I have not sufficient knowledge of that part of the country. I know the country only as far as Mount Hope. I do not know whether any one has placed before you the industrial position of the town of Forbes, and the occupation of the people who live in it—that is, within the municipal district. I may state that there are 20 public-houses; 5 butcher shops; 5 bakers—one of them a steam baker; 2 breweries; 2 wool-scouring establishments, both using steam power; a soap and candle factory, also using steam power; 2 lemonade and cordial makers, one of them using steam power; 2 drapery establishments; 3 coach and buggy builders, who are also general blacksmiths; 2 general blacksmiths; 5 general store-keepers in a large way, wholesale and retail; 1 flour-mill; 1 saw-mill; 2 brick-kilns; 4 saddlers; 4 banks; 2 tinsmiths and plumbers; 2 watchmakers and jewellers; 3 solicitors; 3 doctors; 2 chemists. I do not desire to speak in a spirit of petty jealousy in regard to Parkes. I grant that Parkes has as much right to a railway as any other place. The only objection I have to the proposed line is that it takes us off the main line of traffic.

4027. *Mr. Lee.*] What do you mean by the main line of traffic? The line the traffic has always taken up to now. It is the line taken by Her Majesty's mail. The mails from Sydney to Condobolin once a day, come through here. At the same time there is the general traffic up and down the river. The electoral statistics given to the Committee at Parkes were, in my judgment, misleading, as the electoral division of Parkes extends to within 15 miles of Forbes, whereas the Forbes electorate is bounded by the Lachlan River on the south, a short distance on the other side of the town. Mr. Thomas, the School Inspector of the district, has handed me the particulars about the schools here. It is a return of the whole of the schools in the district within 20 miles to the north of the Molong and Parkes line, and within 20 miles to the south of the Borenore and Forbes line. With regard to those lying between the two lines, those schools lying nearer the Parkes line are credited to that line, and those lying nearer the Forbes line are credited to it.

4028. Are these schools measured in a direct line, or from the road? Mr. Cheeseman prepared a map, and will show you how he measured it. I hand in the list of schools.

4029. Does this list purport to be a list of the schools within the Inspector's district? No; only of the schools in his district, situated within 20 miles to the north of one line, and within 20 miles to the south of the other. The object is to show where the largest population is. The denominational schools are here. They are taken from a return handed in by Mr. Inglis two years ago, when he was Minister of Public Instruction. I may say that the enrolment at the school at Forbes is equal, within twelve, to the enrolment of all the schools north of the line from Molong to Parkes.

4030. Respecting the wheat grown in your district, where do you find a market for the flour? In the town itself, and down the river as far as Mount Hope.

4031. Is there sufficient grown for local requirements? Sometimes rather more.

4032. Have you been in the habit of sending any towards Borenore? No, none at all.

4033. I suppose the Orange flour would cut you out there? We send as far as Eugowra.

4034. Your chief trade has been to the west? Yes.

4035. Is that the market you look to in the future? To the west as well as to the east. We would have sent flour to Sydney in years when we have had plenty of wheat, if we could have sent it cheaply.

4036. The tendency of your evidence is to show that this is a suitable place for growing wheat in large quantities, the inference is, that you would soon grow more than you could possibly use, and I want to know where your market is to be? We shall not grow more than we can use, because if the farmers find that they cannot grow wheat profitably they will not grow it at all.

4037.

- Mr. J. B. Reymond.
4 Mar., 1890.
4037. We are considering the railway;—what freight is there likely to be? If there were a railway we should send flour and wheat to Orange and Sydney.
4038. What price would you want, so as to enable the farmers to grow at a profit? If they could get 3s. 6d. a bushel in Sydney, and if 6d. would clear the trainage, they could grow it at a profit.
4039. But the price of wheat fluctuates very much in the Sydney markets? Yes.
4040. Do you know that the Railway Commissioners have instituted special rates for the conveyance of grain? Yes.
4041. Suppose you could get your wheat from Forbes to Sydney at 4½d. a bushel? That would leave 1½d. for the agents and carters. If 6d. would cover all those expenses it would pay.
4042. What does it cost to produce wheat here? I have to pay for everything. My experience is that it costs 2s. a bushel to put it into the bag.
4343. There are times when wheat is considerably less than 3s. 6d. a bushel? If the price were lower, the farmers could not send it from here to Sydney, and live.
4044. Then it would only be when the price was 3s. 6d. that wheat would be sent from here;—do you think that upon that basis any large quantity of wheat would be sent? Wheat is seldom under 3s. 6d. in Sydney. I watch the markets and I do not remember to have seen it under 3s. 6d.
4045. What other produce would be sent from here? A large quantity of freight would be sent to Sydney—there would be fruit, and perhaps later on, wine. Wool is, of course, the mainstay of the district; there would also be a large quantity of fat stock.
4046. But the wool is conveyed within 2 or 3 months of the year? You may say within 4 months; the wool that is scoured is kept a little longer here.
4047. What freight would be offered to the railway for the remaining 8 months of the year? Hides, tallow, grain, fruit, timber, and fat stock, and there would always be the passenger traffic.
4048. How many mills are there here? Only one;—there are two plants in the same building. In the return I gave you I omitted to mention a quartz-crushing battery which is working at the Britannia Reef, within half a mile of the town.
4049. Could you give us any idea of the actual number of bushels of wheat raised every year? I could not give you a better idea than the quantity we have bought.
4050. Do not the storekeepers buy it? They do not buy large quantities. There is a large quantity in such a year as this used for horses' feed—I do not know what the total production of wheat would be.
4051. Do you wish the Committee to understand that you buy all the wheat? No, but we buy the bulk of it.
4052. Four-fifths of it I suppose? I daresay we do.
4053. Do you know the railway route from here to Borenore? I have travelled over it, and also over the route from Molong to Parkes, and from here to Young. I have been from farm to farm, wheat-buying.
4054. Consequently, you know that there is considerable settlement on each track? Yes, I have a very good idea of the settlement on each route.
4055. You admit that there is a fair amount of settlement on the three routes? There is.
4056. That being the case, and seeing that it is in contemplation to make one railway into the district, which route should, in your opinion, be adopted with a view to serve the greatest number of people? The Borenore line, decidedly. That goes right through settlement, there would be settlers to the north and south of it. The Molong-Parkes line has no settlement to speak of, to the north of the line.

Mr. Thomas Leslie, selector, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. T. Leslie.
4 Mar., 1890.
4057. *Mr. Lee.*] You are a selector? Yes, on a large scale.
4058. Holding how many acres? My return for the present year is 7,494 acres.
4059. Where are you located? About 25 miles south-west of Forbes, in the Grenfell electorate.
4060. How long have you been there? Twelve years.
4061. Prior to your residing there, were you living in any other portion of the district? I came from the Murrumbidgee, near Gundagai, before I went there to reside.
4062. How do you occupy yourself, principally? I go in for grazing, principally.
4063. Sheep? Principally. I have only a few cattle.
4064. With what result? I have a return here which may be of some use to the Committee. I can give you particulars for the last four years. In 1886, I had an area of 10,217 acres, on which I grazed 6,384 sheep, 33 cattle, and 5 horses; in 1887, I had an area of 9,647 acres, upon which I grazed 7,766 sheep, 53 cattle, and 6 horses; in 1888, I had area of 9,464 acres, upon which I grazed 7,690 sheep, 64 cattle, and 6 horses; in 1889, I had an area of 7,494 acres, upon which I grazed 7,467 sheep, 47 cattle, and 7 horses. So far as the return for 1888 is concerned, I ought to mention, that I had sold off 2,000 sheep prior to making the return. It had to be made before the end of December. This return shows that during the four years the land carried a sheep to a trifle over one and an eighth of an acre. It is over an eighth and under a quarter. I may state that so far as the returns for 1886 and 1887 are concerned, I was then grazing on some land open to conditional purchase. You will see that the area has been reduced, the land having been taken up by conditional purchasers. The land which I now hold, being very highly improved, is capable of carrying a very much larger number of stock than is shown by the returns for 1886 and 1887. The land is capable at the present time, in any sort of a good season, of carrying fully one sheep to the acre. I can give you the wool returns off the sheep for 1888 and 1889. My wool return in 1888, was 22 tons 13 cwt. 1 qr. and 19 lb.; the sheepskins were 6 cwt. and 6 lb. In 1889, the wool was 16 tons 12 cwt. 3 qr. 9 lb., and the sheepskins 10 cwt. 3 qr. 8 lb.
4065. Is your land on the river? No, off the river.
4066. What water is there? There is no water, except what we conserve in tanks.
4067. You have made some tanks? Yes.
4068. Do you irrigate any portion of the land? No.
4069. The returns you give are the result of the natural grasses? Yes.
4070. Do you cultivate any portion of your land? A small portion for hay only; it varies from 4 to 20 acres.
4071. By what route do you send your wool to market? Since the cross-line has been constructed it is sent to Cowra.

4072. Is that your present route? It is nearer and cheaper, as a rule, to send it that way. I sent it there one year, when I could make satisfactory arrangements, but this year I could not. The wool went by Wright, Heaton, & Co., who contracted for carriage to Borenore, Mr. T. Leslie.
4 Mar., 1890.
4073. Will your supplies come back by the same route? I deal with the local storekeepers.
4074. Do you know the proposed route from Molong to Parkes, and thence to Forbes? I cannot say I know it. I have been over the country only once.
4075. How would that route suit you? If that line were constructed I think we should have to pay a higher rate to get our goods to market than we should have to pay if a line were made *via* Borenore or Cowra.
4076. Why? Because the distance from Sydney is greater.
4077. How much? I cannot say the number of miles.
4078. Are there many selectors in your locality? Yes, a good number.
4079. I suppose they graze somewhat on the same lines as you yourself? They are principally selectors on a pretty large scale. There are a few cultivating—they have been doing so, more particularly within the last twelve or eighteen months. Since the division of the runs a great many men have come over from Victoria, and these seem to be principally farmers.
4080. Have you had a dry season since you have been on your land? Yes, I had two or three dry years.
4081. Have you suffered much in consequence? I have suffered, but not to such an extent as to materially check my progress.
4082. Have you had any wet seasons? Yes, in 1878 and 1879.
4083. Have you seen the country flooded? Yes, I have seen a lot of water on the other side of the river in wet seasons.
4084. Have you suffered any losses from the floods? Never.
4085. You have had extremes of seasons, wet and dry, and after a number of years you still find your occupation a profitable one? Very profitable I may say.
4086. Which of the routes of railway into this district do you think would serve the greater number of people? That I cannot say. I believe in the construction of our railways on national principles.
4087. You have a preference for the Borenore line? I have not, If you seek my opinion about railway construction, I think the line should come where it would settle the largest number of people on the land. The land being that which is most productive and best watered.
4088. Which line do you think should be adopted from that point of view? The Cowra line, I believe.

Mr. James Twaddell, grazier, sworn and examined:—

4089. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? In the town of Forbes.
4090. How long have you resided in the town and district? Fifty years, or more.
4091. In what part of the district? In the Forbes part—that is near to Forbes.
4092. What occupation do you follow? I am a grazier and squatter.
4093. I presume you have a large knowledge of the district? I know it pretty well.
4094. Do you know the country between Molong and Parkes? I know it from Parkes to Dulladerry Creek.
4095. Is the whole of that country good pastoral land? It is very rough. Some of it is good land, along the Billabong Creek, but the other is rough.
4096. What do you refer to as being very rough? Between the first range when you go out, leaving Parkes—it is very rough over that first range for some distance.
4097. Have you any particular information you desire to give the Committee? Well I could give you some information which I gave some years ago to the people here respecting that route.
4098. To which route do you refer to? The route from Molong and Parkes. I know the country between that and the Dulladerry Creek. I will read you a report which I made some time ago, by request of the Local Council. I was asked if I knew of one to point out to Mr. Surveyor Fitzgerald, a shorter and more practicable route for the Western railway, *via* the Mandagery Mountains, than the one recently surveyed.

Mr.
J. Twaddell.
4 Mar., 1890.

Gentlemen,

Droubalgie, October 9, 1877.

In compliance with your request, that I would put myself into communication with Mr. Surveyor Fitzgerald, for the purpose of calling his attention to any more desirable route (with which I might be acquainted) than those yet projected for the intended line of railway; I beg to state that I have with that view passed some days with that gentleman, and have laid before him and actually traversed, in his company, a route, I believe, hitherto unknown (at all events until now unnoticed), which appears to offer some substantial advantages over the others.

This passes through the Mandagery Mountains, at the Goamine Pass, thence through the Waterhole Creek Station, and a gap in the Bumbery Range, down Flagstone Creek to a point near Flanagan's selection. The line thence being nearly straight to Strickland's Lagoon (Newells dam), on the main road from Forbes to Parkes.

The route in question is considerably to the south of the other lines proposed, and avoiding, as it does, the circuitous courses of the others, saves in actual distance sixteen miles at the least, and, consequently the cost of construction to that extent. I may, in conclusion, state that Mr. Surveyor Fitzgerald expressed himself very favourably to the advantages offered by this line over the others, and I believe he will not hesitate to recommend it for adoption.

4099. Are there any engineering difficulties on the route you suggest? There are.
4100. Are they of sufficient magnitude to prevent the line being considered as you proposed? It will be a more expensive line than the other.
4101. Have you the merit of shortening the line in any way? I think it would have that effect. It is a portion of the line from Parkes to Molong. I believe it goes near to the Dulladerry Creek, up the Flagstone Creek.
- 4101½. Setting aside the question of rival routes, from your lengthy experience as a pastoralist in this district, do you think that if the railway were constructed to Forbes from any one of the points mentioned, there would be sufficient traffic upon it, to give anything like a fair return on the expenditure, and to pay working expenses? I do not think that would be the case if the Parkes and Molong line were adopted—its construction would be very expensive—it would be a much more expensive line than the Borenore line. I think the line would give sufficient revenue to prevent absolute loss.

Mr. Charles Read, farmer, sworn and examined:—

4102. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a farmer.
4103. Where do you reside? About 8 miles from Forbes, on the southern side of the river, in the Grenfell electorate.

Mr. C. Read.
4 Mar., 1890.

4104.

- Mr. C. Read. 4104. What is the area of your holding? I hold between 400 and 500 acres? The family hold about 1,200.
4105. What are you doing with the land? I am farming it, principally.
- 4 Mar., 1890. 4106. How many acres have you under crop? I have had 200 acres under crop.
4107. But how many had you last season? I had not above 70 last season.
4108. Have you any sheep? No; I keep dairying cattle and a few stores.
4109. What crops do you grow? Mostly wheat and hay.
4110. What is your average per acre of wheat crops? I have been 14 years on the farm, growing wheat, and my lowest yield has been 18 bushels—the highest is the yield I have had this year, 36 bushels.
4111. Have you threshed your wheat this year? I have. I own a steam thresher.
4112. How many acres have you under wheat this year? 70 acres. I cut a little for hay, but not much.
4113. You have never had a failure in 14 years? Well, 1878 was practically a failure—that was the only failure I had.
4114. In every other year beside 1878, then, you have had 18 bushels? That is the lowest I have threshed. In some seasons there has been more demand for hay than for wheat. I have cut it for hay; it has paid me better.
4115. Have you not cut it for hay in some seasons when you have seen that it was going to be a failure for wheat? Never.
4116. Is it not usual for the farmers here, when they see they are going to get a bad wheat crop, to cut it for hay? It is, sometimes.
4117. Have you never done so? Not that I remember.
4118. What is the average quantity of hay you have cut off your land? I have cut it as high as 4 tons and as low as 10 cwt.—that would be wheaten hay; it pays best.
4119. Are your neighbours, independently of your own family, farmers? Yes; there is my son-in-law adjoining me.
4120. Has he been as lucky as to get as large crops as yours? Yes; I have threshed for him—he has had 30 bushels.
4121. Have you been farming anywhere else? I have been farming in the district twenty-four years.
4122. Can you give us an idea of the difference between this and other districts—I mean as to the crops? I can give you a fair idea, because I have travelled with the thresher.
4123. How far do you travel from Forbes with your thresher? I have been to Parkes in three seasons, and in one of those years I threshed at Eugowra, and I also went 21 miles towards Grenfell.
4124. Have you ever gone towards Condobolin? This year, but only 8 miles.
4125. Could you give us an estimate of the average quantity you thresh yearly in this place? I can only give what I have heard them say; we can never ascertain the number of acres.
4126. What is the number of bushels you thresh during the season? There has been a lot of stripping done in the district. I have not threshed such a great lot. In Parkes we threshed, as far as I can recollect, 7,000 bushels.
4127. In the same year you threshed at Eugowra? Yes; there were two steam threshers there at the time, and we only got about a third of the threshing. I could not say how much we threshed, but it is a splendid wheat-growing district. I know that one party told me that he averaged 40 bushels. I think I threshed 4,000 bushels. I think we earned £50, at 1s. per bag.
4128. Did you thresh any more that season? Yes. I remember now that we threshed at Eugowra in the year I have named, that is 1884, 4,476 bushels.
4129. What did you thresh in Forbes? I cannot give you the Forbes total for that year.
4130. From your knowledge of the soil, what is your opinion of Forbes as an agricultural district? It is all good wheat-growing land.
4131. At what price can you afford to grow it? I can grow wheat well, and make it pay at 3s., if we have the market. I am speaking of myself—it is not every farmer who has machinery of all kinds to do the work.
4132. Those who have not machinery would want a higher price then? Or they would have to put up with less profit.
4133. Suppose this line were constructed to Forbes, would you put more under crop than you do now? I am about grubbing 50 acres at a new place. I took up one of these special areas.
4134. You have more land grubbed now than you have under crop? Yes.
4135. You have plenty of land ready to put under crop? Yes. I regard the new land as superior for wheat to the land I have already grubbed.
4136. Are there any other threshing machines in the district besides yours? Mine is the only one in the Forbes district.
4137. Is yours a large machine? It is a 5-foot drum.
4138. Have you as much work as you can do in the season? I do not depend entirely on it. I go out in the district, and if there is work to do I go further. I have had the misfortune to have one thresher burnt this year, and I have bought another. I mention it to show you that I think sufficient of the Forbes district to consider it worth my while to buy another.
4139. Is there any increase this year in the number of acres under crop in this district? Yes; and there will be a bigger increase next year.
4140. Do you believe the railway will give an impetus to this industry? I think so; that is what we have in view.
4141. Do you think the railway we have now under consideration, from Molong to Parkes, will do this district good? No; I am not an advocate of that line.*
4142. Which line do you think would be the best? I think the Borenore line. There is more population. I know the whole of the route well—it is better land all the way. Not that I want to run down the Parkes district, I have relations farming there, and I have been always treated well there.
4143. Do you consider that the land about here, is superior to the land about Parkes for agriculture? I do not say that, I say it is equal to it, if not superior to it. I will explain what I think; we have a lot of open.

* NOTE (on revision):—I wish to draw attention to question 4141, wherein I am asked, "Do I think a railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes would do this district good?" The answer is, "No." It should have been, "I am not an advocate of that line, and I still think the Borenore line would serve the most people." It would be false to say that a railway would do no good to Forbes, no matter which way it came.

open country here—that is, open myall plains. I ploughed 90 acres of land there, and I suppose the whole of the labour I put in it, was one week's work in gathering the myall lying on it. I could not have cleared the land of heavy timber in the time. We have thousands of acres of that kind of land now held in reserves not far from where I grew my last crop. I think if it were thrown open we should have plenty of applications for it.

4144. What reserve is that? It is a travelling stock reserve on the Grenfell-road—most of it is high from the flood, it is quite equal to the land I have been farming. That is how I got a lot of land under cultivation. I partly cleared. I was told that the myall land would not grow wheat, and I tried it. I have been engaged in farming all my life, and I do not listen to people who tell you, that this and that is no good, I like to try for myself, and I have given you the result of my labours.

Mr. Bagration White, agent for Wright, Heaton, & Co., sworn and examined:—

4145. *Mr Lee.*] Where do you reside? At Forbes.

4146. What is your occupation? I am a forwarding agent. I am agent for Wright, Heaton, & Co.

4147. Your business is intimately connected with railway receipts and the despatch of goods? Not so much here as on the line. Nevertheless, I send the goods from here to the line. I despatch them from the depôt.

4148. You are the agent for people outside of the town more than for people inside the town? For both.

4149. Have you prepared any statistics to lay before the Committee with regard to traffic? I can give you some particulars concerning our business. I may say that as Wright, Heaton, & Co.'s agent in the town of Forbes, I have received in the year 1889, 1,180 tons. 380 tons have gone from Borenore to Condobolin, and 26 tons to Mount Hope. There has been a great falling off in the Mount Hope traffic this last year, because, owing to the low price of copper, the mines have not been working. Therefore there has been no population there. Borambla is on the south side of the river, and it received 24 tons from Borenore. Burrawang got 90 tons.

4150. Can you give us any particulars as to the wool? I suppose fully 10,000 bales of wool have gone through Forbes in the four months—that is up to the end of January.

4151. Could you give me an approximate estimate of the carriage paid on those 10,000 bales? I could not.

4152. I mean the land carriage to Borenore? A lot of the wool came from far down the river, and a great portion from about here, so that it is a very complicated affair.

4153. Having in view the rates charged on the other lines, what would be the probable rate on a bale of wool from Forbes to Borenore? The price of carriage from here to Borenore would be 2s. 6d. or 3s. per cwt.

4154. Have you any data which enables you to give an accurate answer? No; but I should think the total amount paid on the wool would be something like £1,600. If we had a railway constructed to this place, wool which goes to Cowra would come here.

4155. What other goods are sent to Borenore? Hides, tallow, and sheepskins.

4156. Any grain? Not much grain, I think.

4157. Your firm deal in maize and chaff a good deal, do they not? Not such a great deal here; not as much as in other places.

4158. Do you obtain it from the other districts and bring it into Forbes? I have had a good deal, but not a great quantity from Borenore. I do not do much in the forage line.

4159. Is the freight passing through your hands increasing or decreasing? Increasing in the last year, most decidedly. As I remarked before, when the Mount Hope mines were going, we had a large business. I have seen as many as thirteen teams in the town in one day, loaded with copper, from Cobar and Mount Hope.

4160. I suppose you contract to convey goods from Borenore right out west? Yes; we deliver them by team to the various persons to whom they are consigned.

4161. What is the nature of the traffic, between Forbes and the west? The main part of my business between here and the back country is wool. Of course I despatch any other goods which may arrive, or which the storekeepers may have to send away.

4162. How many tons does that amount to in a year? There are stations, such as Condobolin, where we might send, throughout the year, fully 60 tons of loading.

Mr. John Cunningham Cunningham, wool-scourer, sworn and examined:—

4163. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a wool-scourer, from Forbes.

4164. How long have you been here? I have been in business for eighteen months only.

4165. Where is your place of business? On the river to the south of Forbes.

4166. What does your machinery consist of—what power have you got? We have steam power—4-horse power nominal.

4167. And you pump water from the river? We are better situated than that. We have a permanent supply of drift or spring water, which is to be found about Forbes, leaving us independent of the river. We pump the water from a well. I can use the river, if required.

4168. How many hands do you employ? About twenty in a busy season.

4169. Do you use a machine for drying your wool, or do you dry it on the grass? At present on the grass; but we contemplate placing a large plant upon the ground. We would do so at once if we were assured of quick transit.

4170. What quantity of wool do you put through in a month? I can give you the quantity we have put through since we started. We have received over 200 tons of wool from a distance from Forbes varying from 5 to 60 miles. We have despatched to Sydney about 120 tons of that quantity, which would represent between £500 and £600 for carriage, at current rates. We could increase that amount very much if we had quick transit.

4171. You find a difficulty in getting wool to the station? Yes. Two-thirds of the quantity I have named went *via* Cowra. A quantity of the wool would go to Melbourne, as well as to Sydney.

4172. If there were a railway line in Forbes would you send the wool to Cowra by team? No.

4173. Suppose the line under consideration from Molong to Parkes and Forbes were constructed, would you send your wool by that line? I should send it *via* Cowra, by team, if that line were made.

Mr.
B. White.
4 Mar., 1890.

Mr. J. C.
Cunningham.
4 Mar., 1890.

Mr. C. Read.
4 Mar., 1890.

- Mr. J. C. Cunningham. 4174. In preference to putting it on the railway line? Yes.*
 4175. Why? Because I believe it would be less expensive.
 4176. You have made up your mind that the line must go *via* Cowra, or you will not have it at all? Not at all.
 4177. Do you know that the difference in the haulage on the two lines would be only $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles? Well, the present rate makes very little difference; that is to say, it does not matter very much whether you send the wool *via* Borenore, or by Cowra.
 4178. But if the line were constructed to Forbes, would you continue to send your wool by dray to Cowra? Certainly not. I want the quickest way of getting to market.
 4179. If the line under investigation were constructed, which way would you send your wool? By the line, of course. I presume you mean the Borenore line.
 4180. Do you think that the construction of that railway, then, would lead to an increase in your business? Yes. The reason I say so is that there has been an increase of wool in the district during the last twelve months. Since I have been here I have not been able to cope with it. I have had wool remaining in Forbes for six to eight weeks, through our not being able to get it down to Sydney. A gentlemen for whom I was scouring asked to be allowed to send a portion of wool down in the grease, rather than to delay by the scouring. That is, of course, a great loss to myself and the district.
 4181. That would be obviated if this line were constructed? Most decidedly.
 4182. You would have no difficulty in carting from your place to the railway station at Forbes? No; and it would give me confidence in expending a large sum in order to meet the requirements of the district.
 4183. You do not hesitate to say that you could get plenty of wool to scour if you could get it away within a certain time? Yes, we could scour a great deal more—in fact, the whole clip of the district—if we had quick transit.
 4184. *Mr. Lee.*] So far as your business is concerned, your great anxiety is to get your wool despatched quickly? Yes.
 4185. Have you a preference for any particular route? Studying the character of the country, and looking at the probable cost, I think the Cowra line should be adopted. In the first place, the altitude over which the goods would travel going to Borenore would be very much greater than that on the Cowra route. This would make the wear and tear on the railway stock greater.
 4186. So long as you get an outlet by railway, have you a preference for any route, or would you take any route which would give you quick access to market? Any line which would give my clients a chance of getting their goods to market. I leave it to the Government to determine the quickest and shortest route.

Mr. William Kinglick Garnsey, stock and station agent, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. W. K. Garnsey. 4187. *Mr. Dowel.*] What is your occupation? I am a stock and station agent at Forbes. I have resided here for five or six years.
 4188. Do you know the district? I know it well.
 4189. Have you resided in the district prior to the last five or six years? No.
 4190. Then your knowledge is confined to that time? Yes.
 4191. Are there any large transactions in stock in this district? Yes.
 4192. What information have you to give the Committee? I can give you the number of stock we have sold since we have been here.
 4193. Will you be good enough to read the particulars? We had two months in 1884 in which we sold 2 horses, 50 cattle, 2,830 sheep, and we leased 25,000 acres of country; in 1885, we sold 22 horses, 4,616 head of cattle, 270,984 sheep, 1 station, and we leased 137,700 acres of land; in 1886, we sold 9 horses, 6,894 cattle, 226,609 sheep, 3 stations, and we leased 102,000 acres of land; in 1887, we sold 36 horses, 11,273 cattle, 294,684 sheep, 8 stations, and we leased 6,950 acres of country; in 1888, we sold 10 horses, 5,681 cattle, 299,024 sheep, 11 stations, and we leased 80,500 acres of country; in 1889, we sold 30 horses, 1,979 cattle, 423,766 sheep, 3 stations, and we leased 10,700 acres of country; so far in 1890, we have sold 10 horses, 1 head of cattle, 103,636 sheep, and 1 station.
 4194. Generally speaking, may I infer that the business in this district in which you are engaged is increasing? Yes; it is.
 4195. Would any portion of the business to which you have just referred afford revenue to a railway constructed to Forbes? Yes.
 4196. What portion? I could not say.
 4197. Do you think, from your knowledge of the district, that a considerable portion of the traffic brought to the railway would consist of fat stock, sheep, and cattle? I do.
 4198. Would any revenue be derived from starving stock? Yes; we railed two years ago, from Cowra, between 16,000 and 25,000 sheep across to Wagga. They would have gone to Forbes, if the line had been here.
 4199. If the railway were constructed to Forbes, do you think the traffic of stock through here would be still further increased? In fat stock it might, but not in stores.
 4200. It is fat stock, you anticipate, which would bring revenue to the railway? Yes.
 4201. From your knowledge of the country, do you think a larger proportion of that kind of traffic would come to Forbes than comes there now? I am certain it would.
 4202. Can you say, approximately, what increase there would be? I have not gone into a calculation at all. I know the stations intimately between here and Hillston; and I know that much of the wool that now finds its way to Nyngan would find its way here, if there were a railway.
 4203. You have referred to the sale of a large number of acres of land;—what do you infer from that—that persons are selling out at a profit? Yes; I can instance one station which we sold twice. I mean Upper Droubalgie. The area is 9,500 acres, of which about 3,000 acres are secured in freehold and conditional purchase. We sold this station in September, 1886, for £7,500, and we re-sold it in July, 1888, —one year and ten months afterwards—for £9,000, showing an increase in value for that time alone, of £1,500.
 4204. During that time had the station materially improved? No; it was in the same state as on the day we first sold it.

4205.

* NOTE (on revision):—There was a slight misunderstanding when I answered question 4174. I send a large proportion of scoured wool to Melbourne, and thought sending the wool per dray, *via* Cowra, would be less expensive and more direct than sending it *via* Parkes.

Mr. W. K.
Garnsey.
4 Mar., 1890.

4205. Have you had many transactions in land? Yes.
4206. What have they resulted in? Land has been sold at a profit. We had not this transaction ourselves, but I know of it. A farm of 420 acres on the Lachlan River, 6 miles from Forbes, was sold a year ago at £5 per acre; a week afterwards it was sold for £5 5s.; and in a year afterwards I took a buyer at £6 6s., and the present owner refuses to sell—he had a water frontage. There is a place belonging to William Chandler, a farmer at Wangan Vale, near Eugowra, about half-way between Forbes and Eugowra; there is an area of 1,440 acres. It was sold about two years ago for £1 18s. per acre; the present owner refused £2 10s. per acre for the same land twelve months later.; I took a buyer up there about four months ago and he wanted £3 10s.
4207. Then the Committee may infer that land is increasing steadily in value? Yes. There is a farm on the river belonging to Mr. Reymond; I took a buyer and offered £6 10s; he refused it. I may tell you also that I had a gentlemen looking about for a fortnight trying to buy a place at which he wished to start growing fruit—oranges principally, I believe. He could not buy suitable land, even at £6 an acre.
4208. Your occupation causes you to travel through the district? Continually.
4209. Is the country fairly settled upon? Yes, wherever it is available. The distance from Cowra to Forbes is just 58 miles, and taking 2 to 3 miles on each side of the river, every acre is thickly populated, and occupied by small *bona-fide* holders. Nearly all of this area consists of rich deep black soil. I estimate the average value at £4 per acre all through. Outside of the area I have named, the land is worth from £2 to £2 10s. per acre for a considerable distance. I may mention also that the valley of the Lachlan runs parallel with the surveyed line from Wood's Flat, *via* Eugowra, to Forbes. This rich land continues on both sides of the river to Condobolin, a distance of 60 miles, where a break occurs on the north side. On the south side the good land continues, with few exceptions, as far as Merri-Merrigal, 75 miles below Condobolin.
4210. Does the appearance of the selectors you know give you the impression they are permanently settled? It does.
4211. What is their chief occupation? They are occupied principally in stock-growing, because there is no outlet for anything else. So far as other things are concerned, they can grow only what is required for the district.
4212. Can you say whether there have been any sales of those selections to pastoral tenants? Not many since I have been here. Generally speaking, the settlers are *bona-fide*;—they have every appearance of possessing comfortable homes.
4213. Do you think the construction of a railway to Forbes would conduce materially to their prosperity? I think it would.
4214. And to that of the district generally? Yes.
4215. Would it give a great impetus to agriculture? It would increase it very much, compared with what it is now.
4216. Have you noticed that of late years there has been a larger area of land under crop? No; because there is no outlet. They can only consume a certain amount here. The supply is up to the demand now.
4217. Is property increasing in value in the town of Forbes? It is. Properties we have sold we can re-sell at a profit.
4218. People appear to have confidence in the town and district? Yes.
4219. Is it the anticipation of a railway which engenders this confidence? I would not say that. The natural resources of the town are steadily increasing it.
4220. Do you know anything of the rival routes? All the lines, I think.
4221. Do you think the district would be served to any considerable extent by the construction of the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, *via* Flagstone Creek? Any railway to the town would do it good, no matter which way it came.
4222. But would that line serve a considerable number of inhabitants—large centres of population? I think so.
4223. You know Parkes well? Yes.
4224. The principal centre of population is round about there? Yes.
4225. Can you say how the country is settled to the north of Parkes? It is very thickly settled just now.
4226. What is the character of the country? It is very open box country, with good red soil.
4227. If the statement were made this morning that there was no settlement to the north of the proposed line from Molong, would it be correct? I do not think so.
4228. You are able to form an opinion? I think so. I have been all my life at the stock and station business.
4229. If a railway were made to Forbes, what do you think would be the principal source of revenue? Well, in the first place the passenger traffic will increase considerably.
4230. What about the merchandise traffic—that will increase? That would increase. There would also be a great quantity of wool, and a good deal of fat stock.
4231. The Railway Commissioners have estimated that the whole of the return of fat stock would be covered by £800 a year;—do you think that that is an under-estimate? There is one thing to be considered in answering that question. When persons having stock can travel up a river like this, with such good country, they will be likely to do so, and a number of them might rail their stock at Cowra—they would travel their stock up to Cowra, and save the rail round. If the season were good the stock would do equally well; if the season were bad the stock would be brought to Forbes, in order that they might be railed as quickly as possible, and got away by the quickest route.
4232. Do you think that the estimate of £800 would be sufficient? I think Parkes would contribute more than that amount, to say nothing of Forbes.
4233. You are sure that the country to the north of Parkes is fairly settled? Yes.
4234. And that the settlers would contribute to the railway revenue at Parkes? Yes.
4235. Do you know the country between Grenfell and Parkes? Yes; it is all good country.
4236. Is it fairly settled upon? Well, it could be better settled upon.
4237. Is the land in the hands of large holders? From Forbes to Grenfell, after you get 10 miles out, you will find the next 10 miles all in large areas. Each side of that 10 miles is well settled upon.
4238. There is one considerable portion then in large estates, which is not likely to be settled upon? It is in large areas.
4239. It is now occupied for pastoral purposes? Yes; between Parkes and Forbes the land is not settled upon at all, because it is comprised in a gold reserve.

- Mr. W. K. Garnsey.
Mar., 1890.
4240. It is merely occupied by the pastoral tenants? Yes.
4241. Do you think the cross line is one which could be constructed? I do.
4242. In preference to the one which is being referred to the Committee? I do; because I think it is a line in the interests of the country at large.
4243. What distance is there to go from Grenfell to connect with the nearest railway? Something over 30 miles.
4244. Do you think the Committee could fairly recommend the construction of the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, *via* Flagstone Creek? I do not think so.
4245. For what reason? There is too much bad country there.
4246. What part is bad? Take 12 miles out of Parkes, or 14 miles out of Molong, and it is good country, but the balance is bad country.
4247. You consider that there is a belt of 24 miles of inferior country between Molong and Parkes? Yes.
4248. Suitable for what purpose? For breeding wild dogs and kangaroos.
4249. Is it a fact that this land which you describe as being so bad is settled upon? I know some people out there who have been there all their lives.
4250. Still you do not think the railway ought to be constructed there? I do not think so, honestly.
4251. Do you think the people of Cudal would be served by the Molong line, if the railway were brought within 4 miles of it? Of course any person close to a railway gets an advantage from it.
4252. But do you consider that the Cudal farmers would be fairly served if they were 4 miles from a railway? The railway would serve them, but not as well as if it were taken through Cudal.
4253. At all events, they would be better served than they now are? Yes.
4254. Would not traffic from the farmers go to the railway-station if it were only 4 miles distant? Certainly, if the farmers could not get cheaper carriage by road.
4255. But would not the Cudal people use the railway under any circumstances? I think so. I know I would myself if I were at Cudal.
4256. By bringing the railway nearer Cudal, would it be taken out of the bad country to which you have referred, or out of any portion of it? It is good country about Cudal; the country is good considerably more than 4 miles from Cudal.
4257. Therefore there would not be as much bad country as you anticipated? I never travelled across from Cudal, but I have been through from Murga in towards Dubbo. It is pretty nearly all bad country from the time you leave the Borenore line straight through to Oberley.
4258. But the construction of the line to Forbes by either route would be a material benefit to the town of Forbes and to the district? Yes.
4259. You are clearly of opinion that a line should be made to Forbes? We ought to have had a line here years ago.
4260. You think the Committee would be perfectly justified in recommending it? I think so.
4261. Do you know the country between Forbes and Condobolin? I do.
4262. Do you know it beyond Condobolin? As far down the river as Euabalong, about 40 miles.
4263. Would the trade of that district be brought here to a large extent if a railway were made here? It would.
4264. Is Condobolin a thriving town? A very prosperous little town.
4265. And the people there would do their trade with the depôt at Forbes? They would, I believe.

Mr. Joseph Bernard Reymond, sworn and further examined:—

- Mr. J. B. Reymond.
4 Mar., 1890.
4266. *Chairman.*] I believe you wish to supplement your evidence? In giving the industries, businesses, and occupations of the townspeople, I omitted to mention that there were two newspapers and six stock and station agents. I also intended to read you a list of those having irrigation plants, and I should like to give you the names now. They are: Martin Brothers, Martin, Nicolas and Reymond, Farrand, Tozer, Corscaden, Gatenby, and Edols.

Mr. John Canning Corscaden, wool-scourer and fellmonger, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. C. Corscaden.
4 Mar., 1890.
4267. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? A wool-scourer and fellmonger.
4268. Where are you situated? About a mile and three-quarters from the town, on the river.
4269. How many men do you employ? I have had about 30 hands this season.
4270. What machinery do you employ? A twelve-horse power boiler. I have two Tangye pumps; they are 6-inch pumps.
4271. Do you get water from the river? Direct from the river.
4272. About what amount of wool do you pass through your hands in twelve months? About 215 tons—that is the weight when it is scoured, not in the grease.
4273. Are you passing more through your hands now than you used to do, or are you doing about the same business? A little more, I think.
4274. How long have you been in business? About two years.
4275. And you think there is an increase? Yes.
4276. Do you have as much wool as you can scour? Yes.
4277. You have no difficulty in getting wool? No; but there is a difficulty in getting it away.
4278. How do you get it away? We send some by Cowra, and some by Borenore, whichever we can get through quickest.
4279. If you had a railway here, would it be of much importance to you? Very much indeed; a railway to Forbes would materially benefit us.
4280. I suppose it would not matter to you very much which way the line went? It would, considerably.
4281. Why? We do not want a line *via* Molong; that route is too roundabout. We want a direct line, to benefit the people down the river.
4282. You mean down the Lachlan? Yes.
4283. How would it affect them? If the line came *via* Molong they would not send their wool that way.
4284. But there is only 2½ miles difference? But they would be sending their wool right round the country, and it would be easier and cheaper to send it to Cowra by team.

4285. You think that if the line under consideration were made the wool would be sent by team to Cowra? I believe it would.
4286. Is that what you would do? The matter is not in my hands always; but I think I would do so myself.
4287. Although you know that there is only 2 miles difference in the distance? Well, it appears to be sending the wool all round the country.
4288. But you cannot get over the fact that the difference in distance is only 2 miles;—in spite of that small difference, you would rather send your wool by team to Cowra? I would rather send it by Cowra. I should get it sent away more quickly and cheaply that way.
4289. The teams go more quickly than the railway? The teams go right through to Cowra.
4290. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you any knowledge of this district? I have only travelled by the coach.
4291. Where would those persons be on the river who would object to sending their wool from Forbes, by railway, round by Molong? I know that a great number of our constituents would object, although I could not name them.
4292. Do you know of any? I could not name them now.
4293. Could you name one? No; I should not like to mention anyone, because they might object. I fancy they would not like to send their wool this way.
4294. You only fancy so? Yes.
4295. Coming back to your own statement, do you not think that if a railway were constructed to Forbes, coming from any point on the existing railway system, it would be of advantage to you in assisting you to send your wool by railway rather than by dray;—do you not see that you would be able to despatch your wool in sufficient time to take advantage of a favourable market in Sydney, whereas, if you were depending on dray-carriage, your wool might be too late for the good market? That is quite correct.
4296. Well then, under those circumstances, would not the railway be a considerable advantage to the people in Forbes? Yes; if it came direct, but not by the roundabout route.
4297. Would 2 miles difference in the two routes make any difference to you in the transportation of your wool to Sydney, once you got it upon the railway? I think there is a difference of more than 2 miles, but I am not certain.
4298. But would you, on account of that difference, prefer to send your wool by dray to Cowra? I think it would be cheaper in the long run, and I also think that the railway from Borenore would suit the larger number of people.
4299. If a railway were brought to Forbes by any route, would you use it? I might do so, sometimes.

Mr. J. O.
Corscaden.
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Frank Alleyn Edols, Esq., squatter, sworn and examined:—

4300. *Mr. Lee.*] I understand that you are engaged in squatting pursuits? Yes.
4301. Are you one of the firm? No; but I am working under my father, who is the firm trading as T. Edols & Co.
4302. Where is the property situated? About 35 miles west of here.
4303. You have sheep, chiefly, on your run? Yes.
4304. About how many bales of wool do you send to market a year? The number varies; we had over 4,000 this last year.
4305. Greasy? It included about 400 or 500 bales of scoured. I can give you the exact number. There were 4,148 bales altogether.
4306. Which market did you send it to? We sent our wool to England, through Sydney.
4307. How did you get it from the station to Sydney? We sent it through Wright, Heaton, by dray, to Forbes. The teams take it from the wool-shed to Borenore, through Forbes, and it is taken thence by train to Sydney.
4308. Could you tell us the amount of trainage you would pay on those 4,148 bales? I could not say what the train freight is. We agreed to give Wright, Heaton, & Co. £6 a ton to take the wool at the station and deliver it at Sydney. For scoured wool we paid them £7 3s. 3d. There would be only about 500 bales of scoured wool.
4309. What would you allow for the dray carriage from the station to Borenore, per ton? I could not say.
4310. The object of this line of examination is to ascertain the actual freight likely to be obtained by the proposed railway? I am afraid I cannot give you that information.
4311. Do you get your station supplies back by the same route? Yes.
4312. About how many tons a year? Last year we had over 90 tons of back-loading; besides that, we had two or three loads from Cowra—about 5 tons on each load; there would be a total altogether of about 105 tons.
4313. Did you send any wool *via* Cowra? No.
4314. Is the Borenore route shorter for you than the Cowra route? No; I think it is a little bit longer, judging from the coach.
4315. Have you been over both tracks? Yes.
4316. Which is the better road? The Cowra road.
4317. And for what reason do you send your wool to Borenore? Wright, Heaton, & Co. take it from us, and that is the way they go. They enter into a contract to deliver the wool in Sydney at so much per ton. It does not matter to us which way it goes.
4318. Supposing a railway were made from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, would it offer to you a suitable outlet for your wool? Yes; I think it would.
4319. Could you suggest any route which would better serve your purpose than the route *via* Molong and Parkes? My own idea is that the Cowra route would serve us better. I fancy that it would be shorter.
4320. I do not know what is the position of your station in regard to Cowra; but I may inform you that the Cowra line is actually longer than the Borenore line, whereas the Molong line is the longest of the three? Yes; I thought it was.
4321. Do you know the surrounding country? Yes; I know most of it.
4322. Have you been to Borenore? Yes.
4323. Have you been to Molong? No; only as far as Parkes.
4324. Occupying the position you do in this part of the country—having such a large property here—you would, as a citizen, be interested in the extension of the railway system to this part of the colony? Yes.

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4325. And in common with the rest of the community, you are desirous of seeing the railway taken along a route, which would best serve the interests of the majority of the people? Yes.
4326. Have you thought the matter out sufficiently, to be able to offer an opinion, as to which is the best route to serve the greater number of people? I like the cross-line from Dubbo to Parkes, Forbes, Grenfell, and Young.
4327. But if that line were constructed, you would send your wool *via* Cowra;—you would not send it *via* Dubbo? I think by way of Dubbo.
4328. Would not that be a longer route than the other? I do not think so.
4329. So far as your interest is concerned, you would not advocate the construction of the cross-line to get to the west? No.
4330. It would be with a view of getting direct to Sydney? Yes.
4331. Would the construction of a line to this district, offer any special benefit to you? Oh, yes; because we should get our wool away quicker and more cheaply.
4332. Are there times when your wool is delayed in consequence of bad roads? No; I do not think we have ever had our wool delayed by bad roads.
4333. Taking the present medium of traffic by dray, you are enabled to make use of it in all weathers? Yes.
4334. The only additional advantage of the railway would be, that it would give you quicker and cheaper transit? Yes.
4335. Do you think it would lead to increasing the flocks on your station? No; I do not think it would.
4336. Would it induce you to cultivate at all? Yes; I should think so. It would induce us to go in for irrigation.
4337. You have some dry seasons here occasionally? Yes.
4338. Have you to purchase much forage at those times? Yes; we have to purchase a good deal for the horses.
4339. Where do you obtain it from, chiefly? We get some which is grown on the river by the farmers on our own station, and some from Parkes.
4340. Have you had occasion to remove any of your stock in dry seasons? Yes; we have.
4341. Do you travel them in the ordinary way? Yes.
4342. Would a railway into the Lachlan country enable you to shift them quickly, and advantageously, in dry seasons? It would.
4343. And would you be able to bear the cost of transit? Yes.
4344. To what part of the country would you send your starving stock;—are there any particular districts, which, in dry weather, hold their own better than other districts? We have always sent our stock up into the mountains, into the cold country, in the direction of Cooma, but not as far as that. It is often the case, if we have a dry time of it, they might not have a dry time out Parkes way, and we might then send our stock there.
4345. You would remove the stock to where there was grass? Yes.
4346. If a line were constructed across country, from Dubbo to the New England country, would that be too great a distance for you to send your stock? Yes; I think it would.
4347. Have you ever had occasion to use the railway to remove any stock? No.
4348. So that you do not know what the cost of it would be? No.
4349. You know that special rates are made under those conditions? Yes.
4350. Have you gone in for any amount of irrigation yet? For some.
4351. Have you the plant on the station? Yes; we have two plants.
4352. To what purpose do you usually put them;—is it for the cultivation of a garden, or for crops? No; to keep the stud sheep.
4353. That is to provide the natural grasses? Yes.
4354. Do you lay down English grass at all? No; we have grown a little lucerne, but very little.
4355. I suppose rye, and grass of that kind, will not do well? We find that the natural grasses do the best.
4356. In the case of extremely dry weather, can you, by irrigating, get the grass to grow? Yes.
4357. No matter how dry the atmosphere may be? Yes.
4358. So long as you supply an abundance of water the vegetation will spring? Yes.
4359. *Chairman.*] Will you obtain for us the amount paid on trainage from Borenore to Sydney on your wool? Yes; if I cannot get it from our agent here, I will write to the station and get it from my brother.
4360. *Mr. Dowel.*] What distance is your station from Condobolin? 28 miles.
4361. And what distance from Forbes? 35 miles.
4362. What distance from Parkes? 40 miles.
4363. What is the area of your pastoral holding? There are 90,000 acres of purchased land, over 200,000 acres of leasehold area, and 40,400 acres of resumed area.
4364. What stock have you? Last year we sheared 246,000, including lambs.
4365. Have you any cattle? About 200 head of cattle.
4366. Is the principal portion of your holding, land of first-class quality? Yes.
4367. Its grazing capabilities are good? Yes.
4368. Is it suitable for agriculture? Yes. There may be parts of it which are, but I do not think most of it is.
4369. At all events, some part would be? Yes; if we had sufficient rain.
4370. Have you grown, on your own station, any vegetables, fruits, or vines? Yes. We have a garden at the homestead.
4371. How do the fruit trees thrive? Very well. We water them regularly.
4372. Would that be a fair indication that some fruits and cereals would grow on other parts of the run? Yes; with irrigation.
4373. Knowing the country as well as you do in that direction, do you not think, that if a line were constructed to Forbes, there would be a considerable amount of traffic in fat stock;—would you not send fat stock yourselves? We could not do so; we sell our sheep off the shears, as stores.
4374. Is there a considerable amount of traffic in stock in this district? Yes.
4375. Do you know of your own knowledge whether there is a large number of fats coming through Forbes? I do not. I know we get a great many sheep through the run, but they are not fats.

4376. Do you think there would be any traffic at all in fat sheep for the railway? Yes.
 4377. And you think a considerable quantity of wool would be brought to Forbes? Yes.
 4378. More than comes here at the present time? I could not say that.
 4379. But would it not be an inducement to squatters, to send their wool here, if they could get it away more quickly, and at a lower rate? Yes.
 4380. Therefore there is every probability of the railway being utilized for the carriage of wool? Yes.
 4381. Do you think the construction of a railway to Forbes would be a great convenience to passengers? Yes.
 4382. Any railway to Forbes? Yes.
 4383. You could transact your business more quickly and easily in Sydney than you do now? Yes.
 4384. You do not think persons would drive to Cowra;—you think they would come to Forbes? Yes.
 4385. Do you think it is at all likely, then, that people would send their wool by dray to Cowra, if there were a railway station at Forbes? No.
 4386. Supposing you were scouring wool in Forbes, would you instruct your agent to send it by dray to Cowra, instead of shipping it on to the train at Forbes? I would have it sent direct by train, of course.

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Esq.
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Mr. Alexander Biggs, contractor, sworn and examined:—

4387. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Forbes.
 4388. *Mr. Dowell.*] What is your occupation? I am a contractor.
 4389. How long have you resided here? Twenty-eight years.
 4390. You have a considerable knowledge of the district? I have.
 4391. As a contractor, will you give us some information about the timber of the district? The best timber in the district is on the Lachlan River;—it is hardwood timber. You can get pine off the river, on both sides. I have been bridge-building; I put a bridge over the Mandagery Creek, between Cudal and the Parkes-road. I also put one up between Parkes and Molong. I went all through the hills for timber. I got most of the timber for the Cudal bridge, on the other side of Cudal, at what they call the Big Flat; it is all big timber. The soft stuff came from Oakey Creek, Barragin way.
 4392. What distances are these places from Cudal? Oakey Creek is 10 miles, and Big Flat is 3. I was looking for 42 feet girders among the ironbark, on the Molong and Parkes-road. I went all through the hills there. I had to go to the caves at Barry's Stables; I was a fortnight looking, and could not find a sound stick.
 4393. Where is Barry's Stables? On the road between Cudal and Orange.
 4394. What distance from Cudal? About 14 miles;—it is supposed to be half way.
 4395. Is it a timber reserve? No, it is Crown land. I got the sticks there easily enough; but I could not get them among the ironbark.
 4396. What timber was it you obtained? White gum, or mountain ash, as they call it here.
 4397. The Government allowed you to use white gum instead of stringy-bark? We could not get stringy-bark good enough.
 4398-9. You are sure that white gum does not stand as long as ironbark? I am.
 4400. Will you please give the Committee some information as to the timber in the immediate vicinity of Forbes;—that is, within a radius of 20 miles? There is a good deal of yellow box; it is one of the best timbers going for bridge work.
 4401. And it can only be obtained in short lengths? I have got them 52 feet long. There is a good deal of gum timber; but a lot of it has been ringbarked. Thousands of acres have been spoilt.
 4402. Is the yellow box of which you speak pipey or shelly? Some of it; but most of it is good sound wood. With the exception of the gum, it is the soundest wood about this part. There is a good deal of pine yet.
 4403. What distance from the proposed railway? There is pine upon the Orange-road from here to Eugowra; the line runs through it. It runs in on to the river also. There is a big timber reserve upon the river.
 4404. What distance from Forbes? Twelve miles to the lower boundary.
 4405. Is it an extensive pine scrub? It runs 7 or 8 miles out.
 4406. The same character of timber that has been put into this building? Exactly the same.
 4407. Plenty of timber like these girders could be got out of it? Yes.
 4408. If this line were constructed, and steam saving plants were put into the scrub, timber could be supplied through the railway to Forbes, and could be sent away on the railway to various markets? I believe so.
 4409. So as to give a revenue to the railway? I think so.
 4410. What price do you pay for timber? You can get it delivered at Forbes at 11s. per hundred feet.
 4411. Is there a large quantity of the timber to which you refer? A large quantity. You may say that Forbes is in the centre of it.
 4412. Having resided in the district as long as you have, have you noticed that of late years, there has been a particular increase in its prosperity? Yes; I have noticed that.
 4413. A large number of buildings have been erected? Yes.
 4414. The building trade is now brisker than ever? Yes.
 4415. What about building outside of the town? I am pretty well acquainted with the country round about here. Most of it is settled upon. The majority of the settlers are *bona fide*.
 4416. They are still erecting dwelling-houses of a permanent character? Yes.
 4417. And you do not think they are likely to leave there? No.
 4417½. Has this been going on for a large number of years? The place has been steadily improving all the time. A few years ago we built the Lagoon bridge; there was then a lot of vacant land. Since then it has been cut up into special areas, and you cannot get timber now at all where you could get it then.
 4418. The land upon which you used to get timber is now settled upon? Yes.
 4419. And if you wanted any timber you would have to purchase it from the selectors here? Yes.
 4420. Is there anything else beside timber you think that is likely to bring traffic to the railway? Most decidedly. There is the wool; a great deal of it goes this way.
 4421. Have you any special knowledge of the stations about here? Yes.

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- Mr. A. Biggs. 4422. And you think that a large quantity of the wool grown in the district will be brought to this line?
Decidedly.
- 4 Mar., 1890. 4422½. Do you know Condobolin? Yes, and beyond.
4423. Do you think that any large portion of the produce of that district will come to Forbes? Yes.
4424. Giving traffic to the railway? Most decidedly it will.
4425. Do you know the country between Grenfell and Forbes? It is good country all the way—that is, keeping on the west side of the ranges.
4426. Are there engineering difficulties in the way of the construction of that railway that you know of? None whatever.
4427. Do you know the country traversed by the railway the Committee are now considering? I have been timber-getting from one end of it to the other.
4428. With the exception of the reserves, it is pretty well all settled upon, is it not? All the good available land is taken up, but there is a considerable portion of it which is good for nothing.
4429. What is the portion to which you refer? It is good from Parkes, 12 or 14 miles out on the road to Molong, along the surveyed route, and then from there to within about 17 miles of Molong, on the left hand side of the surveyed line, it is useless.
4430. Is it settled upon? Not in to the left. You could not settle upon it; it is all hills there. Along the road it is all settled, except at places where the land is of no use.
4431. Is that Crown land? Yes; but it is all mountain and scrub.
4432. Do you not know that it is locked up and that it could not be settled upon? I was not aware of that.
4433. Were you aware that it formed a portion of a leasehold area? I was not.
4434. What land are you referring to, particularly? All the hills from Bumberry straight along from Meranburn, in to the left. Along the road the land is good, but I am speaking about the land in to the left.
4435. Have you been there recently? It is two years since I was there.
4436. Would you be surprised to find that a considerable portion of that land is settled upon? Close to the road itself I believe it is; but if you go to the back of those sections you will find rough, hilly country till you get to Bilga. In odd places it is good, but a great portion of it is useless.
4437. What is the character of the land to the north of Parkes? That is all good.
4438. And between Parkes and Condobolin? That is very good too. From Parkes to Tomingly and that direction the land is all settled upon. Between Parkes and Oberley there are a good many selections, but there is a lot of inferior land.
4439. Where do you think the settlers to the north of Parkes would transact their business if this railway were made? With Parkes, of course.
4440. And the good country is fairly settled upon? Yes.
4441. You have been over the country yourself? Yes; I built a bridge there a short time ago.
4442. Does the settlement appear to be of a permanent character? Yes.
4443. There are a good class of men improving their holdings and combining agriculture with pastoral pursuits? Yes; some have come in only lately. The majority have come there within the last three or four years.
4444. Under any circumstances, without discussing the merits of the rival routes, is it advisable that a line should be made to Forbes? I think it is.
4445. And you think that it would be a line which would eventually pay, if it did not pay at the start? I do.

Mr. Charles St. Baker, stock and station agent, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. C. St. Baker. 4446. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a stock and station agent and auctioneer.
- 4 Mar., 1890. 4447. How long have you resided here? Since 1862. I have been a little while away.
4448. What is the nature of the evidence you wish to give us? It is with regard to the floods and the general capabilities of the district.
4449. Is this place ever flooded, or is it subject to floods? A part of Forbes has been flooded. We had a big flood in 1867; that was when the big bridge in Bathurst was washed away. It was a very slight degree less than the flood of 1870. I was agent for Messrs. Cobb & Co. at the time. I had no difficulty then in conveying the mails on horseback from here in the middle of the night to the Southern Cross, to meet the coach. The reason the coach could not come through was that there are hills here which get rotten in wet weather. They would not bear the coach, so we took the mails through on horseback.
4450. What about the country outside Forbes—is it liable to flood? Some of it; but no flood-waters get up to the line from Borenore to Forbes, as now measured. It is measured outside of the highest of the flood lines—that is, either the line of 1867 or the line of 1870. There is nothing beyond the creeks, which are met with everywhere, and which have to be bridged.
4451. Have you not known all the traffic on this road suspended on account of floods? No.
4452. Not the traffic from Forbes to Condobolin? No.
4453. You have never known the traffic stopped by flood water? No; but it has been impeded.
4454. If a resident at Condobolin swore to this Committee that he had known the traffic to be stopped for a week on account of the flood he must have been swearing a lie? It has been impeded at times.
4455. What do you mean by impeded? Well, it has been stopped to a certain extent, as at the time of the wash-away at Cootamundra, when the railway accident happened.
4456. One of you two witnesses cannot be correct? Possibly not.
4457. Have you seen much progress in the business portion of the town of Forbes within the last two or three years? Considerable progress.
4458. Do you think that a railway constructed here would be a paying line, and that it would be at the same time of material consequence to the district? That depends which way it comes.
4459. Supposing it comes from Molong to Parkes and Forbes—how would that affect the district? It might possibly pay.
4460. Do you think it would be of benefit to Forbes? I think we could get a line of greater benefit to Forbes and to the colony generally.
4461. You do not think it would be of much benefit to Forbes then? Not of much benefit,

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4462. Which of the suggested lines do you think would be of most benefit to Forbes? I think the Borenore line, via Cudal. It would go through the best country, and would serve the interests of the district as well as the general interests of the colony better.

4463. Would it also serve that large number of settlers to the north of Parkes? Yes; if the line were continued from here to Parkes.

4464. How would a line from Cowra to Forbes suit the district? It might suit it pretty well—perhaps as well as the Borenore line; but I believe in the Borenore line myself.

4465. But the worst of the three is the one via Molong and Parkes? Most decidedly; very much the worst.

4466. For what reason? In taking the line from Molong to Parkes, you are taking it along the edge of the good country. On the north side of the line the bulk of the land consists of barren ridges. Molong, the township, is in one of the northern corners. The bulk of the good country extends right away to the Lachlan River, and includes Cargo, Canowindra, and Cudal. It goes right away to Merraganowrie; that is on the Lachlan River. The flats there are noted for the wonderful crops of corn they have grown. I believe I am right in saying that they copped in one season even the crops grown on the Hunter River. All this so-called Molong country is to the southward, and a great deal of it to the south of the line from Borenore to Forbes.

4467. Would that country be served by the Cowra line? Yes.

4468. How far is Cargo from Orange? Twenty-five miles, I think; but I am not sure of the distance. Canowindra would be about 40 miles from Orange.

4469. What I want to get at is the distance of the country you are speaking of from the existing line? Orange and Cowra would be the nearest points.

4470. How far is it from Cowra to Canowindra? Only 22 miles, I believe.

4471. Is there any other information you would like to give the Committee? I should like to say that, so far as the Eugowra people are concerned, a portion of them are in the Molong district, and they would not be served at all by the Molong line. There is a considerable area of good land there. If you look at the map which is before you, showing the settlement, you will see that a great deal of the land to the north of the Molong line is blank. You will see that to the south of that line it is all settled country. To the north of the Molong line there are a lot of barren ridges, and so far as the people to the north of Parkes are concerned, if they want a railway it would be better to take it from Borenore, via Eugowra, and Cudal to Forbes, and thence to Parkes, giving them a terminus there. That seems to be the terminal point at which they are aiming.

4472. Mr. Lee.] There is a deviation, starting from a point between 217 and 218 miles on the staked line;— would not that bring the Cudal people within the influence of the Molong line? It might bring the township within its influence; but you must remember that Cudal is a long way distant from the bulk of the country which we wish to serve by the line we advocate. You are leaving out all the country to the south right down to the river, which is part of the Molong district, and which has been included in the Molong returns. They have appropriated those returns for Molong, in supporting their claim to a railway; but they omit to mention that Molong is in one of the northern corners, whereas the line we advocate, from Cudal to Borenore, is in the centre of the Molong district, with good land on each side of it.

4473. As a matter of fact, however, the deviation would serve Cudal? It might serve the township, if it came within 4 miles of it; but it could not be said to serve the Cudal people, because they extend 12 miles this side of Cudal.

4474. Having this deviation in view, do you not think it would serve the Cudal people equally well with people to the north of the staked line? There are very few to the north. You will see from the map that there is little or no settlement; the population extends on the south right down to the river. Looking at the map before you, I think it must be quite evident that the line from Borenore to Forbes would serve the largest population; the settlement as shown by the map proves that conclusively.

4475. But would not the proposed deviation be more likely to serve not only the people of Cudal, but the people to the north of the staked line? The line from Borenore to Forbes, via Cudal, would, I think, serve the greater number of people. The settlement to the north of the Molong line would not, according to the map you show me, suffer at all, because the bulk of that settlement is nearly all due north of Molong. The settlers there could come to Molong without any trouble, but a large number of persons to the south, if you adopt the Molong line, could not get to a railway without going a great distance out of their way.

4476. Are there not some residents north of the staked line over 15 miles from Molong? There might be.

4477. Are there not residents 15 miles south of the proposed line from Borenore? Undoubtedly.

4478. Then, if it were possible to make a deviation in the centre, between these two lines, would it not be likely to serve the interests of the greater number of people? Decidedly not. The Borenore-Cudal line is the most central line, and will undoubtedly serve the greatest number of people, as well as being of the greatest benefit to the colony at large.

4479. Mr. Dowel.] How long have you resided at Forbes? Since 1862. I have resided here for twenty-two years absolutely.

4480. Do you think it is necessary to bring a railway to Forbes at all? I think it has as good a claim to a railway as any town not having railway communication.

4481. Do you not think that if a railway were brought here by any of the routes to which reference has been made, it would be an advantage? I do not think it would; I do not think the Molong line would be of any advantage to Forbes.

4482. Is not Forbes the terminal point? Yes, pro tem.

4483. You know that the proposal is to construct a line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, via Flagstone Creek? Yes.

4484. As a resident of Forbes, knowing the district so intimately as you appear to do, you still say that a railway by that route would be of no advantage at all to Forbes? I must give an answer with a qualification.

4485. I will take your answer—yes or no? May I be allowed to give a qualification?

4486. I have not the slightest objection, but we do not want a speech? I am not making a speech; but I think that a much better line in the interests of the colony generally, as well as of this district, would be that from Borenore, via Cudal, to Forbes.

- Mr. C. St. Baker. 4487. Do you consider that if the line is made as proposed, it will be of any advantage to the town and district of Forbes? I do not think it will be of much advantage. I think it will be a waste of money.
- 4 Mar., 1890. 4488. As far as you can see, you think it is not desirable to construct this line; and you think that Forbes had better be without a railway, than have one by that route? That is just what I do think.
4489. Have you any knowledge of the stock-traffic that comes into Forbes? I have a general knowledge of it, but I have not looked it up.
4490. Are you aware a large quantity of wool and other produce come to Forbes? Decidedly.
4491. If a railway were brought to Forbes by any route, do you think that produce would be sent by it, or that it would be sent by bullock or horse team to Borenore or Cowra? I think a great proportion would.
4492. A large number of persons would not use the railway? I do not think they would.
4493. Would it not give them increased facilities in the shape of greater speed and cheaper rates? But they do not give us cheaper rates; we find that the railway has given us dearer rates. When the railway was at Bathurst and Rydal, we used to get loading up cheaper than we do now, as a matter of fact.
4494. What would be the cost of sending a bushel of wheat to the railway? I cannot say; I am not in that line of business. I have not looked the matter up.
4495. You do not know the rates of carriage per ton in the district? I could not give you the absolute rates just now.
4496. Have you never had any goods conveyed from the railway station to Forbes? No; but I know what others have paid.
4497. What have they paid? They have paid as much, from the nearest railway station, as £8 a ton;—that was from Bathurst some years ago.
4498. Have you never received any goods yourself? I am not in the habit of receiving goods.
4499. Supposing it has been sworn, that the carriage of wheat from Forbes to the nearest railway station, would cost 6d. per bushel, would it be of any advantage to settlers in this district who grow grain, to get their produce taken right through to Sydney by the railway at 4½d. per bushel? That is a self-evident fact.
4500. And yet you say that the railway would be of no advantage to the district? I do not think it could be of much advantage *via* Molong.
4501. Are not the agriculturists an important class, worth consideration? They are, to a certain extent; but if they could get their grain carried by a more direct line at a cheaper rate, it would be to their interests to use that means of carriage.
4502. You think, after all, that some considerable advantage would be gained by agriculturists upon a railway coming to Forbes from any point the Government might determine? There might be some advantage from whatever point the railway came. What I say is that the line you suggest would not be of the greatest advantage to the district.
4503. You would sooner be without a railway than that it should come *via* Parkes, is that what I understand you to say? You understand me to say that.
4504. *Mr. Lee.*] Have you given any attention to the suggested line from Cowra to Forbes? Yes.
4505. How would a line of that character open up the district? Very well.
4506. You know that there have been many lines surveyed into the valley of the Lachlan, from different points? Yes.
4507. And that this question of the proposed railway extension has been hanging over for many years? It has.
4508. The country has been tolerably well explored by surveys? It ought to have been.
4509. Could you suggest any line which would better serve the district than either of the three which have been mentioned this afternoon? My opinion is, that the Borenore route is the best line to open up the district. I can give you my reasons for it, if you like. I believe that a cross line from Young, *via* Forbes, to some point on the North-western line, is inevitable in the future;—that was the line I advocated myself in 1880, when I was a candidate for election to the Legislative Assembly, and when I was defeated.

Mr. John Woodliffe Girdham, gunsmith, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. W. Girdham. 4510. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your occupation? I am a gunsmith.
- 4 Mar., 1890. 4511. Where do you reside? At Forbes.
4512. How long have you been here? Since the latter end of 1861.
4513. On what point do you desire to give evidence? I collected the census in 1871 and in 1881, and I know the whole of the district. I have travelled through it all. I was given to understand that I would be required to give evidence as regards the flooded state of the country.
4514. We should be glad if you would give us any information, first of all, with reference to the Condobolin side? The road which would be taken by a railway from Borenore to Forbes, runs pretty free from any flooded country. In flood-time I have had occasion to go that way. I was to the southward of the proposed line from Borenore to Forbes, on to Condobolin. The two lines run parallel beyond Lackey's woolshed and junction within 20 miles of Condobolin. The line from Parkes on to Condobolin runs right through Warregal, Nelungaloon, and through the heart of the Honorable John Lackey's property;—that line is free from flood. So also is the line from Cudal to Toogong, Murga, Eugowra, and on to Forbes and Condobolin. In 1870 I had occasion to take the mails out, on account of the rotten state of the country. The mail could not come along—it was not on account of the floods, but the country was so rotten that the coach could not travel upon it. In taking the mails out, I went to the southward of the proposed railway line. I drove out Mr. Geysler, the last gentleman who surveyed the line from camp to camp, till he got as far as Murga. I had occasion to go right along the line, and I could see, from the way it was surveyed, that it was in one place about 3 miles away from any flooded country. The country through which the line passes is unsurpassable, either for agricultural or grazing purposes.
4515. Now as to the line to Cowra? I have also been along that route, it is a grand piece of country between Forbes and Eugowra, and on to Woodstock. I think Woodstock will be the nearest and best point at which to tap the cross line;—there is country there which cannot be surpassed. One of the Commissioners,

Commissioners, Mr. Fehon, has expressed the opinion that it was a grand national line, and that he never saw better country. It has been said that these gentlemen,—I am referring to the Railway Commissioners—go through the country with their eyes shut. That is a falsehood. I drove Mr. Fehon from Forbes to Wellington, and there was not an inch of that country that that gentleman did not take particular notice of. He observed both the quality of the soil and its carrying capacity. The gentleman who swore, at Molong, that the Commissioners saw nothing of the country, is a sanguinary perverter of the truth. I know the whole of this district, and I do not think that for agricultural or grazing purposes it can be beaten anywhere in the colony.

Mr. J. W.
Girdham.
4 Mar., 1890.

4516. You have seen the Lachlan in flood? I have.

4517. Have you seen the dray road between this and Condobolin flooded? Never. If it were, God help Forbes.

4518. Have you ever known the traffic to be stopped at any time? No, except on the river road.

4519. On which side of the river? On the north side. I was engaged for some time repairing the telegraph line, and the flood waters never stopped me;—I had 60 miles of the line to look after between Forbes and Condobolin, and I have often worked in flood time. There are some places, or rather, were some places, between here and Condobolin, at Bumbergin, where at one time we could not pass, but they have built a bridge, and now you can pass in time of flood. Between here and the Southern Cross the Government have made the road 3 feet 6 inches high, and water which used to come here in 1870 and 1874, instead of coming round Forbes, now goes to the south side of the river.

4520. *Mr. Dowel.*] You know the country well between here and Woodstock? I do.

4521. What is its character between Woodstock and Eugowra? Very good.

4522. You know the country between Eugowra and Parkes? Yes.

4523. Also between Eugowra and Forbes? Yes.

4524. What is the character of the whole of that country? From Eugowra to Parkes, on the south-western side of the Euro Mountain it is very good. I do not think the country between Eugowra and Forbes could be surpassed—it would grow anything.

4525. Do you know the distance from Woodstock to Eugowra? No; but I noticed that the country was particularly good.

William Brooke, Esq., journalist, sworn and examined:—

4526. *Mr. Dowel.*] You reside at Forbes? I do.

4527. How long have you resided here? Twenty-eight years.

4528. You have seen Forbes grow to its present dimensions? From the start up to the present time.

4529. What is your occupation? I am a journalist.

4530. Have you followed that occupation for a long time? For nearly twenty years.

4531. Previous to that what were you doing? I was living on the river, farming.

4532. What is the nature of the information you desire to give to the Committee? I do not wish to give any particular information. I see from the paper to which my name is attached, that general information is required. I cannot have lived here so long without knowing a great deal of the general character of the country. I know it all thoroughly for many miles round. I have been interested in the railway question for many years. I have taken an active part in the agitation.

4533. You have heard most of the evidence which has been given to the Committee? Most of it.

4534. Do you endorse the statements which have been made, as to this being a good agricultural and pastoral district? I do. I have travelled over a good deal of this country, and over a good portion of Victoria. I do not know a district in any of these colonies which is so well adapted as this one to pastoral and agricultural purposes.

4535. You think it desirable that a railway should be constructed to Forbes? Decidedly.

4536. Without discussing the relative merits of the rival routes, I would ask you whether from your large knowledge of the district, you think that a line to Forbes from any one of the points named should be constructed? I think it is desirable that a railway should be constructed from one of the points named. I look upon the railway as simply a better kind of road, and anything which tends to make communication between the provinces and the metropolis readier and more speedy, cannot be otherwise than an advantage to a district.

4537. Do you believe that the construction of this railway would develop the resources of the district, and add to the prosperity of the people? I do.

4538. I ask you the same question with regard to the proposed line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, *via* Flagstone Creek;—do you think that would be of any advantage to Forbes? In this way;—that we should have speedier communication than we have at present, but by a more circuitous route.

4539. You are aware that this route would involve 11 miles less of railway construction than any other of the suggested routes? I was not aware of that.

4540. Do you know the line from Molong to Parkes? I have not travelled the whole line, but I have travelled it from Parkes to Manildra.

4541. You know the country from Parkes to Forbes? Thoroughly.

4542. You know that a large portion of that country is a gold-field reserve, and that no settlement exists? I am aware of that.

4543. And that, therefore, the traffic which would be brought from Forbes, would be from the outlying districts? Yes; some portion of the traffic, but not much, from the south side of the river.

4544. Do you think that the construction of this line will materially benefit the outside population of the district? As I said just now, I think a line coming from any point to Forbes, could hardly help being a benefit to Forbes; still I do not think the line you mention is the most beneficial line for the district.

4545. Do you think that if this line is constructed any considerable revenue would be brought to the railway in the shape of traffic in produce and stock? Of course some revenue would be brought to it, but I could not say how much.

4546. The revenue would come from almost any point to this railway? As I said just now, I do not think much revenue would be derived from the south side of the river.

4547. Would the Condobolin people use Forbes as a depôt? I do not think they would.

4548. When the witnesses from Condobolin stated that they would make Forbes a depôt, although they favoured the Cowra line, do you think they represented the views of the Condobolin people? I know, as a matter of fact, that the Condobolin people favour the Cowra line.

4549.

W. Brooke,
Esq.
4 Mar., 1890.

- W. Brooke, Esq.
4 Mar., 1890.
4549. Witnesses from Condobolin have told us that if the railway were brought to Forbes they would make Forbes their depôt? Possibly they would; I really do not know.
4550. But do you think it is likely? I do not know.
4551. Do you think that they would prefer to go to Cowra? I am not in a position to say.
4552. What source of revenue could be depended upon for a railway to Forbes? Well, there would be the passenger traffic and a good deal of ordinary merchandise. There are large quantities of goods coming into Forbes from various railway-stations. From Borenore and from Cowra, nearly every day, heavily-laden teams come in. That traffic, I presume, would come to the railway. There are also quantities of goods coming from Cowra, Cudal, and Cargo, in the way of wheat and other produce. Then the corn grown at Eugowra would be a source of revenue to the railway. I noticed that Mr. Prow in his evidence yesterday, gave some statistics as to goods which came to him from the railway-station at Cowra. There is also a considerable quantity of goods coming to him by team, which have never travelled upon the railway at all. Then there is the return produce from the district—wool, grain, hides, tallow, and, I believe, also a large quantity of fruit. I have seen tons upon tons of magnificent apples lying in Mr. Tozer's garden rotting. He could not sell them; he had no means of carrying them away.
4553. If a line were brought from any point to Forbes, you think a large quantity of fruit would be sent upon it? Fruit, especially. For many descriptions it would hardly matter how circuitous the route was. For other descriptions of course the quicker the despatch the better.
4554. Do you think the passenger traffic from Borenore to Forbes would be continued by coach, or that persons would use the railway *via* Molong? I should imagine that persons would use the railway by whatever route it came. I know that from my own experience. I would rather ride in a railway carriage than travel in a coach, although it might be a few miles further round.
4555. Although the railway might come *via* Molong and Parkes, you would prefer to travel that way by rail to travelling in a coach? Yes. Whatever view I might hold as to the desirableness of having a line constructed by any other route, it would not influence me in travelling any way. I should study, in the first instance, my own personal convenience.
4556. When witnesses tell us that if the Molong line were made they would continue to send their produce by bullock-team to Cowra, do you think they mean what they say—do you think they would actually do that if a railway were constructed? A great deal depends on the kind of produce.
4557. Wool, for instance? I have no doubt that would go by railway, but in the reception of goods from Sydney, the heavier class of goods—ironware, salt, and goods of that character—I believe the majority of those would come from Cowra still.
4558. You know that the Commissioners now work our railways on commercial principles? Yes.
4559. Do you not think they would have an eye to the matter to which you refer? But they do not like to run the railway at a loss.
4560. You know what differential rates are? Yes.
4561. Do you think it is likely that they would allow goods in this district to be carried by bullock-teams? We have seen that battle fought out at Goulburn and elsewhere.
4562. Let me ask you one more question about the Cowra line. Is there any considerable amount of traffic between Forbes and Victoria? There is a good deal of goods traffic with Victoria, and a good deal of passenger traffic as well. Many of the settlers living on the river and in the neighbourhood of Forbes and Parkes have come from Victoria—they have a great deal of correspondence with that place.
4563. Is there a considerable amount of merchandise or stock traffic? A quantity of stock traffic.
4564. Any merchandise traffic? A good deal of machinery comes from Victoria, by way of Cowra and Young.
4565. Is there any furniture and other merchandise coming that way? The largest proportion of merchandise by far comes from Sydney.
4566. You have come a great deal into contact with persons residing in various parts of the district who may be considered to represent public opinion? Yes.
4567. What is the consensus of public opinion with regard to this railway question? It seems to be divided.
4568. But there is no division of opinion as regards the necessity for constructing the railway to Forbes? No.
4569. The only difference of opinion is as to the route? That is all.
4570. I suppose certain persons prefer certain routes? Yes.
4571. Have you any knowledge of the country on the Molong line? I was never in Molong in my life. I know all the other routes. I have travelled repeatedly between Forbes and Borenore. One of the advantages of that route is that there is a permanent watercourse along it. From the time you leave Heifer Station Creek, 5 miles from Orange, there is a watercourse on your right-hand side nearly all the way to Eugowra, and I take it that the presence of water is an important element in the settlement of population.
4572. Is the country liable to be flooded in any way? I have never seen it flooded, and I have been over it winter and summer.
4573. Does the line pass through any large estates? There is Mr. Smith's. I do not know the extent of it. I have been told that the line passes through 30 miles of private property, but I am sure it is nothing like that. I should take it to be from 4 to 6 miles. That is from my personal observation as I have gone through.
4574. Then the statement made by Dr. Ross to the Minister in 1884, to the effect that the line from Borenore, *via* Cudal would pass through 30 miles of private land, is not correct? I should say that it was decidedly incorrect—at variance with the facts.
4575. Are you aware that the line would pass for a mile through an almost bottomless swamp? That statement is also incorrect.
4576. Is the statement also incorrect that much of the country is liable to floods? Totally incorrect, I think.
4577. Is the statement correct that population is scanty, and that the only settlement is at Cudal? There is population the whole of the way.
4578. Through the private land to which you refer? The private land does not extend beyond a few miles. As I said, I think there are from 4 to 6 miles. That would be Mr. Smith's property. I believe Keenan's people have purchased land, but I do not know to what extent.
- 4579.

4579. You, yourself, are in favour of a railway being constructed to Forbes? I am, certainly.

4580. And you think that Parliament would be justified in authorizing the construction of the line, and that a fair revenue would be derived from the traffic? I do. It is a question of route; that is all. I should like to add that in an all-important matter of this sort, as affecting the country as well as this particular district, we have to consider not only the population now existing throughout these areas, but we must bear in mind that the railway will be a work of a permanent character, intended to benefit not only the present population but the population in years to come. It is hard to say what will be the population of these districts twenty-five years hence. Population, as a rule, follows the watercourses, which, as we know, are few and far between in Australia. In years to come, as I believe, the population will be very much larger on the rivers and the watercourses than elsewhere, and on the principle that the railways are intended to confer the greatest good on the greatest number, I think they should follow, as nearly as possible, the watercourses. Something has been said as to the competition between railway carriage and team carriage. I believe there is a man in the town now who has carried goods from Sydney to Forbes at £5 a ton all the way. I know the country between Forbes and Cowra. As soon as Mr. Suttor made the proposal, in Parliament, that a line to Forbes should be constructed from Woodstock, I at once went over to Cowra, and drove on to Woodstock. I travelled over the country from that point to Canowindra. It is all splendid agricultural land—that is, the lower spurs of the Canoblas Range, just before they fall into the flat lands on the river. Of course, a line coming from Woodstock would have the benefit of the Lachlan River, the Belabula River, and the Eugowra Creek. From Canowindra to Eugowra, there are 18 or 20 miles of splendid land. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that it is in contemplation to construct a line from Young *via* Grenfell to Forbes, Parkes, and Dubbo, because the statement has been made in Parliament; and, in view of that intention, I think the better line for first purposes, to connect Forbes with the existing system, would be from Borenore.

W. Brooke,
Esq.
4 Mar., 1890.

Mr. Thomas Tozer, gardener, sworn and examined:—

4581. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a gardener.

4582. Where do you reside? At Forbes.

4583. What is the area of your garden? $18\frac{1}{2}$ acres.

4584. Is it wholly under fruit-trees? There are 12 acres under fruit-trees.

4585. Do you grow anything else besides fruit? Vegetables, and a little hay for my own use.

4586. Do you irrigate your ground? Yes.

4587. What means of irrigation have you? A portable engine and a centrifugal pump.

4588. Do you find that fruit grows well in this district? Yes. I have been growing it for the last twenty-five years.

4589. Have you grown it in any other district? In Sydney.

4590. Is there a great difference between the adaptability of this soil and the Sydney soil, for the growth of fruit? A great difference.

4591. Which is the better of the two? These alluvial flats are better than any soil about Sydney that I know of.

4592. But you could not grow fruit without irrigation? Yes. I have done all the way along, until this last five years, without it, and I have grown as big fruit as I grow now.

4593. What fruits do you grow? Apples, pears, peaches, plums, apricots, nectarines—some of my oranges went to Sydney last season, and some of the Parramatta judges stated that they had not seen anything like them.

4594. Are the peaches you exhibit a fair sample of your peaches? Yes.

4595. Did you ever see finer peaches anywhere else? No.

4596. Have you any idea as to what the larger of them weigh? They go about three-quarters of a pound each; they would be considerably more than half a pound.

4597. And what would the larger apples weigh? $1\frac{1}{4}$ lb.

4598. What do you do with your fruit? I sell all I can about Forbes, Parkes, and Condobolin; the rest I take to Nymagee and Cobar.

4599. Do you think that if there were a means of getting it quicker to Sydney you would have a big market for all you could grow? Yes.

4600. Do you think there would be room here for an industry of this kind, if there were better means of transit to Sydney? Yes, plenty of room.

4601. I mean for other persons to start at it also? Yes, as long as we had the means of taking it away. I have taken fruit to Orange—not lately.

4602. Have you grown grapes? I have.

4603. Have you made wines? No; I sell them all for the table.

4604. How many acres have you under vine? About $2\frac{1}{2}$.

4605. Have you trenched your ground for fruit-growing? It does not require it.

4606. Not even for grapes? No. I used two ploughs about 14 or 15 inches deep. If you trenched this ground for fruit-trees you would get no fruit at all—the trees would all go to wood.

4607. Do you know if the trees live long in the district? I have peach-trees about seventeen years old. They do not generally live so long in Sydney.

4608. Are the peaches you exhibit from young trees? They are from trees about seven years old, but I had peaches as big as that this year off old trees.

4609. Do you think you would be able to send some to Sydney if there were a railway? I could often catch the Sydney market, and get a good price. It would be far better than travelling 250 miles with a van.

4610. Could you give us any idea of the weight of the season's fruit from your orchard and vineyard? No, I could not.

4611. About how many tons would there be? I could not form an idea. In some seasons I have had tons lying on the ground.

4612. Do you grow a large quantity of vegetables? Not a great quantity, until lately. We could send tons of vegetables to the Sydney market. We have country here for the growth of vegetables which could not be beaten in Sydney.

Mr.
T. Tozer.
4 Mar., 1890.

Robert

Robert Matteson Vaughn, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

R. M.
Vaughn,
Esq.
4 Mar., 1890.

4613. *Mr. Lee.*] You reside at Grenfell? Yes; I have resided there for twenty-three years.
4614. And you formerly represented the district in the Legislative Assembly? Yes.
4615. Will you please give such evidence as you desire to place before the Committee in your own way? I have not much to say, and I will be as brief as possible. The chief evidence I wish to give is as to the cross-line from Young, through Grenfell, Forbes, Parkes, and on to Dubbo and Werris Creek. The country about Grenfell is particularly adapted to wheat-growing. It is also good grazing country, being open box forest. The line has been surveyed, and the route is described by the surveyors as being one of the easiest and cheapest in construction of any upon which they have been engaged. I am, personally, an expert in the construction of railways and other public works, being a civil engineer and contractor. I can say of my own knowledge, that a line should be constructed from Young to Forbes and Parkes, for £3,500 per mile. The town of Grenfell itself is an important town, having 4 banks, 9 stores, 8 hotels, 4 blacksmiths, 3 wheelwrights, 3 saw-mills in the town itself, and 2 outside, 2 flour-mills, 1 brewery, 1 cordial factory, a superior Public School, a Roman Catholic school, and one quartz-crushing machine. The distance from the junction with the cross-line to Forbes would be 74 miles. I will give you some statistics as to the tonnage of goods which has been paid upon by the town—that is, the amount which has been paid for goods during the past twelve months. The haulage is estimated at from 10,000 to 12,000 tons, both from Young and Cowra—that is, annually. The traffic is divided—some of the goods come by way of Young and more by way of Cowra. One firm alone have paid £2,000 freight during the past twelve months. With regard to the rival routes, I can speak from my own personal knowledge. I have been over the lines from Borenore and Cowra, and from Young to this point. I do not know the route from Molong to Parkes; but I know the route from Borenore to Forbes very well. I consider that that would be the best line with which to connect the present railway system with Forbes. That is unless the cross-line were made, and that would accommodate everybody, I think.
4616. What would be the particular advantage which would be derived from the construction of a cross-country line taking those towns which are not already served? In the first place, it would be a great stock route in case of drought. The people could remove their stock by the shortest and best route up to the mountains about Kiandra, or to New England the other way. It would be a much better and cheaper route than the other one. There would also be a good route for the supply of Melbourne, and fat stock—that must, at no distant date, be a great source of traffic in this country. Melbourne, at the present time, cannot supply herself with meat, and at no distant date we must supply her, the Victorian country being already occupied. I think the traffic in stock will be immense. I think that point is worthy the greatest consideration. A line which would go through a mild climate and through level country is, of course, best suited to that particular kind of traffic. The animals would not be knocked about to the extent that they would if they had to go over the rough country about Blayney.
4617. Would the route you name open up a large wheat-growing country? The statistics show that Grenfell has this year the highest average per acre of any part of the Australian colonies, being nearly 20 bushels. To be exact, it is $19\frac{1}{10}\frac{1}{2}$.
4618. Are those figures taken from official sources? From Coghlan.
4619. To which market does this large quantity of wheat find its way? It would find its way to the Sydney market, with railway communication. I had an order from Sydney recently to buy 100,000 bags at Grenfell, if I could purchase it at a certain price.
4620. You know the present Railway Commissioners have made special rates for the carriage of grain? Yes.
4621. Would the special rates admit of the district you name sending its wheat to Sydney? Not with any hope of profit. I could purchase it at 2s. 6d. a bushel; but when I came to figure out the charges I found I could not execute the order.
4622. I suppose the wheat was in the district? I believe it could have been bought in that, and the Young district.
4623. The railway rates, even at the reduced rate, would not allow a profit? No.
4624. Presuming that the present rates are cut down to the lowest possible point compatible with a slight return to the Department, what prospect is there in the future of your getting your wheat to market? If a railway were constructed at £3,500 per mile I think we might allow for the rates being even still further reduced. We should not go over the mountains; we should go over the Southern line.
4625. Young would be the point of connection in this projected line? Yes.
4626. What distance would Young be from Sydney? 250 miles.
4627. That would be equal to $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per bushel? Yes.
4628. And could wheat be carried at a profit for that figure? Not at present.
4629. Have you thought of any rate which the farmers could pay, which would enable them to send wheat to the Sydney market at a profit? No; I have not.
4630. What is the net value per bushel they could receive on the spot to pay them? I think there would be a profit at 2s. 6d. per bushel, if we had railway communication, and the charges were reduced. Three shillings would pay.
4631. Is there any other information you desire to give to the Committee? I should like to say a few words as to the proposed line to Cowra. I am only speaking now as an engineer. I understand that from Cowra to Blayney there is a rise of more than 2,000 feet. At all events, there are grades on that line of 1 in 40, that is the highest grade allowed in railway construction in the colony. There are 5 miles at one part of the line with a grade of 1 in 40.
4632. Continuously? Very nearly so. There is a grade of 1 in 40 on several points of the line, consequently that would be the ruling grade, and no more than could be hauled upon those steep grades could be carried on any part of the line. That is an insuperable objection to sending all the traffic from Forbes through Cowra, to say nothing of the fact that if you build upon the Lachlan River, the line will only serve one side. The traffic must all come from one side, unless bridges were built at short intervals and at great expense along the 50 miles of river. There is some flooded country between Forbes and Cowra, and that would be another objection to the line. These places are near Eugowra Creek, and also the Belahula River.

George Henry Greene, Esq., M.P., sworn and examined:—

4633. *Mr. Dowel.*] You are the representative of the Grenfell electorate in the Legislative Assembly? G. H. Greene,
Esq., M.P.

Yes.

4634. Have you resided in that district for any length of time? About twelve years.

4635. You know the district pretty well? I know the greater part of it pretty well.

4636. Can you say what is the population of Grenfell? The population about eighteen months ago was 7,456, but I have been disappointed in more recent returns I expected to get. The return I give is for the Grenfell electorate. I do not know the exact population of the town.

4637. Does not the boundary of the Grenfell electorate come close to the Lachlan, near Forbes? Yes; to the south side of the Lachlan.

4638. Within what distance of the township of Forbes? I suppose it would be $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from here to the river.

4639. What is the nature of the evidence you desire to give to the Committee? I propose to show that a line connecting Forbes, *via* Grenfell, with the Southern line, will open up an enormous amount of traffic between the southern portion of New South Wales and Victoria, and that it would afford facilities for the farmers of the Grenfell district to send their wheat and other produce not only to Sydney and to Melbourne, but—and this, in my opinion, is of still greater value—north and west. I consider, and I think I have strong grounds for saying it, that in point of production there is no district in the whole of New South Wales which stands higher than Grenfell in proportion to its population. I have here some statistics which Mr. Coghlan kindly compiled for me, showing the progressive nature of the increase in all kinds of production in the Grenfell electorate since 1884. I have also a table prepared by Mr. Coghlan, showing the rainfall, and I am prepared to give the average in the production of wheat per acre for a number of years. I claim that by this evidence I shall establish the fact, that, whatever advantages we may be at present blessed with, are not merely chance advantages or advantages gained by spasmodic efforts, but that there has been a steady, gradual increase in population and wealth of every description. I am also prepared to say that there is land awaiting the plough at this moment, not in hundreds of acres but by hundreds of thousands of acres—that land is quite as good as any land now under cultivation.

4640. Are there any Crown Lands? Yes; but there are large quantities of this land held by men who farm and hold their own land, and who are looking forward to developing the soil, and to attaining an independence by working it. As a matter of fact, no one can travel through the district without being struck by the number of independent men who have made a living by agriculture—men who are now wealthy. It would be invidious to name them, but I could name them by the score. These are men who have cultivated the soil themselves to a large extent, they will bear me out in saying that if a means of conveyance of wheat were offered, there would be simply no limit to the amount of cultivation which could be successfully carried out. I am not a large farmer myself, but I have spoken to these men, and I take a great interest in this work. I am informed that if they can only net half a crown a bushel on the ground for their wheat, they would be prepared to farm not 100 or 200 acres, but that they would substitute 1,000 acres where they have now 100 acres. My own experience and knowledge lead me to believe that these statements are absolutely and perfectly true. To show the progressive nature of the advance that has been made, I may state, that in 1884 there were only 4,678 acres under wheat; in the year just ended, there were, according to Coghlan, 7,913 acres under wheat.

4641. Before you proceed with your statistics, I will ask you whether you are aware that the railway line which has been referred to the Committee, is from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, *via* Flagstone Creek? Yes.

4642. In opposition to that line, you are suggesting another route? Not in opposition to that line, necessarily.

4643. In connection with it? Yes.

4644. What route do you propose? I do not feel that I am capable of giving evidence as to the lines north of the Lachlan, but it occurred to me that, knowing with what object or intention the line could be carried on beyond Forbes, and knowing also the position of affairs to the south of Forbes, I might give information which would enable the Committee to make up their minds more easily as to the future course of the railway.

4645. Do you desire Grenfell to be connected by railway with Forbes? Yes.

4646. With what point of the existing system? I think the line should go from Young to Grenfell and Forbes. From Forbes I have advocated the line on to Dubbo, but under existing conditions I do not feel justified in offering an opinion on the line north of the Lachlan.

4647. Your line would stop at Forbes? Yes.

4648. You think that that line would induce the farmers of your district to increase the cultivation of their areas? I am satisfied of it.

4649. That is if they had a market to Forbes and Young? I have no hesitation in saying that the increase in production would be beyond calculation.

4650. You have given us the area under wheat this year;—what is the yield? In 1884, the average was 15.1 bushels; in 1885, 13.4; in 1885-6, 7.9; in 1886-7, 20.5; in 1887-8, 11.3; in 1889, 4.18; in 1889-90, 19.96. It is equivalent, practically, to 20 bushels. I am assured by those who collected the statistics from the farmers that the amount is habitually under-rated. It seems that many persons have an idea that they will be taxed on their produce; it is an unreasoning idea, but they often dislike to disclose the full extent of their crops. Last year we had under crop altogether 8,440 acres. This year I have not the number, but if it rises in proportion to the area under wheat it will be considerably larger. With regard to the 8,440 acres, I may state that from my own knowledge, many farmers only return the amount of crop they actually reap. In many cases in 1888-9, they abandoned their crops practically, and turned their stock into them, and treated them as if the land had not been cultivated at all. As regards the rainfall, I should fancy that the average would be over 22 inches—that is for Grenfell. The returns from Marsden, Lake Cowal, Goolagong, and the Pinnacle, are almost equally satisfactory. As regards the stock which are carried in this district, in 1884 we had only 906,209 sheep—the number has progressively increased until in 1888—I have not the returns for this last year, but they are much larger than those for 1888, the number was 1,593,936;—that is the number of sheep upon which the assessment was paid. Then as regards the public schools, I have only seven out of thirteen schools in my list. In these the enrolment amounts to 601. I have also the post office returns of the different towns. There is one other point to which I would draw your attention—the gross amount of wheat this year was 157,984 bushels.

As

G. H. Greene,
Esq., M.P.
4 Mar., 1890.

- G. H. Greene, Esq., M.P.
4 Mar., 1890.
- As regards settlement, there were selected last year 69,461 acres. There are held altogether in the district under conditional purchase 320,000 acres; and under conditional lease, with a preferent right of purchase, 200,000 acres. The land revenue for last year was £22,000, and the returns taken for years past show a steady and continuous increase, averaging for the past two years, 1888 and 1889, 25 per cent. I will hand in the details for publication as an appendix to my evidence. I may mention that these returns have been compiled by Government officials. Another advantage which we claim, rightly or wrongly, for the line we suggest is, that although the distance from Forbes to Sydney, *via* Grenfell and Young, would be greater than that by any of the other lines proposed—probably this is a matter for experts to determine—the cost to the country per ton for conveyance to Sydney might not be greater, as the grade would be much less. The point I am about now to mention, I touch upon with some diffidence, not being an expert. I am given to believe that the opinion of those who have studied the matter—the opinion of men who have gone carefully over the line from Young to Grenfell and Forbes, is that it can be made one of the cheapest and most productive lines in New South Wales. As a matter of fact, the greater part of the timber used for sleepers and for the construction of bridges on the Young and Blayney line, was taken from the neighbourhood of Grenfell. We have an enormous quantity of splendid ballast and magnificent ironbark, stringybark, and white box. With regard to the grades on the Young and Blayney line, I travelled by that line for weeks, twice almost every day, on my way down to Sydney. On several occasions I have stood on the platform at Monteagle waiting for the train to get up the 1 in 40 grade. There are several of those grades on the line. On one occasion, coming from Young to Monteagle, without any weight except empty trucks, the engine-driver was able to get off the engine and walk alongside it. On another occasion I waited 25 minutes at Monteagle, hearing the engine puffing and blowing, and trying to get up the grade on the other side. The driver was only able to do so by going back some distance—getting up a full head of steam, getting the incline behind, and charging the hill.
4651. Then you are decidedly opposed to any railway to be constructed having a grade of 1 in 40? Most distinctly.
4652. Do you know whether the line, as surveyed from Cowra to Forbes, has grades of 1 in 40? I do not know.
4653. However, you would consider that an objection to the line? Most undoubtedly.
4654. You are not proposing any rival route whatever to the route *via* Molong? No.
4655. Are you acquainted with that route? I cannot say that I know it, except from the appearance of the plans.
4656. You would not like to offer an opinion upon it? No.
4657. The Grenfell and Young line would not interfere with the line before the Committee? No.
4658. Do you know whether the Grenfell line would pass through any large estates? I believe it would. I do not know for how many miles, but another gentleman will be able to give you that information. I think I could state that one estate through which it would pass will probably be cut up for sale, and as far as any land of my own in the neighbourhood is concerned, I am offering it, at this moment, to prevent the evil which undoubtedly is brought about by the holding of large estates in close proximity to a railway.
4659. Would the route you suggest pass through any land of your own? No, none.
4660. From your knowledge of the country between Young and Grenfell, do you think that a railway constructed through it, would be likely to pay interest on the capital, expenditure, and working expenses? I think so. I have no hesitation in saying that it would pay infinitely better than many lines which are now being worked.

Ernest Henry Kinleside Crawford, Esq., manager for the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Co., sworn and examined:—

- E. H. K. Crawford, Esq.
4 Mar., 1890.
4661. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At the Pinnacle.
4662. What is your occupation? I am manager for the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Co., on the Pinnacle station.
4663. What evidence do you desire to give to the Committee? Believing, as I do, that the line upon which the Committee are now taking evidence, would go to Forbes, I desire to say that, in my opinion, that line would be incomplete if it were not taken further. I think if the line were extended in the way I would suggest, it would be of great advantage to the colony at large.
4664. Will you give your reasons? My chief reason is that if this line comes from the north-western line to Parkes and Forbes, and then on to Grenfell and Young, it would open up a route from the north-western line to the Great Southern line. The line would, in my opinion, be easily constructed, and would allow stock-owners out to the west and north-west—at Bourke for instance—to send their stock in times of drought to Tumut and Gundagai; and also to send their fat stock direct, either to Melbourne or to Sydney, which would also be a great advantage. I can give you statistics as to the number of sheep and cattle passing through Grenfell since 1887. In 1887, there were 267,275 sheep, and 4,532 head of cattle; in 1888, there were 198,789 sheep, and 8,058 head of cattle; in 1889, there were 206,218 sheep, and twenty-three head of cattle. There would be far more sheep travelling that way if the owners were able to send them by train to the mountains; they are in many instances unable to travel from Bourke in drought time, owing to the bad state of the roads. The line I advocate would pass through country which is well adapted to the production, not only of fat stock, but of wheat, and all sorts of crops;—in fact nearly any crop the farmers choose to put in. The farmers are now debarred from growing to the extent to which they would grow, because they have not railway communication. It becomes too expensive for them to cart their produce to the nearest railway station. If the railway passed through the towns named, I am sure that many of the holdings through which it passed would be subdivided into small farms, and that instead of our seeing the country one vast sheep-walk, it would, in a few years, be thickly populated; there would be flourishing little farms all along the route. A considerable portion of the route is reserved for railway purposes—consequently there would not be so much private land to be purchased.

Mr. William Willis Priddle, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. W. W. Priddle.
4 Mar., 1890.
4665. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer and grazier.
4666. Where? 28 miles from Forbes and 13 miles from Grenfell, at Little Bald Hills.
4667. Will you, as concisely as possible, give the Committee the information you wish to lay before them? What I chiefly desired to say was that it is not of much use to grow a crop, because we cannot get it away.

away. I suppose I was about the first on the Grenfell side of the plains to grow anything worth while. From my place towards Grenfell, and round the town, say within 12 miles of it, there are twenty men who, if they had railway communication, would be prepared to grow crops of from 500 to 1000 acres.

4668. You mean a railway through Grenfell and Forbes? Yes; it would benefit me if it came to Forbes and stopped here; but a line going to the Southern railway would benefit me and others still more. I have 240 acres under crop this year; I had a very good crop; I took 1,000 bags of wheat off it, and 50 bags of maize.

4669. About 20 bushels to the acre? Yes. A storm wasted another ten I suppose, and I cut about 30 acres for hay.

4670. You say that if you had a railway to Forbes, it would be a benefit to you? Undoubtedly. I could get about 3s. 2d. for my wheat in Forbes if we had a railway. I get 3s. now, but I cannot possibly draw it, on account of the state of the roads. Two teams have been ten days on the road. They started with eighty bags and brought back forty of them. I said "It is of no use to tackle the plain any more;—it would take ten horses to draw an empty waggon."

4671. Is the plain liable to be flooded at any time? Water runs on it, but not to any depth;—there is a way of escaping the plain, if a railway were about to be constructed. I ought to tell you that there are timber and railway reserves all the way through to Grenfell from here. For my part I would give my land gratis to the Government if they would construct a railway—it would go through my property three miles, not the way it is surveyed, but by a better route. I should be most happy to point out the better route.

Mr. William Walter Bell, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

4672. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? In the district of Grenfell, 7 miles from Grenfell.

4673. What is your occupation? I am a farmer and grazier. I shall have been at the same place nineteen years next December.

4674. Have you a general knowledge of the country about here? Yes.

4675. Is it fairly settled upon? All of it;—that is round Grenfell, for 10 or 12 miles.

4676. Is the character of the country good? Yes.

4677. Good crops are produced? Yes. I had 20 acres of oats this year—it was in the oldest paddock I had—it is eighteen years old. I have had 15 crops in eighteen years off it, and this year I had 930 bushels by the bag—it would be nearly 50 bushels to the acre. It has been only rested twice in seventeen years.

4678. Yet you appear to be growing as good oats as you ever grew in the same paddock? Yes. My next oldest paddock is sixteen years—it has been rested only one year in that time. It has been cropped fifteen out of the sixteen years. This year we had to cut a great portion of the crop for hay; it was so heavy. The rest was cut for wheat—it is not threshed yet, but I daresay it will go 2½ bushels to the acre.

4679. What other crops do you grow besides these? I had about 200 acres in this year. I had some corn in, I suppose it will go 20 bushels to the acre, owing to two months of dry weather.

4680. Do you grow fruit and vegetables in your part of the country? Some, but not to any extent.

4681. Do you combine sheep-farming with agricultural pursuits? Yes.

4682. What advantage would result to you if a railway were constructed to Forbes? We should be able to send our grain away to market direct. At present, my place being about 30 miles from Cowra, it costs me to get my grain to the train 25 or 30 per cent. more than it costs to get it from Cowra to Sydney.

4683. That prevents you from availing yourself of the metropolitan market? Yes; I was in Sydney a month ago; I went to the office and obtained the information about trainage, and I found that if it were not for the cartage, we could send our wheat down to Sydney. The cartage takes off the profit. We should get about 2s. a bushel, and we cannot do it under half-a-crown. We can do with half-a-crown on the ground.

4684. You cannot find a market in Sydney at remunerative rates? No.

4685. And you believe that a railway constructed to Forbes would materially alter your position, and be a great benefit to you? Yes.

4686. You think that all the farmers would send wheat by the railway? Yes; there are four of us within 2 miles of one another, and we have 600 tons of hay, and 16,000 bushels of wheat, and no market for it.

Mr. Thomas Andrew Crowe, auctioneer, sworn and examined:—

4687. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your occupation? I am an auctioneer.

4688. Living where? At Forbes.

4689. You desire, I believe, to tender some evidence as to the suggested railway from Woodstock to Forbes and Parkes? I merely wished to impress upon the Committee the necessity for taking it into consideration on account of its peculiar advantages. It would not only benefit more places, but it would give means of access which none of the other proposed lines will give. The line I refer to would go from Woodstock to Eugowra; it would branch off at Eugowra, to Forbes and to Parkes, giving both places a railway. If the line were extended north from Parkes it would give the same facilities for trucking stock from the Northern line to the Southern line, as would be given by the suggested cross-line. It would also place the people in the Parkes district within much easier access of all the southern markets than would the railway *via* Molong. There would also be a saving in the cost of construction. The line would be cheaper either than the Borenore or the Molong line. It would also be available for saving heavy traffic over the Blue Mountains. I may state that I am secretary to the Pastoral and Agricultural Association here, and I have a few statistics. I have taken two periods of ten years, 1879 and 1889. You will see the difference between the show of ten years ago and the show of last year. The show in 1879 was the sixth show of the Association. The number of exhibitors was fifty-nine; but in 1889 there were 179 exhibitors. The number of entries in 1879 was 154, while in 1889 there were 526. The prizes offered in 1879 amounted to £140, and in 1889 to £430. In agricultural produce and dairy produce, flour, fruits, and vegetables, there were seven entries in 1879, as against forty-nine entries in 1889. With regard to traffic on the railway, the manager of the Britannia Gold-mining Co. assures me that from September, 1887, to March, 1890, they paid carriage on goods to the extent of £576 17s. 10d. This is on machinery.

4690. Have you known any stacks of hay to remain in this district for many years? Yes.

4691. Why have they remained in that state? Because the grass has been plentiful, and there has not been local consumption. It would not pay to take it away from the district by teams. There were no satisfactory means of getting it away. Of course it is bulky carriage, and unless you have a local sale it has to remain where it is.

WEDNESDAY, 5 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Assembly Hall, Eugowra, at 11.45 a.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Mr. Donald Chesher, grazier and hotelkeeper, sworn and examined:—

Mr.
D. Chesher.
5 Mar., 1890.

4692. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a grazier and hotelkeeper.
4693. Residing where? At Eugowra.
4694. How long have you lived in this district? A little over fourteen years.
4695. In the same business? No; I have been grazing.
4696. What is the area of your holding as a grazier? 1,300 acres.
4697. What have you done with that land? I have part of it—that is, between 800 and 900 acres—rented to a man who runs sheep on it. I run cattle on the rest.
4698. How many cattle have you? About forty.
4699. How many horses? Not over fifteen or sixteen at present.
4700. How many sheep does your tenant run? 2,000.
4701. Then he must have some outside reserve? No; he has rented his land from me, and he runs that number of sheep on it.
4702. Does he run the whole of that number of sheep inside the land he has rented from you? He rented the land from me on the 1st January, and he has had that number of sheep upon it since.
4703. It will not carry that number long, will it? If we had such weather as we have had lately, it would carry that number continually.
4704. What is the average carrying capacity of the area? Two sheep to the acre.
4705. Is it on the river or creek? No; there are a number of springs. The land is black flat.
4706. Is it an exceptional piece of land? I do not know that it is; it is improved. I have prairie grass and any amount of trefoil growing on it.
4707. Is there much land like it here? Yes; I consider that any land here which has been rung would carry two sheep to the acre—that is, on the average. Of course, I count the river land in, as well as the frontages to the creek.
4708. Have you any industries here beside the pastoral industry? Farming.
4709. Have you any witnesses who are farmers? Yes; they all go in for farming pretty well. I have a few statistics applying within a radius of 8 miles of this place. They show the number of landholders; the total area of the holdings; the areas under crop—wheat, oats, corn, and hay; and stock—that is, sheep, cattle, horses, and pigs.
4710. Will you read the totals? The total number of landowners is seventy-nine. I had seventy-four, originally, in the returns, but there are five men whose signatures I did not obtain when I was taking the holdings. I thought the returns would be of no use without their signatures.
4711. What is the total area of the holdings? 122,187½ acres.
4712. What area is under crop? 2,760½ acres.
4713. What wheat have you grown in the district this season? I cannot say about the district, but within 8 miles of this town we have grown 42,443 bushels; we have also grown 360 bushels of oats, and 10,800 bushels of corn.
4714. Has that corn been husked? No; it is the estimated yield.
4715. Have the wheat and oats been threshed? Yes. I will tell you the way in which I took the average of wheat: A man would give me so many acres. Most of them stripped, only a very few threshed. The estimate given here is according to the estimate of those who grow the wheat.
4716. How long will it be before the corn is ready for pulling? Not until next month.
4717. May there not be a failure in the corn? Not now, because I think the flower is on.
4718. I suppose the corn total is guess-work? They are calculated from other years, and from the outlook. The corn is now ripening. There are any amount of cobs, and I think the calculation is well within the mark.
4719. How much hay have you had? 672½ tons.
4720. Now, as to the number of sheep? Some of the sheep are grazing further than 8 miles out of the town, but the owners are all living within the district. The number of sheep is 100,252; the cattle number 4,891; the horses, 876; and the pigs, 502.
4721. I suppose what applies to the sheep will also apply to the horses and cattle—that is, some of them may be grazing outside of the 8-mile radius? The largest owner of cattle and sheep has a wool-shed, which you can see, half a mile away from here. The other big holder, Mr. Jenkins, comes to the other side of the creek. His holding is in the Molong district.
4722. Are any of these sheep within the Molong district—in fact, do any of the returns apply to the Molong district? Yes.
4723. A portion are in the Molong district, I suppose, and a portion in the Forbes district? Yes; the creek divides the Molong district from the Forbes district.
4724. Can you tell me whether the average area under crop in your district has been increasing or decreasing within the last few years? It is increasing, decidedly. Eleven of the holders I have given you took up their selections in November last.
4725. What is the size of their holdings? One selector took up 133 acres, with a conditional lease to it, and the others were up to 400 acres.
4726. They are all small holders then? Yes. There is a reserve running from here to Canowindra, half a mile on the northern side of the road. It was thrown open to selection, and there was a rush there. The consequence was that persons could not get as much as they wanted, but had to take as much as was left for them. I was one among the number, and I think there were about fifteen there for the land.

4727.

4727. Was all the land that was open taken up? A small piece was not taken up, I think; there was no water on it.
4728. Was it a special area? No; there was a travelling-stock route half a mile on each side of the road to Canowindra, and one side was thrown open.
4729. Is much of the land here under reserve or lease? It is; in the unsettled districts it is all leased. There is very little land available until these leases are thrown open. An area on the Molong side of the creek will be thrown open in July or August—I mean a leasehold area.
4730. Do you know that particular leasehold? Yes.
4731. Is it fit for small settlement? Yes.
4732. Would it be selected, do you think? Yes; there would be balloting for it.
4733. Do you think that the population of this district would increase if available land were here? It would increase largely if the land were thrown open, but we are hemmed in so by leases and reserves.
4734. Is the land about here fit for agriculture? Yes.
4735. Could a man with a small holding—say, up to 320 acres—get a living? They do, and a pretty good living too; they keep a few cattle and horses.
4736. Where is your market for anything that may be grown here? Most of the wheat has to be taken to Forbes, on account of the difficulty of carriage. It is only three weeks or a month ago since the Progress Committee wrote to our member, asking him if he could induce the Government to reduce the carriage on wheat. That was just before the new rate sheet came out. A new sheet was sent up, showing that the rates had been somewhat altered.
4737. You know the line of railway the Committee are investigating;—would the construction of that line be of any benefit to your people? No; the Parkes line would injure us.
4738. Why? It would take traffic away, I fancy.
4739. From this road? No doubt some would come this way, but it would take away a good deal of traffic down the river.
4740. You know the other suggested lines—from Borenore and Cowra;—which of the two would be of the greatest benefit to your portion of the district? The Borenore and Cowra lines junction, on the other side of the creek; either of the lines would suit us.
4741. It would not matter to you which of the two were adopted? Not much.
4742. But the Parkes line would be of no use to you at all? Not the slightest.
4743. You know the reduced rates on farm produce? No, I do not.
4744. What would be a remunerative price for wheat grown in this district;—what could the farmers live at? I do not think they could do much under 3s., as they are now.
4745. I am speaking of the price of wheat on the ground? I cannot say; I am not farming.
4746. What is the cost of carriage between here and Borenore? 2s. 9d. a cwt. I paid this morning.
4747. That is very high, is it not? I do not know. It is seldom we have it lower.
4748. They get it from Cowra to Forbes for 2s.? Well, I can show all the way-bills. The rate I have given is from Borenore here.
4749. What is the rate the other way? I do not know what they pay on wheat from here. We have a saw-mill here, and there is another mill about 6 miles from here on the river. The proprietor wished me to say that he could dispose of about 60,000 feet a month if he could get it away. It would be pine and gum.
4750. How many men has he in his employ? I have seen four or five there.
4751. *Mr. Lee.*] Has this portion of the district supplied Forbes with statistics for railway purposes? I have not supplied any.
4752. Out of this 100,252 sheep, are any contained in the Forbes district? You will understand that I am merely taking a radius of this town. We are half in the Molong and half in the Forbes district.
4753. Might not the sheep possibly be included in the returns handed in from Forbes? Well; not all, because some are in the Molong district.
4754. Are none of the sheep you have given in the Forbes district? About one-half I suppose.
4755. Well, would not that half be included in the Forbes returns? Yes.
4756. And the same of the cattle? No; the bulk of the cattle are on this side. I do not think they were included in the Forbes return. I have been secretary to the Eugowra League, and if the Forbes people wished to know anything they would write to me.
4757. What do you do with these 10,000 bushels of corn;—where do you find market for it? Some is sent to Orange, some down the river, some is sold locally, and some is sent to Forbes.
4758. Where is your chief market? The corn is sent various ways. I believe most of it is sent down the river.
4759. Consequently, if a railway were built it would not be likely to go to Orange? It would, if we could get the freights low enough to admit of our competing with other grain growers.
4760. You had 42,000 bushels of wheat this year;—what did you do with that? Some goes to Forbes and some to Cudal, and a good deal of it has been sent to Sydney.
4761. That for Sydney is carted to Borenore? Yes.
4762. What is the dray freight? I do not know.
4763. Is any large portion sold to the mill at Forbes? A good deal.
4764. And if the mill gave a return of the number of bushels of wheat they bought, this number would be included in that return? I presume so.
4765. Is there any other information you desire to give us? Well; there are two schools here in Eugowra.
4766. Will the schoolmaster be giving evidence? No. I may say that at the Public School the attendance is 64, at the Convent School there are 43. In a radius of 8 miles there are two Public Schools, and three half-time schools, and two more are now being erected.
4767. Is there a bank in this town? No; there is a post and telegraph office, with a Government Savings Bank, and a money order office attached.
4768. What is about the population of the town? The whole population would be from 190 to 200.
4769. Does that embrace the seventy-nine holders of land you have spoken of? No; only one of them.
4770. You are speaking of the township population alone? Yes. There are thirty-five houses in the surveyed township. I could also furnish you with the business places and so forth. I may say that our wheat return was a little over 20½ bushels to the acre. A good deal of the wheat was destroyed, through the rain coming,

Mr.
D. Chesher.
5 Mar., 1890.

- Mr. D. Chesher.
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4771. Had you any rust here? No. As to the business houses, I should like to say that there are three hotels, two stores, two blacksmiths' and wheelwrights' shops, one saw-mill, a butcher's shop, a baker's shop, a shoemaker's, and a saddler's.
4772. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you a fair knowledge of the country surrounding this district? Yes.
4773. Do you know the country between Eugowra and Parkes? Yes.
4774. Do you think that if a railway were constructed to Parkes, *via* Molong, it would injure Eugowra? Yes.
4775. Do you know the country between Woodstock and Eugowra? Yes; it is good country.
4776. What is the distance? About 36 miles.
4777. What is the distance between Eugowra and Parkes? About 30 miles.
4778. What is the distance from Eugowra to Forbes? Round the road, 24 miles; but the line is much shorter. I came along the line this morning. I left Forbes at twenty minutes past 6, and was here at twenty minutes to 9.
4779. Are there any engineering difficulties in the way of the construction of a railway between Eugowra and Forbes? There is some rough country where the road goes; it has to take a little detour to the left, to avoid the rough country. I have never noticed very much as I have been along.
4780. Is the country fairly good between Eugowra and Parkes? No; there is rough country in the middle—this end is good and the other end is good.
4781. And one portion of the country is bad? Yes; it is ironbark country.
4782. Is the ironbark good timber? I do not think so.
4783. Do you think you are correct in your estimated distance between Eugowra and Parkes? The general idea is that it is about 30 miles.
4784. Have you been over the country yourself? Yes.
4785. Do you think that the railway from Woodstock to Eugowra, and branching at Eugowra to Forbes and Parkes, would serve a large number of the population? Yes; I think it would.
4786. Is it a line, the construction of which you yourself would recommend? It would serve a large number of people.
4787. What is the character of the holdings in this district—are they large or small? It is a squatting country, you must remember. The holdings are very large in some places, but still there are some selectors on the runs.
4788. Are the selections on the runs large or small? Some of them very large. I have a return of one holding of about 4,000 acres.
4789. That is a family selection, I suppose? Yes.
4790. Is not that class of settler a very desirable one to encourage? Decidedly.
4791. I suppose they combine grazing with agricultural pursuits? Yes; that seems to pay the best.
4792. On the holdings of which you have a knowledge, do you think that the holders are likely to remain;—are the holdings fairly improved? Yes.
4793. You do not think they will revert to the squatter? No; I am pretty well sure of that. They are *bona-fide* selectors. I do not think there is a dummy in the district at the present time.
4794. They have all cleared out? They cleared out years ago. When I came here, fourteen years ago, on this side of the creek there were only four selectors. There were only two houses here, and two of the selectors were dummies.
4795. What is the population within a radius of 8 miles, including the population of the township itself, approximately? I do not think I should be going beyond the mark if I reckoned each house to contain six persons. That would give a population in the radius you have named of 684. I think I am below the mark. Some of the selectors have large families—up to half a dozen and over.

Mr. Archibald M'Millan, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. A. M'Millan.
5 Mar., 1890.
4796. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer and grazier.
4797. How many acres do you hold? Nearly 5,000 altogether.
4798. Yourself and your sons? Yes; we are a big family.
4799. Is any portion of that area conditionally leased? Only about 380 acres.
4800. How long have you held that land? Some as long as I have been in the district—about twelve years.
4801. Are you the original selector, or did you purchase? I am the original selector.
4802. What do you produce off that land? This year we have have farmed about 80 acres.
4803. What sort of crops do you grow? All wheat.
4804. What return do you get? The return I obtained was off 75 acres—5 acres were cut for hay; the return I had was 432 bags of wheat.
4805. That would be about 1,728 bushels? Yes; and there was a great waste.
4806. That would be equal to 23 bushels to the acre? Yes. There was considerable waste. There was a heavy crop lying on the ground. There were fully 6 bushels an acre lost.
4807. Have you threshed your wheat yet? Yes; I have reaped, threshed, and bagged at the rate of 23 bushels to the acre, and I have lost 6 bushels to the acre.
4808. Has this been a good season? Yes.
4809. What sort of a crop had you in 1888—the dry year? Not good; it was a failure.
4810. Then you do not get a crop every year? We have had a crop every year during during the twelve years I have been here, with the exception of the year 1888.
4811. What have the crops been since 1888? They have averaged about 18 bushels.
4812. You are an experienced farmer;—what do you consider a fair average of wheat per acre for this land, taking an ordinary season? For the district, I should consider 20 bushels would be a fair average.
4813. Is not the land cultivated in this district confined to the creek banks and the flats? It is confined for the most part to the creek and river banks.
4814. Is it better land? It is generally considered so, but it is not. There is as good land off the creek as there is on it.
4815. But, as a matter of fact, the creek bank land is considered the best? It is considered the strongest for some things.

4816. Do you look on wheat-growing as a certainty in this district? Not as we are situated; we have no outlet for it.
4817. What I mean is, are the seasons sufficiently good to enable you to calculate upon a crop every year? Yes.
4818. With the exception of the year 1888, you have not lost a crop? No.
4819. What about the maize crop? I do not grow much maize.
4820. And the hay? The hay crop is very good. I have grown oats for hay, as well as wheat. The last crop of oats I had for hay gave 3 tons to the acre. There were fully 100 tons off 32 acres.
4821. Are you bringing more land under cultivation annually? No; I think I have sufficient. There is no outlet for the crop. We have only the local market at Forbes.
4822. Do you sell your wheat chiefly to the mill at Forbes? Always.
4823. Have you ever sent any wheat to Cudal or to Sydney? No.
4824. Do most of the farmers here sell to the Forbes mill? Yes; I think so, with the exception of a few who send Cudal way.
4825. Have most of them sold this year to Forbes? No; I think there is considerably more in the district than the mill at Forbes can take.
4826. Have you delivered your wheat this year? They are delivering it now.
4827. Are the farmers holding it? No; on account of the bad roads, they must get clear of it before the winter comes on.
4828. Do you think a third of the crop is in your district at the present moment? Fully a third of it.
4829. You want to see a railway constructed into your part of the country? Yes.
4830. How would that benefit you and your class? It would benefit us to this extent—that where we have 1 acre under tillage at the present time we should have 50 acres, if we had an outlet for the crop.
4831. That would mean that you are looking to the outside markets? Yes.
4832. You do not want a railway to take your grain into Forbes? No.
4833. What does it cost you per bushel to produce your wheat—that is, ploughing, sowing, reaping, and threshing? I consider that £1 an acre is ample to pay all the expense of ploughing, sowing, harvesting, and bagging; that would include the cost of the seed, also.
4834. That would be a fraction off 1s. 1d. per bushel? Yes.
4835. Would 2s. 6d. per bushel on the spot pay you? Yes.
4836. If you got 2s. 6d. per bushel on the spot, would you increase the acreage under wheat? I would.
4837. Do you know what the cost of carriage to Sydney by rail would be for this distance? No; not for farm produce.
4838. It would be equal to 4½d. per bushel—with other expenses, put the cost at 6d.—that would mean that 3s. a bushel in Sydney would pay you? Yes.
4839. If a market could be obtained in Sydney at 3s., you would undoubtedly send your wheat to that market? Yes.
4840. Would you look to the outside market as a market for your corn? I never grew much of it.
4841. Your land is capable of growing anything? Yes.
4842. And your return of maize is very large? Yes.
4843. Is not the western country a proper market for your maize? Down the river is the best market.
4844. You do not grow many potatoes;—is the climate not suitable? Not as a rule.
4845. Wheat, really, is the staple produce of this part of the country? Yes; wheat or oats.
4846. *Mr. Cox.*] Where is your own land situated? Down at the junction of this creek and the river—about 6 miles off.
4847. Is any of the pine country, such as that we have just come through, under cultivation? A considerable quantity of it is, but the pine country does not go to the river.
4848. What kind of crop do you get in that land? Very good crops.
4849. I suppose they are not equal in quantity to the crops grown on the creek flats? In some respects they are better.
4850. Is it a better grain? A plumper grain. Our wheat gets too rank on the creek and river frontage, and is liable to lie down.
4851. That pinches the grain sometimes? Yes.
4852. In the country we passed through to-day, between here and Forbes, do you think the greater part of the land is suitable for agriculture? Decidedly; there is very little of it, besides the swamps, that would not be suitable.
4853. Of the red sandy soil which we passed through, and the yellowish soil, which would you consider the better? Sometimes the red soil is better for one thing, and sometimes the light soil is the best. The light soil is, as a rule, the best for wheat.
4854. The country between this and Forbes is a reserve at the present moment? Yes.
4855. If it were cancelled, would a large portion of it be taken up? Every acre.
4856. You think it would be profitably settled? Yes.

Mr. Edward Herbert, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

4857. *Mr. Cox.*] What are you? I am a farmer and grazier.
4858. What area have you? In all, about 1,600 acres.
4859. How much of that do you cultivate? In some years a little more than in others. This last year I had 80 acres under cultivation—under wheat, and I had some hay.
4860. What is the result of your harvest? Between 300 and 400 bags of wheat. The wheat I cut for hay ran about 3 tons to the acre.
4861. That is beyond the usual yield? Yes; the wheat was very heavy this last year. A lot of the crop was down.
4862. How long have you been here? Sixteen or seventeen years. I have been cultivating from the time I could get the land into a fit state for it.
4863. How often have your crops failed in those years? I have never had a thorough failure.
4864. Not in 1888? No; I had 9 bushels to the acre that year.

Mr.
E. Herbert.
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- Mr. E. Herbert.
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4865. Is your land on a creek or river flat? At the junction of the creek and river. On the creek, within 2 miles of the town, I think I had some 45 acres that ran 9 bushels to the acre in the year you name. I got between 6s. and 7s. a bushel for it.
4866. Then it paid you nearly as well as a good crop? Yes; there was not so much to handle and cart away.
4867. Where is your market? At Forbes.
4868. The market there, I presume, is limited? It was not limited last year.
4869. Would you add much to your farming area, if you could get a good reliable market for your produce? If we could rely upon a certain market we could put in a great deal more than we have in now.
4870. The present land carriage you have to contend with, prevents you from doing so? Yes. If we were to grow more wheat the Forbes mill would not take it, and it would not pay to cart it to Borenore, and then send it by train to Sydney.
4871. I believe you send some of your wheat to Cudal? I have not, but I know others who have sent it that way. Mr. Marsh, a neighbour of mine, sold his to Wright, Heaton, and they sent it that way one year.
4872. What is the cost of sending wheat from here to Borenore? I could not say, but the storekeepers have sent some.
4873. What stock have you? Cattle and horses.
4874. And dairying cattle? We sell a bit of butter in the spring of the year, and in the cooler weather.
4875. Would a railway from Molong to Parkes, and Forbes, be of any benefit to you? Not at all.
4876. What is the cost of sending your wheat to Forbes? I draw it with my own team.
4877. But what would the cost be? About 4d. a bushel, sometimes 6d., if the roads are bad.
4878. That, added to the trackage charged, would be a barrier to the successful growth of wheat? You could not make anything out of it, I think.
4879. Do you know the country between here and Borenore? Yes; I have been up and down many times.
4880. Would a railway from Borenore, *via* Cudal, benefit you very materially? Yes; it would do a lot of good to me and to others;—in fact, to every farmer in this neighbourhood.
4881. Do you think a much greater area would be put under cultivation in the event of a railway coming in that direction? Yes; we should be much more independent in the matter of sale; we could sell in many ways, if we had a railway to take our produce to the metropolis.
4882. Have you ever cultivated any of this kind of pine country? I have not cultivated any myself.
4883. I suppose it gives a good crop, equally with the other country? In wet seasons it gives a good crop, perhaps a better average than mine; mine, perhaps, would be too strong, and in a good season like this the wheat would go down.
4884. About half the country between this and Forbes is pine country? Yes.
4885. And the other half consists of river flats? Yes.
4886. Which would be the most suitable for cultivation? I fancy the flats would wear the longest; perhaps the pine country would give the best crops for a few years.
4887. The river flats would be costly to bring under cultivation? Yes; but they would be the least expensive in the end, because they would be comparatively everlasting.
4888. You mean that the floods would renew the soil? Yes.
4889. In the event of a flood covering the crop, would it destroy it? It depends upon the time of the year.
4890. But at harvest time the floods would ruin the crop? Yes.
4891. Suppose the wheat were growing? If it were young, a flood would not hurt it much.
4892. A good deal of the land on these flats is liable to inundation? Yes.
4893. But that, you think, would not be a barrier to cultivation? No.
4894. Is your country flooded? Yes; on the river, mine is.
4895. But not on the creek? It may overflow a little; it overflows at times. I have a farm within 2 miles of the town; the creek there overflowed on one occasion, in November, but it did not overflow sufficiently to do injury. I fancy it did the maize good, and it made a grand yield of my oats.
4896. How far is it from this point to Dulladerry Creek? I cannot say.
4897. What sort of road is there between Toogong and Manildra? A hilly road—up and down.
4898. Has it been made? No; not to my knowledge. I have not been there for the last few years.
4899. Do you think a large extent of country would be taken up if these reserves were thrown open? Every bit that could be obtained would be taken up.
4900. Irrespective of the railway? Yes; people would take it, if they could get it, at any time.
4901. But if the railway were to come here, it would be rushed? It certainly would; it would be taken up in small lots, settled upon, and farmed.

Mr. Archibald M'Millan, sworn and further examined:—

- Mr. A. M'Millan.
5 Mar., 1890.
4902. *Chairman.*] I believe you wish to express your opinion relative to the suggested line *via* Eugowra to Cowra? Yes; I consider that the line from here to Cowra would benefit more people than the line from here to Borenore; and in this way, that it would be further away from the Molong line, and would benefit the Cudal people, as well as the people living along the valley of the Lachlan.
4903. You mean the Canowindra people? Yes.
4904. You think, then, that the line *via* Cowra would be the best of the three? Yes; for the reasons I have just given.

Mr. Thomas Clyburn, publican, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. T. Clyburn.
5 Mar., 1890.
4905. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? At Canowindra.
4906. How long have you resided there? Twenty years.
4907. What is your occupation? When I first went there I was a quartz miller and I had a crushing machine.
4908. What occupation do you follow now? I am a publican.
4909. What is the nature of the evidence you desire to give to this Committee? I want to give some general evidence. I desire to produce some statistics relating to Canowindra. They were collected a few months

months ago, a man being employed especially to collect them. I exhibit a list of the names of residents desirous of a railway from Cowra, *via* Canowindra and Eugowra, to Forbes and Condobolin. The list shows the number and area of holdings, the cultivation and yield per acre, the stock, mining particulars, machinery, and schools within the distance of 12 miles each way along the line of route from Canowindra and 6 miles on either side. The list is alphabetically arranged; the name of every holder of land is included, the area of his holding, the area under cultivation, and the yield per acre. The yield was estimated a little before the crops were taken off, but some of the crops have since been taken off and they have shown that the farmers were not far out in their calculation. The total number of holdings given was 234, the total area in acres is 242,727; the area under cultivation is 15,444 acres, number of sheep 214,667, of cattle 6,700, of horses 2,766, and of pigs 865. Then as to the schools at Canowindra, there is a total attendance of 100. The attendance at Nyrang Creek is 30, at Walli 40, at Watergumberg 33, Soldier's Flat 28, Chaucer 25, Tenandra 15, The Grove 18, and Mogong 16. The total attendance at the schools averages 305 daily. Then as to machinery, there is the Gospel Oak Mining Co., at Stockyard Gully, with 10 stamps and 25-horse power; Smith's, at Canowindra, with 5 stamps and 10-horse power; Smith's flour-mill at Belmore, with two sets of stones, 10-horse power. Then I may mention that £735 was taken by the Mining Registrar last year. These returns are all taken up to the end of last year. Canowindra is a great mining centre. I hand in a synopsis of the returns, showing the increase of stock, the area under cultivation, &c. You will see the difference between 1887 and 1889. There is an increase of 129 holdings, of 85,365 acres, of 4,097 acres under cultivation, of 109,919 sheep, 3,870 cattle, 750 horses, with a decrease in pigs of 750. There are no returns available for further comparison.

Mr.
T. Clyburn.
5 Mar., 1890.

4910. Your returns include all the country right up to the point at which the Eugowra returns were completed? Yes; that was understood.

4911. Can you say what the population of Canowindra is? I could not say exactly; there is Belmore, about 2 miles away.

4912. Have you a personal knowledge of the country to which your statistics refer? Yes.

4913. What is the class of country? It is first-class agricultural and mineral land all through.

4914. Is it chiefly occupied? Nearly every bit of it.

4915. And settled upon? Yes, with the exception of 20 miles between here and Canowindra; that is not occupied, as it is a travelling-stock route.

4916. It is Crown land? Yes.

4917. The whole of the country, with the exception of the reserves, is occupied? Yes; they are very good settlers, taking them all through. I do not know of any who are not willing to remain on the land.

4918. They have every appearance of being a permanent class of residents? Yes.

4919. What are the principal crops grown? Wheat, hay, and corn.

4920. You are aware that the line of railway which has been referred to the Committee goes from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, *via* Flagstone Creek? Yes.

4921. Will that line, in your opinion, be of any benefit to this district? None whatever.

4922. You are quite clear on that point? Quite clear.

4923. What are your reasons for thinking so? It would be further away from our place; we should have to go further, and the carriage would be heavier than in the case of Cowra.

4924. Do you know the country traversed by the proposed line from Molong to Parkes? No.

4925. But you feel pretty sure that the line would be of no benefit to you? Neither that, nor the Bore-nore line.

4926. Are there any engineering difficulties on the line of railway you suggest? There is only one bridge.

4927. Is the country level? Yes. There is only one place where they reckon there will be a grade of 1 in 40; all the other grades are 1 in 70 and 1 in 80. The engine would have to go through the 1 in 40 grade, as far as I know.

4928. You have been over the staked route? No, not the whole of it.

4929. What about this 1 in 40 grade? I can give you no further information about that.

4930. I suppose you come into contact with a good many of the residents in your township? Yes.

4931. Have any meetings been held there in support of the railway? Yes; the opinion of the people is that we ought to have one. Another thing I have noticed—that is, that in the different papers which I have seen bearing upon the matter, Canowindra is generally classed as forming a portion of Cudal; we wish that to be denied; we should not be served by the Cudal route.

4932. What distance would Canowindra be from the nearest point of the railway? Twenty-five miles.

4933. That is too far to be of any service to you? Yes; and then there is the extra expense of the haulage.

4934. Is there any timber within a reasonable distance of the line you suggest, which would be suitable for fencing, sleepers, and bridge purpose? I know of one place where you could get it for bridges, and you could get any quantity of timber for fencing.

4935. There is no diversity of opinion among your people, as to the route which should be adopted? No.

4936. Under all the circumstances, you think that the proposed line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes would not serve the residents of your district? I think it would not. I would point out that the difference in the elevation of Bore-nore and Cowra is somewhere about 1,200 feet. The consequence is, that there would be all that stiff grade to go up.

4937. What is the height of Blayney? About 3,000 feet.

4938. What is the difference between Blayney and Bore-nore? That I cannot say; but in travelling to Bore-nore you have some stiff grades to mount, and the line would cost more for working expenses. There would also be a greater distance for us to cart our produce. The level from Cowra to this point is 1,200 feet lower, to start with, than it is at Bore-nore. You would have all that extra grade in working.

4939. What rise have you to make to go into Blayney;—is it not as far above the sea as Bore-nore? Blayney is on the other side; you are coming down, and you would have to go up again.

4940. What difference does it make whether you go up to Blayney, or to Bore-nore? There is this difference—that in going to Cowra you are running on to a line already constructed, with a junction at a lower grade; in the other case, you would have the extra line to construct to get to Cudal.

- Mr. T. Clyburn.
5 Mar., 1890.
4941. Do you know that Forbes is 14 miles nearer Sydney, going by way of Borenore, than going by way of Cowra? Yes; suppose I want to go to Young, what a nice thing it would be for me to have to go all the way round by Orange.
4942. Suppose you want to go to Victoria? Well, the same thing holds good there.
4943. What traffic do you anticipate would go to Young or to the south? There is a large traffic in stock—they are trucked at Cowra; some come from Queensland, and some from down south.
4944. You appear not to want a railway so much for the people of Canowindra, as for the people of Queensland? I do not go quite so far as that.
4945. What benefit would accrue to Canowindra in sending your produce south? It would make 4d. a bushel on all our wheat—that is only one consideration.
4946. How do you make out the difference of 4d. a bushel? By putting it on the train and sending it to Sydney.
4947. Sending it which way do you say? From any of the farms to the railway station.
4948. If you had a railway, it would make a difference of 4d. a bushel, you say? Yes.
4949. Suppose you had either of the other railways? In that case it would cost us about 8d. a bushel.
4950. How so? Because it would be so much further carriage.

Mr. Thomas Finn, storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. T. Finn.
5 Mar., 1890.
4951. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a storekeeper residing at Canowindra. I have been there eighteen years. I have not been storekeeping all the time, but I have been in business.
4952. What is the population of Canowindra? The population of Canowindra itself is about 200. If you take a radius of 8 or 9 miles there are 700 or 800. We live on the people who come into the town, from the back.
4953. What is the principal industry in your district? Wheat-growing and agriculture, generally.
4954. Is there much land under crop in the Canowindra district? A great deal. I could give you the latest returns taken by the police in January. They were handed to me last night in a rough form by a constable.
4955. Are they for the police district of Canowindra? They take them within a radius of 10 miles. The police district of Canowindra is comprised in the Cowra district. Our district joins on to Toogong and Goolagong. Part of the Goolagong district is in the Cowra district.
4956. This would include Barrigan? Very nearly.
4957. What is the state of Canowindra at present; is the population increasing? It has increased very much the last year or two. I am sure it has doubled within the last two years, and there is every appearance of a still further increase.
4958. Is there any particular industry in Canowindra—manufacturing, or anything of that sort? There is no manufacturing, but we have a flour-mill.
4959. How far are you from Cowra? Twenty miles exactly.
4960. Is that the nearest point on any railway? Cowra and Woodstock would be, as nearly as possible, the same.
4961. You know the country between Canowindra and Woodstock? Yes; it is good country, but it would be a rougher route for the construction of a railway than the surveyed route to Cowra.
4962. Is not Woodstock nearer to Canowindra than to Cowra? I think about the same, as nearly as possible.
4963. Do you know anything about the line of route of the proposed railway *via* Molong and Parkes and Forbes? I do not know anything about the Molong route. I know the line from Borenore.
4964. Supposing a line were constructed to Forbes by either of these two routes, would it be of any advantage to you? Not in the least.
4965. Then no other line would suit the Canowindra people but a line from Cowra, on Wood's Flat? That is all.
4966. Have you had any meetings at Canowindra about this railway? Yes. The general opinion is that we ought to have a railway from Cowra, for the benefit of the country at large.
4967. Do you know that there is a large population to the north of Parkes which would be in no way served by a line from Cowra? Yes, I know there would be a large population there.
4968. Do you not think that, in the construction of a railway line, all these things should be considered, and that a line should be constructed which would serve the greatest number of persons? Yes; but we have as great a number on the line, I suggest, as they have. At the present time there is a rush to Parkes, consequently you see a number of persons there who might not be there to-morrow. We may have a rush to our district at any time; it is just as auriferous as the Parkes district.
4969. Is the country between Cowra and Canowindra, and between Canowindra and this place, well populated? Yes; recently a lot of land has been thrown open for selection between Canowindra and Eugowra, on the left-hand side, on the travelling stock route.
4970. Which side does the travelling stock reserve run from Canowindra to this place? It runs right through; there is half a mile of reserve on each side of the road.
4971. And this land which has been thrown open is on the north side—that is on the right-hand side coming here? Yes.
4972. Was the whole of the land taken up? There was not an acre available which was not taken up.
4973. What area was thrown open? I have no idea.
4974. What would be the size of the selections? From about 160 to 320 acres. It was cut up into small pieces. I may say that on the Cowra line, all the land between Cowra and Canowindra has been taken up chiefly by selectors. I have a report here from Mr. Thornbury, who surveyed a railway here some years ago. Mr. Clyburn made a mistake in stating the distances between Cowra and Forbes, and Borenore and Forbes; the distance of railway construction would be far less than he stated—that is *via* Cowra—and the cost of construction per mile would be £5,988.
4975. Where did you get those figures? From Mr. Thornbury's report. He surveyed the line from Canowindra to Cowra for the Government. I have not the slightest doubt about the distance from Cowra to Forbes. It is 63 miles. I travelled the line with Mr. Commissioner Fehon, and I heard him say that he was confident, from what he saw of the line between Canowindra and Cowra, that it could be constructed for £5,000 a mile. I will give you some of the places which would be benefited by the railway. In the first place there is Cargo, because it would be as short a distance from Cargo as the Cudal line; all the places this side of Cargo would come to Canowindra, as a matter of course. Then there is Goolagong, which would be ignored, if there were not a railway to Cowra.

4976. How far is that from Canowindra? It is 15 miles from Canowindra; the people there go now to Cowra, the distance being 25 miles. Goolagong would be served by the route from Cowra to Canowindra, at Nyrang Creek, about 5 miles this side of Canowindra. The district is on the Lachlan River, and there is wool traffic between Goolagong and Grenfell, about 45 miles; and Barrigan would also be benefited by the Cowra line, in fact all the settlers along the Lachlan River, from Cowra down to Forbes. You asked Mr. Clyborn about the wheat going on to the Southern line. A lot of the wheat grown in our district has been bought to go to Cootamundra and Goulburn. Most of our wheat this year has gone to Sydney. I could also give you the returns of the Canowindra Post-office for 1885 and for 1889. Mr. T. Finn.
5 Mar., 1890.

4977. Why did you select 1885? I do not know why that year was selected; the post-master handed the particulars to me. With regard to the schools, I can corroborate what Mr. Clyborn has said, being a member of the School Board for the district of Cowra.

4978. *Mr. Cox.*] I notice that in these returns there is a man named Duffy who has 1,620 acres on which he is feeding 5,000 sheep, or three sheep to the acre? I am sure he often does that; he is always dealing in sheep, buying and selling. Many men with small holdings run four or five sheep to the acre, for the time being.

4979. A man may put on twenty sheep to the acre and may keep them on the land for a week, but would it not be deceiving to put them on a list like this, which is supposed to be a fair return for the year? At the time the return was collected Duffy probably had the number of sheep given, and that is why they are included in it.

4980. Here is another man, named Jenkins, with 21,600 sheep to 3,600 acres? The area given would be only his conditional purchase and freehold. He must have a far larger area of land than that.

4981. Then I say again, that the return is deceiving;—it is supposed to represent the number of sheep kept for the year; the whole return is rendered valueless it seems to me? Of course, Mr. Jenkins could not keep the number of sheep you give on such an area for the whole year.

4982. Then I see that a man named Hurley has 1,006 acres of land, on which he keeps 5,000 sheep, or five sheep to the acre—is that possible? He deals in sheep, and he may have had that number at the time. I know that both Duffy and Hurley overstock, and find it out to their sorrow in time of drought.

4983. But you understand that if the man does not keep, continuously, the number of sheep given in the return the return is deceiving? I could not say whether they keep them continuously, or not.

4984. I have known persons, to prevent sheep from being destroyed by grass seed, to put them all into two or three paddocks, feeding them on a certain area, but it would be deceiving to say that that number of sheep were kept on a few thousand acres of land? Of course it would not be possible to keep the numbers you have given, continuously, on such small areas. At the same time the area of Jenkins' holding is wrongly stated, I believe.

4985. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know Mr. Hamilton Osborne? Yes.

4986. Do you know his holding? Yes.

4987. Does it contain 29,000 acres? It might, I think.

4988. Do you know that he is returned as carrying 40,000 sheep? I did not know that.

4989. What is the character of his land? It is splendid land.

4990. Do you know what rent he pays for it? He has very little leased land; it is nearly all freehold.

4991. You have said just now that the rush of gold might suddenly cause a large population at Canowindra? Yes.

4992. Can you give the Committee any information regarding the mineral resources of the district? At the present time there is a reef, which has been working for the last three or four years, giving magnificent returns and paying a large dividend. I refer to the Blue Jacket Reef. Their average per week would be 50 or 60 oz. of gold. It goes about 2 oz. to the ton, and their blanketings have gone as high as 12 oz. They put through 42 tons the other day at the Clyde Works, and that went 7¼ oz. There are other reefs working, which go from ½ oz. to 1½ oz.

4993. What number of miners are employed in this auriferous belt of country? At the present time there are not more than forty or fifty, and they would be scattered about the district. I may mention that a lot of leasehold areas will be shortly available for selection. People will take up the land as soon as it is open.

4994. Is the land on these areas of good quality? Very good, in most cases.

4995. Is it well watered? No; but it is easy to make water.

4996. In your opinion the whole of this land will be occupied as soon as it is available? Yes.

4997. By *bona fide* men? Yes.

4998. The day of the dummy has gone by? Yes, and we are glad it is so.

Mr. Robert Rice, farmer, sworn and examined:—

4999. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At Canowindra. I have been there close upon four years, but I have been in Cowra twenty-seven years. I am a farmer. Mr. R. Rice.
5 Mar., 1890.

5000. What is the extent of your holding altogether? 642 acres of purchased land, and I lease 180 acres.

5001. Are you an original selector? No, not at that place.

5002. You desire to give some evidence as to the proposed line from Cowra to Canowindra? Yes.

5003. What do you wish to say? I have been over every yard of the Cowra route, and I know that it has been proved to be the nearest route to Forbes, *via* Eugowra, by from 1½ to 2½ miles.

5004. You mean the shortest of the surveys from the Murrumburrah line? Yes; that can be proved. The distance can be lessened between this place and Canowindra fully 3 miles, giving quite as good a route as the other lines. I reckon that there would be five miles less to construct. There has been only a trial survey of the route between Cowra and this township, but if there were a permanent survey, I am sure that the route could be still further shortened, and that it could be made a cheaper line. This route has been proved to be the cheapest, officially, by £200,000.

5005. Officially? Yes, from several sources. I will give you at least one good source. Mr. W. H. Suttor made a statement to that effect in a letter to a newspaper.

5006. Those figures are taken, apparently, from Parliamentary papers? Yes; the next point I have to press on the Committee is the height between Cowra and Forbes—it is only 200 feet—just the drop of the river between the two towns—consequently there would be easy grades. Borenore being 2,000 feet, there would be increased haulage, as Mr. W. H. Suttor shows in his letter—“We have already taken our lines

over

Mr. R. Rice. over these high altitudes too frequently, and I do not think another mistake of the kind should be made in constructing a line to Forbes." The quality of the land on the route I suggest, surpasses the quality of the land on either of the rival routes—this I can prove from statistics, and from my experience of the district, I can state confidently, that we can carry, on many thousands of acres, from two to ten sheep to the acre. I can carry 1,000 sheep on 100 acres of land.

5 Mar., 1890.

5007. For how long? For nine months in the year.

5008. Every year? Yes. On the land to which I refer, the thistles grow from 12 to 14 feet high. There are 100,000 acres of similar land on the Belabula River.

5009. Is it all thistle country? Yes; I have grown 90 bushels of corn to the acre, and others, who have held the same land, have grown 100 bushels to the acre. I maintain that the land is unsurpassable for wheat-growing. As a practical farmer, I say that there is no land in the colony equal to the land on the route from Cowra to this township. I have been a wheat-grower for twenty-seven years. Cudal, I may mention, is already provided with a railway, being only 15 miles distant from Borenore. The distance from Cowra to Forbes would be 64 miles. The line would serve the Lachlan Valley, and when you see the Upper Lachlan, I guarantee you will say there is no better district in the colony; it is only a few miles off the river at any place—the railway I mean; therefore, it embraces the valley of the Lachlan for the whole distance.

5010. Have you seen the Tweed and Richmond Rivers? No. I may also state that by constructing a line *via* Cowra, the public could be suited either with a Sydney or a southern market. They would not have this choice if the line were taken *via* Molong, or Borenore. Neither of those routes could be constructed without persons being obliged to go a very long way round to get to the Southern line, so as to take advantage of the Southern markets. The Lachlan River is already bridged. I think this is a great point in favour of the Cowra route—that we have a very extensive bridge over the Lachlan there. I suppose it has cost nearly £200,000.

5011. You mean the railway bridge? Yes. As to the places which would be benefited, there is Goolagong. We know the exact distance of that place, because the Government erected a telephone there a few months ago. The distance from the point tapped by this line would be 10 miles. The population on this route is far greater than that on the Borenore, or Molong route. It must be, when you consider that Cargo, Eugowra, Goolagong, Canowindra, and all these other places would be served.

5012. Could you give me the population of these various places? Only an estimate.

5013. Which is the most important settlement this side of Cowra? Canowindra. There is only one bridge to construct by this route—that is over the Belabula, and it is not an expensive one. Bricks, sand, ballast, and stone can be obtained on the route—also sleepers.

5014. What sort of timber is it? All kinds of hardwood, ironbark, box, and red gum. I read the evidence of Mr. Kenna, of Orange, who stated that the route from Cowra to Forbes was thinly populated. Now I deny that, and to prove my words I should like you to allow me to merely quote from the report of Mr. Surveyor Thornbury, who was sent up by the Government to survey the line about three years ago. He said:—"The country comprises good agricultural and pastoral land, and is nearly all taken up by free selection. There are a great number of farmers proximate to the line, which has been taken as close as possible to the cultivated land." Cowra, being midway between the Southern and Western lines, would be most advantageous to settlers on the Lachlan, and to the people of Forbes and Parkes also. I have always considered the Blayney and Murrumburrah line would carry a great deal of the traffic of this colony for many years to come. Cowra, being midway on the line, people would be more advantageously served. We know that a large number of the recent selectors round Parkes, at least two-thirds of them, are Victorians. A great deal of their traffic will go towards Melbourne, and you can quite understand the advantage which would be gained by settlers if, on their arrival at Cowra, they were able to command the Melbourne or the Sydney market. Suppose there were a block on the Western route—that might occur at any time—then, settlers having their produce at Cowra, could send it by the Southern route to Sydney. That, it seems to me, is a very strong argument in favour of the line I suggest. No company or syndicate would hesitate which route to adopt, if a dividend were the object. If the travelling-stock reserves were thrown open and a fair upset price were put upon the land, the amount returned would fully pay for the land the Government might have to purchase, if they adopted the Cowra route. It is a dead level, and there is land, of the very richest description on this travelling-stock reserve. It would be selected the first day it was thrown open. There would be a saving in the cost of construction, arising out of the lesser distance of £200,000—that is a great consideration. The land being almost level, the line could naturally be constructed almost straight, consequently the cost of maintenance would be very much less. The advantages of population, easier gradients, and cheap construction, all seem to point to the Cowra line as the best route which could be adopted. I believe the line would give national satisfaction. The valley of the Lachlan, at least, would have the most direct and legitimate channel for its traffic, and I consider that a great good would be achieved.

5015. One of your chief reasons for advocating the Cowra line is that it would give settlers a choice of the Melbourne as well as of the Sydney market? Yes.

5016. The stock traffic in this district, no doubt, would be large, but you must be aware that there must be traffic other than stock to maintain a railway;—you have already shown that your portion of the district is a fertile one, and that it produces immense crops of wheat and maize, particularly—what market do you depend upon for the sale of your maize? The Belabula River, so far as inland places go, is unsurpassed for maize growing. They grow very little maize in Victoria, and import a great quantity. I have already sent maize to Sydney, but I do not see why the Victorian market might not be a market for maize. If I can obtain a higher price there, surely it will be the better market.

5017. Could you pay the freight on that long distance, together with the Victorian duty, and then sell your maize in Victoria at a profit? Yes, I think so; because if I send my corn to Sydney, as I have done, it is quite possible that that very corn may be again shipped and sent to Melbourne.

5018. Then, where would your market be for the large quantities of wheat you grow? There are some hundreds of tons that have gone through Canowindra from Walli, Woods' Flat, and other places, for the Forbes market.

5019. How much wheat do you think has been delivered at Forbes this year? I cannot say. I know some of my neighbours are selling there.

5020. Could you say how many loads have been sent? It is early in the season yet.

5021. Is much Canowindra wheat sold in Forbes every year? Yes; most years it is sold in Forbes; it is, as a rule, the best market.

5022. Has there been as much wheat as usual sold there this year? No; because they had more good crops round Forbes.
5023. What other markets do you look forward to? I sell wheat at Bathurst and Cowra; those have been my chief markets.
5024. Markets other than Sydney have been your markets up to the present time? Yes.
5025. In the event of a railway being constructed, you look forward to increasing your output considerably? Yes.
5026. And the quantity you would have, in consequence of the increased cultivation, would be very large? Yes.
5027. Naturally, you would look for a market outside in preference to purely local markets? Yes.
5028. And where would you go to? The bulk of our produce must, in a few years hence, go to Sydney.
5029. What price, on the spot, will pay you at Canowindra for the growth of wheat? My opinion is that wheat cannot be grown for less than 3s. a bushel on the spot; when the price is below that I would not put a plough into the ground.
5030. Then if the trainage and Sydney charges were added, you would have to get 3s. 6d. per bushel in the Sydney market? Yes; to make the crop pay.
5031. What does it cost you to cultivate your land,—that is to plough, sow, reap, thresh, and bag the wheat? It is very difficult to answer that question directly. Suppose I put in a crop every second year, and fallow one year, that would be a very different thing from putting in a crop yearly. I have been in the habit of doing a great deal of fallowing in my wheat-growing, and I think that 15 bushels to the acre, at 3s. a bushel, would just pay a man fairly. It is as little as he could live upon.
5032. What I want to get at is how much it would cost to grow the wheat per bushel, and get it ready for market? I suppose it would cost 15s. to plough and harrow, and the seed would be 3s. 9d. I roll my wheat, and that costs 1s. per acre; the harvesting would be 12s., that is including bags; then there are fencing, and a number of other things to pay for. I could not really tell you what it would cost, I cannot give you any nearer idea than these figures, and I do not think any man could. I should have been up a tree a long time ago, if I had not had 3s. a bushel for wheat. I have grown wheat for twenty-seven years, but my price has averaged 5s. per bushel.

Mr. R. Rice.
5 Mar., 1890.

Mr. William Cook, constable, sworn and examined:—

5033. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your position? I am a constable, stationed at Conowindra. I have been here something over six years.
5034. Is it your duty to collect statistics for the district? Yes.
5035. Will you look at the statistics produced? Yes; I could not say what these are; they are not taken by me, or from my returns.
5036. You cannot vouch for them? No.
5037. Have you any returns compiled by yourself? I have only the wheat returns. I can give you the quantity of wheat grown in my portion.
5038. I find in the statistics which have been handed in to us, very notable instances of an enormous number of sheep being run on small areas of ground. Mr. Duffy holds 1,620 acres, and he is put down as having 5,000 sheep, or three sheep to the acre? I believe he has that number.
5039. But could he keep that number on his land all the year round? No.
5040. Therefore to give that number in a return supposed to apply to the whole of the year 1889, would be misleading? Yes; but Duffy probably had that number of sheep when the return was taken—you take the number when you are collecting, even if they happen to be in a stockyard.
5041. Do you know a man named Hurley, who is represented to have 1,006 acres of land? Yes, but he has more than that—he has a lot of leasehold land—3,000 or 4,000 acres.
5042. He is said to keep 5,000 sheep? He has fully that—he shored 4,000. He could run that number; he may be a little over-stocked, but not much. He generally runs from 3,000 to 4,000.
5043. Do you know Mr. Jenkins, with 6,300 acres of land, keeping 21,500 sheep? He shored about 21,000 last year, and when I got the return in January, he had just bought 5,000 more.
5044. What sort of country is it? It is not extra good; he could not keep that number all the year round.
5045. What are the wheat returns you desire to give? The total yield in the portion I took was 79,664 bushels.
5046. On what area was that collected? With the exception of three or four, or perhaps half a dozen, it would be collected from persons within 10 miles of Canowindra.
5047. When did you yet these returns? In January.
5048. Was the harvest over then? It was mostly bagged then. They gave me the number of bags, and I reckoned 4 bushels to the bag.
5049. Did you see the crops growing? Yes; they would have gone more than they did, but several thunderstorms passed over the district and destroyed a great deal of wheat. I should say that fully one-fourth of the crops was lost.
5050. What did you find the average yield of acre to be? Something over 18½ bushels.
5051. Did you collect the statistics in 1888? Yes.
5052. What was the average yield that year? There was a very poor yield that year, a great deal of wheat was destroyed. I do not think it averaged more than 5 bushels. A lot of the crops were not cut at all.
5053. To what acreage does your wheat return apply? 4,285 acres.
5054. Do you know anything of the Cudal and Barrigan country? Only the outlines of it.
5055. Have you come across any farming population there? Yes.
5056. Do you know the Manildra country? No.
5057. Comparing that country with the country about Cargo, Cudal, Cowra, and Canowindra, which would you say was the best? I do not know the Manildra country well; but I can give some idea of the land down this way. Taking the whole distance between Cowra and Nyrang Creek, 6 or 8 miles this side of Canowindra, it is most thickly populated. The number of holdings I collected was 150 within a radius of 10 miles. These returns go to Molong—they are taken in the Molong returns for the year.

Mr. W. Cook.
5 Mar., 1890.

Mr.

Mr. James Davison, storekeeper, sworn and examined :—

Mr. J.
Davison.
5 Mar., 1890.

5058. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? At Eugowra.
 5059. What is your occupation? I am a storekeeper at present.
 5060. How long have you resided here? I have been in the district fifteen years.
 5060½. Previous to that where were you? I was in Parkes for five or six years.
 5061. Have you a considerable knowledge of this district? Pretty good.
 5062. And of the people who reside here? Yes.
 5063. Is the district fairly settled? Yes.
 5064. What is the nature of the evidence you desire to give? I have no particular evidence to give.
 5065. During your residence of fifteen years here, have the crops, to your knowledge, been fair? They are generally pretty fair crops. In odd years they have missed. I have not missed altogether, but I have had inferior crops.
 5066. What are the principal pursuits carried on by the residents here? Agriculture and grazing.
 5067. Is there any dairying? A little, but it is not carried on to any great extent—there is no outlet for the butter.
 5068. From your position as a storekeeper, do you think that the settlers in this district are improving their position, or that they are going back? They are certainly improving it.
 5069. And is the district generally improving? Yes.
 5070. Do you regard the settlement as being of a permanent character? Yes.
 5070½. You think the residents are *bona fide*? I am sure they are.
 5071. Can you give any information as to the merchandise brought to this town? Only as regards my own. I get about 2 tons a month on the average, from Borenore.
 5072. What rates do you pay for carriage? The rates vary, according to the season. I have paid as low as 2s. per cwt., and as high as 5s.
 5073. What is the rate of carriage from this place to Borenore? Generally, about two-thirds of the rates I have mentioned.
 5074. Is there any special price for the carriage of wheat to Borenore? I have seen it carried for 8d. a bushel, and I have known them to ask 1s.
 5075. Do you produce wheat here? No.
 5076. Do you buy produce of any description? Butter and eggs.
 5077. Is there much of that produce brought to you for sale? Sometimes a good deal—more than I want.
 5078. And you have no market? Except at Forbes, for that kind of thing.
 5079. You know the proposed line from Molong to Parkes, *via* Flagstone Creek? Yes.
 5080. You have resided in Parkes—what do you think of that proposal? I cannot say much for the route because it goes through a lot of barren, useless country. There are miles and miles of it, from Manildra to Flagstone Creek.
 5081. Do you know all of the country on that route? A great deal of it. I have not exactly followed the lines, but have touched on them here and there. The greater part of the line you mention is a barren waste.
 5082. Where is this country situated? Between Meranburn, to within a few miles of Parkes—it is all one class of country. All that country at the back of the mountain is useless—it is roly polly, there is no grass on it.
 5083. How long did you reside in the Parkes district? I was five years on the Coobang Station.
 5084. Had you many opportunities of seeing the country round about Parkes? I have had more opportunity since I have been here than I had there.
 5085. How far does this country extend from Parkes, on the road to Molong? About 7 miles.
 5086. Have you been over the country to the north of Parkes—towards Peak Hill? Yes.
 5087. Is it good or bad country? It is good country.
 5088. Was it settled upon when you knew it? No.
 5089. Do you know the country between Parkes and Forbes? Yes, on the road.
 5090. Is it good, bad, or indifferent country? Very good, most of the way.
 5091. Then all the country from Forbes to Parkes, and the country for about 7 miles from Parkes towards Molong, is good? Yes, it is of a fair character on the north side of the road.
 5092. Does the good land extend northerly for a considerable distance? Yes.
 5093. Knowing the country as well as you do, do you think it is desirable that a railway should be constructed to serve the settlers in these districts? I think there are more people living on this route, and that a railway here would serve a greater number.
 5094. Is the character of the land sufficiently good, and is the population sufficiently large, to warrant the Government in constructing a railway? I could not say that it was not. I do not know the present population. If you are referring to the Parkes district, very few people were settled there when I was there some years ago.
 5095. Would the proposed line, if constructed to Parkes and Forbes, be of any service to you? If it went from Borenore, but if it went the other way it would be of no service whatever.
 5096. If the farmers could get an outlet to the Sydney market from Forbes or Parkes, would that not be a considerable advantage to those who cultivate the soil between Eugowra and Forbes? I cannot say that it would be of great service, because they would have a bad road to travel to get across to the railway.
 5097. What is the distance? It would be about 30 miles on to the Parkes line.
 5098. And on to the Forbes line? By the measured road it would be 24 miles.
 5099. Often, if you have surplus produce, you cannot dispose of it, even at Forbes? Often we cannot.
 5100. If there were a railway to Forbes, would it not be of considerable advantage in taking your produce to a market where you could be always sure of selling it? Yes; but we could take it for nearly the same cost to Borenore.
 5101. What is the distance from here to Borenore? Forty odd miles.
 5102. Would you prefer to cart your produce 40 miles, in preference to the 24? Yes; but if we went to Forbes there would be the extra trainage to pay.
 5102½. You cannot see that any benefit would be conferred upon this place if a railway were constructed from Forbes to Molong? I cannot see that there would be any.

5103. Is it not generally admitted that farmers will take their produce to a railway if they can get within 10, 15, or 20 miles of it? Yes.
5104. Would not the farmers within that radius of Forbes use the railway for their surplus produce? Some of them might, but if they had their own teams they might as well take the produce to Borenore, as pay the extra trainage.
5105. Have you noticed that this place has progressed in size and numbers since you have been residing here? The town itself does not progress fast, but the population is increasing; more land is being taken up every year round about. Whenever land is open, it is taken up very quickly.
- 5105½. Can you say, of your own knowledge, whether fruit can be grown to advantage in this locality? Yes, there are very good crops of grapes, peaches, apples, pears, and everything of that kind.
5106. As a storekeeper here, you have come into contact with a number of persons, and have discussed the various rival routes? Yes.
5107. What is the consensus of opinion as regards the route which should be adopted? People favour either the Canowindra or the Borenore line.
5108. Are they pretty equally divided in opinion as to the merits of these two lines? I think so.

Mr. J.
Davison.

5 Mar., 1890.

Mr. Michael John Dwyer, contractor, sworn and examined:—

5109. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a contractor.
5110. Residing where? At Eugowra.
5111. What is the nature of the evidence you wish to give? I am a native of the district. I was born within about 20 miles of this place; I know the locality thoroughly. I consider that if this part of the country were approached by a railway line it would tend greatly to improve settlement upon the land; we should have a much larger population.
5112. Have you noticed that this place has progressed lately? Yes. We find that land available for selection is eagerly sought for. The land to the north of the Canowindra-road, forming part of the travelling stock reserve, was settled in one day.
5113. Have you ever known this place to be more prosperous than it is at the present time? No; never. I knew this place when there was only one hotel here.
5114. Do you see more land put under cultivation here every year? Yes; I believe there is.
5115. Have you ever known this place, or any land round about here, to be flooded? The creek seldom overflows its banks here.
5116. But you have known it to do so? I have seen it overflow once.
5117. Did it stop the traffic? No.
5118. How deep would it be on the road where the traffic would be? The place where it overflows is below the place where the traffic crosses the creek.
5119. It would only affect the farms? Yes.
5120. Did it do much damage to the farms? No. It is generally considered that when the creek overflows its banks it benefits the land it flows over.
5121. Do you know the surveyed line to Cowra? Yes.
5122. Would that be in the flooded country? No, above it.
5123. Do you know the surveyed line to Borenore? Part of it.
5124. Would any part of it be subject to flood? It joins the line from Cowra to this place before it crosses the creek, about 10 chains from the bridge.
5125. What class of contracts do you take? At the present time I have a contract under the Roads Department, and another from Mr. Jenkins, for fencing.
5126. Which line would be of the most benefit to this place? The Cowra line. As regards the slow increase of population, it is principally because the land is locked up in reserves that the population does not increase more. We have travelling stock reserves, forest reserves, and railway reserves,—all that land would be eagerly taken up. There was one piece of land, a special area, 16 miles from here, and sixteen applicants balloted for the one piece. It is of very little use for the farmers to extend the area under cultivation, because there is no outlet for their wheat. The men who combine grazing with farming send their fat stock to Melbourne—one lot went recently to Cowra, and another to Junee.
5127. *Mr. Cox.*] Do you know the country about Cargo, Barrigan, and Cudal? I have travelled through it.
5128. Do you know it fairly well? I know the roads.
5129. Do you know the farms? A few, but not all.
5130. You know the Manildra country? No.
5131. Therefore you could not give an opinion as to which railway would suit the bulk of the people living in these localities? No.

Mr. M. J.
Dwyer.

5 Mar., 1890.

Mr. Nicholas Edward Osberg, sawyer and farmer, sworn and examined:—

5132. *Mr. Lee.*] You are a resident of Eugowra? Yes; I have been here for about eleven years.
5133. What do you do? I am sawing at present.
5134. Have you always been sawing here? No; I have been farming and doing blacksmith's and wheelwright's work, and all that sort of thing.
5135. Are you doing any farming now? Yes.
5136. Do you till your land? Yes.
5137. You have heard some of the evidence by some of the other witnesses? Yes.
5138. What particular class of evidence do you wish to give? As to the timber trade, which could be developed, I think there would be a great deal of it, if there were any outlet.
5139. What kind of timber do you deal in? There is plenty of good red gum; it cannot be surpassed in the colonies for sleepers or for wheelwright's purposes. There is any amount of it all along the valley of the Lachlan—the Lachlan pine is also very good. I am sawing some of it at the present time.
5140. Do you own the saw-mill at Eugowra? Yes.
5141. Where does your large timber come from? Within a radius of 6 miles.
5142. Do you saw up much red gum? According to the demand—it is chiefly required for bridges and culverts.

Mr.
N. E. Osberg.

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5143.

- Mr. N. E. Osberg. 5143. Is there much of it in the district? Yes.
- 5 Mar., 1890. 5144. Have you had anything to do with sleepers? No; but I have seen plenty.
5145. Is the timber large and sound enough for sleepers? Yes.
5146. Is it sound, as a rule? You find gum-veins in some of it.
5147. Is there much pine about here? A good deal.
5148. Is there pine here in sufficient quantities to keep your mill going? For a considerable time.
5149. Do you saw lining boards? Yes.
5150. What is the nature of the timber? It is very good for building purposes; it is more lasting than the Oregon pine, especially for flooring.
5151. If there were railway communication, do you think there would be much demand for this wood? Yes.
5152. And could you supply a considerable demand? Yes.
5153. Could you supply 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 feet? If I had time.
5154. Is there timber in the district to do it? Yes.
5155. Supposing a line were constructed, could you saw timber, and send it to other districts, and compete there with the local timber? Yes; I am closer to the pine here. I should send pine towards Canowindra, or towards Cudal, if this line were constructed.
5156. But there is pine in other parts of the colony? Not much up this way.
5157. Not in the valley of the Murray? Yes; and on the Western line. But if there were a railway between here and Borenore, we could send timber to Borenore, and compete with people on the Dubbo line.
5158. Would the Borenore line suit you better than the Canowindra line? No; I think the Canowindra line would do equally well.
5159. Have the people here a preference for either line? If anything, they prefer the Canowindra line.
5160. Both of the surveys junction at Eugowra? Yes.
5161. So that the Eugowra people are in the happy position of getting a line, whichever way it comes? Yes; as long as it does not come through Parkes.
5162. The line from Molong to Parkes will not suit you? No.
5163. But if you had cheap communication with Parkes, would not the miners up there demand your timber? No; there is pine at Parkes, and a saw-mill too. Of course, you might have a branch line to Parkes.
5164. I suppose there is a saw-mill at Cowra? Yes; but they have to draw the timber a long way.
5165. If it were easy to send sawn boards by train, I suppose it would be as easy to send log timber? There would be one advantage—if you required any Maryborough logs or kauri pine, you could get it up in the log and cut it up here.
5166. Is your mill running full time? Yes; when I have time to run it.
5167. I suppose you have orders enough to keep you going? Yes, at the present, and for some time to come.
5168. If you had a railway, you could not cut any more stuff? I could, because up to the present I have been idle—that is, I have been doing other business occasionally—the carriage is heavy, and unless I get local orders I do not care very much about the work. Local orders pay very much better than distant orders.
5169. You have to get in your logs by dray? Yes.
5170. Most of your constituents drag their timber from the mill? It all depends—sometimes they do.
5171. Can you mention special advantages which would accrue from the construction of a line to this part of the district? Well, there is any amount of water for irrigation along the valley of the Lachlan, and if the farmers and graziers had easy access to a railway they would cultivate more, and go in for fruit-growing and so forth. At present there is no market for anything, therefore it is of no use for them to spend money on irrigation plants.
5172. Do you grow any wheat? I have done so until last year.
5173. For sale? Yes.
5174. Where do you sell it? At Forbes, as a rule.
5175. Have you any difficulty in finding a market? No; I do not grow very much.
5176. The other farmers swear that they cannot sell what they grow? Some of them have to take their wheat away from here, I believe.
5177. *Mr. Dowel.*] What price do you obtain for your timber at the mill? 11s. and 12s., cash and credit.

Mr. Daniel John Robertson, gardener, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. D. J. Robertson. 5178. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your occupation? I am a gardener.
- 5 Mar., 1890. 5179. What area have you under cultivation? I have altogether 20 acres; some of it I cultivate for wheat.
5180. What have you under orchard and vines? About 8 acres.
5181. What are your chief fruits? Peaches, apples, pears, apricots, plums, and grapes. I have 2 acres of grape vines.
5182. How old is your orchard? It commenced with about twenty trees, and I have added every year. I commenced about twelve years back.
5183. Are you still increasing it? Yes.
5184. Therefore you find it profitable? I hope it will be; it has not paid me very much yet.
5185. Then why do you keep adding to it? I am in hopes that it will be profitable some day. I am starting to dry fruit, and I hope to make it pay in that way.
5186. What process of drying do you adopt? I have an American dryer. I have tried samples of all sorts of fruit this year, but I have not done them very well, because I am new at it.
5187. Have you a local demand for your fruit? I go to Cowra, Molong, Orange, and Cudal.
5188. You can grow fruit which cannot be grown in the colder climates? Yes; our grapes are ripe before theirs.
5189. Do you think a railway will be of any advantage to you? Decidedly.
5190. Where would you send your fruit? To Orange, *via* Borenore, to begin with—Cowra, on the other line, would suit me as well—it is a colder district. I am a month ahead of them in peaches, apricots, and grapes.

5191. How does your climate compare with that of Parkes? This is a better climate for fruit than the Parkes climate. Sometimes they have better grapes—not always. I believe, as a rule, we can outdo them in fruit of any kind—peaches, and other stone fruit, they cannot grow as we can.

Mr. D. J.
Robertson.

5192. Cannot they grow peaches at Forbes as well as you can? I do not think you have seen peaches better than those which I am now exhibiting. I had some ripe on the 1st December, I am sending fruit to Forbes now.

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5193. Do you irrigate? Yes.

5194. Have you abundance of water? No, I have not enough.

5195. So that, in a dry season, you would be unable to irrigate? Last year I had as good a crop as any—at least it paid me best, because I had a better price. I got 6s., 8s., and 10s. a case, taking the fruit to Cowra and Canowindra.

5196. Then I gather that, unless you have a railway on which to get rid of your produce, you will have to dry it? Yes. I may mention that my grapes would not have been affected by the rain this year as they have been, if I had had any means of getting them away. I am trying raisins.

5197. If there were a railway you think the fruit-growing industry would be a profitable one, and that a large number of persons would embark in it? Hundreds of acres would be planted with trees.

Mr. William Niven, bee-keeper, sworn and examined:—

5198. *Mr. Lee.*] You reside in Eugowra? Yes, I have been here about thirteen years.

Mr. W. Niven.

5199. What have you been doing all that time? Part of the time I was hawking. I used to travel from Orange through the back country; in later years I have undertaken well-sinking contracts. Latterly, I have turned my attention to an apiary.

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5200. As a commercial experiment or as a hobby? With a view to make a profit.

5201. How does it pay you? At first I did not succeed very well, I worked on the old system, with boxes, but latterly, I have adopted the more modern system, and now I am succeeding very well.

5202. What bee do you cultivate? The black bee.

5203. Is that the English bee? Yes, but latterly I have got Italian queens. I am going to Italianise all my bees.

5204. How many hives have you? Seventy-three.

5205. What quantity do they yield in the course of the year? In an ordinary season, with frames, I estimate that they yield one cwt. per hive. It depends a great deal on the bee-keeper, and the number of bees in a hive. One man might work with 10,000 in a hive, and another man with 30,000.

5206. Have you had much experience in the management of bees? I have had to do with bees all my life, but it is only for the last four years that I have commenced studying books on the subject.

5207. Do you cultivate food for them? I grow honeysuckle in the winter, but I depend mostly on the pasturage and the bush.

5208. In what form do you send your honey to market? I have been sending extracted honey.

5209. Do you find a demand for it? I can always sell it, now that it is known.

5210. Where is your market for it? Lately, I have sold a good deal of it in Forbes; but I have sent it to Bathurst, Sydney, and Cowra.

5211. By dray? No, I have taken it myself.

5212. Do you find it a profitable speculation? Yes, I am making my living at it now, and I intend to continue it.

5213. Are you a married man? I have a family, but my wife is dead.

5214. You can support your family by the industry? Yes.

5215. What advantage would a railway be to an industry of this kind? It would be a great advantage to me. Often, when honey is worth 6d. and 8d. a lb. in Sydney, I could send it there.

5216. However successful your industry may be, the produce you are likely to send to the railway would amount to a very small freight? I am making only a commencement. I have seventy-three hives now, but I might bring the number up to 500.

5217. Your evidence proves what can be done in the way of raising bees, and you have shown that, with a better outlet, the industry would be still more profitable? Yes.

5218. Is there room here for other bee farms? Plenty.

5219. Do the bees suffer much in the dry weather? It affects them a good deal. A bee-keeper has to see that he does not take too much honey; but he can feed them, and carry them through the drought, if necessary.

5220. But that is the difficulty? Yes.

5221. Can you give us any other evidence concerning the railway? I have heard witnesses speak about the flooded state of the country on the frontages to the Lachlan. I have travelled some years from Orange, down the Lachlan, to Forbes and Parkes, and out as far as Cobar and Hillston. I have seen the country in flood time.

5222. What is your opinion? I consider that even if a flood rose and spread over the banks, it would not interfere with the railway, because the permanent way is raised. I have travelled from Lake Cudgellico to Forbes, in flood time—the water spread out for miles, but it was very shallow—perhaps only 10 inches deep. You could easily travel along the road, if you knew where it was. The current is so weak that it would not wash anything away. I have found more difficulty, in a wet season, in travelling in the back parts, on the red soil, than I have in the flooded country in time of flood.

5223. For what distance does the flooded country extend? I have known 8 or 9 miles of flooded country along the banks.

5224. How far from the river? Sometimes a $\frac{1}{2}$ and sometimes a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile. Traffic could go between here and Forbes in flood time, by keeping a little round.

5225. Do you know the flooded country, between the Southern Cross and Forbes? Yes; there is a low place where the water breaks over, and runs round by Forbes. By keeping where the railway goes you avoid it.

5226. *Mr. Dowel.*] The floods are sometimes an advantage to the district? Yes; I have never heard of them washing away fences or stock.

5227. What price do you obtain for a bottle of honey of the description you are now exhibiting? I sell it at 9s. a dozen, wholesale. I have had offers from Sydney. Not long ago, they said they would take a ton, if I had it to send.

Mr.

Mr. Lawrence Kirby, storekeeper, sworn and examined :—

- Mr. L. Kirby. 5228. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a general storekeeper.
 5229. Where do you reside? At Eugowra.
 5 Mar., 1890. 5230. How long have you been here? Fourteen years.
 5231. Have you been keeping a store all that time? Yes.
 5232. Do you find that the place is prosperous, and that your business improves? Yes, very much.
 5233. Is it better now than it was some time ago? It is twenty times better than it was when I came here.
 5234. Has it improved during the last four or five years? It is steadily improving.
 5235. Can you do better since you have discontinued the traffic to Parkes through this road. There is more doing in the way of settlement.
 5236. Does not the principal support of the stores arise from the traffic on the road through here? No. Our principal support is from settlement. Of course, we get a certain amount of support from the traffic.
 5237. Do you sell corn and chaff? Yes.
 5238. Where do you get it from? I get it from the local farmers, within a radius of 6 or 8 miles.
 5239. It is all grown here? Yes.
 5240. What is the average price of chaff per cwt.? Last year I bought at from £5 10s. to £7 10s.
 5241. That was an exceptionally dry year? Yes.
 5242. What did you give for it this year? I got it delivered here at from £3 to £3 5s.
 5243. I suppose if you had a railway it would not pay to buy chaff here and send it to Sydney? You can buy it cheaper at the farms here.
 5244. Can it be bought cheaper than at the rate at which you have been buying it? Yes; I buy it delivered.
 5245. Do you buy much corn? Yes, a good deal.
 5246. How much chaff do you buy in the year? Last season I bought 140 tons.
 5247. Was it all sold here? I sent about 14 tons to the other side of Condobolin. I had also orders from Mount Hope. I did not supply any though.
 5248. Would the construction of a railway line do you much good? A great deal.
 5249. If a line were constructed, would there be much merchandize traffic from here? Yes; there is a lot of produce grown in the district which would be sent either to the back country, or down to Bathurst, or Sydney. There is a large quantity of produce in the district this year and no market for it.
 5250. Are the holdings here of a large size, as a rule? Yes; a good size, as a rule. They run from 150 to 1,000 acres, and over—some of them are very large.
 5251. Which do you reckon are most useful to the district—the large holders or the small holders? The small holders, I believe.
 5252. I suppose they get more out of the ground than men with large holdings? Yes, they work the land more; they raise more produce.
 5253. Do you think the railway we are considering would be of any benefit to this place? No; we should derive no benefit at all from it.
 5254. Which railway to this district, do you think, will serve the interests of the greatest number of people? Either the railway from Borenore, or that from Cowra. It does not matter, so far as Eugowra is concerned, which way it comes.
 5255. But I mean in the interests of the general public? I believe the Borenore line, simply because it has the greater population. I may mention that I have sent away a lot of local produce, such as eggs and butter. I have sent butter to Sydney, and also bacon.
 5256. Where is the butter made? Nearly all of the settlers make butter.
 5257. All the year round? Except for a month or two in the hot weather.
 5258. What quantities have you sent to Sydney, monthly? I do not send it regularly; I find it does not pay—the expense is too great. I send 1 cwt. at a time; eggs I send pretty often.
 5259. How much butter do you think is made in this district in a month? I suppose about 1 ton.
 5260. What is the return of eggs a month? I should think about 400 dozen.
 5261. Is there any other produce you send from here? Hides, sheepskins, beeswax, kangaroo skins, opossum skins—in fact all sorts of skins.
 5262. What do you think would be the total amount of tonnage you would send away, including everything? It is very hard to say. Perhaps about 15 tons in the twelve months.
 5263. Have you sent any wheat to Sydney? Two years ago I sent 177 bags; I sent to Orange, in 1887, 317 bags.
 5264. Did you send any in January, 1889. No, it was scarce that year. I sent 200 bags to Forbes and Cudal, and got it ground for local consumption.
 5265. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where did you reside, previous to coming to Eugowra? At Bathurst.
 5266. What occupation did you follow there? I served my time at storekeeping.
 5267. Have you any knowledge of this district, outside of the town? A fair knowledge.
 5268. Do you know anything of the mineral resources of this district; is there any gold in the immediate neighbourhood of Eugowra? The prospectors obtained some, 2 or 3 miles from here, I think on the Canowindra-road.
 5269. No gold has been brought to your store for sale? No.
 5270. Are there any stock transactions taking place in this district? A large number of travelling stock pass through. I have seen as many as 10,000 sheep at a time. It is quite a common thing to see that number passing through here.
 5271. Where did they come from? The back country.
 5272. Where are they making for, as a rule? For Orange, Bathurst, and Blayney, and other routes.
 5273. If a railway were made to Eugowra, would any of that stock be conveyed upon it? I believe the greater part of the stock would be conveyed by rail.
 5274. Would a large number of stock be brought here to be trucked? A large number, I feel sure.
 5275. Have you any large travelling stock reserves in this district? Yes; too large, in fact.
 5276. To what do you attribute the improvement in business generally, at Eugowra? To settlement on the land.
 5277. You think the settlers are in a fairly good position? Yes.
 5278. Are they in the habit of disposing of their holdings to the squatter? I have not known one to do so for years—they are all *bonâ fide* men.

Mr.

Mr. Donald Chesher, sworn, and further examined:—

5279. *Chairman.*] I believe you wish to give some additional evidence? Yes. With regard to the price of land. I am an auctioneer and commission agent. I have several farms for sale now in this district. There was a forced sale down here. A man mortgaged the place and died, and it was sold off. The place was about half a mile over the creek, it was sold at £3 10s. 6d. an acre. It was a selection, and was improved up to the requirements of the law—that is, the improvements amount to 10s. an acre. A bush fire had come just before, and had cleared off the fence.

5280. Was much of the land cleared? Not a great deal.

5281. How many acres were there? 168½ acres.

5282. Is that a fair sample of the land about here? Yes. Then Mr. Herbert, who gave evidence to-day, bought a freehold from Mr. Fanning, and gave £3 10s. an acre. I know that he was offered by Mr. Garney, auctioneer, of Forbes, £5. The land is on the river.

5283. Who was the purchaser of the first selection? Mr. Jenkins.

5284. You have heard the information which has been given us as to the large quantity of travelling stock coming through this district. Can you give us any information, as an auctioneer, concerning that stock? There are frequent stock transactions in the district. About a fortnight ago Mr. Dalton, of Orange, came down here, and bought either 8,000 or 10,000 head of sheep. Another gentleman bought 2,000 very recently. All M'Phillamy's sheep travel through here and truck at Borenore.

5285. Would the stock to which you refer represent a great many thousands? They come in mobs of from 8,000 to 10,000—that is, stores. I despatched, myself, the week before last, to Borenore, 2,160.

5286. If there were a railway station at Eugowra, would there be any considerable number of fats trucked here? Yes.

5287. And at any time when the terminus was taken beyond this place;—do you think that fat stock would still be trucked here for market? Yes; the local stock. The owners of the run on which we now are have over 3,000 head of cattle, and they sent some to Melbourne last week. They trucked them at Cowra.

5288. But are there any fat sheep travelling through the district which are likely to go to market from here? A good many go up the river.

5289. Would any wool be brought here for despatch? Only the local wool.

5290. But I suppose the sheep to which you have been referring would not be trucked here at all, after the railway had passed Eugowra? Only the locally grown sheep—those within 15 or 20 miles. On the average, those 10 miles this side of Forbes would come here. Those over the river would also come here.

THURSDAY, 6 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at Glazier's Hotel, Murga, at 10.30 a.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Mr. James Glazier, senior, publican, sworn and examined:—

5291. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am keeping this licensed house at the present time.

5292. How long have you resided here? Ten years, last September.

5293. I suppose this is a pastoral town? Yes.

5294. What is its population? I can give you statistics, showing the population within 8 miles of Murga.

5295. That would be an 8 mile radius in every direction? Yes.

5296. But Mr. Chesher gave us statistics collected within 8 miles of Eugowra—if you give us statistics collected within 8 miles of Murga the two would overlap? Yes.

5297. Who collected these statistics? My son. They represent Gilwarry Rocks, Waterhole Creek, Redbank, and Reedy Creek, within 8 miles of Murga. At these places there are 48 adults, 150 children; the area of holdings is 5,000 acres; the number of acres cleared is 1,150—the number under hay 100, under wheat 900, under maize 150. There are 1,000 sheep, 150 horses, 200 head of cattle, and 20 pigs. The grand total, inclusive of the places I have mentioned, would be 175 adults, 235 children; the area of holdings, 85,114 acres; the acres cleared, 3,976; under hay, 165 acres; under wheat, 1,733 acres; under maize, 340 acres. The number of sheep would be 19,417, horses 582, cattle 775, and pigs 174.

5298. Have you seen any progress in this district during the last two or three years? Yes; a great many more people have been selecting.

5299. Is there any land available here for selection now? Not that I know of.

5300. Is there not a lot of Crown land here which would be selected, if it were not too barren and mountainous for that purpose? Yes.

5301. Are there any leasehold areas which will fall in this year, and which will be then open for selection? I know of none, unless at Goimbla and Eugowra; there may be some land there.

5302. Where has the population settled which has come here within the last few years? Some of them down on this side of the creek, and some on the opposite side—some are upon Reedy Creek.

5303. How far is Murga from the proposed line of railway? It is about 17 miles from here across to the Flagstone Creek.

5304. Would the construction of that line be of much benefit to Murga? None at all.

5305. You know that another line has been suggested from Borenore to Forbes—would that line be of material benefit to this place? It would be of great benefit.

5306. Would the suggested line from Cowra be of any benefit to you? None at all.

5307. How far would Murga be from that line? Well, I suppose it is 14 miles from here to Eugowra.

5308. Would you be no nearer to any part of that line? No; it would be 20 miles from here to go up to Long's Corner and across to Canowindra.

- Mr. J. Glazier, sen.
6 Mar., 1890.
5309. Is there much land under cultivation in a northerly direction from here, towards the proposed line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? A great deal, especially on Reedy Creek. There is as fine land for wheat-growing there as you would find in any part of the world.
5310. Is Mandagery Creek the main creek running west from here? Yes.
5311. Going direct south towards Canowindra, are there many farms? There are a great many going from Long's Corner into Canowindra.
5312. Are there any farms between here and Mogong? Yes; but there is a great reserve that way, adjoining the farms.
5313. You mean at Toogong? Between Toogong and Mogong.
5314. But I am talking of the country to the south of this place? It is mountainous right over to Nyrang Creek.
5315. Do you think that if the proposed railway were constructed to Forbes, this district would contribute much traffic towards the payment of expenses? I believe there would be sufficient loading up and down the line to pay expenses. I believe a good deal of additional agriculture would be carried on.
5316. What is your idea of the tonnage that would leave this place? A good deal of wheat and oats, and corn would be grown all down the Mandagery Creek, and on Reedy Creek.
5317. Could you give us an idea of the average return of wheat per acre in this district? From what I can see, the average for the last ten years would be about 20 bushels to the acre.
5318. Have you had any failures in crop? In times of drought our farmers have had very fair crops.
5319. But 20 bushels to the acre is a long way above an average fair crop? Yes; but there have been crops here which have gone as high as 40 bushels. I think I saw on Reedy Creek, this year, wheat which would average 40 bushels.
5320. Is Mr. Stevenson the largest farmer in the district? Yes, I think so.
5321. *Mr. Lee.*] Do you know the country from Molong to Parkes? No, I have never been along that road.
5322. You do not know the railway track, then? Part of it, from the head of Reedy Creek.
5323. Is that anywhere near Manildra? No; right away. The place I speak of is between Parkes and Forbes.
5324. Do you know the Dungeon Range? Yes; I have been there several times.
5325. What distance is it from Murga to Manildra? About 23 miles—that is the way you would have to go by road; in a straight line it is about 20 miles.
5326. *Chairman.*] Is there any mining going on in this district? At Boney's Rocks.
5327. Where is that? 6 miles from here.
5328. In which direction? Out east, between Toogong and Canowindra.
5329. What are they mining for? Gold.
5330. Is there any population there—are they doing any good? A good few people are there now.
5331. Are they getting gold? They are getting good stone, at least, so a man told me last night.
5332. Do they crush there? No; Canowindra.
5333. How far is it from where they are mining to Canowindra? About 15 miles.
5334. It is all reefing, I suppose? Yes.
5335. Is there any other mining here besides that? They were mining at Surface Hill, 3 miles from here—that would be alluvial.
5336. Were they sluicing it? Yes. My son got gold, but it was not payable, it was only prospecting.
5337. Have you any silver or any other mineral in the district? Yes; we have some up in the mountains.
5338. How far from here? About 3 miles.
5339. What have they done there in the shape of prospecting? They have put down a shaft 50 feet. I obtained these assays from Mr. Dixon, of Sydney—1 oz. 13 dwt. 16 grs. gold, and 6 oz. 7 dwt. 9 grs. silver to the ton. Another assay, by Mr. Harwood, gave, lead, 19·575 per cent., silver, 33 oz. 19 dwt. 11 gr. per ton, with a trace of gold.
5340. This is from a large lode formation? Yes.

Mr. Henry Green, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. H. Green.
6 Mar., 1890.
5341. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer and grazier.
5342. What is the size of your holding? 290 acres.
5343. Are you an original selector? Yes.
5344. Is the whole of your holding conditionally purchased? It is all purchased.
5345. How long have you been here? Twelve years.
5346. What do you grow on your land? Wheat, hay, corn, and potatoes.
5347. Did you grow any hay this last year? None this last year.
5348. Did you grow any wheat? About 56 acres, I think.
5349. How many bushels to the acre? I have not threshed yet.
5350. Have you cultivated wheat every year? Mostly wheat—there is no consumption for hay.
5351. What has been the average crop? I suppose I have had from 15 to 20 bushels to the acre.
5352. What is the average return of wheat in this district, per acre? I suppose, about 15 bushels to the acre—that is a fair average, taking one season with another.
5353. Where do you find a market for your wheat? Sometimes at Forbes, sometimes at Orange—wherever we can obtain the best price.
5354. Do you ever ship any to Sydney? I have done so.
5355. From what part of the railway have you shipped it? From Orange.
5356. Was the transaction a satisfactory one? No, it was not.
5357. After paying expenses, it left you no profit? Exactly; the cartage was too heavy from here.
5358. What price ought you to get for your wheat on the spot, in order to make it pay? I think that 3s. on the spot ought to pay, taking one year with another.
5359. On an average, 3s. on the spot would pay? Yes.
5360. You know that railways have been surveyed from Molong to Forbes, and from Borenore to Forbes? Yes.
5361. Which of these surveyed lines would suit this district best? The Borenore line, by far the best.

5362. Of course you hold strong opinions upon that question, because you happen to live there? I am well acquainted with both lines. I have been a carrier for thirty years. Mr. H. Green.
6 Mar., 1890.
5363. You have travelled on both routes? Yes.
5364. Why do you think the Borenore route would be the best? The land on that route is by far the best for cultivation. If more of the land were thrown open to selection there would be a great deal of cultivation; but a lot of the land is reserved. For this last five years there have been no selections.
5365. What reserve is there? There is a mile on each side of the route, for some distance.
5366. If you went a mile on each side you would go up into the hills? Not at all places. In some places, perhaps, but not at others.
5367. Does not the surveyed line from Borenore run through a large area of purchased land? Not a great deal.
5368. How long is it since you were over the Parkes and Molong route? About twelve months.
5369. Do you know Manildra and Garra? Yes.
5370. Do you know that there are many thousands of acres settled upon in that direction? I know there is a good deal of settlement about Garra.
5371. Would this part of the district compare favourably with that, for settlement? I think so.
5372. Are there not ten settlers there for every one here? When you get into our farming districts, about Cudal and Canowindra, you will find any number of farmers.
5373. But in the places I have mentioned there would be about ten settlers for every one in this immediate locality? Yes.
5374. What other reasons are there in favour of the line coming this way? Well, the line going to Molong would be of no use to us at all.
5375. But, taking a larger view of the question, and supposing a line to be made to serve the bulk of the people in these districts, which route do you think should be adopted? Well, the Garra people are close to a line at present, at Molong—they are only about 7 miles from Molong.
5376. What about Manildra? There is not much farming carried on there.
5377. What about the country between that and Bumberry? There is very little farming there—it is for the most part barren land.
5378. But it is all taken up? That may be; it is, nevertheless, very poor land.
5379. The land you have here is chiefly alluvial land, situated on the banks of the various creeks? Yes.
5380. And when you leave the flats you get at once into barren ranges? Just hereabouts.
5381. What particular advantages do you expect, personally, from the construction of the line? I hope to get my grain to a good market.
5382. And I suppose there will be an increase in the value of your land? Yes.
5383. Have you been in the habit of carrying your wheat in drays from here to Orange? Yes.
5384. Have you had any difficulty in selling it any time? About three years ago, I had a great difficulty in selling it, and in getting it to market. I have sent wheat from here to Sydney, and have sold it for 2s. 5d. per bushel.
5385. One of your chief reasons for advocating this line is, that it would be of great advantage to you, personally? Yes.
5386. *Mr. Cox.*] Which has the greater population—the district to the north, or the district to the south of the proposed line? The district to the north, I think.
5387. Right away between this and Manildra? Yes.
5388. What is the amount of population south? There is none at all this way.
5389. But towards Toogong? I could not tell you. There is a large population on the Nyrang Creek. After passing Long's Corner you get into open country.
5390. Which is the better soil for cultivation—that towards Toogong and Nyrang Creek, or that towards Manildra? The soil towards Toogong cannot be beaten, there is nothing but mountains from here to Manildra.
5391. Are you aware whether the proposed railway will run through any large portion of the Toogong estate? I does run through a portion of it, but I cannot say whether it is large or small.

Mr. Edwin Glazier, miner, sworn and examined:—

5392. *Mr. Dowd.*] Where do you reside? At Murga; I have been here, off and on, for about ten years.
5393. Where were you previously? At Canowindra.
5394. What is your occupation? I follow mining, principally.
5395. For how long have you been doing so? Some six or seven years now, off and on.
5396. Can you give the Committee any information about the minerals in this district? I am working now on the Nangar Mountains, about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Murga. Before that, I was working at Surface Hill, a short distance from here.
5397. In what sort of mine are you now working? We sunk a shaft there 50 feet first, and we had only one assay from that depth—that my father has given you. The lode is 200 feet wide between the two walls. I know where the foot-wall is, and where the top-wall is, and I have sunk in both.
5398. Have you any quartz here? Yes.
5399. All the specimens you exhibit are contained within this lode? Yes.
5400. These are exhibits of the various strata through which you passed in sinking the shaft 50 feet? Yes; we obtained the same description of stone in the shaft—some of it has been assayed by Mr. Dixon, and some by Mr. Harwood.
5401. From your knowledge of mining, do you think there is likely to be any large discovery of gold or other mineral in this district? I do.
5402. Have you heard that opinion expressed by other diggers? I have.
5403. What number of diggers are there in the district? There have been a great many here at different times. There are only four now engaged where I am working. There are a number working at Boney's Rocks, about 5 miles from here.

Mr. E.
Glazier.
6 Mar., 1890.

Mr. Charles Fuller, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

5404. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer and grazier.
5405. What area of land have you? 1,005 acres of selection, and I have a conditional lease. 5406. Mr. C. Fuller.
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- Mr. C. Fuller. 5406. What is the total area of your holding? 3,773 acres.
 5407. What quantity of stock have you? About 2,000 sheep.
 6 Mar., 1890. 5408. Some statistics have been handed to us purporting to give the names of the various holders of land within a circuit of 8 miles of Murga. Your name is down, and the area of land is correct; but you are not placed here as a sheep-holder at all? I have a joint interest in the land—perhaps that is the reason.
 5409. What horses and cattle have you? About twenty head of horses, and fifty head of cattle.
 5410. What area of land do you cultivate? About 60 acres. I grow wheat, maize, hay, pumpkins, and, sometimes, potatoes. I have no potatoes in this year.
 5411. What crops had you in this year? I had 22 acres of wheat.
 5412. And what return did you get? About 400 bushels; 40 acres of hay gave me 20 tons; and I am now growing about 25 acres of corn.
 5413. What do you expect from that? I may get from 12 to 15 bushels.
 5414. How does it come to be so low? It has been neglected—it got very bad with weeds.
 5415. How far is your farm from Murga? Two miles.
 5416. Upon the Mandagery Creek? No; straight in a northerly direction from here.
 5417. Why do you cultivate so small an area out of so large a holding of land? Because there is no outlet for the produce.
 5418. Where is your market for wheat? Cudal and Borenore—sometimes Forbes. I occasionally sell a little at Eugowra.
 5419. This year you are getting a very low price, on account of the heavy crop throughout the district? Yes.
 5420. What does it cost you to put in and take off a crop of wheat? I never calculated it.
 5421. What has been your average crop for the past ten years? From 12 to 15 bushels.
 5422. Did you get anything in 1888, in the great drought? Not much. I got 18 bags of wheat off 22 acres, but the cattle got into some of it and destroyed it.
 5423. Have you any other occupation than that of keeping sheep and cultivating this small area of land? No.
 5424. Have you a threshing machine? No, I have a stripper.
 5425. Do you use that for your neighbours' crops as well as for your own? No; not very extensively. I do, sometimes, two or three farms in the year, besides my own.
 5426. Is that the general method of getting the harvest in? Yes, generally, but some approve of cutting and threshing with machinery.
 5427. Is it not a fact there has been a large quantity of wheat lost this year through the strippers? Of course, if the wheat is lying down it cannot be gathered by the stripper.
 5428. Then it was not the fault of the stripper that there was so big a loss this year? No.
 5429. Do you know the line of railway which has been surveyed *via* Borenore and Cudal? Yes.
 5430. Do you think that line would better serve the greater number of farmers in this part of the country than the line *via* Molong and Parkes? I do.
 5431. Why? Because there is a larger population on this line than on the other.
 5432. Leaving out of the question the people who live between the two lines, would the greater number to be served be to the south of this line, or to the north of the other line? To the south of this line, decidedly.
 5433. Is it a fact that there are several large estates on this line on which there is no settlement? There are two fairly large estates, but they are not extraordinarily large. Bowman's estate at Toogong is only 15,000 acres. I do not know what the area of Mr. Lance Smith's estate is.
 5434. Do you think that if a railway were constructed, these proprietors would cut up their land for cultivation? They might do so.
 5435. Is the land particularly suited to cultivation? Yes; it is first-class soil, the greater portion of it.
 5436. Would the proposed railway from Borenore run through a large portion of these two estates? Not a large portion; it runs through some reserves, though.
 5437. It has also been suggested that a line should be constructed from Cowra—would that line suit you? I do not think so.
 5438. The line you advocate is the Borenore line? Yes, exclusively.
 5439. Is there much reserved land about here which could be rendered available for conditional purchases? There is a good deal—there is a travelling stock reserve from Long's Corner pretty well to Forbes.
 5440. Do you know the leasehold areas on Goimbla and Eugowra? Yes.
 5441. Is there much land there now locked up, which will be thrown open for selection in July next? Yes; I think so. I may mention that the principal part of the travelling stock reserve is first class cultivation land.
 5442. You think the travelling stock reserve would be thrown open if a railway were constructed? Yes.
 5443. Is there any timber in the neighbourhood suitable for railway sleepers? Yes.
 5444. Where is it to be found? There is box timber all along the line, and red gum on the creek; then there is ironbark up the Nangar Valley, and also upon the other side.
 5445. I suppose there is a good deal of traffic on this road? Not so much as there was before the line was constructed to Nyngan, but there is a fair amount now. No doubt, if a line were constructed to Forbes, more goods would go this way than go now. This line, if it were continued to Condobolin, would take traffic which now goes to the Western line. I also think that if we had railway communication you would see a good deal more farming carried on than is done now.
 5446. You think there will be plenty of land available? Yes; and not only that, but people who have land would cultivate more largely than they do now. We cannot compete with other places having railway communication, on account of the heavy rates of carriage by team.
 5447. *Mr. Lee.*] You know the route of the proposed railway from Molong? From Manildra.
 5448. Do you know much of that part of the country? I know it all, pretty well.
 5449. Do you know the country to the north of that line? I know it by Cumnock and Oberley.
 5450. Do you know Kadina? No.
 5451. How long is it since you were there? I have not been out that way for ten years.
 5452. Then how can you swear that the population south of this line is greater than the population to the north of the other line? Well I can only swear from what I know of it.*
 5453. But how do you come to know about it? Simply from going through the country. 5454.

NOTE (on revision) :—From the knowledge I have of the country, knowing it is principally mountainous, population could not settle on it.

5454. But you have not been there for ten years? I have learned a good deal from other persons who have travelled through it. Mr. C. Fuller.
5455. Then you are swearing from what you have heard from other people? Yes. 6 Mar., 1890.
5456. You cannot speak of the population from your own knowledge? No; not for the last few years.
- 5456½. You are going mostly on what you have heard from other people? Yes, mostly.
5457. The land at Canowindra would be outside the influence of this line? I do not think so.
5458. How far is Conowindra from here? About 18 miles.
5459. Canowindra is as close to Cowra as it would be to this line? That may be.
5460. Consequently it cannot be reckoned as part of the country influenced by this line, as it is within the same distance of an existing line? I understand that there are only two lines in question.

Mr. Isaac Wren, farmer, sworn and examined:—

5461. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer. Mr. I. Wren.
5462. Where do you reside? At Cranbury. 6 Mar., 1890.
5463. How far is that from here? About 10 miles easterly from here, to the right of Toogong.
5464. Is it a township? No; there is a farming population.
5465. Are there many farms there? A great many.
5466. What is the area of your holding? 474 acres.
5467. How much have you cleared and fit for cultivation? I had 127 acres under crop this year.
5468. Have you all the land you have cleared under crop? Yes.
5469. What have you been growing? Wheat, hay, and corn. I have 500 bags of wheat, or 2,000 bushels off 87 acres.
5470. That is over 23 bushels to the acre? Yes.
5471. What hay did you get? I had about 45 tons from about 33 acres.
5472. What corn have you? I have about 8 acres of corn.
5473. Where is your market? At present we are compelled to sell at Cudal, on account of the haulage. Cudal is the nearest town of any importance to us.
5474. What would it cost you a bushel to convey your wheat to Borenore? 6d. a bushel. Several teamsters this year would not take it there under 6d. We have paid 6d. a bushel to Orange.
5475. If the line we are investigating were constructed, would it be of any advantage to you? No.
5476. Which line would be of most advantage to you? A line from Borenore, through Cudal, would be of most advantage to us.
5477. Would either the line from Molong, or the line from Cowra, be of advantage to you? A line from Cowra to Forbes would be of more advantage to us than the Molong line. The Cowra line would go through Canowindra, and we are 14 miles from that place.
5478. Do you know Mr. Wren, a solicitor of Manildra? He is my brother magistrate.
5479. How far is your selection from your brother's? From 13 to 14 miles; my brother's farm is at Gregra.
5480. Would the Borenore line serve your brother as well as yourself? It would; it would not be more than 5 miles distant.
5481. At what distance on either side of a railway line do you estimate that farmers will be served? I should say about 10 miles.
5482. You think that a railway would serve farmers, fairly and honestly, 10 miles on each side of it? Yes. If we could not get it closer we would be satisfied with that.
5483. Has there been an increase in the area of land put under cultivation in the district in the last two or three years? The increase during the last two or three years has been very slight, if there has been any at all. I cannot say, definitely, that there has been any increase in cultivation.
5484. How do you account for that? Well, in the first instance, bad seasons have interfered with agriculture very much.
5485. Has the price of wheat had anything to do with it? The price of wheat has been very low. Then there is the cost of carriage to market.
5486. If a railway were constructed, what would it cost per bushel to send your wheat to Sydney, touching at the nearest railway point to your district? I could not say. I should imagine that we might get our wheat down for 6d., 7d., or perhaps 8d. per bushel.
5487. Would that pay you then? Much better than at the present time. Now, it costs us about 1s. 1d.
5488. You are aware that the Railway Commissioners have made special rates for the conveyance of farm produce. From the point at which you would probably touch a railway, the charge would be about 4d. a bushel, delivered in Sydney. That being the case;—do you think the farmers would be induced to put a larger area under crop? I think so.
5489. What does your wheat cost per bushel to grow;—what could you afford to sell it for on the ground, allowing yourself a reasonable profit? I have never made that calculation.
5490. What is the average yield of your district? It is hard to say what it has been during the last three or four years. Previously, for three years following, it averaged about 23 bushels to the acre. Since that time we have had uncertain seasons, and droughts have set in. At Barrigan, in very indifferent seasons, it has averaged 11½ bushels per acre.
5491. Is there any other information you would like to give the Committee? I should like to say a few words as to the nature of the country between Cargo and Canowindra. The whole of that land is well adapted for cultivation; it is occupied now principally by small settlers and farmers. Starting from Long's Corner, and going south, it is almost level country—that is, going towards Canowindra. From Canowindra to Cargo, and from Cargo to Bowan Park, on the east of Cudal, the whole of the country is fit for cultivation.
5492. Is much of that country held in large areas by squatters? Very little of it. Mr. Bowman, at Toogong, is the largest holder I know of. There is a paddock belonging to Davy's Plains Station, but it is not a very large area. There is a reserve of 9,000 acres at Long's Corner. A portion of it has lately been revoked, and it has been thrown open to settlement. I have made a calculation as to the number of farms in the district. There are nine farms almost adjoining me, of from 290 to 500 acres; nine have grown upwards of 3,160 bags of wheat this season. I know of one place where a threshing machine has threshed, this season, 1,800 bags of wheat off three farms.

Mr.

Mr. Thomas Barton, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. T. Barton.
6 Mar., 1890.
5493. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer.
5494. Holding how many acres? Four hundred and ten.
5495. How much do you cultivate? I have not cultivated much lately, because there has been no market.
5496. What do you chiefly cultivate? Wheat and hay.
5497. How far do you reside from Murga? Two miles.
5498. What are you doing with your land, chiefly? Grazing.
5499. Why are you in attendance to give evidence to-day? Because I think the Borenore line is the best line.
5500. You have been requested to attend? Yes.
5501. Who asked you? Mr. Glazier, a good while ago.
5502. When did you know that the Committee would be here? I saw it stated in the Orange newspaper.
5503. Could you give us any information as to why the railway should not be made between Molong and Parkes, or as to why it should be made anywhere else? I do not know the road from Molong to Parkes, but I do know the road to Borenore.
5504. The Borenore line would suit you best? Yes.
5505. You cannot say that the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes would not benefit a large number of people? It will not get the traffic from the right hand side of this road, as long as there is a road to Borenore.
5506. How far is Borenore? Thirty-eight miles.
5507. Suppose a deviation brought the Molong line within 10 miles of this place—would the people use it then? I do not think they would pay that 10 miles of cartage, if they had a good road to Borenore.
5508. Would you cart your produce 40 miles, to Borenore, if you had a railway station 10 miles distant? That depends upon the produce.
5509. Would you send your wheat to the railway station 10 miles distant? No; I would sooner cart it 40 miles, and save the railway carriage.
5510. If you would cart your wheat 40 miles, I suppose you can cart it now, so that really you do not want a railway? I do not grow wheat, because there is no market.
5511. Have you any other information to give us as to the capabilities of the country, and so forth? I think this place will grow anything in reason, and for sleepers and fencing there is plenty of good timber.
5512. That can be said of the country through from Parkes to Manildra, Toogong and Cudal, and thence to Canowindra? It is all good country, with the exception of the mountains just here.
5513. There is a large population settled over that area? Yes, and they are chiefly farmers, living by cultivation.
5514. But a railway cannot be taken to every man's door. Which would be the best line to serve the greatest number of persons in this district? If I had no interest in the matter at all, I should still say that the Borenore line is the best line.
5515. Yet you know nothing about the other line? All this district, and all the residents down below Forbes, will support this line.
5516. Are you including Canowindra and Cargo? Yes.
5517. If this line were constructed, do you not know that the Canowindra people would be further away from it than they are from the Murrumburrah line at present? I was not aware of it.
5518. *Mr. Cox.*] Do you live across the creek? Yes.
5519. A bridge has lately been constructed over the creek? For the traffic from here to Parkes, backwards and forwards—it is a main road, and stock travel upon it a great deal.
5520. At whose instance was the bridge built? The people about here petitioned for it.
5521. It serves all those people lying to the north between here and Manildra? Yes, the people at Reedy Creek.

Mr. Robert Kinnerson, grazier, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. R. Kinnerson.
6 Mar., 1890.
5522. *Mr. Cox.*] Where do you reside? At Nangar; 7 miles from here towards Eugowra; about half-way between this place and Eugowra.
5523. What is the area of your holding? Five hundred and fifty-seven acres. I go in for a little cultivation and a little grazing.
5524. Do you find cultivation profitable? Not exactly here—it is rather too far from market.
5525. If you had a means of getting your produce to market, would you cultivate more largely than you do now? A lot more.
5526. Would your neighbours do the same? Yes.
5527. I suppose they only cultivate now because they have nothing else to give them employment for a part of the year? Exactly.
5528. Do you know the route from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? Not much. I have travelled it a few times, years ago, when I was carrying. I know it is pretty rough country.
5529. Are you on the Mandagery Creek? Yes; right on the creek.
5530. What was the result of your harvesting this year? I got about 400 bags of wheat off about 80 acres. I had some stripped, and some I have in stacks not yet threshed. I could not say what is in the stacks exactly, but I stripped 275 bags. I think there must be something over 100 bags in the stacks.
5531. What do you do with your wheat? I have sold part of it. I take it to Forbes.
5532. At what cost? Sixpence per bushel.
5533. What price do you get there? Three shillings.
5534. Would 2s. 6d. a bushel pay you? Yes; if we had the facilities to get the produce to market.
5535. Have you ever had a team on the road? Yes; I was carrying myself, at one time.
5536. That would be knocked on the head in the event of there being a railway? Yes.
5537. You believe that a railway from Borenore, *via* Cudal, to Forbes, would suit the larger number of persons in this part of the country? Yes.

Mr. Hugh Pryor, farmer, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. H. Pryor.
6 Mar., 1890.
5538. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? At Reedy Creek, 6 miles from Murga; I am a farmer.
5539. How long have you resided in this district? Somewhere about thirteen years. Previous to that I was living on the other side of Orange, 3 miles on the other side of Millthorpe. 5540.

5540. What area have you? I hold 320 acres. I till it, and grow a bit of wheat.
5541. Where do you dispose of your grain? Principally at Cudal.
5542. What distance are you from that place? Twenty-one miles.
5543. Do you know anything about the staked line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I have never been along the railway route, but I have travelled the road with a team, pretty often. I have gone from Dulladerry, through Meranburn, into Molong.
5544. What would be the nearest point on the Molong railway to your property—I mean the proposed line? I do not think it would be more than 7 miles away.
5545. Then would that railway serve you and the Reedy Creek people at all? I suppose it would have to serve us, if we did not get a line through here.
5546. But if a railway were constructed in that direction, do you think the farmers at Reedy Creek would bring their produce to it? That is the line we should have to take, if we could not get through *via* Cudal.
5547. You know that the Molong line is now surveyed to a point at about 4 miles from Cudal? I was not aware of that.
5548. Knowing that, do you think that the line would be of any service to the farmers at Reedy Creek? As far as I can see, the deviation would not affect the people at Reedy Creek.
5549. Would the construction of any one of these lines be of advantage to the farmers in this district? Yes, it would enable them to get their produce to market at a low rate of carriage. At present we have no encouragement to increase the area under cultivation. But for my family, I would allow the land to stand still.
5550. If you could land your wheat at Sydney, by the Molong line, at 4d. a bushel, would you be encouraged to put in a larger area of wheat? Yes; but there is the cartage to be considered.
5551. But would you not be able to avail yourself of the Sydney market? Yes.
5552. In your opinion, then, it would be an advantage to have a line constructed? Either that line or the Borenore line—the Borenore line is my favourite line. It is all falling ground from Reedy Creek to Murga, with the exception of a little red hill; but it is impossible to go the other way in wet weather.

Mr. Henry Thomas, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

5553. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a farmer and grazier.
5554. Where do you reside? At Barrigan, but it is usually called Cranbury—my holding adjoins Mr. Wren's.
5555. What evidence can you give this Committee as to the construction of the proposed line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes—would it be of any advantage to you? No; I do not think so.
5556. Do you think that either the Cowra or the Borenore line would be of greater advantage? The Borenore line, I think, because it runs within $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of my place. I would not advocate the line for that reason alone, but in my judgment, it passes through the centre of the population.
5557. Do you know the country north of the line from Molong to Parkes? I do not.
5558. Then how do you know that the line from Borenore to Forbes would be the central line? Well, I take it that the Molong line runs to the extreme north, and the Cowra line to the extreme south, whereas the Borenore line would be in the centre.
5559. But how far is it from this proposed line to the main Western line, at Dubbo—is it not three times as far as it is from here to Cowra? I do not know about that, but it is central, so far as the agricultural area is concerned. It is not generally supposed that the Bogan country grows much produce.
5560. Would you be surprised to hear that in the Kadina country 17,000 acres have been taken up in one place, and that the holders are all farmers? There is nothing very surprising about that. I would not say for a moment that it was not the case.
5561. But your statement that the Borenore line is the central line is not exactly borne out by facts? It may be a good thing to make a railway with a view to induce population to settle upon the soil, but if you can put a line where you have population to begin with, I think you are doing still better. The people are already settled upon this line.
5562. But you say you do not know anything about the population to the north of the Molong line? I can only speak from my reading and casual observation. I cannot speak definitely.
5563. Have you read or heard anything about the Parkes country I am now speaking of—I mean the country directly north of Parkes? I know it only from hearsay. I have heard that a few persons have settled down at Kadina, who have come from Victoria or South Australia. I have heard that they are getting on remarkably well, and that they have taken up a considerable area of land.
5564. Do you not think, having regard to the population to the north of the Molong line, that that is more likely to be the central line than the Borenore line? I do not imagine so for a moment, but on the other hand, I cannot say definitely that that would not be the case. I fancy we require a railway here, even if they get one there.
5565. Would a line from Borenore to Forbes be a paying line? I think it would pay right away from the time of its construction.
5566. You think it would pay working expenses and the interest on capital? It would.
5567. Supposing a line were constructed from Borenore to Forbes, to what distance south of that line would the people be served? I suppose it would serve people for 15 miles on either side of it.
5568. That would take in the people nearly down to Canowindra? Yes. I should be satisfied if I got a railway within 15 miles.
5569. How far are you from this proposed line? It would be about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the outside of my land, but 4 miles from where I reside.
5570. How far are you from Cudal? Eight miles.
5571. Then if a line of railway from Molong to Parkes went within 4 miles of Cudal you would be well served, because you would be within 12 miles of it? If that is the case;—but I am rather doubtful about the distance.
5572. If the Molong and Parkes line came within 12 miles of your place you would be served? I think so, if I could not get a better line. People are generally averse to making more miles of railway than are absolutely necessary—the carriage has to be paid on the additional distance for all time to come, even if the Molong line came within 4 miles of Cudal, there would be 20 miles extra to travel in order to take advantage of it, so far as some people are concerned.

Mr. H. Pryor.
6 Mar., 1890.

Mr.
H. Thomas.
6 Mar., 1890.

- Mr. H. Thomas. 5573. *Mr. Dowel.*] But you would get your grain to Sydney at 4d. a bushel? That would be an advantage.
- 6 Mar., 1890. 5574. Is there any other statement you desire to make? I can quite corroborate Mr. Wren's statement as to the quantity of wheat grown in the district—this year, I am sure I had 30 bushels to the acre.

THURSDAY, 6 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court House, Cudal, at 5 p.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN.)

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

WILLIAM SPRENGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Mr. Edward Taylor, senior, grazier, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. E. Taylor, sen. 5575. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a grazier.
- 6 Mar., 1890. 5576. Where do you reside? At Pretty Plains.
5577. Do you know anything about this district? A good deal.
5578. You have property here? I have about 1,300 acres of land; some freehold land, some selected land, and some town property.
5579. Where is the 1,300 acres situated? Within 1½ miles of the town, between here and Orange.
5580. What do you do? One of my sons is living and farming on it. I keep stock on it.
5581. What stock? Cattle and horses.
5582. How many head of cattle? In winter time over 200 head. In the summer time I have not so many. I shift them down below.
5583. Do you use any cattle for dairying purposes? I do, at home—not here.
5584. Are you breeding horses? Yes.
5585. How many have you at this place? Not many. At the present time only half a dozen.
5586. Your son farms a portion of the land? Yes.
5587. How many acres? About 130.
5588. Had he that area under crop this year? Yes.
5589. Has he been in the habit of farming there for some time? Yes.
5590. What sort of crops does he get? They are good this year, but last year he got none at all.
5591. What would be about the average? From 17 to 20 bushels. This year he had over 30 bushels.
5592. How many acres had he under wheat this year? I think about 80 or 90; the rest was hay.
5593. Does he grow anything else? I think he had about 20 acres of corn.
5594. Is it looking well? No; the rain did not come in time.
5595. Where is his market for wheat? He sold it this year at Millthorpe.
5596. How does he get it there? In waggons, from here to Borenore, and there he puts it on to the train.
5597. What does it cost per bushel to cart it from his farm to Borenore? He draws with his own teams.
5698. But what could he get it drawn for? For about 1s. a bag, or 3d. a bushel.
5599. If a railway line were constructed to this district, would a larger acreage be put under cultivation? I think so.
5600. Would the line we are investigating, from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, be of any benefit to you? No; not a bit.
5601. Would the line from Cowra to Forbes be of any benefit to you? No.
5602. The only line that would do any good to this place, in your judgment, is the line from Borenore to Forbes, *via* Cudal? Yes.
5603. Putting aside all personal feeling, do you think that would be the proper line for the Government to construct in the interests of the greatest number of people? For this district it would be the best line. The people on the other side of Manildra would be within 8 miles of it; they would be still nearer if there were a platform at Little Boree, at Parkes-lane, and they would have a good metalled road right up to it; that would be 8 or 9 miles from here.
5604. Do you know where the proposed line is surveyed, then? Yes; but I do not know whether they would put a platform there.
5605. Do you think that if the people of Manildra are 8 or 9 miles from a railway they ought to consider themselves served by it? I should think so, because every one cannot have a line.
5606. By the same rule, you would be served if you were 8 or 9 miles from a railway? We should, if we could not get any closer.
5607. Would the Molong line, under these circumstances, benefit you? It would not benefit us, because if we had our wheat on the waggons we might as well take it to Borenore as to Manildra.
5608. How far is it from here to Manildra? About 8 miles, straight. Some parts of Manildra are nearer than others. Some of the farmers live within 6 miles of this place.
5609. What class of country is it between here and Manildra;—is it agricultural country all the way through? There are some stony ridges and some good land.
5610. Is it near Manildra? Near Meranburn. The bad land is when you get to Coates' Creek.
5611. How much barren country is there between here and Manildra? I could not say how much, but there is a good deal.
5612. Is it a mile across? No; I do not think it is.
5613. With the exception of that small portion of bad land, is all the land from here to Manildra good agricultural land? Yes; there is the Mandagery Creek, it is very good between here and that point, excepting a few places where you will find rocks and stones.
5614. Now, supposing the Molong line, instead of going through Manildra, was to go through about half-way between here and Manildra, would it benefit the people of Cudal? Not on the south side. The principal farms are about Big Flat, and between here and Cargo. 5615.

5615. Supposing a line were constructed from Borenore through Cudal and Forbes, to what distance on the south side would the farmers be benefited by it? About 8 miles. I think it ought to serve the farmers even more than 8 miles on each side.

5616. Do you not think that if every farmer got a railway line within 12 or 14 miles of his farm he ought to be satisfied? If they could all get that they ought to be.

5617. If you had a line within 4 miles of Cudal to the north, the people 8 miles below you again towards Cargo would not be more than 12 miles from the railway, and they ought, therefore to be satisfied? I think it would pay them better to cart to Borenore.

5618. How far are you from Borenore? About 15 miles, I think, but I could not be sure.

5619. Do you know whether the population is increasing,—whether more people have come here within the last few years? There are more coming here every year.

5620. What are they doing? Farming.

5621. Are they selectors? Yes.

5622. Is there any land open to selection? Not now; it is all taken up.

5623. What increase has there been in the population within the last three or four years? I cannot say. I know a number of strange persons have come here, but I could not say how many.

5624. Do you know whether the land between here and the Mandagery Creek, to the north of this place, is as good as the land between here and Cargo to the south of it? I do not think it is. There is good and bad land on both sides. There is as good land on the Molong line as there is on this line. There is good land at Manildra, and good land at Bumberry just this side of Packham's.

5625. Do you know the country up towards Kadina? Yes; and towards Garra and Oberly. I have dealt with horses and cattle there.

5626. Do you know the country between Oberly and Manildra? Yes.

5627. What sort of country is that? There is very good land on Brymedura, but it is not open to selection.

5628. What do you think of the Kadina land? Some is good and some is bad.

5629. Is there not a large population there? There was not when I was there.

5630. How long is it since you were there? Five years ago.

5631. Do you think that if a line were constructed from Borenore to Forbes *via* Cudal it would serve people at Kadina? I think they would be close enough to the line at Molong.

5632. How many miles from the line at Molong do you think they are? About 30 miles.

5633. Of course you do not think that this line would serve them then? No; not at that distance.

5634. Then there is another place to the west—I mean Trundle—where 19,000 acres have been taken up. The people there would be still worse off? Of course this line would not benefit them a bit.

5635. But would not a line to Parkes benefit them? Better than the Cudal line, certainly.

5636. Knowing that there is a large increase in the population to the north of the Molong line, and putting on one side all personal feelings in the matter, which of the whole of the lines suggested do you think would be the proper one to construct in the interests of the community? I think the Borenore line, because there are so many good farms out here to the south, round Barrigan, Cargo, and towards the Canoblas. I think they grow better crops in that direction.

5637. Would not the people at the Canoblas be served by the line from Orange to Borenore? Yes; on one side, but not on the other, where you go down to Paling Yard Creek, Cave Creek, and Big Flat.

5638. Would not Barrigan be served by a line from Cowra quite as well as by a line from Borenore? The people at Barrigan could get to this line at Long's corner or Toogong; 7 miles would be the furthest, and going to Canowindra there would be 12 miles, a difference of 4 or 5 miles.

5639. You are only 15 miles from Borenore, and having a good road to that place do you not think that you are already fairly served by a railway, and much better served than many other parts of the colony? There are thousands of tons of straw going to waste this year for want of railway communication, and within 6 miles of Cudal 32,000 bushels of wheat have been grown. A threshing machine this year has threshed 8,000 bags; then a great deal has been stripped, and there is a lot more remaining to be threshed. So far 32,000 bushels have been stripped and threshed. Gavin, Baker and E. Taylor, junior, have grown, 8,000 bushels between the three.

5640. What is the population of this place? Over 300.

5641. Within what radius? Within $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of this place.

5642. Is there anything you would like to add to the evidence you have already given? I should like to give my reasons for thinking that the Borenore line is the best. I have been travelling round the district for about twenty years. I have been nearly all over the Molong district, and I admit that there is good as well as bad land in it. The reason I think this is the best line is, that there are so many persons settled upon it. The land on both lines was at one time open for selection, and if the land on the other line had been as good as it is there I think there would have been more people settled upon it, and that there would have been more business places. From Borenore to Eugowra there are twelve public-houses, and five billiard-tables, paying to the Government £410 a year. On the Parkes line there are only three public-houses paying to the Government £90 a year—a difference of £310. On this line there are eight stores from Borenore to Eugowra, two telegraph offices, one flour-mill, one bank, a savings' bank and money-order office, two Schools of Art, a Good Templar's hall, seven schools within half a mile of the road, a Catholic chapel, an English church, four blacksmiths' shops, two saddlers' shops, two bakers, two shoemakers, two harness-makers, and three police stations. On the Molong line you will find none of these places—there are only three public-houses, and two little stores; there are no banks and telegraph offices; there was a constable stationed at Manildra for a few months, but he had nothing to do there, and the Government shifted him. Then there is a running creek of water within sight of the railway for 46 miles from Borenore to Eugowra, with the exception of the first 5 miles.

5643. Does not the Borenore line pass through some large estates which are not at all likely to be subdivided? This line for 25 miles, from Borenore to Toogong, runs through twenty-four land-holdings—take Keenan's first—the line goes through his land for about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles; the next is Mr. Smith's—it goes through his land for $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

5644. What length of the line goes through the Toogong Estate? I could not say positively, but I should think about 4 miles.

5645. That is about 11 miles of large estates through which the line passes out of the 25 miles between Toogong and Borenore? Yes; but you must not include Toogong—it is 25 miles up to Toogong.

- Mr. 5646. To go through the estate you would be about 29 miles from Borenore? Yes; then you go through
 E. Taylor, sen. a gold-field reserve, which goes down to Long's Corner; then from there there is a travelling stock reserve.
 5647. Is there any particularly good timber about there for building purposes, or for railway construction?
 6 Mar., 1890. I do not think there is about here, close to the line.
 5648. You said just now that the land on this line had been more readily selected than the land upon the
 Molong line, and you inferred from that that the land here was a better quality—where did the western
 outlet from Orange go before the Molong railway was constructed—did it go towards Parkes, or was it
 along this road? The western outlet was along the Forbes-road, of course.
 5649. Would not that fact of itself be sufficient to account for the population along the road? I do not
 think selectors who wanted to take up land would care much about the western outlet.
 5650. But you have referred to the general population—do you not think that such an immense traffic as
 you have had along this road, would be likely to cause settlement? I think it might to a certain extent,
 because, of course, business-people go where the traffic is.
 5651. Then the increased population will not necessarily show that the land was better, although it might
 show that there was more traffic along the road than along the Parkes-road? Molong is an older town
 than Orange, and also Wellington; and if the land there had been good it would, I suppose, have been
 taken up eagerly.
 5652. Is not a good deal of the land round about Molong locked up in large estates? I do not know
 about that. But Molong was a town twenty-five years ago.

Mr. Charles Schramme, Hon. Secretary of the Cudal Railway League, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. 5653. *Mr. Lee.* You reside at Cudal? Yes; I have been living at Cudal about two years; but I have
 C. Schramme. been living within 3 miles of the town about sixteen years. My occupation has been farming; but I
 6 Mar., 1890. am not doing anything in particular now.
 5654. Have you taken much interest in this question of railway communication? I have since I have
 been living in Cudal.
 5655. Is there a railway league in Cudal? Yes; I am the honorary secretary of the league.
 5656. Has the league had any public meetings? Yes.
 5657. Have they prepared any statistics, in tabulated form, to be submitted to the Committee? Yes; I
 have some statistics—they are of various descriptions. It has been stated in Molong that the majority of
 the population on the Borenore and Forbes railway route is on the north side. I have prepared a list,
 showing all the names of the holders on the north side, and all on the south side of the line, within 7 miles
 of the proposed route. They are taken from Cheeseman's Creek to Toogong. I now hand in the names
 on the south side and on the north side, as an exhibit for the information of the Committee.
 5658. How have these statistics been collected? By two persons who should have been present to-day.
 5659. Did you collect any? No; they were collected by my authority.
 5660. Are you prepared to swear that they are correct? I am prepared to swear that they are a correct
 copy of what I have received.
 5661. The total number in the list, purporting to be the holders on the south side, is 143? Yes.
 5662. And the number on the north side is sixty? Yes.
 5663. Are any residents in the Murga district included in these lists? No.
 5664. Are we to understand that they refer only to the country between Cheeseman's Creek and Toogong?
 Yes; I can also give you a list of the number of persons holding land between Borenore and Cheeseman's
 Creek—you will see that the number of holders is twenty-two.
 5665. Do you also hand in a list showing the names of holders through whose land the Borenore line will
 pass, if constructed from Cheeseman's Creek to Toogong? Yes.
 5666. I see that No. 2, the Hon. John Smith, at Boree, has no acreage given? I could not ascertain it.
 5667. The acreage is wanting in several other cases I see? Yes, I could not ascertain it. In some of
 these instances the line passes through only a small portion.
 5668. Who collected the statistics? Percival Gavin and William Cragie.
 5669. Are they paid collectors? Yes, they are paid by the day.
 5670. Are these returns certified by the holders of the land? They have not seen the documents, I think
 —they simply gave the acreage to the collectors.
 5671. Have you checked the list to see that it is correct? I have not looked at the map.
 5672. You have taken it for granted that the return is correct? I have no reason to doubt it.
 5673. Still, you cannot swear that it is absolutely correct? No. I also hand in a summary of the
 population and produce returns, taken from Borenore to Murga, within 7 miles of the proposed Borenore,
 Cudal, and Forbes railway route; it shows that there are 376 holders of land, a population of 2,334, and
 that the acres of holdings are 245,693.
 5674. Are the leaseholds included? Yes; the acres cleared number 24,631; the acres under hay are
 2,968; under wheat, 12,450; under oats, 404; under barley, 51; under maize, 2,238. There are 91,791
 sheep, 3,212 horse, 5,659 cattle, and 885 pigs. Allowing an average of 2 tons of hay, 25 bushels of wheat,
 40 bushels of oats, 15 bushels of barley, and 20 bushels of maize per acre, which is a very moderate
 average for this season's crops in this district, the yield will be 5,936 ton of hay, 311,250 bushels of wheat,
 16,160 bushels of oats, 765 bushels of barley, and 44,760 bushels of maize. To this may be added from
 Cargo, Mogong, Nerang, Canowindra, and other places south of the line, 40,000 bushels of wheat; and
 from Gregra, Manildra, and Mandagery, 10,000 bushels of wheat giving a total of 361,250 bushels of
 wheat grown within a reasonable distance of the proposed route, with other produce in proportion.
 5675. Do you really know whether 361,250 bushels of wheat have been grown this season? I believe so.
 5676. But can you give me any evidence of it? The farmers will give you evidence as to the returns of
 their wheat.
 5677. But you furnish us with this return as evidence; if it is not authentic it is of no value; it is use-
 less, unless you can swear to the correctness of it. We do not want an estimate if we can get exact
 returns. You say that the figures you give represent a fair average of the crops of this year? I believe
 they are a fair average for this year. I am sure there must be as much wheat as the quantity stated.
 5678. But how do you know that this wheat was grown? The acreage is given by the farmers themselves.
 You have the number of acres under crop.

5679. Only for certain portions; I see no returns from Mogong, Cargo, and Nerang? It is only an estimate. My estimate of the wheat grown at Canowindra is 40,000 bushels, and there is an official record showing that more than 40,000 bushels were grown at Canowindra this year. The return is, I believe, sent to the Molong office. I am satisfied if any wheat is grown at all they must have grown this quantity. I can find three men in the district who have grown 10,000 bushels of wheat.

Mr.
C. Schramme.
6 Mar., 1890.

5680. But what we want is some evidence of the fact? I believe the estimate I have given to be correct; I would not make a false statement.

5681. Not willingly, I am sure. But in preparing statistics it is very difficult to obtain the matter upon which to proceed, consequently persons fall back upon information gathered from various sources, and from that they form an estimate; this we have already found to be the case in the course of our investigation. It is of no use to load the evidence with a lot of figures which are absolutely useless? These statistics were collected by two persons who will swear to-morrow that they are truthfully given. If the farmers state that they grew so much wheat, we must take their word for it. We cannot thresh or measure their wheat. The quantity of wheat may appear to you to be large, but in the Molong statistics they put down the wheat produce of Toogong, Cudal, and Canowindra, at about 248,000 bushels, and they say that the Molong portion alone produced about 290,000 bushels. Now, the reason why it appears so from the police statistics is that the police in Molong have collected a portion of their statistics about 7 miles south of the Borenore-Forbes line. The district is apportioned out to the police in a peculiar manner in that respect, and instead of this return applying to the Molong portion of the district alone, it applies to the whole of the remaining portion of the electorate. I am referring now to the statistics given by the Molong people as belonging to the Molong district alone. The Molong police have been 7 miles to the south of Cheeseman's Creek also. If the amount of wheat grown in that portion of the electorate is deducted this line, as far as the head of Oakey Creek, and they have taken nearly the whole of the statistics of from the Molong portion, and added to the Cudal portion, as it should be, it would make a material difference in the statistics produced at Molong. The police statistics are not really applicable to railway purposes. Molong is on one side of an electorate which is about 48 miles across.

5682. You think then that the Molong people, in giving their returns, have included some portions which should have been included in Cudal? Yes.

5683. Have you not included some portion of the Molong district? No.

5683½. Do you not think that Manildra belongs to the Molong district? Yes.

5684. But you have included it in your returns? A portion of it.

5685. Have you included Canowindra in your returns? That is to the south of the line.

5686. Do you not think the Canowindra people might feel aggrieved at your taking possession of their statistics? I think not.

5687. You think it is fair for you to make use of their returns for other districts, but that it is not fair for Molong to make use of your returns? They do not apply to railway matters.

5688. You include the Canowindra returns in your list? Yes.

5689. Have you any reason to suppose that the Canowindra people would send their traffic to Borenore if the line were constructed? I am certain they would.

5690. To what point? To Cudal or Toogong.

5691. Are you aware that the Canowindra people are almost as close to the Murrumburrah line at about Cowra as they would be to this line? That may possibly be the case.

5692. Are they not using the Cowra line at present? I do not know; but they may be using it because they have not a better line to use.

5693. Seeing that the Canowindra people are closer to Cowra than to Borenore, or any point upon the proposed Borenore line, do you think they would be likely to send any traffic to that line? I think so; because Orange is the inland town for this district. Most of the produce goes to Orange, not Blayney.

5694. Are there not other towns buying wheat? There might be a long way to go, and if the farmers could get a nearer market they would avail themselves of it.

5695. But would any farmers be likely to cart their produce the longest distance to a railway station? It depends upon where they can get the best market.

5696. Then on your own showing you have included in your returns the Canowindra district, when it is clearly proved that it cannot be brought within as easy influence of the Borenore line as on the Cowra line? There would be a difference of about 2 miles in the distance, and when the wheat is on the wagon they would not consider a distance of 2 or 3 miles.

5697. If you had the choice would you cart the longer or the shorter distance? If I had the choice I should take my wheat to Orange, because I should get quite as good a price there, and it would be nearer.

5698. But would you cart it to Toogong, or Eugowra, to send it to Orange? I might send it to Toogong, if residing in the Canowindra district.

5699. Why? I should send it to the nearest market. I do not think there is a bushel of wheat that goes to Molong from this district. It goes chiefly to Orange and Sydney; but as I have pointed out Orange is the chief market for this district. The statistics are not particularized so far as Canowindra and Manildra are concerned. I added them to show that they would feed this line if it were constructed.

5700. The Canowindra people have sworn distinctly that they would not send anything by this line? The three persons who gave that evidence do not represent Canowindra.

5701. But would not they represent it quite as well as you do Cudal? No; they are merely expressing their own individual intentions, whereas, as Secretary of the Cudal Railway League, I represent and express the sentiments of the people.

5702. Your additions to your local statistics have made them of no value? The local statistics are given separately, I merely added the others to show the probable traffic on the line. I have to add some statistics as to the public schools. I find that the number of public schools between Borenore and Murga within 8 miles of the suggested line is 27.

5703. I see your return includes other matters? Yes.

5704. First as to the public schools and the enrolment of the children—from what sources did you get this information? From the school books.

5705. Is that last year's education report? Yes, the report for 1888.

5706. How did you arrive at the number of letters posted at the various offices? From the official Report of the Post Office.

5707.

- Mr. C. Schramme.
Mar., 1890.
5707. The same with regard to the telegrams and money orders? Yes.
5708. How did you arrive at the estimated population of 3,200? From statistics.
5709. What statistics are available for that purpose? The returns prepared by the collectors. I will now hand in statistical returns illustrative of the population in the district through which the Borenore line will pass. The returns are taken within 8 miles of the proposed line, and have been compiled by the Committee of the Cudal Railway League from official Government reports, and other reliable sources for the year 1888.
5710. Is there any other information you can give the Committee? I can give you some information as to the traffic at Borenore. I wrote to Mr. Smith, Messrs. Wright, Heaton's Manager, at Borenore yesterday, and I have received from him some particulars as to the traffic. He sends me the following letter:—

Borenore, March 5th, 1890.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 4th instant reached me this morning. It is with feelings of sincere regret that I cannot comply with your request. I have done my best to get the book-keeper from Orange office, but he is too busy to relieve me. I should be only too glad to render you the assistance required, but as I cannot come in person, I will send you the evidence which I would give, hoping that it will be of some material use.

Borenore Station, January 1st, 1889, to December 31st, 1889.

Inwards.—Borenore, 570 tons; Cudal, 500 tons; Toogong, 17 tons; Murga, 25 tons; Eugowra, 130 tons; Forbes, 1,180 tons; Burrawang, 90 tons; Borambil, 34 tons; Condobolin, 380 tons; Mount Hope, 26 tons. Total, 2,952 tons.

Wool received at Borenore Station, September 1st, 1889, to December 31st, 1889, 8,989 bales.

Outwards.—1889, 4,294 tons; coaching, 1889, £855 12s. 10d.; 1,674 passengers, £530.

Wheat received at Borenore Station, January 1st, 1890, to March 6th, 1890—

January, 1,400 bags; February, 6,300 bags; March (six days), 1,700 bags. I have allowed 290 bags for to-morrow, this will be about the quantity to come in.

You can explain when giving the evidence that the traffic at this station, so far as goods and wool are concerned, would be as much again if all the traffic came this way, but on account of Cowra station opening, fully half the traffic goes that way.

We pay to the railway an average of £9,000 per annum for trainage, and other accounts which pass through our hands, but on which we do not pay the trainage, would amount to £4,000, making a total of £13,000.

Wishing you every success.

Yours, &c.,

JNO. SMITH.

Any further information you require wire me to-morrow, and I will furnish.

To C. Schramme, Esq., Hon. Secretary, Cudal Railway League, Cudal.

I have papers showing the population of Cudal, and it can be proved that the correct population is given. I will hand you in the names of the persons, and that will verify the totals of the other lists I have given.

5711. What further evidence have you to give? I have been a long time in the district, and I have travelled on both routes. I know the Parkes route very well. I travelled on it eight or ten years ago. When I came here to select I rode all over the district. I visited Mandagery Creek and Meranburn. I concluded that the land here was the best, and I settled down here. I have not been sorry that I did so. There is no better land in New South Wales than ours, excepting, perhaps, some of the river flats. I do not think the land is surpassed anywhere for its wheat producing capabilities—it is by no means an extraordinary thing to grow 40 bushels of wheat to the acre—men have grown that this year.

5712. How long is it since you were through the Molong district? I have not been from Molong to Parkes, but I have been from Boree.

5713. Have you been north of Parkes to Kadina and Trundle? No.

5714. Have you been north of the line between Molong and Manildra? Not very far.

5715. Have you been 15 or 20 miles up? No.

5716. Consequently you are quite ignorant as to what population there might be there? Yes.

5717. Your knowledge is based on information you have gained in the district? Yes. I may say, that instead of people having to travel *via* Parkes to go to Forbes, they often have to go to Forbes in order to get to Parkes, the Parkes country being so bad that it is very difficult to travel over.

5718. *Mr. Cox.*] Is there any traffic to Canowindra on this road now? I think so. There is a lot of traffic coming in from the eastern part of Canowindra. I often see people from Canowindra here.

5719. Do you know that goods pass through Cudal *en route* to Canowindra? I have no personal knowledge of the matter.

FRIDAY, 7 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court House, Cudal, at 9 a.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX | WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Mr. Edward Taylor, senior, sworn and further examined:—

Mr. E. Taylor, senior.
7 Mar., 1890.

5720. *Chairman.*] I believe you wish to make a further statement to the Committee? I said yesterday that the distance from here to Borenore was 15 miles, whereas it is 18 miles.

Mr. Alfred Percival Gavin, farmer, sworn and examined:—

Mr. A. P. Gavin.
7 Mar., 1890.

5721. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At Cudal.

5722. What is your occupation? I am a farmer.

5723. Were you employed by the Cudal Railway League to collect statistics? Yes.

5724. Have you any data by you to check the numbers given? Yes.

5725. What did you do with the statistics gathered by you? I merely copied them as you see them here, and handed them to the Railway League—there is the rough copy as I took them.

5726. You simply carried out your instructions? That is all. 5727.

5727. How did you arrive at the number of bushels per acre on the several farms? Chiefly by average. I took the acreage and the yield of several farms in the neighbourhood and I averaged them. Mr. A. P. Gavin.
5728. When did you collect these statistics? In the latter part of October of last year. 7 Mar., 1890.
5729. Had the wheat crop been threshed for the past year? Yes; but we were collecting for the year coming, and were taking the acreage under crop then.
5730. This is the acreage estimated for 1890, and the crop was then growing? Yes.
5731. Supposing something had destroyed all the crop, where would your statistics have been? We had the acreage, and as none of the crops were destroyed we can easily arrive at an average.
5732. The growing crops were estimated to give this result—were they matured? Yes.
5733. At that time they were only partially grown? Yes.
5734. Then as to the number of stock how did you arrive at that? By taking down all the stock every person had.
5735. How far did you go on the north side of Cudal? About 6 miles at the furthest—not that I think, perhaps about 5 miles.
5736. Do you know the Orange and Parkes Road? Yes; I went just to the border of that.
5737. Did you go to Cargo? Yes, as far as Cargo.
5738. Did you go to Mogong? No.
5739. To Nerang? No.
5740. To Canowindra? No.
5741. To Gregra? Yes; I went as far as Gregra.
5742. Manildra? No.
5743. Mandagery? I hardly know where the parish begins.
5744. If you did not visit these places how did you ascertain the quantity of wheat they grew? I scarcely know where some of them begin and end—some of them may come nearly into Cudal.
5745. If you do not know, how can you possibly give the returns—you say you did not go to Canowindra? Mr. Craigie collected there, and also on the Mandagery.

Mr. William Craigie, mail contractor, sworn and examined:—

5746. *Mr. Lee.*] What are you? I am a mail contractor.
- 5747-8. Residing at Cudal? Yes.
5749. Were you appointed Collector by the Cudal Railway League? Yes; I acted in conjunction with Mr. Gavin. Mr. W. Craigie.
7 Mar., 1890.
5750. What portion did you take? The lower portion of the Mandagery Creek. I followed it down a little below Toogong, and out upon the Canowindra Road for a few miles towards Mogong.
5751. Do you support the statements of your colleague as to the way in which the statistics were collected? Not exactly. When I collected the statistics the hay harvest was in. I asked the acreage the farmers had and the crops they had in. The estimate was to be struck afterwards, from the returns after threshing. That, I believe, has been done. No estimate was taken of the yield of that crop.
5752. Then how did you get at the figures? I asked how many acres they had under each kind of crop. I asked the acreage of their holding and the number of acres cleared. I also asked what they intended to make hay of, and what they intended to cut for wheat.
5753. But as to the yields? There was no return given to me. I asked them, and they said they could not estimate it, and that the best way to obtain it would be after the crop was gathered.
5754. They gave you the acreage of their holding, and they told you what they intended to cut for hay and what they would leave for wheat? Yes.
5755. They gave you no figures as to the results? No.
5756. And you are unable to swear to these figures? In many cases I knew the acreage and the number of stock; the yield of grain I could not swear to. I have worked myself, on two or three of the farms, and having taken the census, I know their returns. I assisted one person named Taylor to gather his crop, and it averaged nearly seven bags to the acre.
5757. In any case you cannot vouch for these figures, because they were not given to you? No.

Mr. William Shield, storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

5758. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your occupation? I am a storekeeper in the town of Cudal.
5759. Have you been long a resident in this district? About forty-two years. Mr. W. Shield.
7 Mar., 1890.
5760. You are well acquainted with its surroundings? I am.
5761. Do you know the country well, through which a railway from Borenore to Eugowra would pass? Yes.
5762. You know it all thoroughly on both sides? Yes.
5763. Are you equally acquainted with the other land—from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I am; but I have not been over that line so recently as I have been over this. I knew the country where the line goes, when it was simply a bridle track to the westward; I have known it over forty years.
5764. The Cudal line has been settled much longer than the country on the other line—farms have been here much longer? Yes, I think so.
5765. Is that on account of this being the great highway to the west? This has been the great highway to Forbes, and down the Lachlan; Parkes was on a by-road going to Gunningbland.
5766. You have some practical knowledge of farming? I have.
5767. In your opinion which line of these two passes through the better country? Decidedly this line, *via* Cudal.
5768. Why do you say so? Because there is more good agricultural land on this line than on the other. There is some good land on the other line, 7 or 8 miles from Molong, at Garra and Manildra. There are also some patches beyond; but not to any large extent until you get within 5 or 6 miles of Parkes.
5769. On this line is the land all good, or is it only patchy? There are patches on this line, of course, as you yourselves must have noticed yesterday as you passed through Goimbla and Murga, and the Rocks this side of Eugowra.
5770. With those exceptions the whole of the country on this line is good? With those exceptions the country, and especially that to the south of the surveyed line, *via* Cudal, cannot be beaten in New South Wales for the growth of wheat. 5771.

Mr.
W. Shield.
7 Mar., 1890.

5771. There is yet another line projected. I refer to that from Cowra to Canowindra, and on to Forbes—do you think it would be a suitable line in the interests of the community generally, so far as this district is concerned? I do not think it would benefit Cudal at all.

5772. But I suppose Cargo and Barrigan would benefit from it? Some of the settlers there might use the line, but I do not think the majority would—they do their business with Orange, and would come this way.

5773. But there is a bad hill to get up to Orange, from the level ground at Canowindra? Of course there is an easier road on the level ground, but it is not a macadamised road, and persons living in this district, within 5 miles of Canowindra, do their business with Cudal and Orange.

5774. Is there much traffic from Canowindra this way? Not exactly from the town, but from 5 or 6 miles this way there is. There are several persons living within 7 or 8 miles of the town who do business with me.

5775. Some of these persons do business with Orange notwithstanding that they have to climb a big mountain in order to do so? I do not think there is any big mountain, I do not call it a mountain. Of course there is a hill, and rather a steep one, I would rather go up that hill, the road being metalled, than I would go along a flat road if it were boggy.

5776. What kind of road is it between Canowindra and this place? Pretty level.

5777. But none of it is made? Portions here and there—50 or 100 yards now and again. I think you passed over one or two portions yesterday. Now I come to think of it I am not quite clear as to whether any of it is metalled or not.

5778. We have full particulars from another witness as to the statistics of the district. Have you anything further to say to the Committee in furtherance of the line we are investigating or in opposition to it? I believe a line *via* Cudal would be of more advantage to the district, and also to the colony. I am certain that there is a larger population on this line than on the other, which in my mind goes to prove that the country here must be better. So far as the line passing thorough Meranburn is concerned I do not see that we could possibly avail ourselves of it, nor do I see how the persons residing to the south of this line could do so. The nearest point of the originally surveyed line which could be made use of by people here would be about 11 miles distant at Manildra.

5779. You are aware that a surveyor is now engaged on the survey of a deviation through Bocoble Gap? I know where that line goes very well.

5779½. How far is that away? The nearest point to Cudal would be at least 8 miles.

5780. Not 4 miles? Certainly not.

5781. How far is it from Cudal to Manildra? About 11 miles. If you go by road you cannot do it in less.

5782. So that the deviation *via* Bocoble Gap would not come south more than 3 miles? The nearest point would be at the back of Mr. Allen's, about Mr. Wren's ground.

5783. How far is Mr. Wren's farm from here? The first portion would be at least 8 or 9 miles.

5784. That is the nearest point touched by the deviation? Yes.

5785. So that a line of railway to Molong *via* Parkes and Forbes would be of little advantage to the people unless they lived considerably to the north of this line? Quite so,—it would be of no advantage to the population south of the Cudal line. Drawing their wheat and produce to the nearest railway station on the Parkes line, they would have to go not less than 8 miles. They would have in all 28 miles to reach Borenore. They would have to pay haulage for that distance.

5786. What you mean to say is, I suppose, that once they get their produce on the dray it does not make much difference whether they drive 10 or 20 miles? I did not say that.

5787. Do you mean to say then that they would save 28 miles of trainage by driving their drays 20 miles? No. It is 18 miles from here to Borenore I believe, and many of the farmers or rather the bulk of them live some distance to the south of the Cudal line. Many of them do not come to Cudal at all, but in going to Borenore they have a good sound road. If they went over the 11 miles between this and Manildra they would not have nearly as good a road, and they would have to pay for the haulage of their wheat about 14 miles from Manildra to Molong. The difference when they reached here would be that they would have to go 18 miles by road instead of 11—there would be a difference of 7 miles.

5788. In the event of a railway being made from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, the Government would naturally have good feeders in the shape of good roads—some of the difficulties you mention would therefore be overcome? Of course I cannot say that that would not be done, but the principal sources of traffic to the line would be to the south of Cudal.

5789. More wheat is grown to the south of the proposed line to Borenore than to the north of it? That depends upon the distance you go; I could not say that more is grown here if you include Garra. The district of Molong extends to Oberley, Buckinbah, Two-mile Creek, and round that way, but the Parkes line would be of no advantage to these people—they would go to Wellington and Molong. The only thing is that the Parkes line would be of service to the population living actually between Molong and Parkes. Of course the population immediately round Parkes would be included.

5790. *Chairman.*] Have you any further statement to make—do you think there is any other line which would be of advantage? I have thought whether it might not be well to construct a line from Borenore to Eugowra, and from thence to Parkes, and from Eugowra to Forbes, making a junction at Eugowra. That could be constructed, according to the estimates given, for the same money as the line from Molong to Parkes—it is all level country between Eugowra and Parkes.

5790½. *Mr. Cox.*] You are aware that a great difficulty in connection with the Borenore line consists in getting down the hill to Borenore from Keenan's Swamp—it is a very heavy grade? Not heavier than those on the Cobar line already passed. My knowledge of the estimated cost and grades of the lines is, I may mention, derived from Parliamentary papers.

5791. *Chairman.*] Then I may inform you that your figures are not correct? Then I suppose the papers I have read were wrong. My statement in regard to this line is made from what I have read in the Parliamentary papers. I would not make a misstatement wilfully.

5792. The cost of this line is estimated to be £6,444 per mile, and of the other line, £5,700 per mile? That is different from what I have heard before, but I do not see how any person outside of the Department could have any knowledge of the cost of construction beside that which he gathers from the public press.

5793. Is there any other statement you desire to make? Well, the line from Borenore to Forbes would be the shorter distance to Sydney. 5794.

5794. But not the shortest piece of construction? The shortest when completed by 17 miles. It seems to me that that shorter distance would make up for the additional cost of construction.

5795. The argument used by the Forbes people was to this effect—that if they used a railway *via* Parkes and Molong, they would have to carry their produce 17 miles further than they would coming this way for all time to come? Exactly; and many other persons would be affected by the longer distance.

Mr.
W. Shield.
7 Mar., 1890.

Mr. John Taylor, farmer, sworn and examined:—

5796. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? A mile from Toogong.

5797. How long have you been in the district? Twenty years.

5798. What is your occupation? I am a farmer.

5799. What is the size of your holdings? About 720 acres.

5800. How many acres have you under cultivation? About 110.

5801. What do you chiefly grow? Wheat, chiefly.

5802. Do you find the growth of wheat a profitable industry? Yes, if I can obtain anything like a price for it.

5803. What are the average crops you grow? There is a very great difference. My lowest average in an ordinary year would be about 20 bushels to the acre—for one or two years I had no crops at all, or nearly none. I have had, for instance, 7 or 8 bushels to the acre, and in a good year I have had as much as 33½ and 35 bushels.

5804. With your average crops, if you had a market for your produce, wheat-growing would be a profitable industry in the district? I think so.

5805. Do you know the character of the country and the nature of settlement in this district? Yes, I have travelled the line between Orange and Forbes hundreds of times.

5806. You are well acquainted with the character of settlement in the district? Yes.

5807. Is the settlement in large or in small holdings? In small holdings principally.

5808. Do the men with these holdings appear likely to reside upon them permanently and to continue their industry? Yes.

5809. They are not likely to sell to a pastoral tenant? I should not think so.

5810. Can you say what this soil is capable of growing? Wheat, potatoes, and corn, although corn does not seem to do as well in this district as other crops.

5811. Do orchards and vineyards do well? Pretty well in places. Some people seem to do well with them.

5812. What is your average crop of potatoes? I have not measured the ground or weighed the potatoes, but I have had what I estimated to be 6 tons to the acre.

5813. What does it cost you at the present time to convey your wheat to a railway station? I have carted my own wheat, but I heard my neighbours say that they had to pay 1s. 6d. a bag to get it carried to Borenore—they made an agreement, and in some cases the carriers even then refused to carry.

5814. Do you know the route of the staked-out line between Borenore and Cudal? Yes.

5815. You are acquainted with Dr. Ross, M.P., I suppose? Yes.

5816. Is the statement he made to the Minister on 17/9/84 correct—that this line would pass through 30 miles of private land? I do not think the statement is correct.

5817. Is he correct in stating that it would pass for a mile through a bottomless swamp? I suppose he alludes to Keenan's Swamp, and the line can cross that swamp in a great deal less than a quarter of a mile—it is not only not bottomless, but as a carrier on this road for many years, I have known cattle to walk across it on firm ground.

5818. Is it true that Mr. Sharkey got bogged there, and that they had to haul him out with a team of bullocks? I do not know. I have seen people bogged on dry land before to-day.

5819. Is the statement correct that much of the country through which this line would pass is liable to floods? No; it is not.

5820. Then you directly contradict statements Dr. Ross made to the Minister? I do not care whom I contradict—I am speaking the truth.

5821. Is it true that population on this line is scanty, and that Cudal is the only centre? If you consider it a scanty population to have a man and his family living on every 300 acres, and in some cases less, then it is scanty.

5822. Is the statement true? It is not true. There are many families living in this district on from 40 acres up to a section.

5823. Is it true that this line would serve fewer people than either of the other routes? It is not true.

5824. You give your emphatic denial to the statements made by Dr. Ross to the Minister? That, I do.

5825. Do you know anything about the line referred to this Committee for investigation? I have travelled the road from Orange and Boree to Parkes by team many years ago, but I have not travelled it since the railway was marked out. I understand that it partly follows the direction of the road—that is, by Meranburn, Manildra, Dulladerry Creek, and Bumberry.

5826. Do you know the country between Eugowra and Parkes? Yes.

5827. Having resided in the district for so long, and knowing the district so well, together with the class of people settled in it, and the nature of their occupation, do you think that a railway should be constructed along the permanently-staked-out route from Borenore, *via* Cudal, to Forbes? I certainly am of that opinion.

5828. Do you know of any other line which will serve our district? I do not know of any other line so likely to be a paying line. There is any amount of good land on it, and that cannot be said of other places, as far as I know them. The land is well settled at the present time; it is all taken up—a man cannot get a farm of good land unless he goes on to a reserve.

5829. Have you as good a knowledge of the route from Molong to Parkes as you have of this route? No, I have not; but I have a pretty good general knowledge of the country to the north.

5830. You think the line *via* Cudal should be constructed in the interests of settlement? Yes.

5831. Is there anything else you would like to say to the Committee? I consider that the other route, from what I know of the country, would not bear comparison with this one. There is a good deal of sterile country that could not be made to grow anything; no man of sense would take any trouble with it.

Mr.
J. Taylor.
7 Mar., 1890.

Mr.
J. Taylor.
7 Mar., 1890.

it. I have been told that it has been said that there is splendid timber on the other route. As far as I can recollect, I saw no timber on that route which would compare with the timber to be found within 5 miles of this route.

5832. What is the character of the timber on this route? Ironbark and red-box, and the box is supposed to be superior to the ironbark.

Mr. Walter Rennie Murray, farmer, sworn and examined:—

Mr. W. R.
Murray.
7 Mar., 1890.

5833. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a farmer.
 5834. Where do you reside? On Mandagery Creek.
 5835. To the north of Cudal? To the north-west of Cudal.
 5836. How far is your farm from the township of Cudal? About 7 miles.
 5837. How far is it from Meranburn or Manildra? About 7 miles.
 5838. Then you are half way between the two places? Yes.
 5839. What is the area of your holding? 300 acres.
 5840. How much of it have you under crop this year? I have about 106 acres under crop.
 5841. Of what did it consist principally? Of wheat, hay, potatoes, and pumpkins.
 5842. Do you know what your average of wheat was? I had between 1,600 and 1,700 bushels off 100 acres.
 5843. Have you long cultivated your land for wheat? About sixteen years.
 5844. What has been the average crop? The crop I have given you is not over the average.
 5845. But there have been years when you had scarcely anything? Last year we had a very poor crop.
 5846. Your average then has been fully 16 or 17 bushels? I think that is a fair average.
 5847. Have you, as a rule, a good crop of hay? I have had about 3 tons to the acre, of wheaten hay, this year.
 5848. Is it a good district for potatoes? Fairly good.
 5849. What is the lowest price for wheat on the ground which would enable you to live and keep your family? We have to live on it, and draw it to Borenore for 2s. 10d.
 5850. What is it worth to draw it to Borenore from your farm? 6d. a bushel.
 5851. Then you could grow wheat remuneratively for something like 2s. 6d. a bushel? Yes.
 5852. If you were guaranteed 2s. 6d. a bushel for as much wheat as you could grow would you put more than 100 acres under wheat? I think so.
 5853. Would the line which has been referred to the Committee be of any great advantage to you if constructed? I am midway between the two places. Taking everything into consideration, I do not think it would be of as much advantage to me as the line coming this way. The roads this way are better.
 5854. Still, the other line would surely be of some advantage to you? It is a matter of almost indifference to me which line is made—it is only a question of roads.
 5855. Still, if your wish were complied with, the Borenore-Cudal line would be constructed? I think so.
 5856. Are there many farmers in your neighbourhood? All the available land is taken up.
 5857. That is from Cudal right through to Meranburn? Yes; excepting the reserves. You could not select a farm now between the two places.
 5858. Is it all good farming country? It is all good.
 5859. Do you know what it would cost you per bushel to send your wheat to Sydney from Meranburn at the present rates? I do not.
 5860. Suppose it would cost you 4½d. a bushel, could you grow wheat remuneratively? Yes; considering that wheat is 3s. 6d. a bushel in Sydney now, and that we can only get 2s. 10d. here.
 5861. So far as you are concerned, you think that either the line from Borenore to Forbes, or the line from Molong to Parkes, would be of great benefit to the farmers in your neighbourhood? Yes.
 5862. Supposing either of the lines were constructed, do you think the farmers in your vicinity would put a larger number of acres under wheat crop? I should think so.
 5863. Is there any further statement which you would like to make to the Committee? There is a good timber reserve on the line from Borenore to Forbes.
 5864. Where is it situated? About 4 miles north of Toogong from the railway route.
 5865. Do you know the ironbark land on the route from Molong to Parkes? I have seen it, but I have never worked in it, or taken any particular notice of it. The timber on the reserve at Toogong is the best ironbark I ever saw in this part of the country. There is also the Nangar reserve. The timber on that is principally red-gum, or red-box. As far as the country on the two routes is concerned, I am certain that the country on the Borenore route is by far the better. There is certainly a great extent of good land this way both north and south of the line. Right down the valley of the Mandagery there is as good land as you will find anywhere in this part of the colony—that is, running down towards Forbes to the junction with the Lachlan, below Eugowra—that piece of country contains good land from one end to the other.
 5866. Do you know the country for some distance to the north of Parkes? I have been over it.
 5867. Have you been up to Kadina? I do not know it by that name. I know Callumbutta and Gumble—that is rough country. There is a lot of mountainous country there running out towards Parkes. It is very rough right through from Gumble to Parkes. There is nothing but ironbark ridges.

Mr. Samuel Landauer, sworn and further examined:—

Mr. S.
Landauer.
7 Mar., 1890.

5868. *Chairman.*] I believe you have a further statement which you desire to make to the Committee? Yes; it is with regard to Keenan's Swamp. The Borenore line would not pass through it for more than 2 chains, and the whole distance of purchased land through which the line would pass would not be more than 24 miles, counting large and small holdings. The distance for which the line runs through Mr. Smith's land is about 3½ miles. Now I am here, I should like to mention that last year being a dry season, and wheat being scarce here, I sent 290 tons of flour down the Lachlan, 26 tons between here and Canowindra, and down the Lachlan again—about 30 tons of bran, pollard, and wheat. This does not include small lots.

5869. This year, I suppose, you will send away still more? We have sent nearly as much away already.

Mr.

Mr. Cornelius Dempsey, hotelkeeper, sworn, and examined:—

5870. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your occupation? I am an hotelkeeper and produce-dealer at Cudal. I have been here about four and a half years.
5871. Upon what particular point do you wish to give evidence? I wish to give some particulars as to traffic on the road. I know the road from here to Forbes well.
5872. Will you give us your evidence as to the traffic? There are ninety teams constantly on the road.
5873. Travelling between what places? Borenore, Forbes, and Condobolin.
5874. Has the number increased of late years? No, it has decreased since the Cowra railway was opened.
5875. Has the opening of the Molong line made any difference to the traffic? None whatever.
5876. This used to be the main line of traffic before the Blayney line was opened? I have seen thirty and forty teamsters camped in front of my place at night before that line was opened.
5877. You think that the Murrumburrah and Blayney line then, has affected traffic upon this road? It has had a wonderful effect on the traffic.
5878. How many coaches are there on the road? There is one each way every day—a four-horse coach.
5879. I suppose that since the farmers have come in and land has been more freely taken up traffic has increased? The farming traffic has increased wonderfully.
5880. What other evidence do you desire to give? I have travelled on both routes. I was a carrier at one time, and my opinion is that this is the better route of the two. I am quite certain that if we had a railway along here farmers would profit by it. I may mention that I have a chaff-cutting machine. I used to send chaff to Sydney and I had to cease sending it on account of the team carriage to Borenore. We pay 14s. a ton. The reason that a great deal of traffic has gone from here to the Cowra line is that there are no macadamised roads in that district, and all the bullock teams have principally left this on that account.

Mr.
C. Dempsey.
7 Mar., 1890.

Mr. George Gavin, farmer, sworn and examined:—

5881. *Mr. Cox.*] What are you? I am a farmer.
5882. How long have you been a resident of Cudal? About fifteen years.
5883. Where is your farm situated? It is about 3 miles from Cudal.
5884. How much do you cultivate? About 300 acres.
5885. What is your chief crop? Hay, oats, maize, and wheat. I have not a large area under potatoes.
5886. How long have you been cultivating in this district? About fifteen years.
5887. Of course you must find it profitable or you would not continue to cultivate? You must cultivate sometimes even when it is not profitable. It would be more profitable if we had cheaper carriage.
5888. With machinery you can cultivate much more cheaply than you could years ago? Much more cheaply.
5889. Three shillings a bushel now would pay you better than 4s. or 5s. a bushel under the old system of reaping by hand? Yes.
5890. What does it cost you to send your wheat to Borenore? From where I am farming it would cost about 1s. a bag as the roads are very good. The distance is only about 14 miles and there is a very good road. I generally draw my own produce.
5891. Would a railway benefit you very much? Decidedly.
5892. In what way? Well, there is farm produce. I have a lot of stuff going to waste; it would not pay me to cart it. For instance, there is straw, hay, and chaff; the carriage takes all the profit off it. I have 100 tons of straw, which I could not attempt to send to Sydney at the present cost of carriage.
5893. But you anticipate being able to send your wheat all the way to Sydney at a little more than the rate you now pay to Borenore? Just a trifle more.
5894. Consequently, if you had a railway, you would largely increase your acreage under crop? I should be most happy to do so.
5895. What can you clear per acre, taking one year with another;—can you clear £1 an acre by farming? That is a matter which wants consideration. I hardly know what I clear. I suppose I must clear that or I should not continue.
5896. Have you £100 to put in the bank at the end of the year off 100 acres? I think so.
5897. If you can clear £1 an acre by cultivation it really pays you better than sheep or cattle? Yes. I have taken up 96 tons of wheat within the last three weeks to the railway station off my own farm, and I have a good deal more to take up.
5898. You believe that the farmers all round you would add to their cultivation if they had a railway? I am sure they would.
5899. A railway would increase the material prosperity of the district, and would add to the wealth of the country? It would certainly increase our prosperity.
5900. Would a railway *via* Parkes and Forbes benefit the country—I am not speaking of your particular district—as well as a line *via* Cudal? I do not think so, for this reason, that it merely skirts the good country. The country between Cargo and Meranburn is excellent country, and the line you refer to merely skirts it. I think the more thickly populated districts have a better claim to a railway.

Mr.
G. Gavin,
7 Mar., 1890.

Mr. William Henry Couch, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

5901. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? About 7 miles south of this place, by the nearest road, on the main road from Orange to Borenore, Canowindra, and Cargo.
5902. What is your occupation? I am a farmer, and grazier.
5903. What is the extent of your holding? I hold, in connection with my family, 3,054 acres.
5904. What do you chiefly do with the land? I graze chiefly, but I have been farming pretty extensively for the last thirty years.
5905. What number of acres had you under crop this last year? I have been in the habit of cultivating for twenty years from 200 to 250 acres. Last year, on account of the trouble in getting away produce and so forth, I decreased the area to about one-third. Last year I had something like 70 acres under crop.
5906. Under what crop? Wheat and hay principally. I had grape vines and things of that kind on small areas.

Mr.
W. H. Couch.
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- Mr. W. H. Couch.
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5907. What is the carrying capacity of your land? I have not had less than two sheep to the acre for the last ten years. I have nearly three sheep to the acre now, and I kept nearly two sheep to the acre last year in a great drought.
5908. What distance is your holding from a railway station? About 20 miles from Borenore.
5909. What does it cost you to take your produce to that market? I have sent thousands of bushels to Orange, and I never sent a bushel there under 6d. I may say that I cultivate lucerne to a great extent. I have about 100 acres of lucerne.
5910. Would that be on the banks of a creek? Yes.
5911. How does it thrive? First-class, if it is well cultivated and the land is suitable.
5912. Have you had hay crops from the lucerne? Not generally; it is generally eaten by sheep.
5913. Do you irrigate any portion of the land? No; but it could be irrigated easily.
5914. What would be your average crop of lucerne, for hay? About 2 tons to the acre.
5915. Have you a good knowledge of the district? I have been thirty years resident here and in the vicinity of the Parkes line.
5916. You have a knowledge of the Parkes line? For about 20 or 30 miles out of Molong—no further.
5917. Do you know the traffic on either of the lines of road? I know the traffic pretty well on this line but not so well on the Parkes line.
5918. What is the traffic on the Cudal line? I only know it in a general way. I have been to Orange twice in a coach these last few years. On one occasion, there being nothing special about it, there were twelve passengers, and I had to stand about half way to Orange.
5919. What is the traffic between here and Canowindra? There is a fair amount of traffic between the two places. Some of the goods manufactured here are used in Canowindra, I believe. I may tell you that the teams you passed yesterday, and which camped near the court-house last night, have gone to Borenore with wheat, from farms within 7 miles of Canowindra. There is a large mill at Cargo; that is 8 or 9 miles in a straight line from here. I have a considerable interest in that mill. I am one of the local managers. The mill derives a great deal of its supply from the immediate neighbourhood of Canowindra, up to the very boundary of the proposed line. Nearly all of that flour comes on to the road to Borenore. On some occasions we have sold flour to go down the western line to Nyngan and Bourke. The teams have been stuck on the road often in wet weather. They have been stuck in the mud, and the flour being behind time in arriving at its destination, supplies have been brought from elsewhere, and we have had the flour left on our hands on several occasions. On one occasion it was nearly a dead loss. The farmers on this side of Canowindra send a small portion to Cudal, but the larger portion they send to Borenore, or to the Cargo mill. Teams go weekly with merchandise for the storekeepers of Canowindra from the Borenore station.
5920. Is there a flour-mill at Canowindra? Yes; but it does not work regularly.
5921. Are you acquainted with the various rival routes as staked out? I have a knowledge of the most of them.
5922. Do you know anything of the route staked out from Molong to Parkes? I have not been over it since it has been staked out. I know the country for about 25 or 30 miles. I have resided in it for several years, that is until the Land Act of 1861 was passed. I then sought of settling. I did not like the country out there. I did not know this part. I was about to settle there when I was recommended by a gentleman named Burgess, of Molong, to come out here. In recommending me to come here he used these words:—"There is as much difference between the land down there and up here at Molong as there is between chalk and cheese." I told him that I did not know the country about here, and he offered to show it to me. I said that if he would do so I would pay him if I took up any land.
5923. Do you find the land upon which you are now settled superior to the land with which you were acquainted on the Parkes line? Yes. I took up the land Mr. Burgess told me, and I paid him £10 two days afterwards.*
5924. Having a knowledge of these various routes, which one do you think should be adopted in the interests of the general public? I think that in the interests of the general public the Borenore and Cudal route should be adopted. I would not adopt the Cowra line on account of the scarcity of the population. The bullock teams travel that way because there are no metal roads, and there is plenty of turn-out for the bullocks, otherwise they would travel on the Borenore route.
5925. *Chairman.*] Would not the line from Cowra serve the Canowindra people better than this line? Yes, the people just near Canowindra; but the chief part of the farms are not close to Canowindra. They are on this side. I believe it has been sworn at Molong that I hold 5,000 acres, and that there is very little settlement in the neighbourhood of Bowen's Park. The fact of the matter is that I hold, in conjunction with my family, only 3,054 acres. Davy's Plains station own about the same. I have not an inch of property within 4 miles of Bowen's Park by the nearest road; but I was counting the farms coming along the road yesterday, and within a radius of 2 miles of the Bowen's Park post-office I counted forty-two.

Mr. Thomas Seale, farmer, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. T. Seale.
7 Mar., 1890.
5926. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a farmer at Bowen's Park, 3 miles from here. I have been here seventeen years.
5927. What is the area of your holding? 480 acres.
5928. What do you do with it? I till it, and use it for agriculture, principally.
5929. Is it all cleared? No; about 120 acres.
5930. What quantity had you under crop last season? About 90 acres.
5931. Is that the largest crop you have had on it? No.
5932. What sort of crop have you had? Very good. It averages about 19 bushels. I have some statistics to hand in.
5933. Will they not be included in the statistics handed in by Mr. Schramme? Yes.
5934. Then you merely wish to confirm his statistics? Yes. There are two holdings I am not quite sure of, and I think the yield is under-estimated.
5935. Are the returns given here in some instances the actual returns of wheat? Yes. 5936.

* NOTE (on revision).—This Mr. Burgess is, I am informed, the same gentleman who, in his evidence at Molong, is said to have stated that the land in the vicinity of the Cudal route was in every way very inferior to that *via* Molong and Parkes.

5936. Would the line from Molong to Parkes be of any benefit to you? Not in the least; the Borenore line would be much closer.
5937. How far is your land from Borenore? About 15 miles—I think it is about that distance,—it is 14 miles anyway.
5938. If this line were constructed, you would be within about 14 miles of it? Yes.
5939. Would the Cowra line be of any use to you? No; we should be nearer to Borenore.
5940. Do you think that if that line were constructed more land would be placed under cultivation than you have at present? I firmly believe that would be the case. More hay—more bulky stuff would be grown.
5941. That, of course, would be a great advantage to farmers, because if they saw that the crop was not going to be of any use for wheat they would turn it into hay? Yes.
5942. Consequently the risk in putting in a large crop would be diminished? Yes. My chief reason for advocating the Borenore line is that the country through which it passes is superior to the country on the other line.
5943. What could you profitably grow wheat for on the ground, suppose delivery were taken at your farm? We could grow it for 3s. if it were taken away from the farm. That would be a much greater profit than we derive at the present time.

Mr.
T. Seale.
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Mr. John Baker, farmer, sworn and examined :—

5944. *Mr. Lee.*] How long have you resided in the district? Twelve years; I am a farmer.
5945. Where is your farm? At Bowen Park.
5946. Have you anything to add to the evidence of the last witness? I must say I would not like to grow wheat at 2s. 6d. a bushel.
5947. What would it pay to grow it at? I believe I can grow it to pay me at 3s. 6d. a bushel, and I can grow it as cheaply as any one.
5948. Supposing the buyer took delivery on the farm, what would you sell it at? I could not live at it by selling under 3s. I believe I could live at 3s. a bushel if I put in a lot.
5949. Is it a tolerably certain crop in your part? It is not a certainty, but we generally get as good a crop as any one round.
5950. How do you reckon up your crop;—you do not expect a full crop every year, I suppose? We do not get it.
5951. Do you get one crop in three years? Yes; a pretty fair crop once in three years. Last year was an exceptionally bad year, and this year is a very good one, but we lost a lot. I believe I lost fully 50 bags. I could not get it; it laid down.
5952. Is it the extreme dry weather or the extreme wet weather which does you much harm? Wheat is a crop which does not want very much rain.
5953. That being the case, how does it come about that the crop is frequently a partial failure here? Too little rain.
- 5953½. Do you suffer from rust or smut? No. On very rich land we may have a little rust, but that is all.
5954. Is your grain damaged in any way in consequence of weeds? No.
5955. Is it good milling wheat? Yes.
5956. The actual loss is in cultivation, and depends entirely on the season? Yes; I have travelled a good bit about New South Wales, and I never saw better land in my life.
5957. What market have you availed yourself of? Orange.
5958. How do you get your wheat there? By team. I sold some at Bathurst. I always deliver at Borenore, no matter where I sell.
5959. What is the distance from Bowen Park to Borenore? As we have to come round, it is 20 miles from my place. We could go nearer, but that is rotten country.
5960. Supposing a decent road were made by the most direct route possible? Then the distance would be about 14 or 15 miles.
5961. Do you ever make use of the Cowra line? No.
5962. Do you know anything of the country through which the proposed railway runs from Borenore to Forbes? Not past Toogong. I have been to Molong, but not on the proposed line from there to Parkes.
5963. Which of the two routes do you favour? This one, decidedly.
5964. For what reason? Because it would suit me, and because I think it would pay, if constructed. No doubt the population on this line is three to every one on the other line.
5965. How do you know that? From statistics; then there are the public schools to go by.
5966. Your chief reason for advocating this line is, that it would be of benefit to you? Yes; and the public also.
5967. Is there any available land for settlement in the neighbourhood of Bowen Park? I cannot say there is.
5968. Consequently, the approach of the railway will not increase the settlement? No; but it will increase the area under crop. I shall put more under crop myself.
5969. Would Borenore be the closest point at which you could touch the proposed line? No; Cudal would be about 4 miles off.
5970. You regard yourself as a resident of the Cudal District? Yes.
5971. If this line were constructed, you would be within a stone's throw of it; consequently, it would be a great and direct benefit to you? Yes.
5972. *Mr. Cox.*] What do you get for your wheat? 3s., delivered at Borenore; I send it there by my own teams.
5973. What would it cost you? If I had to pay, it would cost 4d. a bushel.
5974. That would leave 2s. 8d.? Yes.
5975. How is it that other farmers can live at 2s. 6d. a bushel? I do not know. I have my own family to take it off. I can take it off as cheaply as anyone.

Mr.
J. Baker.
7 Mar., 1890.

Mr.

Mr. Isaac Bates, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. Isaac Bates. 5976. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you live? At Sisters' Rock.
 5977. What distance is that from Cudal? About 12 miles as the crow flies direct between here and Borenore crossways. I am within 4 miles of Borenore in one direction, and I live near a place called the Caves.
 5978. What is your occupation? I am a farmer and grazier.
 5979. What is the extent of your holding? 2,400 acres.
 5980. What is the nature of the evidence you desire to give the Committee? For many years I was a carrier on the road, and as a carrier I had to travel both ways—sometimes to Forbes and sometimes to Parkes. I believe from my own personal observation that the road from Borenore, or from any part down this way—from Amaroo for instance—would go through more fertile country than through smaller holdings. It would be a shorter road if the roads were equal in everything else.
 5981. To what place would it be shorter? Forbes.
 5982. Would it be shorter to Parkes? Equally to Parkes, I think.
 5983. Would you be surprised to learn that there is 11 miles less to construct on the route from Molong to Parkes, thence to Forbes, than on any other route? That may be true as far as construction goes. I was thinking of the total distance when the line was constructed. I hear people complain very much of having to pay the longer freight.
 5984. You have a knowledge of both routes. How long is it since you were on the Parkes route? About four years.
 5985. What was the length of your experience in that part of the country? I was travelling there a number of years.
 5986. For how many years were you travelling on that road? About twelve, between Orange and Forbes and Molong and Parkes.
 5987. Have you been from Parkes to Forbes? Yes.
 5988. I suppose you did not explore the country at all? Only when I had to look for my horses. I never went out purposely to explore it.
 5989. Did you notice that it was fairly settled upon? I noticed that it was occupied and fairly settled upon.
 5990. What class of settlement did you notice? Selectors, chiefly, and occasionally stations.
 5991. Had the selectors small holdings? Yes.
 5992. Were they engaged in agricultural and pastoral pursuits? Yes.
 5993. Do you think that the residents in that direction are entitled to railway communication? Yes; I do.
 5994. Do you think this particular line will serve them, and that they will be benefited by it? Of course.
 5995. You also know the Borenore route—you have travelled over it a great deal? Yes.
 5996. Is the country over which it passes fairly settled? Yes; in some cases thickly settled.
 5997. I suppose you think that those settlers should have a railway? Yes. Four years ago Forbes was a more flourishing town than Parkes, and the soil on the Eugowra-Parkes Road is of a richer description than the soil about Parkes. I am speaking of the soil through which the proposed line passes.
 5998. Knowing both routes as well as you do, which do you think should be adopted in the interests of the country? It is a very grave question. I think I am giving a truthful answer to the question when I say the Cudal-Forbes line.
 5999. Notwithstanding, you think taking into consideration the settlement of the country on the route from Molong to Parkes that the people there are entitled to a railway also? Yes.
 6000. Have you any other information bearing on the subject you can give the Committee? Yes. I think a junction at Amaroo should be taken into consideration. There are 3½ miles of railway already constructed to that point.
 6001. You think that is the point at which the Forbes line should leave the other line? Yes; I think that should be the starting place.
 6002. What is the distance between Borenore and Amaroo? About 7 miles. It will shorten the line 3½ miles. A great deal of the gradient is taken off by starting from Amaroo and extending to Borenore.
 6003. You would avoid some of the steeper grades by going round the hills? Yes.
 6004. Do you know anything of the country between Eugowra and Parkes? No. I know the country between Murga and Parkes. I waited on the Minister with a deputation to advocate a line from German's Hill to Cudal. The line is already surveyed. The Cudal people thought the line did not come sufficiently close to them, and they threw cold water on it. I believe it would be the best route so far as population is concerned.

Mr. Patrick Ryan, farmer, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. P. Ryan. 6005. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a farmer.
 6006. Where do you reside? At Mousehole Creek.
 6007. Where is that? About 1½ miles from the Boree sheep station.
 6008. How far are you from the Borenore Station? About 11 or 12 miles.
 6009. Do you know the route of the proposed line *via* Borenore or Cudal? I do.
 6010. How far would that be from you? I am about 12 or 15 chains from it, measuring from the boundary of my paddock.
 6011. Where do you take your produce now? Borenore.
 6012. Do you grow much wheat? Some years about 1,500; others, 1,000; and others 700 bushels.
 6013. How much have you grown this year? I had close upon 700 bushels off 30 acres. I have grown 1,200 bushels off 28 acres.
 6014. Have you ever had a year when you have had nothing? Only last year, when no one got anything. I have taken 130 tons of hay this year off 40 acres.
 6015. What is the lowest price at which you could grow wheat to keep yourself and family? It is hard to say, but I should think from 4s. to 4s. 6d. per bushel.
 6016. But taking an ordinary crop could you not grow it for 2s. 6d. on the ground? I could not grow it for less than 4s. or 5s. at the lowest.

6017. How do you keep your bank account going if it costs you about 4s. to grow your wheat, and you sell it at 3s.? There would be very little money in the bank at that price. Mr. P. Ryan.
6018. One man said he put away £100 into the bank from 100 acres after paying all expenses? Some persons may be so situated that they can do that. It depends upon the family. I have been thirty-five years in the colony. I landed here in 1854. I have travelled in many places to get a home, but I do not think I could get a better one than the one I am in at present. I think the country will be a great loser, if the Government do not make the suggested railway from Borenore to Forbes, *via* Cudal. 7 Mar., 1890.

Mr. Luke Hughes, publican and farmer, sworn and examined:—

6019. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At Cheeseman's Creek, 9 miles from Cudal, on the main road to Orange. Mr.
L. Hughes.
6020. What are you? A publican and farmer.
6021. What is the nature of the evidence you desire to give? I have travelled on both routes, and I think I am in a position to judge as to which would be the better route of the two. I know only a portion of the Molong and Parkes line. 7 Mar., 1890.
6022. What is the use of your saying that you know which is the better route of the two to serve the larger number of people if you have not been along both routes? Well I know all the people about here, and the people going by my place.
6023. What traffic is there past your place? There is a great traffic past there to and from the Borenore railway station, but I never kept any account of it.
6024. How long have you kept your hotel? About fourteen years.
6025. Do you remember a time when there was less or more traffic than there is now? I remember a time when there was more traffic—that was before the Dubbo railway was opened.
6026. Has the construction of the Murrumburrah railway line taken any traffic off? Yes.
6027. If a line were constructed from Cowra to Forbes, it would take still more traffic and would interfere with your business? Yes.
6028. If the traffic was kept along this line your business would benefit? Yes.
6029. What particular advantages would accrue to your district if the Borenore line were constructed? I think it would be the better paying line—there are more people living along the route.
6030. But what data have you to go upon—how do you know? I know most of the people.
6031. Do you know most of the people living on the other line? Yes; I have not travelled the road from Molong to Meranburn, but I have travelled from Meranburn to Parkes several times. I have been about among the farms along both roads.
6032. I suppose the general opinion in this part of the country is that the Borenore line should be constructed? Yes.
6033. Local opinion is almost unanimous in that respect? Yes.
6034. Upon the good old principle of each one for himself? I do not think so.
6035. I suppose you know the wheat growing districts of the west, comprise a very large area within the immediate influence of the several suggested lines from Molong, Cowra, and Borenore—there being such an immense area to be served by one line of railway, which route do you think would serve the greater number of inhabitants? The route from Borenore *via* Cudal—there is good country on both sides of the line.
6036. From a national point of view would that line be the best? Decidedly.

Joseph Claxton, Esq., Postmaster at Cudal, sworn and examined:—

6037. *Mr. Cox.*] What position do you occupy? I am Postmaster at Cudal. J. Claxton
Esq.
6038. You desire to give us some information in reference to the postal returns? Yes. The number of letters posted in 1889 amounted to 28,356, showing an excess of 1,009 on last year; the number of newspapers posted was 6,152. In the Money Order branch the amount issued was £1,707 Gs. 2d., the number of orders being 640, the amount paid upon orders was £625 10s. 1d., the number of orders being 170. The Savings Bank deposits amounted to £540 14s., the number of depositors being 147. The withdrawals amounted to £362 1s., and the number of withdrawals was 35. The telegraph returns were £96 13s. 1d., and the number of telegrams 1,630. The stamps yielded £340. I may state that when I came here two years ago we had only three bags of mail matter. Since then the correspondence has grown to such an extent that we have had to have a special bag from Sydney, making four bags. There are about 120 daily papers issued here, I think. The average rainfall has been for the last five years, 25.42 inches. The Government at the present time pay £497 to Cobb & Co. for the conveyance of mails right through to Forbes. The present year shows an increase in business, and there is every prospect of a good year before us. 7 Mar., 1890.
6039. Have you observed whether the coaching traffic is on the increase? I think so. Since the first of the year there have been fairly-loaded coaches both ways;—in fact, I think the loading delays them a little.
6040. Do you think this increase is due to the increase in settlement? Yes. I see a great number of strange faces in this district. People from Camden and down that way are coming up here.
6041. Is not a lot of your business caused by the through traffic? I do not think it. There may be an odd telegram now and again from coach passengers, but the increase I have is pretty local.
6042. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know the country between Eugowra and Parkes? I have been across several times.
6043. What sort of country is it? It is pretty fair.
6044. Is it level? I should call it very passable country; it is not very hilly, but there is a slight fall to the river.
6045. Do you know of any engineering difficulties in the construction of a railway? I do not think so; there is only a bridge as you come in to Parkes. I have been across several times in an open buggy; the distance is about 32 miles.
6046. If a witness at Eugowra said that the route would be impracticable for a railway his evidence would not be true? Not from what I have observed.

Mr.

Mr. Stephen Tierney, hotel-keeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. S. Tierney.] 6047. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am an hotel-keeper.
 6048. Where do you reside? At Keenan's Bridge, 7 miles this side of Borenore.
 7 Mar., 1890. 6049. What is the nature of the evidence you wish to give the Committee? I will answer any question, if I can.
 6050. Have you been living at Keenan's Bridge long? About four and a-half years, and three and a-half years at Heiffer's Station, on the Forbes-road.
 6051. Do you know where the suggested line is pegged out from Borenore to Forbes? Part of the way; I know the starting-point.
 6052. Do you know where the line is marked out from your place to Borenore? Yes.
 6053. You know it has to mount a steep grade? Yes.
 6054. Do you know of your own knowledge whether by making a detour, and going any other way, that hill could be avoided? I do not know.
 6055. You know where Amaroo is? Yes.
 6056. Would a line from that point avoid the mountains? In coming from Amaroo you would have to pass the swamp at some place. By coming from Borenore you could practically avoid the swamp.
 6057. Has the traffic on the road increased or decreased lately? I can give some facts as regards the traffic up to a certain time. A good deal of the bullock-dray traffic goes down to Cowra because there is no metal on the roads there. The carrying traffic on October 5th, 1889, represented fifteen passengers; on the 16th, there were twenty-two; on the 17th, fifteen; on the 18th, eleven; on the 19th, four; on the 20th, three; on the 21st, eight; on the 22nd, eleven; and so on—the total would be 223 from the 15th October to the 2nd November inclusive. These passengers passed my residence; I put them down myself as they passed. The centre of the road is only 16 yards from my verandah. During the same time the coach ran six days a week, and from October 15th to November 2nd, the coaching traffic was 218. From the 18th February up to last night in the present year, there were 116 passengers by the coach. In the first week in March 121 teams passed, and fifty-four passengers were carried. I have never seen better traffic on a similar road, than I have seen on the Forbes Road, since I have been in the colony. I left New England in 1864, and lived as an innkeeper on the Molong-road, for some years.

Mr. Andrew George Peterson, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. A. G. Peterson.] 6058. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At Gheewong.
 7 Mar., 1890. 6059. How long have you been there? I have been there sixteen years; I am a farmer and grazier.
 6060. The Committee are desirous of ascertaining what it costs to produce wheat—that is the ploughing, harrowing, sewing, reaping, threshing, and bagging—could you tell us? I could tell you what it costs to produce wheat, but I could not speak as to the cost of the preparation of the land. I will give you the cost after the land is prepared. I have men to do work for me and pay for everything. Nearly everything is done by contract for me, and I keep a record. My ploughing costs 5s. per acre; the men find their own horses, their own horses food, their own food, and I find the ploughs and plough-shares. Harrowing at 1s. per stroke; twice over would be 2s. per acre; the sewing would be 3d. per acre; the seed would be 4s. an acre, and the wear and tear of ploughing would be about 6d. per acre—that makes 11s. 9d. for putting the wheat in. I now come to the harvesting—the stripping is all done by contract on a similar arrangement to that which I have mentioned. The man finds his own horses and horse food, and I find him in his own food. I pay 4s. 6d. an acre. The cleaning costs 2s. 4d. an acre, including bagging; the wages of the cook to work for the harvesters is £1 a week, or (say) 6d. an acre; the rations for six men at 1s. per head per diem, would be 10d. per acre; the wear and tear of machinery, oil, twine, and needles, I reckon at 1s. 1d. per acre, making the total cost per acre 21s.; that is what it costs me, and I am perfectly certain that the figures are correct.
 6061. You appear to have kept an accurate account of your disbursements, and you say that you have to pay for all the labour? Yes; my own labour goes for nothing in supervision. I may state that so far as carriage is concerned I pay 3d. per bushel for carriage to Molong.
 6062. Then wheat can be produced even if you have to pay for labour at 21s. per acre? Yes.
 6063. Suppose a farmer had several sons capable of assisting in farm work, could wheat not be cultivated and produced at even less than 21s. an acre? I doubt it; you see a man has to keep a family all the year round, whereas I keep my men only while the work is going on.
 6064. What is your average return? I have had from 8 to 25 bushels. My farm is 8 miles from here.
 6065. What did you have this last year? Sixteen bushels. I lost a great deal; it grew too rank and fell.
 6066. What is a fair average crop? Sixteen bushels to the acre. I am perfectly satisfied that that is as much as a man would get taking one year with another; if he gets 3s. 6d. he ought to be satisfied.
 6067. If you get 2s. 6d. a bushel for wheat on the farm, it would leave you a profit of 19s. 6d. an acre with an average of 16 bushels. Would that pay? Yes, if you were to cultivate at all. I seldom send wheat to Molong. It costs 6d. a bushel from Molong to Sydney. Wheat growing will pay right enough if it is managed properly.
 6068. *Mr. Cox.*] That is chiefly due to the use of machinery? Yes.
 6069. You use modern machinery to economise labour? Yes.
 6070. Have you used any steam ploughs? No.
 6071. Are there any cleared areas of land large enough to enable the farmers to work the steam ploughs to advantage? There would be if people would take the trouble to clean the ground thoroughly.
 6072. I suppose that will come in time? Yes, I have no doubt it will.

Mr. Ambrose Minslow, constable, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. A. Minslow.] 6073. *Mr. Cox.*] You are a constable stationed at Cudal? Yes, I have been here twelve months last October.
 7 Mar., 1890. 6074. It is your duty every year to collect statistics? Yes, I collect the Cudal portion.
 6075. Where do you get your orders from? The collectors are appointed by this Court for this portion of the district, but the returns, when collected, are forwarded to Molong as the head station in the district.
 6076. What arrangements are made in the collection of statistics to prevent their overlapping one another—have you any charts drawn out? We follow the natural boundary.
 6077. How far towards Borenore do you go in the collection of your statistics? About 4½ miles. I do not collect Boree.
 6078.

6078. So that a considerable portion of this district lying to the south of the railway line will be included in the Molong district? Yes, it is taken by the Molong police. We know where we are supposed to go and we go no further.

Mr.
A. Minslow.
7 Mar., 1890.

6079. So that the statistics which are said to belong to Molong would be deceptive for railway purposes, inasmuch as they include a large part of the country which properly belongs to the Cudal district? Yes. I called at places where I was told the Molong police had called on the previous day. I did not see them taking the returns, but I know that they did take them.

Mr. Peter Edward Murray, sworn and examined:—

6080. *Mr. Dowel.*] You are a resident in this district? Yes.

6081. Where do you reside? At Spring Creek, about 9 miles from Cudal.

6082. In what direction? Towards the Cargo road.

6083. Have you resided long in this district? About thirteen years.

6084. You have a good knowledge of the country? Yes.

6085. What is the nature of the evidence you desire to give to the Committee? I understood that I was desired to refer to the fact that in the collection of statistics the Molong Police took mine. They came to my place, and my neighbours also have been included in their statistics, although we consider we are in the Cudal district.

Mr.
P. E. Murray.
7 Mar., 1890.

Mr. William Henry Traves, farmer and grazier, sworn and examined:—

6086. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a farmer and grazier.

6087. Where do you reside? Within 5 miles of Canowindra—on the road to Canowindra.

6088. What is the area of your holding? 560 odd acres.

6089. How much do you cultivate? I have 140 acres of timber cleared, but I cultivate only 70 acres.

6090. What evidence do you wish to give the Committee? I wish to confirm the evidence which has been given as regards the traffic coming from Canowindra this way. The principal traffic from the locality in which I live, comes this way, and always has done, so far as my knowledge goes. I myself have sent produce to Borenore, and thence to Sydney. I have sent several crops of wheat that way, and the principal farms lying to the north-east and north-west do the same.

6091. How far is it from your place to Borenore? About 35 miles.

6092. Do you know the suggested line from Borenore to Forbes? Yes.

6093. How far would you be from that line? The nearest point would be 8 or 9 miles at the furthest; that is at Long's Corner. I am giving you now only a rough calculation.

6094. Are you direct north of Canowindra? Very nearly; rather east, if anything.

6095. How far is it from your farm to Cowra? About 27 miles.

6096. Why is it that you cart your produce 35 miles to Borenore when you can cart it to Cowra in 27 miles? The market suits me better; that is why I send it this way.

6097. What market is there at Borenore? Orange and Millthorpe. I have hay at the present time which is of no use to me because the cartage will cost more than it is worth. In dry times we send away a little, principally in the western districts.

6098. Are there no farms between Canowindra and Cowra? It is scarcely populated country; but there are farms.

6099. Nothing like the number to the northward of Canowindra? No.

6100. You think the construction of this line will be of material benefit to you? Yes.

6101. Would not a line from Cowra, through Canowindra, to Eugowra suit you better? It would be 5 miles away from me.

6102. But would it not suit you better than the Borenore line? If it were constructed, I dare say it might.

6103. Putting on one side all personal feeling in the matter, which line would serve the greater number of people—the line from Cowra or the line from Borenore? As far as my knowledge and opinion goes, the line surveyed through here would benefit not only the larger number of persons in the district, but the country at large—I believe it is the nearest route to Sydney, and that it would be the least expensive as far as cartage is concerned. The people at Nyrang Creek would be benefited by the line at Borenore.

6104. But would they not be benefited by the line from Cowra? Equally well, I suppose.

6105. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know the mineral resources of this district? No; but I know there are some mineral claims at Cargo.

Mr.
W. H. Traves.
7 Mar., 1890.

FRIDAY, 7 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Club House Hotel, Orange, at 8 p.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Mr. Alfred Underwood Alley, manager at Orange, for Wright, Heaton, & Co., sworn, and examined:—

6106. *Chairman.*] The Committee have been informed that you desire to make a statement with reference to the traffic between this district and Parkes and Forbes. They will be glad to hear anything you have to say, but they have already taken a great deal of evidence, and must request you to be as brief as possible. I believe you are manager for Wright, Heaton, & Co., forwarding agents at Orange? I am.

6107. Will you please make any statement you may desire to make? I have been constantly travelling between Molong and Parkes from 1870 to 1874. I know the district thoroughly along the proposed route from Molong to Parkes at a distance of 10 miles at each side of the road. I have also been 70 miles below.

Mr.
A. U. Alley.
7 Mar., 1890.

Mr.
A. U. Alley.
7 Mar., 1890.

below Parkes, *via* Bogan Gate, and Troff's Station. The land, I consider, from Molong, for a distance of about 13 miles, to Meranburn, on the main route to Parkes, is of good quality, but from there to within about 5 miles of Parkes, I consider it is of very inferior quality. This bad land consists of stony and ironbark ridges, and the timber is, in my opinion, of inferior quality for railway sleepers. I resided in Parkes for over two years, and although the land around about there is of fair average quality, it is not nearly as fertile as the land about Cudal. I know the land from Parkes to the Troughs Station, and do not consider it is good agricultural land, the country being badly watered, and more suitable for grazing purposes than farming. I have travelled from Orange, *via* Borenore, Cudal, and thence to Eugowra and Forbes, scores of times, and I am intimately acquainted with the country for miles on each side of the proposed route. I think the land from Borenore to Toogong is admirably suited for farming, especially for wheat-growing. Cudal is a very rising township, situated in the centre, without doubt of the best agricultural land in the Colony. The district is thickly studded for miles with *bona fide* settlers. By the line going *via* Cudal it would tap a very large area of the finest wheat-growing land in New South Wales, especially about Cargo, Davis' Plains, and Canowindra. The land from Toogong to Eugowra is patchy, and is not so well adapted to agricultural as to grazing purposes. From Forbes to Condobolin, on both the south and north side of the River Lachlan, if the land, which is of very fine quality, were irrigated, it would yield very heavy crops of wheat, maize, lucerne, and fruits of all kinds. As far as Euabolong, on the same route, 40 miles below Condobolin, the whole of the land is taken up by squatters and selectors, but it is more suitable for grazing purposes. A large extent of country around Condobolin is good agricultural land. Taking into consideration the very superior quality of the land on the Borenore-Forbes route and the much larger population, I unhesitatingly state from my intimate knowledge of both routes, that the Borenore-Cudal-Forbes line would pay better than a line of railway from Molong to Parkes. I have travelled from Forbes to Grenfell through Cowra. The land from Grenfell to within about 10 miles of Cowra is of very inferior quality, being very mountainous and rocky. It is the poorest country I ever travelled over in these colonies. Regarding the traffic between Borenore, *via* Cudal, thence to Forbes and Condobolin, and from Molong to Parkes from 1877, when Orange was a railway terminus, as manager for Wright, Heaton, & Co., I forwarded the whole of the goods to the above mentioned places, and received the whole of the wool and copper from the various stations on the proposed rival routes, and I have no hesitation in saying, after examining the firm's books, that it took fully four times as many teams to deliver the goods which came by rail from Sydney to Orange to their destination on the proposed Cudal-Forbes route, as it did to deliver the goods *via* Molong and Parkes, clearly showing that the Cudal-Forbes railway route will pay better than the Molong to Parkes line. The returns given by Mr. W. H. Moulder at the inquiry held by you at Orange, *re* the two routes including the tonnage of goods and quantity of wool, copper, hides, &c., I wish now to corroborate. The returns were supplied by me; I got them from the books of the firm.

MONDAY, 10 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Cowra, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Mr. Dennis M'Cartie, Senior-sergeant of Police, sworn and examined:—

Mr.
D. M'Cartie.
10 Mar., 1890.

6108. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am a senior-sergeant of police.

6109. Have you been here long? About 14 years.

6110. You have some statistics to place before the Committee? Yes; I will read them. The acreage under wheat is 13,749 acres.

6111. To what area do these statistics apply—I suppose you have made Cowra the centre? Yes; we have gone to a radius of 15 miles.

6112. Then your district does not reach to Canowindra? It goes to the Belabula River.

6113. We have already statistics from Canowindra—do you think your statistics and those gathered at Canowindra, will clash? Very likely; a good many are included in mine on this side of the river.

6114. This is the difficulty we have had to contend with all through at almost every place where statistics have been handed in to us, we have found them overlapping; consequently they have been of little or no value, because we have had a repetition of the same statistics over and over again. If some system had been adopted in the collection of statistics whereby they would not have overlapped they would have been very valuable evidence;—your statistics are collected, I presume, on behalf of the Government? Yes.

6115. If you could have managed to get similar officers to meet you outside your district your evidence would be very valuable, but as matters stand it is of little value? We have nothing to do with the private statistics which are taken.

6116. *Mr. Cox.*] Does your district extend right away to the Molong electorate? Yes.

6117. When you gather your statistics you go as far as Molong? To the boundary.

6118. Consequently, the Police collecting statistics at Molong would not overlap you? No.

6119. The statistics gathered by the Police would be in that respect reliable? Yes.

6120. Will you read the totals of the statistics you have gathered? I have already given you the acreage under wheat. The yield in bushels was 269,988; the acreage under oats yielded 1,800 tons of hay. There were also 400 acres under oats which gave 12,000 bushels. Five hundred acres of corn yielded 5,000 bushels. There are 3,297 horses, 7,042 cattle, 254,526 sheep, and 1,711 pigs.

6121. Are the whole of these statistics within a radius of 15 miles of the place; or are the homesteads only within that distance, and do the statistics apply beyond? The average would be 15 miles. In the direction of Canowindra we go 18 miles, but in other directions 12 or 13, so that I take the average to be about 15 miles.

6122.

6122. These statistics are gathered within the police district of Cowra? Not properly speaking. It is the police district less a small portion of our district which is included in the Molong land and electoral district, and which therefore goes into the Molong statistics.
6123. The Molong police would collect that? Yes.
6124. Are the total returns of cattle, sheep, and horses the total returns from all the land in your portion? Yes.
6125. On leasehold areas, conditional leases, selections, and so on? Yes; the whole. There is no cultivation on the leasehold areas, of course.
6126. Do you collect the electoral rolls of this district? Yes, with assistance.
6127. Did you collect them for this year? Yes.
6128. Is there an increase or decrease upon last year? An increase; but it is a very small one.
6129. In the statistics we received from the Canowindra Railway League we found Mr. Hamilton Osborne set down for 29,000 acres;—how far from Canowindra does his land extend, coming this way? About 6 miles this way.
6130. Consequently you would include some of this land in your returns? Yes; I go to the Belabula River and that would include him.
6131. Then the 29,000 acres will be included in both statistics? Yes.
6132. Sloane is quite close to Cowra? The land is quite close, but the homestead is about 12 miles distant.
6133. If that were included in the Canowindra statistics it would be unfair, as it really belongs to Cowra? Yes.
6134. The only two which should not come in appear to be Sloane and Osborne? Yes; but they hold a very large area between them. The electoral roll last year numbered 1299, and this year it numbers 1391.
6135. What class of people are comprised in the increase? Farmers principally.
6136. Has any land been thrown open to selection here lately? No; not much.
6137. Is there much land available for selection here, do you know? At the present time there is not much available land in the district; it is monopolised by leases.
6138. Then how do these men get their farms;—are they renting them? No; they are freehold.
6139. Then the land must have been available for some time, but has been only lately taken up? The holders have sold out to Victorian farmers who have come in. A lot of persons have come from Victoria, and have settled in this district.
6140. Do you see much progress in the place during the last two or three years? Yes; since the railway came here, principally.
6141. Would not that be accounted for principally through more business being done with the rest in the shape of traffic owing to the presence of the railway station? It is principally owing to our connection with the main trunk lines.

Beilby Kemp, Esq., Clerk of Petty Sessions and Land Agent, sworn and examined:—

6142. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your position? I am Clerk of Petty Sessions and Land Agent at Cowra.
6143. How long have you been here? I was appointed in September, 1887.
6144. Have you been in any portion of this district before you came here? No; I have not.
6145. Could you give the Committee any information as to the alienation which has taken place in your land district since the commencement of the Land Act of 1884? 33,834 acres have been alienated under the Act of 1884. The previous alienation was 189,176 acres. These figures are approximately correct.
6146. Do these returns comprise the conditional leasehold, or do they apply to land alienated by auction? That is simply conditional purchase from 1884 to 1889 inclusive. There seems to have been very little land sold by auction. The area I have given is the area applied for by conditional purchasers up to date.
6147. Have you any idea of the extent of the conditional leaseholds? I could not tell you to-day, but I could furnish the information to-morrow.
6148. Do you know the acreage of the pastoral leaseholds in the district? No; I do not.
6149. Do you notice in the transactions of your office that many transfers are made? A good many, but most to the banks.
6150. Chiefly by way of mortgage? Yes; there are not many in any other way.
6151. What would that lead you to infer? I should infer that persons wanted the money, and transferred by way of mortgage to get temporary assistance.
6152. Would it lead you to suppose that land has been held by them on behalf of capitalists? No, I do not think so.
6153. I suppose you could form a pretty correct idea as to whether there had been much dummieing going on in the district? I should not think very much. I know of none at present.
6154. If a number of transfers were made to large pastoral tenants what would you think then? I might have my doubts then, but I have had none of those in my time.
6155. So far as you can judge the settlement by way of conditional purchase in this neighbourhood has been *bona fide*? Yes, as far as I can judge. Of course my experience is very limited.
6156. You have not been brought very much into contact with the settlers by reason of your short residence? Exactly.
6157. If there had been much dummieing under the new Act, however, it would have come to your knowledge? Yes.
6158. Do you happen to know whether the improvements on the conditional purchases are made in accordance with law? Yes; so far the declarations are coming in to that effect.
6159. I presume the Land Board sits there occasionally? Yes, once in every two months.
6160. And the declarations are made before you? Yes, as a rule.
6161. Your opinion is that the country here has been settled upon in a fair and legitimate manner? Yes; I think so.
6162. Do you happen to know whether there are a large proportion of Crown Lands still within your district? Yes, I believe there are.
6163. How are they held at the present time? Under leasehold area and in reserves.
6164. You do not know the acreage? No.

- B. Kemp, Esq.
10 Mar., 1890.
6165. Do you know the acreage of the reserves? No.
6166. Do you know anything about the reserves? There are some large reserves.
6167. Could you name them? No, I could not.
6168. What is the largest reserve? Some thousands of acres, but I could not give you the exact area.
6169. On which runs are these reserves? I could not say now, but I could let you know later on.
6170. Personally you know nothing of the country between here and Canowindra? No.
6171. When do the pastoral leases fall in in this district? I am informed that a great part fall in at the end of June; this is in the Eastern Division.
6172. Are there any inquiries for land on the part of small settlers? Yes, both personally and by letter.
6173. By many persons outside the colony as well as in the district? As a rule they do not give me their names, so I could not say.
6174. Is it generally supposed that when these leaseholds fall in they will be selected? It is.
6175. Consequently there will be a large addition to the population? Yes.
6176. Is there a railway reserve in your district? I could not tell you now.
6177. Can you tell me the returns in cash from land from the year 1884 up to the year 1889? I can let you know that presently.
6178. You know nothing about the returns furnished by the Police Department? No.
6179. Or of the population of the town? No.

Mr. Richard Sim, jun., Inspector of Conditional Purchases in the Cowra District, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. R. Sim, junr.
10 Mar., 1890.
6180. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your position? I am Inspector of Conditional Purchases in the Cowra District.
6181. How long have you been residing here? Five years.
6182. Has much selection taken place within the last five years? Yes; nearly the whole of the district has been taken up, with the exception of the reserves and leaseholds.
6183. There is no land now suitable for selection, except that on the reserves and leaseholds? No.
6184. Will any large area of leasehold land fall in this year? That I am unable to state; a good quantity will fall in, I know, but I could not say how much.
6185. Could you not tell us approximately? I could not.
6186. On what runs chiefly are there any large areas of Crown lands? On Warrangong and Neila. On those two runs alone there is a very large area.
6187. I suppose a rush will be made for this land directly it is thrown open for selection? Yes, they are making most of the reserves into special areas.
6188. What price do the Government put on these special areas? From 30s. to £2 10s. an acre.
6189. And the land is readily taken up at that price? Not at £2 10s. There is one special area out here which has been standing at £2 10s. for two or three years.
6190. Do you know of any private land being sold in the neighbourhood of Cowra lately, and at what price it was sold? Farms have realized from 30s. to £2 per acre.
6191. Selected land? Yes; improved farms.
6192. Consequently the price of £2 10s. which the Government have put upon unimproved special areas appears to be rather in excess of their value? Yes, a little; that is the reason they have not been taken up. There is another drawback. The land requires water; it is necessary that water should be conserved on these areas, and that requires rather too big an outlay for the selectors.
6193. On this red soil it is difficult to conserve water? No; they can conserve it by excavation; but they are not all prepared to go in for it. There is so much else to do when people take up land.
6194. In the future, however, there can be very little selection except that which takes place on the leasehold areas and reserves? Yes.
6195. Do you know much of the farming in the neighbourhood? I know nearly the whole of it.
6196. Do you think the farming would increase largely if the facilities for getting the produce to market were greater? Yes.
6197. Has cultivation increased materially since the railway was opened to Cowra? Yes; and very much since I have been here within the last five years.
6198. Where in this district are the chief farms situated—on the bank of a river? Between here and Canowindra, and between here and Carcoar, on the eastern side of the Lachlan River, chiefly. There are a good many farms also between here and Young, towards Bang-Bang.
6199. Do you know the Government surveyed route for a railway between this place and Forbes? No.
6200. Is there any other information you wish to give to the Committee? I cannot remember that there is; I might add, perhaps, that most of the country between here and Canowindra is fit for agriculture. A very small portion of it is hilly and unfit for agriculture; the whole of it could be put under cultivation.
6201. Where is the boundary of your district north? The Belabula.
6202. And towards Forbes? Goolagong, Kangarooie, and Broula Range.
6203. Has much dummying been carried on in this district? There has been a certain amount.
6204. Of course that is put a stop to by the present Act? I do not know that it is; in fact I am sure that it is not. Most of the selections, however, have been *bona fide*. In a dry season men take up the land with sufficient money to secure it, but not sufficient to carry them over a bad season, and they have to sell out; that is why there have been so many transfers. Until two years ago we had dry seasons here. The drawback has been that men have settled on the land without sufficient capital.
6205. Is the land which has been selected devoted to pasture or to agriculture? To both.
6206. What is the average area of the selections which have been taken up within the last three or four years? Many additional selections have been taken up. I should say the holdings would average from 400 to 500 acres.
6207. Sufficient land has been taken up to permit of the combination of pastoral with agricultural pursuits? Yes. The selectors take up a small area in the first place, and then add to it.
6208. Until the leasehold areas fall in, there will be little opportunity for any one to select? Very little; in fact a lot of persons are waiting to select, and are inquiring for land every day.
6209. Have applications been made to throw open some of the reserves for selection? That I cannot say.

John

John Vigar Bartlett, Esq., Superintendent of Roads in the Cowra district, sworn and examined:—

6210. *Mr. Dowel.*] What is your position here? I am Superintendent of Roads in this district.

6211. How long have you resided here? Since 8th December, 1884.

6212. You have a considerable knowledge of the district? Yes.

6213. Extending how far? From Carcoar to Lake Cowal, and from Bigga to Eugowra. Those are the boundaries of my district.

6214. Can you give the Committee any information with regard to the rival routes of railway? I cannot comparatively, because I have not travelled the route from Molong, or that from Borenore to Forbes.

6215. Do you know what is known as Thornbury's route? Not without seeing the map.

6216. Do you know the Canowindra route? Yes; I am conversant with that, and with the whole of the country intervening between this place and Eugowra.

6217. You have observed the character of the country, and the class of settlement existing on that particular route? I have. The route *via* Binni Creek to Canowindra is about the most densely populated in this district. That is outside of the towns.

6218. Are the holdings large or small? They are not large. They vary from a little over 100 to 300 or 400 acres. Some have more. There is a little stony country intervening, but the principal portion of the land is well adapted to agricultural purposes.

6219. Does the settlement strike you as being of a permanent character? Yes. There have been a few changes, but those who have purchased from the original selectors were for the most part strangers. A great many Victorians come here. They purchase the land, and seldom part with it once they get hold of it.

6220. To what use is it put? Agriculture and grazing combined.

6221–2. Have you noticed during your residence any increase in the population in this district? The town itself has more than doubled. There are great signs of improvement, there are more houses. All the recent buildings are well built, and of a permanent character.

6223. Is the town of Canowindra surrounded by large estates? The township surveyed by the Department is about three quarters of a mile on the south side of the Belabula, but there has been a private subdivision.

6224. Is it not a fact, however, that Canowindra is surrounded by large estates? Only on two sides are there large estates, Hamilton Osborne's Bangaroo property running down the Belabula towards the Lachlan is the largest estate, and he has one or two paddocks about 3 miles out from the township. That is the principle large holding there is in the vicinity. Mr. Smith of Mogong has some property there, but he is about 7 miles away. There is a property of about 2,000 or 3,000 acres belonging to Mr. Foot, and there is Mr. Rice's place, but with those exceptions the place is thickly studded with farms for miles round.

6225. Where is the private township of Canowindra? The Government township is on this side of Belabula on the south side. When you ascend from the river you meet the private township. Belmore is away towards Cargo.

6226. On whose estate was the private township? On no estate in particular. The suburban land was sold some time ago, and people subdivided and cut up their farms, because the Government were late in giving them a township. They made a township in fact.

6227. That is on the north side of the river? Yes.

6228. Are there any engineering difficulties on the line as sketched out on the map before you? I have not been over the respective allotments with this plan or a similar one in my hand, but from my knowledge of the country I am in a position to state that there are no engineering difficulties whatever in the way of constructing a line of railway. Either of these two routes might be constructed. I would not confine myself to their exact position to within a quarter of a mile.

6229. Knowing the country as you do, and the class of settlement which exists, do you think it is advisable to construct a railway by either of these two routes shown on the map? I say it is the only place where a railway should be constructed. I have no private interest to serve. I do not hold an acre of the land. I am a bird of passage. I am here to-day, but I may be away next week. The country on the other side of Canowindra, towards Eugowra, should be opened up, and there is no way of opening it up except by a line of railway from here to Forbes.

6230. You think it is a good class of country, and that the nature of the settlement would justify the Government in constructing a railway by one of the suggested routes? Undoubtedly.

6231. Would the construction of either of these lines relieve the Government of the construction of any road, or lessen the road expenditure of the Department? Undoubtedly it would, for instance there is a large traffic now on the road between here and Forbes, and it is said that that road is a disgrace to our Department—that is a matter of opinion—but the heavy traffic, on an unmade road, coming up the valley of the Lachlan, is so great, that after a slight rainfall, owing to the sticky nature of the soil, it is impossible to get through with a load. Often when travelling on that road, during the wool season, I have passed between Goolagong and Cowra twenty-seven wool teams.

6232. As a professional man, competent to form an opinion, you recommend that the railway should be constructed on the ground of economy as well as upon other grounds? Yes. It would not only be a saving to our Department but on a commercial basis the railway should be constructed, because it would be the means of making traffic, and avoiding loss on other lines. The wool traffic is not only from Forbes to this place, but from 150 miles below Forbes, away beyond Condobolin, right out west—that all comes this way. When passing along the road I have frequently noticed new names on bales of wool. I like to see where it comes from. I mention this to show that I am acquainted with the places sending their wool this way.

6233. You have not been past Condobolin, and on to Wilcannia and Menindie? No; I have not.

6234. Do you know Young? Yes.

6235. Are you aware that a line of railway is suggested from Young to Forbes? I heard that there was a suggestion to make a junction about 5 or 6 miles out from Young, and to extend a railway from there through Grenfell to Forbes—that proposal was made, I believe, three or four years ago.

6236. Do you know the country traversed by that proposed line? I am not very conversant with the country between Young and Grenfell. I have only travelled along it by the coach.

6237. But you know the country to a certain extent? Yes.

J. V. Bartlett,
Esq.

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J. V. Bartlett, Esq., 6238. Have you observed the country sufficiently to warrant you in making a choice between that line and the line from Cowra through Canowindra? I would certainly recommend the construction of this line in preference to the other for more than one reason. I would recommend this line as a national work because it strikes the loop-line at its centre, and a great deal of the produce sent from these districts does not find a market in Sydney exclusively; a good deal of it is sold in Victoria. Hundreds of trucks run down with stock to Victoria. I have seen seven or eight specials a day starting with cattle for Victoria. If a line is made from Young it means an extra haulage of about 40 odd miles to Sydney; although, of course, the line would be available for the southern traffic. If you strike the cross-line at Cowra both markets are on a level footing. Looking at the map, and calculating the distance, the line I suggest would be a part of a design of a national system of railways.

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6239. Is not Young nearer the southern markets? That is true, but it would be further to get supplies from Sydney. I think there is a difference of over 33 miles—that is between Forbes and Sydney *via* Young and Forbes and Sydney *via* Cowra.

6240. Is there any further information you would like to give to the Committee? You might like to know the traffic over the Cowra Bridge. This is a copy of a return I have made. The principal portion of this traffic is, of course, on the Forbes line—that is the heavy traffic; the other is purely local.

6241. Would the construction of a railway from Cowra to Canowindra involve your Department in much expense in the construction of feeders to the railway? No; the roads already existing would act as feeders. There would be no additional expense because we should be relieved of all the expense of the through traffic; that would more than compensate for the making of short cuts to stations along the line. There is a lot of unsold land at Eugowra, and the rainfall on the other side of the Belabula is much greater than it is here. It is a splendid district for agricultural produce.

6242. *Mr. Lee.*] What is the annual Road Vote for this district? A little over £10,000, irrespective of bridges.

6243. You mentioned just now that much of the traffic coming here was from the Forbes district and from the valley of the Lachlan, beyond Forbes; you must remember that we are now considering a proposal to construct a line of railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes. Suppose the country determines to construct that line would not a great portion of the Condobolin traffic go to Forbes and thence to Molong? Not on the left bank of the river. All the country intervening between there and Grenfell would never go that way.

6244. Would it not be closer for many who send to Cowra now to send to Forbes? Yes; a certain portion of that country would be cut off; they might take a few miles over the left bank, and the rest of the traffic would come here, as it does now.

6245. So that the traffic to Cowra from the western country at present is no criterion of what it might be if a line of railway touched Forbes from some other point? Of course railways always supersede roads and divert the traffic.

6246. Suppose the country were to consider it advisable to construct a railway to Forbes from this cross-line, which do you think, in the interests of the country, would be the best starting point? The cheapest and best line, I think, would be from Cowra, because it can be so easily constructed. If the railway started lower down, at the Sheet of Bark for instance, two stations would be necessary owing to the position of the place. The Government would be scarcely likely to make two stations there; and if they did not do so, all the southern traffic must run on to Woodstock. There would thus be an overlapping for some considerable distance.

6247. But the bend made in the loop-line to get down to Woodstock would naturally be nearer in connection with Eugowra? It would make a slight difference, but what would be gained in one instance would be lost in the other.

6248. What is the distance from Cowra railway station to Woodstock? Twelve miles.

6249. The difference in haulage would be 12 miles so far as the southern market is concerned? Yes; there would be a difference of 2 miles in favour of the Sydney traffic, but there would be considerably more for the Victorian trip. It would be about 10 miles against 2.

John James Richards, Esq., Post and Telegraph Master at Cowra, sworn and examined:—

J. J. Richards, Esq., 6250. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your position? I am Post and Telegraph Master at Cowra. I have been in charge of the office eight years.

6251. Could you furnish the Committee with any statistical information as to the work in the several branches of your department? The amount of money received at the post office for money orders and Savings Bank deposits for the three years, 1887, 1888, and 1889, was £22,650 10s. 9d.; the amount paid out in the same department in the same years was £11,263 16s. 2d.; the amount received for telegrams for the same period was £1,353 9s. 9d. There were posted in 1889, 200,000 letters, 19,000 packets, and 40,000 papers. The stamps sold for 1889 amounted to £1,188 10s.; the excise duty on beer stamps for 1889 was £109 15s. 9d. I can give you some particulars as to the rainfall. In 1886 it rained 88 days, and the total rainfall was 30·81 inches; in 1887 it rained 110 days, and the total rainfall was 42·42 inches; in 1888 it rained 63 days, and the total rainfall was 16·79 inches; in 1889 it rained 79 days, and the total rainfall was 27·23 inches, or an average of 29¼ inches per year.

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6252. Has the general business in your office for the year 1889 shown an increase or a decrease? There has been an increase during the last eight years. It has been gradual, but the business done at the present time is just five times as great as it was when I took charge of the office.

6253. Has there been any alteration in the despatch of mails from Cowra since the opening of the railway? No; there have been no alterations. The mails continue as they did before. Of course the railway brought extra mail matter through this place which previously did not come this way.

6254. Since the railway touched Cowra, has there been a larger amount of mail matter sent here for distribution to various places? Yes; it comes here now because the route is quicker.

6255. That would account in some measure for the increase in your department? Not for the increase of letters. The record of letters taken is for letters actually posted in the town. The letters which passed through are not included in the return.

6256. Has it been your duty to keep a record of the flood levels? No.

Mr.

Mr. John Grant, grazier, sworn and examined :—

6257. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a grazier.
6258. Where is your holding? About 5 miles on the other side of Canowindra.
6259. What is the name of it? Belabula.
6260. And the area? About 20,000 acres.
6261. What do you do with it—is there any under cultivation? About 200 acres under hay, wheat, and corn.
6262. Is that the largest area you have had under cultivation at one time? I have never had more.
6263. Do you grow any lucerne? Yes; in addition to that 200 acres, I have about 300 acres of lucerne.
6264. What is your average yield of wheat? From 25 to 30 bushels.
6265. How many years have you had wheat in? I do not sow every year. I do not sell any wheat. I grow it for my own consumption.
6266. You have had it in in good seasons, I suppose? Yes.
6267. You had not a crop in in 1888, I suppose? Yes; I got about 10 bushels, I think.
6268. Taking that into consideration, what would your average be? From 25 to 30 bushels.
6269. What has been your maximum return then? 40 bushels through the whole crop.
6270. What yield of hay have you had? About 2 tons—that is oaten hay.
6271. Does the lucerne thrive? Yes; it is on the bank of the creek.
6272. How many sheep have you? 20,000.
6273. What do you estimate that your run is capable of carrying? I do not think it is capable of carrying more on the average than 1 sheep to the acre. I have 500 cattle, and 300 horses.
6274. Do you know the route of the proposed line from Cowra to Forbes through Canowindra? Yes.
6275. Would it go through your property? No.
6276. Of course it would serve you very well—better, in fact, than any other line? Yes; I suppose it would.
6277. But would the construction of the line lead you to utilize your property to any greater advantage—would you give better returns; that is, would you carry more sheep to the acre, or put more land under crop? I should have my produce nearer market. The ground could not produce more than it is producing unless more were put under agriculture. Any of the land is fit for agriculture, and it is quite possible that if I had railway communication I might increase the area under cultivation.
6278. Have you any idea at what price you could profitably grow wheat on the ground, supposing delivery were taken at your station? For about 4s.
6279. If you could not grow it under 4s., you would be confined to the local market, because, on account of the carriage, you would never get your price. You think that if you did not get 4s. it would not pay you to grow it? It might pay to grow it at about 3s., but not less.
6280. Are all the men round you large holders? No; there are a great many selectors there.
6281. Have they taken up any of your run? Yes.
6282. How are they doing? Very well as farmers; some of them have stock.
6283. What is about the size of their holdings? They nearly all hold 640 acres.
6284. There are none of them, I suppose, with more than 100 acres under cultivation? Some have more. Some of them take their wheat to Cowra, and some of them take it to Cudal.
6285. Do you know the country to the north of Canowindra, between this and Cudal? Yes; it is all good agricultural land.
6286. How far to the north of Canowindra would people be served by the construction of this line from Cowra to Forbes? For about 10 or 12 miles.
6287. Would that reach to Cudal? Very nearly.
6288. Would the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes serve you in any way? Not at all.
6289. You would be nearer to this railway—that is, the existing railway—than to that line? Yes; a great deal nearer.
6290. Supposing a line were constructed from Borenore, *via* Cudal and Eugowra, to Forbes, would not that serve you? Yes; but not better than this line.
6291. But you would be only 2 or 3 miles away from the line? There would be 2 or 3 miles difference in the distance to the station, if there were a station to Canowindra, and I suppose there would be.
6292. Do you think the construction of either of these lines would induce the selectors in your locality to grow more produce for the market? I have no doubt it would.
6293. Which pays you best, growing sheep or growing wheat? Growing sheep.
6294. Then it is not likely that you will grow wheat for the benefit of the country, when you can benefit yourself more by growing sheep? I do not think so.
6295. And will not that apply to other persons? I suppose they will grow what pays them best. It might pay some men who do the whole of their own cultivation to grow wheat; it would not pay me to grow it, although it might pay a person with a large family to do so.
6296. Have you any idea of the number of small holdings round Canowindra in towards Mogong? There are a good many that way.
6297. Is there not some unalienated land about Mogong? A good bit. It is good agricultural land.
6298. Why is it left unalienated? It is under lease.
6299. Is there not a lot of it that is not under lease? I do not think so. There are some mountains on the other side of Mogong.
6300. *Mr. Cox.*] You say that sheep-growing pays you better than cultivation? Yes.
6301. And yet you grow from 25 to 30 bushels per acre? Yes.
6302. At what price can you sell it on the average? I could not get 3s. a bushel for it now. I have never sold wheat.
6303. Suppose you get 3s. a bushel, and an average of 25 bushels, that would be £3 15s. an acre;—how much would it cost you to cultivate? Over £1 an acre.
6304. That leaves £2 15s. an acre profit? Yes.
6305. How many sheep do you keep to the acre? On the river bank, eight or nine, or even ten.
6306. That is on lucerne ground? No; it is on thistle.
6307. You mean the broad-leaved thistle? Yes.
6308. Keeping eight sheep to the acre, I suppose you would clear about 4s. a sheep? 5s.

Mr.
J. Grant.
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- Mr. J. Grant. 6309. That would be £2, but with cultivation you would clear £2 15s.? The cultivation is very risky, although a man with a family could carry it on pretty well, I suppose.
 10 Mar., 1890. 6310. Clearly, cultivating your land leaves you a greater profit than you get from growing wool? It might pay a man with a family to cultivate, but it would not pay a man who had to employ labour.

Arthur Henry Costin, Esq., Post and Telegraph Master at Canowindra, sworn and examined:—

- A. H. Costin, Esq. 6311. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your position? I am Post and Telegraph Master at Canowindra.
 10 Mar., 1890. 6312. How long have you resided there? For the last six years.
 6313. Have you any statistics to show the working of your department? Yes; I have the Postmaster-General's Report for 1885, and also his report for 1888. The report for 1889 is not yet published. I therefore drew up a report from my own books. The number of letters posted at Canowindra during the year 1885 was 13,368; the number of telegraph messages sent was 1,158; the number of money orders issued was 474, representing £1,379 13s. 11d.; the money orders paid numbered 51, representing £179 9s. 6d.; the revenue from the sale of postage stamps was £170 15s.; the revenue received for telegrams transmitted was £67 7s. 6d., the total revenue being £238 2s. 6d.; the savings bank deposits amounted to £152 5s. 6d. In 1889 the number of letters posted was 33,224; the number of telegraph messages transmitted was 2,376; the money orders issued numbered 503, representing £1,274 3s. 4d.; the money orders paid numbered 107, representing £410 7s. 3d.; the postal revenue was £280, and the telegraph revenue was £107 13s., making a total of £387 13s.; the savings bank deposits amounted to £103 16s. 9d. The increase, taking one year with another, is £149 11s. 6d. That is the increase in the actual revenue between the two years. During the year 1889 a branch of the Commercial Bank opened, and that interfered with our revenue.
 6314. Has the increase been gradual from 1885 to 1889? Yes; and it is still increasing.
 6315. Do you keep the rain gauge? I do.
 6316. What has been the average during the last eight years? I have kept the record for the last five years, and it would give an average of about 26 inches to the year.
 6317. Is there much passenger traffic through Canowindra? Not very much at present, there appears to be an increase though, every year, in the number of passengers.
 6318. What size mail vehicle runs from Canowindra to Forbes? There is no direct coach from Canowindra to Forbes; the letters go by coach to Orange, Woodstock, and Cowra railway stations, a rather roundabout way.
 6319. So that the only direct route is between Cowra and Forbes, not calling at Canowindra? Yes; because there is no coach running on the road from Canowindra to Forbes.
 6320. You have no direct communication with Forbes? No, except by road. Of course there is a main road, Canowindra to Forbes, but it is not a mail line.
 6321. Is there any other information you desire to give to the Committee? I merely wish to state that the population appears to be increasing in the neighbourhood of Canowindra.
 6322. Both in the town and in the country? Yes; more particularly in the town.
 6323. I suppose there is not very much land open for selection outside the town now? There are several reserves on the proposed line from Cowra to Forbes. Between Canowindra and Eugowra, on each side, there is a travelling stock reserve half a mile in width; that, of course, cannot be selected, but it would be snapped up immediately if it were available.
 6324. I presume there will be a fair amount of good land on the leasehold areas to be thrown open? Yes.
 6325. And that will add materially to the population when the time arrives? Yes. I may mention that there is a water reserve adjoining the town. Efforts have been made to get it cut up into allotments. Inasmuch as there is a great demand for land in the town and no land is available, application has been made to the Government to have the reserve cut up.
 6326. Do you reside in the Government town or in the private town? With the exception of a few houses, the Government town is not settled upon at all. I am in the private town—all the Government buildings are in the private town.
 6327. What sort of town is Belmore? It is about 1½ miles from Canowindra, in the direction of Orange; it is a village—there is a flour mill, however, and a few gold-mines are in operation.
 6328. Have you a flour mill in Canowindra? No; the mill at Belmore serves the whole Canowindra district.

Mr. William Robinson, commission agent, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. W. Robinson. 6329. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? At Canowindra.
 10 Mar., 1890. 6330. How long have you resided there? Thirty-eight years.
 6331. You have an extensive knowledge of the district? I should have, I think, considering the time I have been in it.
 6332. You know all the country through which the proposed railway would be constructed? Yes; I know the three lines from Molong, from Borenore, and from Cowra. I know nearly every tree on the three lines.
 6333. What is your occupation? I am a commission agent. Formerly I used to own a place just opposite to the Government township. I sold it to Mr. Foote some fourteen years ago.
 6334. Do you know the railway route known as Thornbury's route? Yes.
 6335. Do you know the route known as Cummings'? No.
 6336. Does the route to which you refer pass through Canowindra, or does it leave it 3 miles away? I mean the Townsend route.
 6337. What is the class of country that Cummings' route passes through? I have travelled all the colonies, and if we are referring to the same route, I do not think there can be better land in any part of New South Wales or Queensland. The quality of the soil is exceedingly good.
 6338. Is the settlement in large or small holdings? There are some large holdings and a great many small ones—from 60 acres up to 640 acres.
 6339. Do the small holdings appear to be of a permanent character? Yes.
 6340. You do not think they are likely to revert to the pastoral tenant? I do not think so.
 6341. Do you think they represent *bona fide* settlement? Yes. 6342.

6342. How do these settlers chiefly employ the land? They are nearly all both grain-growers and sheep-farmers.
6343. And they all appear to be in a thriving condition? Yes; so far as one can see. My business gives me a pretty good acquaintance with the district all round, what with buying and selling to the different people.
6344. In the event of one of these lines being constructed by the Government, do you think it is likely that any considerable amount of traffic would be brought to the railway? A great deal will come from the Lower Lachlan and that part of the country.
6345. What are the principal centres of population within 10 miles of the route which would be served by the railway? The district of Canowindra, very nearly as far as Cudal, would be served by it. Up as far as Barrigan the district is thickly populated. There is a net-work of farms from Canowindra to Barrigan. Then it would also serve the people down the Belabula River as far as Goolagong.
6346. Are there many transactions in stock taking place in Canowindra? Yes.
6347. Do you think they would afford any traffic to the railway? Yes. People have now to send either to Orange or to this place to truck their stock. They have to send here if they are going to the southern markets, and to Orange for the Sydney market.
6348. A great deal of the stock to which you now refer would be trucked at Canowindra? Yes.
6349. And it would not have to come to Cowra over the bridge as it does at the present time? No.
6350. As a stock agent, has it come to your knowledge that any losses of stock have occurred on this bridge? Yes. Not a very long while ago some sheep were killed on the bridge.
6351. You say you have a knowledge of the proposed route from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? Yes.
6352. Do you know anything of the country to the north of that line? Yes; and I have been west as far as Cobar and Wilcannia, and down the Lachlan as far as Hay.
6353. Is the country to the north of the line of a good or bad description? I should not say it is good. It is a very sandy and granity country; nothing like the country between here and Eugowra.
6354. Do you know if it is settled upon? I have not been there for a number of years.
6355. How many? Twelve years.
6356. Would you be surprised to hear that all that country is settled upon at the present time? I have heard so.
6357. Do you know anything of the country at Young? Not a great deal.
6358. You do not know the proposed railway route from Young? I have often been across from Young to Forbes through Grenfell, but I do not know where the route is surveyed.
6359. But you know the class of country the railway would pass through? Yes.
6360. Knowing all these routes, which, in your opinion, would be the best for the Government to construct for the convenience of the largest number of persons, and having regard to the character of the country? Speaking without prejudice, I think the line starting from Cowra would be by far the best.
6361. You feel certain that a considerable amount of revenue would be returned by that line if it were constructed? I do.
6362. Can you give the Committee any information as regards the village of Canowindra;—does it appear to be increasing? Very much within the last three years.
6363. Has the land increased in value? Yes, a great deal.
6364. Is all the available land in the district occupied at the present time? It is all occupied, with the exception of a temporary common and the travelling stock route from Canowindra to Eugowra. All the Crown land available is occupied.
6365. Supposing a fairly improved farm were to come into the market, what would it realize per acre? I have a reserve of £2 10s. per acre asked on improved farms. I have several large holdings of from 300 up to 1,000 acres at that price. I have others down as low as 30s., but they are merely fenced and grazing paddocks. The other paddocks are cleared and cultivated.
6366. Generally speaking, you think that the town and district are improving and increasing in number? Yes.
6367. And that the settlement is of a *bona fide* character? Yes.
6368. Is there any other information that you wish to give to the Committee? No.

Mr. George West Hardie Dry, commission agent, sworn and examined:—

6369. *Mr. Lee.*] Where do you reside? At Belmore, near Canowindra.
6370. What is your occupation? I am a commission agent.
6371. What is the nature of the evidence you wish to give to the Committee—have you any returns prepared? I collected the statistics for Canowindra a short time ago.
6372. You collected and compiled them? Yes.
6373. Before you started collecting them, had you any arrangement with the Railway League at Cudal or at Forbes, with regard to the districts you would severally collect? There was a tacit understanding that each would collect within a certain distance of their own place.
6374. Are you aware that the statistics supplied from Canowindra include a large number of statistics supplied from Cowra? That may be, but the statistics we gathered are solely within the radius to which we were confined, that is 12 miles on each side of Canowindra, on the Eugowra and Cowra lines.
6375. Are you aware that the Cudal statistics include a large number of yours? No; I am not.
6376. We find in going through the various districts that no arrangement has been made between the collectors, and that in nearly every instance, one district has encroached on the other, rendering your detailed statistics utterly valueless? The statistics furnished by the Canowindra League were the first compiled, and were strictly within the distance I have named. Copies were sent to Cowra and Forbes. It was intimated also through the press, that certain arrangements had been made, so that the other districts must be fully cognizant of where we had been—any encroachment must have been made by the other collectors.
6377. The other districts claim certain areas which appear to be at variance with yours—can you give us a revised list showing us the exact number of persons within your boundaries? The number on the list you already have, are within our distance. I hardly see how we can make any revision.
6378. But you all claim certain persons, so that somebody must be wrong? There may be an apparent discrepancy, arising from the size of the holdings, in some instances. Some of them go a considerable distance back from the water boundary, but the holders named in the statistics I furnished are correct.

6379.

Mr.
W. Robinson.
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Mr.
G. W. H. Dry.
10 Mar., 1890.

- Mr. G. W. H. Dry.
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6379. Have you taken an active part in forwarding this railway movement? I naturally feel interested in the question.
6380. Which particular route do your people advocate? From Cowra to Forbes, through Canowindra and Eugowra.
6381. For what reason? It is a cheap and easy route—then there is the population, and the superior character of the country, to be considered.
6382. The line is much closer to Canowindra than the others? Undoubtedly, but it will be a good route for other places besides? Goolagong and Cargo will also benefit by it.
6383. But the chief reason why you advocate the line is, that it will be a greater benefit to Canowindra than any of the other lines? It will benefit not only Canowindra, but the country all along the route.
6384. How far is Canowindra from Cowra? Twenty miles.
6385. How far is Cargo from Canowindra? About 12 miles.
6386. Do you know the district of Parkes? I am not well acquainted with it. I do not know the settlement to the north of that place at all.
6387. Do you know the population at Garra and Manildra? No.
6388. How far is Parkes from Cowra? Close upon 70 miles.
6389. You are aware that it is the intention of the Government to construct a railway into these districts by a route which will suit the greatest number of persons. You know also that such a railway cannot be taken to every man's door, hence the necessity arises for arriving at some point, which will benefit the greatest number. Taking that wide view of the question, are you of opinion that a line from Cowra to Canowindra and Forbes would benefit the greatest number of people in these districts? It will, on account of the Southern line. I think it is in a more central position, and people having stock which they desire to send to the south will have more convenient, and better travelling.
6390. Considering that you are already within 20 miles of a railway station and that the people to the north of Parkes are 60 or 70 miles from a railway, do you think it would be a national policy to give you another line within a few miles of Canowindra and to leave the other settlers unserved? Of course this line would be of great benefit to us; but we are not the only people to be considered—there are so many in the district entitled to consideration.
6391. As a matter of fact, you think that this line will benefit Canowindra—perhaps during the course of construction and perhaps after the line is constructed? It will benefit the whole of the district.
6392. But more particularly Canowindra? Yes.
6393. Since you are already within 20 miles of a railway would not the Government be justified in bringing other persons within 20 miles of that means of communication? Yes, if their resources warrant it.
6394. But you say that you are not conversant with their resources? No.
6395. You appear to know the immediate surroundings of Canowindra, but you do not know the enormous area and the very large population which the Government are anxious to serve by a railway. From a national point of view, which would be the best line to lay down the valley of the Lachlan? I think the Cowra line would be the best line to tap it, on account of the facilities for getting to the Southern market.
6396. Suppose the line were constructed *via* Canowindra, what traffic would your district supply? Stock, grain, and passengers. There is any amount of population there. At Canowindra itself there is a population of about 400. Within a mile of the town there is a population of 246. At Belmore, about 1½ miles distant, there are about 154. Then there is the mining population.
6397. These people are storekeepers and others, and their families living in the town? Yes. Of course the mines at Belmore employ a great number of men. There are about 40 men employed on the mines there. The returns from there lately, gave about 2,600 oz. of gold.
6398. What are the names of the mines? The Blue Jacket, and Hayes Reef. There are banks there, of course.
6399. You referred just now to stock traffic; this is, of course, a large stock district; but are you aware that the Railway Commissioners consider the stock traffic a dead loss to them? I did not know that. I supposed everything would pay, unless under loose management.
6400. They reckon that the stock traffic is of no value; they reckon that it costs them 5s. per train mile both ways, so that very little is to be derived from that traffic. What other traffic would your district supply? Well, the country is specially suited to the growth of grain.
6401. Where is the grain likely to go to? Undoubtedly, it will go to the best market.
6402. Where is that likely to be? If the demand is on the Victorian line it will go that way; if it is in Sydney it will go there.
6403. Is not the western country more likely to be a market for you? Sydney, I think, would take the bulk of the grain from here.
6404. What freight would you be able to pay from Canowindra to Sydney? I do not know about that.
6405. I mean to make wheat-growing a profitable industry? I do not know—I have not dealt much in it myself.
6406. Wheat, you are aware, is carried at a low rate? Yes, I know; but I cannot say what it is. I have no hesitation in saying that if the travelling stock reserve beyond Canowindra was thrown open for sale it would help to pay a great deal of the expenditure, and would at the same time give great returns to the railway. To give you an instance—about a month ago, something like 1,800 acres of this reserve were thrown open, towards Eugowra—that land was immediately rushed, and the people had to ballot for it.
6407. Is there any pastoral holding in your locality? Mr. Osborne, Grant, and Smith.
6408. Is there any leasehold in connection with it? Yes, there is.
6409. That lease will fall in this year? Yes.
6410. Is there any large area of land on that run which would be available for settlement when the lease falls in? Yes; but I do not know what the exact area is.
6411. Has any farm land changed hands lately in your district? Yes.
6412. At what price—take a conditional purchase, for instance, at five years; what would it be worth per acre? Some will ask £3 10s. and £2 10s.
6413. But at what price did the land change hands? That depends upon the improvements; some are only temporarily improved; some would change hands at £3, some at £2 10s., and some at 30s.
6414. Belmore and Canowindra are very close together? Yes; that is owing to the mines. Belmore is a mining township, and there is a flour-mill there. I may mention that there is a branch of the Commercial Bank at Canowindra.

6415. How many hotels are there? Two; and there is another in course of erection. There is no hotel at Belmore; there was one there at one time, but it was burnt down and has not been rebuilt.
6416. *Mr. Cox.*] Have you taken the trouble to find out what the probable receipts of a railway would be, presuming that one were constructed from Cowra to Forbes? No; I have not gone into that matter.
6417. The line will probably cost about £330,000; the annual interest would be £12,000; and the permanent way and other expenses would amount to about £10,000 per annum. Would there be sufficient traffic on this line to pay £22,000 a year? I believe there would. The country through which the line passes is very good, and there is plenty of material near the railway which could be utilized in construction.
6418. You think there would be sufficient traffic—wool and grain one way, and goods the other—to pay this large amount of money? Yes.

Mr.
G. W. H. Dry.
10 Mar., 1890.

Mr. John Bates, Railway Stationmaster at Cowra, sworn and examined:—

6419. *Chairman.*] What is your position? I am Stationmaster at Cowra.
6420. How long have you been on the railway here? About a fortnight.
6421. Have you any returns of railway revenue? Yes. I can give you the returns for 1888 and 1889; that is the earnings of the Cowra railway station for those years. In 1888 there were 4,491 passengers, the amount of coaching was £4,070 19s. 11d., the outward tonnage was 4,579 tons 13 cwt., the total inward tonnage was 4,773 tons 19 cwt. 6 qr., the total amount paid, and to pay, on goods in and out, was £14,566 6s. 8d., the number of bales of wool was 13,481, and the number of bags of wheat 2,773. The coaching and goods earnings amounted to £18,587 6s. 8d. The wool receipts, averaging the bales at 4 cwt., would be 2,696 tons 4 cwt., at £2 18s. 8d., giving a total of £7,708 17s. 1d. The receipts less stock would be £26,396 3s. 9d. In 1889 there were 4,416 passengers, the amount of coaching revenue was £4,121 13s. 2d., the outward tonnage amounted to 5,133 tons 5 cwt. and 2 qr., the inward tonnage amounted to 6,403 tons 4 cwt. 2 qr.; the total amount paid, and to pay, on goods in and out, was £17,033 14s. 11d., the number of bales of wool carried was 18,589, and the number of bags of wheat 3,223; the total of the coaching and goods earnings was £21,265 0s. 1d.; the wool receipts were, on 3,717 tons 12 cwt., £10,904 19s. 4d., making the receipts less stock, £32,169 19s. 9d. The total of the goods and coaching receipts for the month ending 31st January 1890, was £5,152 12s. 9d.
6422. In regard to the passenger returns would that be money taken at your office for passages to Sydney? It would mean passengers, parcels, and horse and dog carriage.
6423. It has nothing to do with passengers coming to Sydney? Nothing whatever.
6424. Is the sum of £17,033 the amount actually taken for goods at your station? That is the total both ways.
6425. Could you give us a comparison between the inward and outward loading; would it be equal or would there be a great difference either way? Not so many goods go away, as come in, excepting in the wool season.
6426. Do you think, taking the year through, that the returns would be about equal? We should receive more than would be due on the trainage of the goods sent away, because wool and grain would be carried at a cheaper rate.
6427. So that if we take one half that would be a fair return from this office? I think fully two-thirds would be revenue returned for goods coming in, because of the difference in trainage. Grain is carried at a very cheap rate in comparison with goods, and so is wool.
6428. Have you noticed any marked increase in the passenger returns on this line? There does not appear to be much increase between 1888 and 1889; there is a good increase in wheat, that is on account of the drought of the previous year. There is also an increase in the wool, that is attributable to the same cause.
6429. Have you much stock trucked here? Not since I have been here.
6430. The stock returns are not shown in this paper? No.
6431. Where are your trucking yards? About 300 yards on the other side of the station.
6432. You have been across the river? To the other end of the bridge.
6433. Is there not a better position for trucking stock at the other end of the bridge than down here? Any place away from the town would be better than where the yards now are.
6434. Do you think a better position could be found on the other side of the bridge? It would be better for the townspeople, as the cattle would not have to come through the town. It would be better for the stock also.
6435. The principal part of the stock comes from that direction? Yes; it is always inconvenient to have stock coming through the town.
6436. Where were you stationed before you came here? At Nevertire.
6437. Did much stock come through your station, from Bourke for Melbourne? There was a large traffic in live stock last year, running night and day. Seventeen engines have been in the yard on one day.
6438. Do you know Young? I have been through it.
6439. Supposing a line were constructed from Young through Grenfell and Forbes, to Parkes, and from thence to Dubbo, would that intercept the stock traffic that comes round by Blayney? Most decidedly it would. A great deal of the traffic through here comes from Dubbo, and from the west of Dubbo.
6440. Then the Young line would be a great stock line? Yes, for the Melbourne market. Pretty well all the stock loaded at Nevertire last year, was for Melbourne.
6441. Have any representations been made by the sheep owners in the Lachlan Valley as to the inconvenience of sending sheep across a narrow bridge to the trucking yards? Not that I know of. I have seen no record of it.
6442. Have you heard of any losses through the use of this narrow bridge for stock? No. I have been through the books at the station, and I have not come across any complaints.
6443. You hand in, as an appendix, a statement showing the earnings of the Cowra railway station for the years 1888 and 1889, and other particulars? Yes.

Mr. J. Bates.
10 Mar., 1890.

Mr. Robert Rice, sworn and further examined:—

Mr. R. Rice. [6441. *Chairman.*] I believe you wish to make some additions to the evidence you gave at Eugowra? I desire to say that there are thousands of acres of land on the Belabula River suitable for irrigation. I have tried it on a small scale, and I intend to go in for it largely, and I know others who have the same intention. We shall be able to grow any amount of produce, to afford traffic for the railway. Mr. Grant has many thousands of acres of black land, suitable for irrigation. I grow 90 bushels of corn to the acre in favourable seasons, without any irrigation whatever. No doubt in a few years there will be a number of irrigation plants on the Belabula River, there being water and good soil. I think there has been some misunderstanding as to the estimated cost of the proposed railway.

Mr. Dennis Cornelius Joseph Donnelly, storekeeper and miller, sworn and examined:—

Mr. D. C. J. Donnelly. [6445. *Mr. Cox.*] What is your occupation? I am a storekeeper and miller.
 6446. How long have you been resident at Cowra? Twelve years. I have been in the district longer than that, but in the town of Cowra twelve years.
 6447. Are you well acquainted with the district? Yes; I have been, during that period, and before it.
 6448. Does your knowledge of the country extend right away north and north-west towards Cudal? My knowledge of the Cudal district would warrant me in giving you the evidence you require in connection with it. It is many years since I passed over the track; it was all open country then.
 6449. What have you to say with reference to the Cowra district? When I first came to Cowra there were three stores, and a very small number of houses. At the present time, as you can see for yourselves, there are a great number of stores, and the population during the interval has increased wonderfully. To give you some idea of the increase in population, I can refer you to the fact of our not having a medical man nearer than Carcoar for some time. At the present time there are two medical men, three undertakers, and we even support a sexton. In the period I have named we have also built a substantial hospital, and I am proud to say that it is entirely out of debt, and has a good substantial balance to its credit, although it is nearly continuously full. There was only one bank when I came to Cowra—the Joint Stock—we have three here now. The court business, when I came here, was conducted in a small room, in what is called the lock-up. The building in which you are now sitting has since been built. A gaol has also been built. This is also a town where the Quarter Sessions and District Court are held. As to the post and telegraph office, when I came here it was a little caboose next to the first public-house, as you go down the street. You have seen the new office which has been built, even that office is too small for the public convenience here. In regard to churches, when I came here a little brick place on the right-hand side of the road did service for the various congregations. There was one small Roman Catholic Church. Since that time we have had a new Church of England, there is a Wesleyan Church in course of erection, there is a large Catholic Church, and also a convent. We have a Roman Catholic school, the attendance at which is nearly 100. I do not know what the attendance at the Public School is. My own children, I educate in my own house. I have often counted the children leaving the convent school, and I have noticed that there have been from 75 to 100.
 6450. What is the population? There are about 1,400 or 1,500 persons on the roll in the police district of Cowra;—that, of course, would indicate a much larger population.
 6451. That would not include Canowindra? No. I might add that the character of the land in this neighbourhood is exceedingly good; so much so, that a very wet season would not be as profitable to the growers here as a comparatively dry one. In a moderate season the head of the wheat is full and the stalk is short. After an extraordinary fall of rain the crop is not always so good. In the twelve years I have been here, we have had one bad season caused by drought, and another by excessive rain. These are the only two seasons in which we have not had a fair and prosperous yield of wheat in the district. We should have had a splendid yield in the year 1887, but the rain destroyed it.
 6452. *Chairman.*] What quality of wheat is grown? It is excellent. No better wheat is grown in any part of the colony, with the exception of the Bathurst Plains wheat. I think the wheat is as good as any I have ever seen. It is very much superior to the New Zealand wheat.
 6453. What quantity of wheat do you purchase in a year? I have had nearly as much as 20,000 bushels of wheat on hand at one time.
 6454. What is the present price of wheat at Cowra? 3s. 2d. for good wheat. You must take this into consideration—that if we have a line of railway to Forbes, and it were extended beyond that to Wilcannia and to Broken Hill, then the valley of the Lachlan would be an immense territory for the supply of the people of Broken Hill, instead of their going to Adelaide for their supply. Instead of sending our produce against the stream, as at present, we would be going with the stream. Now we are entirely ruled by the Sydney market. If wheat is worth 3s. 7d. in Sydney it is only worth as much less here as would cover the freight from here to Sydney. If we were sending wheat the other way, its natural course, it would be worth plus the freight between here and Sydney. Thus instead of being 3s. 2d. here it would be 3s. 7d., 3s. 8d., or even more.
 6455. So that the extension of the railway westward, would be far more advantageous than the present railway eastward, to the metropolis? Decidedly. We have sufficient good soil and resources to feed millions of people. The river land is admirably adapted to the growth of corn, vegetables, and fruit. The undulations on the river are splendid for wheat-growing, there are good clay soils.
 6456. Have you ever made a calculation of the cost of growing wheat? No, but I think persons growing wheat in this or in any other district, should be placed in possession of easy command of a good market to recompense them for the great toil expended in its production. I have known settlers from early dawn to all hours of the night, struggling to clear the land. Sometimes wheat has been brought in here and I have bought it at 2s. 3d. I am sure that it could not have been grown for that money. Since the railway has been opened here there has, of course, been an improvement. I would also advocate this line, not so much for the benefit of the people of this town and district as for the benefit of the people of Forbes and to the west. As a large consignor of wheat, my experience is that the southern market is better than the east. We sent a lot to Sydney this year, but in the other years Wagga, Goulburn, and markets in that direction take a good deal—that is the surplus. If Forbes had a surplus, as she will have in time, she would be equi-distant from the two systems of railway, and would be able to send her produce to either market—to the most suitable at the time.

6457.

6457. From what you say, cultivation must have materially increased since the railway came here? Very much. When the people began to take up land, they were under the impression that a railway would be built; it assisted in inducing persons to take up land, and since its completion it has assisted them to grow more wheat. Mr. D. C. J. Donnelly.

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6458. Are they still clearing their land? Yes, and such large proprietors as Mr. Sloane and Mr. Alford must be able to count their wheat by the thousand bags this season.

6459. The reduced rate for the carriage of wheat I suppose has also been of material assistance? It does not always bring about that result, but it has been better on the present occasion. It often happens that the consumer gets the benefit of the reduction. On this occasion the farmer is getting the entire benefit of the reduction—that is so far as this season has gone. Another matter I wish to refer to is the stock traffic. A short time ago this railway was continually kept going with specials taking stock to the Victorian market. A great deal of it came from the far west, and I need hardly point out that the carriage of this stock round from Forbes to Parkes, Parkes to Molong, Molong to Orange, Orange to Blayney, and Blayney to this place, would involve a great deal of unnecessary knocking about. The direct line across to Cowra would avoid all that, and there would be a great saving of freight. The cost of construction would be very low, and there are no engineering difficulties to be surmounted, with the exception of one bridge over the Belabula, and I do not know that that would be at all difficult in construction. I might also mention that the difference in altitude, between this place and Forbes, is only 100 feet, so that the grades would be very simple. Our elevation is only 900 feet above the waters of Port Jackson. I exhibit a sample of wheat, of which I bought 1,773 bushels. It was grown just beyond the cemetery, about 5 miles from Cowra, on the Canowindra-road.

6460. *Mr. Cox.*] Now as to the returns of traffic going through here, I presume a good deal of traffic over the railway to Cowra still goes through Eugowra to Borenore? A good deal of the traffic does go from beyond Forbes, and Forbes itself to Borenore. I know this year a premium has been offered by Wright, Heaton, & Co. to carriers taking loading that way. That is, a greater amount was paid for carriage given to teams going to Borenore than to teams going to Cowra, in proportion to the distance.

6461. What reason would there be for that;—is there less haulage afterwards from Borenore, than there would be from Cowra to Sydney? I could not say. This is a matter which has come to my own knowledge. I should think that the distance from Borenore to Sydney would not be much shorter than from here. There is another thing which has militated against the traffic coming this way. Very heavy wool teams have been led to believe that the bridge would not carry their weights across, and they have been afraid to come this way.

6462. In other districts it is said that you have no metalled roads to hurt the bullocks feet, and that is the reason they come this way, although it is further? Some excuse is given for everything which is done. A great deal of the loading this way is brought by horse teams, therefore the excuse about the hurting of the bullocks feet does not apply.

6463. Is there more open land for turning out teams on this road than on the other road? Yes; there are some good openings for turning out teams, also for bullocks. There is driftway all the way along for the accommodation of stock, and that can be used by teamsters. I was about to refer to the resources of the district independently of agriculture and pasture. I might say that we have iron ores in abundance here. We have some of the richest iron ore to be found in any part of the world in very large quantities distributed over a considerable surface. We have also some silver bearing lodes. We have both silver and gold. For miles from here you can trace copper any where. I have no doubt, but that in the course of a short time some first-class copper mines will be found in this neighbourhood. Milburn Creek is the nearest. There is one mine which has been partially worked about 8 miles from this town, and it is now being inspected with a view to its being reopened. I have had considerable experience in mining myself. I commenced mining the year before gold was discovered in New South Wales, and from that experience I can safely say that richer or finer iron ore is not likely to be found in any part of Australia than you can find here. I will now refer to some statistics as to the earnings of the railway. In 1887 the earnings of the railway were £16,026 16s. 10d. The total during the last two years including that sum is £31,452 7s. 1d. The difference between the two sums would give you the earnings for the last two years.

6464. What are the items? The passengers outward for the years 1888 and 1889 were 8,907, the goods inward amounted to 11,177 tons 3 cwt. 2 qrs., the goods outward to 9,712 tons 18 cwt. 2 qrs., the wool to 32,070 bales, or about 6,413 tons 14 cwt. The wheat in 1889 amounted to 3,223 bags. The live stock traffic for 1888 and 1889, inwards and outwards, was as follows:—Horses, 292; cattle, 2954; sheep, 85,166; pigs, 3,671.

6465. *Chairman.*] There is a great difference between your return of wheat and the return given by the station-master;—are your returns copied from the books? I believe they are copied from the books. For 1890, the passengers, up to the end of January, numbered 618; the goods outwards were 1,859 tons 0 cwt. 2 qrs., and the goods inwards 509 tons 10 cwt. and 3 qrs. The wool amounted to 1,974 bales, or 394 tons 16 cwt. There were 13,210 bags of wheat, and the earnings for the month were £5,152 12s. 9d.

6466. *Mr. Cox.*] The members of this Committee have seen nearly the whole of these routes with the exception of that between here and Eugowra;—what kind of country is it between these two places? I have never passed over it. I have been from Canowindra to Cargo, but not to Eugowra.

6467. *Chairman.*] I think you stated that a line constructed from here to the west would be of a great deal more consequence to this district than the railway constructed eastward? I think a line constructed from here to bring this district in touch with the large consuming district of Broken Hill, will be a great advantage, not only to this district, but to every district along the valley of the Lachlan.

6468. Did you not state that a line westward would be of more importance to this district than a line eastward? I do not recollect it; but if you mean the line to Sydney, it would be because in sending produce to Sydney, you are sending against the stream, whereas in sending it the other way, you are with the stream.

6469. Would you have made that same statement if you had not a line from Sydney to this place;—would you prefer a line to the west, to a line from this place to Sydney? I should prefer a line most suitable to the circumstances surrounding it. If you put that question to me before the railway had been here, my answer would be guided by the surroundings, I might say “No,” or I might say “Yes.” At the time of the railway being made here, there was no Broken Hill.

6470. But supposing Broken Hill had been in existence, you would advocate communication with Sydney

- Mr. D. C. J. Sydney before communication with any town in the extreme west? It is necessary to be brought into contact with Sydney, of course. It would be necessary to have a line to Sydney as well as the other one.
6471. But is not the line to Sydney of more importance than the line westward? I thought so at the time. If we had no line to bring us in touch with Sydney and other places, a railway to Wilcannia would not be so good for the public at large as would a line to Sydney. Locally speaking a railway from here to Broken Hill would be of more advantage, because when goods come into Sydney at low figures, New Zealand wheat and chaff, for instance, they could not be brought over the Blue Mountains, to compete with us here; that, however, would be a very selfish view to take of the matter.
6472. Do you grow enough in this district for your own consumption? Last year we did not; we had to import.
6473. As a rule you grow more than you require? Decidedly.
6474. Where is your usual market? The best markets I have had for wheat have been on the southern railway system. I have sent a lot of wheat to Goulburn and to other places along that line. This year there has been a demand from various quarters along the southern line, as well as at Bathurst. All the mills at Bathurst have been buying, and several speculators in Sydney have also been buying.
6475. Have you sent much of your wheat from here to Forbes? Yes, very largely.
6476. Regularly? Not regularly. I have not sent much for the last three or four years, but up to that time it was quite a regular thing for the Forbes millers to come down here, buying wheat. I have purchased a great quantity for them. I might add that prior to the opening of the western railway to Nyngan and those places, Forbes was in a better position than it has since been in. The whole of the country as far as Cobar and Mount Hope, was supplied through Forbes. Hence they were glad to get produce from any quarter for distribution. The opening of the line to Nyngan took away some of their back trade, so that they do not do as much in the distributing line, as they did before.
6477. Putting aside all personal feeling and interest in the matter, which do you think would be the most suitable line to construct for the benefit of the greatest number of people? I have not the slightest personal feeling in the matter. I am certain that the line itself for several years would not benefit me in any way—on the contrary, it would militate against my business. A good deal of my present business would go through in the train, but I do say this—that the district round about would benefit immensely from a railway. Anything which opens up a market for a producing district, must be of help and benefit to it.
6478. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you hold any official position in this town? The only position I hold, is that of an alderman and magistrate of the territory.
6479. Can you give the Committee any information as to the value of the ratable property in this town? I could not do that.
6480. Could you give us the amount of the rates collected? Not at this moment.
6481. To what do you attribute the progress and prosperity of the town? To the free selection round here, during the last ten or twelve years.
6482. If this line were constructed from Cowra to Forbes, do you think some of the settlers to whom you refer, would contribute any considerable amount of revenue to it? I am positive of it. Before this line was opened to Blayney, the coach often started without a passenger. I have often travelled the whole distance without a companion.
6483. Is the passenger traffic between Cowra and Forbes considerable? No. I was speaking of the traffic between Cowra and Blayney. As soon as a railway is formed, and facilities are given to passengers to come, they will come fast enough.
6484. The passenger traffic to Forbes at present is not very large? No; but the passenger traffic between here and Forbes, is equal to the traffic between here and Blayney, when I first came to this town.
6485. Are the coaches well filled with passengers? There is a daily coach from here, and I do not know whether it is often full or not—they generally have passengers in them.
6486. This is a very considerable wheat-growing district? Yes; and the area under wheat is increasing every year—the ground is very suitable for the growth of wheat.
6487. How many threshing-machines are there in the district? At present only two.
6488. I suppose a large number of strippers are used? Nearly every farmer has a stripper.
6489. You spoke just now of the mineral resources of the district—how many men are employed in this district working in connection with minerals? Not many. I could not say how many. Some are working upon the river in a small way, some are working out at the Battery, Burrowa River. A few men are working at Broula. There would be a greater number, but at present they are waiting for the Prospecting Board to come out and see if any assistance should be given. The bulk of the men engaged in mining, will be found at Canowindra.
6490. You say there are large deposits of iron here? Yes. As it stands at present, it is impossible to work it. In the first place, there is an indisposition on the part of the people to undertake such an occupation; in the second place, the difficulty in getting up the furnaces is great; and thirdly, the cheap rate at which iron can be brought here from other parts of the world, prevents persons from going into such a speculation. To my mind, however, the day is not far distant, when the mines will not only be profitably worked, but when they will employ a large number of hands.
6491. Do you know the surveyed routes known as Cumming's and Thornbury's? Yes; I know them as far as Canowindra.
6492. What is the nearest point to either of those routes at which these deposits of iron ore would be found? So far as they have been discovered, about 9 or 10 miles, but they may prove a great deal closer than that, if they are further developed.
6493. I suppose there has been considerable discussion here about these rival routes? Yes.
6494. Has any expression of public opinion been given on the subject? At public meetings.
6495. What has it been? A committee was appointed at a public meeting to collect funds to pay Mr. Thornbury and other expenses in connection with the survey. I think Mr. Thornbury was paid by the inhabitants, but I am not sure.
6496. What route was favoured at the meeting to which you refer? Mr. Thornbury's at that meeting, but subsequently another meeting was held, at which Cummings' route was advocated, and it was shown that the grades could be reduced, without lengthening the line very materially.
6497. Do you know any of the route from Young, through Forbes, to Grenfell? I know the country from the Weddin Mountains to Forbes.

6498. Having a general knowledge of these three routes, which, in your opinion, would be the most advantageous for the Government to construct? The line to be constructed for the benefit of the whole population is, I think, from here to Forbes—it goes through a fertile valley; it is easy of construction; there is plenty of material at hand, and it opens a large tract of country already well populated. I think these are reasons enough.

Mr. D. C. J.
Donnelly.
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6499. A large amount of traffic would be brought to the railway by persons settled along that route? Yes; I think so.

Mr. Ivie James Sloane, grazier, sworn and examined:—

6500. *Mr. Cox.*] What are you? I am a grazier.

6501. You reside in the vicinity of Cowra? Within 12 miles of it.

6502. Have you a large area of freehold? About 27,000 acres.

6503. Have you any leasehold? No. I have two reserves but no leaseholds.

6504. Consequently, no portion of your run can be taken up in the present year? No.

6505. What are the reserves on your run? One is a water reserve, and the other is a camping reserve, but it is not on the main road.

6506. What is the name of your run? The Homestead is North Logan.

6507. Do you cultivate? Yes. I cultivated 300 acres last year.

6508. What crop had you? All wheat last year.

6509. Have you much laid down in lucerne? None at all.

6510. Do you not find lucerne a profitable crop, on the banks of the river? No doubt it is, but I have not tried it. I intend to try it this year.

6511. Have you heard of persons keeping as much as eight sheep to the acre, on the land here? No; but I have kept ten for six months. I have kept five all the year round, on river flats.

6512. On the natural grasses? On thistle flats.

6513. We had evidence this morning to the effect that as many as eight sheep to the acre were being kept on thistles on the flats here? I daresay they could be. I had ten to the acre for six months, and they came off fat, they were not removed on account of the scarcity of food, in fact, after they were removed, five sheep to the acre were left on the land.

6514. How long have you been cultivating the soil? Since the railway came, chiefly—not much before.

6515. Have you found it profitable? Yes.

6516. What is about your average yield of wheat? I reckon about 15 bushels.

6517. This year I presume you had a heavy crop? Yes; up to 40 bushels.

6518. What was the average this year? The late crops were cut up with the rust. That reduced the average a good deal. I suppose it would be about 26 bushels.

6519. In 1888 what average had you? 12½ bushels.

6520. There are some half dozen or more freeholds of about the same area as yours, in this district—are there not, Campbell's, Osborne's, and Grant's, for instance? About four or five, I think.

6521. I suppose there is no dummieing in this neighbourhood? I can only speak for myself.

6522. Were these freeholds chiefly obtained by improvement purchases at auction? That is how I had to buy mine principally. Of course I bought out a great many selectors. The selectors whom I bought out were, however, *bona fide*.

6523. What is the value of selected land in this district? I think they are getting about £2 10s. There is a certain amount still to be paid up. There is generally 10s. to 12s. to pay, but it is first class agricultural land.

6524. Taking the whole of this country together, how many sheep will it keep to the acre? Speaking for myself I am running a breeding ewe and a half to the acre. I run two dry sheep—that is on the flat land.

6525. Is that a fair average of the capabilities of this country? I think so—that is on the flat land of course—not going into the hilly country. All the improved land is capable of carrying that amount of stock.

6526. Do you know the country to the north, towards Cudal and Borenore? I have been through there.

6527. Do you know the line staked out from Borenore, through Cudal, to Eugowra? No.

6528. Do you know the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I have been along a part of that line but not through the whole way. The biggest part of the traffic comes here, in preference to Borenore. I know that from the teamsters themselves.

6529. They have macadamized roads and you have bush roads? The carriers bring the goods here, and pay the extra trainage rather than go to Borenore.

6530. Does that apply to horse as well as to bullock teams? I have heard the owners of both sorts of teams say so.

6531. Then there is no truth in the evidence given elsewhere that the bullock teams all come here on account of the softer road, and on account of there being more accommodation for the bullocks while the horse teams went the other way along the macadamized road? I could not say that a large proportion of horse teams come along this road.

6532. You know the country between this point and Eugowra? Yes.

6533. Is it a favourable country for railway construction? I do not think there is any obstacle, excepting the crossing of the Belabula. The ground is slightly undulating, but it is not difficult country to get through.

6534. From your knowledge of the traffic through here, do you think a railway constructed between this point and Forbes for about £320,000, would pay a fair interest and working expenses? I should think it would. Of course the construction of a railway would no doubt increase the traffic. For my own part I should put a great deal more land under crop and that would mean additional revenue to the railway.

6535. If a railway were made through to Forbes I suppose all the traffic would come this way instead of part of it going to Borenore? Yes.

6536. And you think there would be a reasonable prospect of the railway paying? Yes.

6537. Do you truck many sheep to Sydney? I have not trucked very many these last few years.

6538. Do you think the trucking yards are conveniently situated? I think the trucking yards ought to be on the other side of the river—that is my opinion. They have to cross the line so much. The biggest part have to cross the river, and cross the line.

6539.

Mr. I. J.
Sloane.
10 Mar., 1890.

- Mr. I. J. Sloane.
10 Mar., 1890.
6539. Have any representations been made to the Government with a view to a change in the position of the trucking yards? I think representations have been made to have the yards brought to this side of the line. There is Government land on the other side, and they could make trucking yards there, and at the same time have some accommodation for stock. At present the beasts can get nothing to eat, but on the other side they could get a feed. I think there is only one small reserve where they can feed now, and unless the Government keep stray stock off, there is nothing on it.
6540. Would you have to cross any flooded country going from here to Eugowra, besides the point you have spoken of on the Belabula River? There is another small creek.
6541. But are there any flooded flats? I do not think so; I do not know of any.
6542. From Eugowra to Forbes, by keeping to the railway route, you can avoid the floods? I could not say that. I know there is low land, but where the line goes, I do not know.
6543. Do you know Young and Grenfell? Yes.
6544. Are you aware that a railway is projected by the present Government to go from Young, through Grenfell, Forbes, Parkes, and Dubbo? I have heard of it.
6545. Do you think that would be a more national line than the line from Cowra? My own opinion is that this line should be carried through, and I do not say so from self-interest.
6546. If the line were carried through from here to Forbes, it would go on to Parkes and Dubbo? It could, I daresay; but I thought it was to go on to Wilcannia.
6547. Looking at the matter from a national point of view, do you think the line from Young, through Grenfell, to Forbes, would be more advantageous in the general interests of the country, than the line *via* Cowra? I would not venture an opinion on that point. I thought the line from Cowra to Forbes, was to be continued to Wilcannia.

Mr. Henry Ford, contractor, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. H. Ford.
10 Mar., 1890.
6548. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? At Cowra; I am a contractor.
6549. Do you know the proposed route from Cowra to Canowindra? Yes.
6550. You know the class of country through which the line passes? Yes.
6551. Have you been over the route? Two or three times.
6552. Have you observed any engineering difficulties? Nothing, beyond ordinary culverts.
6553. Do you know of any timber along the line, within a reasonable distance, suitable for sleepers, for fencing, and for bridge work? Yes; at various places along the line, good timber can be obtained.
6554. Suitable for railway purposes, generally? Yes.
6555. What is the character of the timber? Stringybark, ironbark, and gum—it is very good timber.
6556. In your opinion there would be no difficulty in procuring timber? I do not think so.
6557. What about ballast? There is plenty of it all along the line—that is within 4 or 5 miles of it. At various places it may be from 6 to 8 miles, but it is not further.
6558. Having travelled over the route, you have observed the class of settlement along it? Yes, there are a great many settlers along the line.
6559. Of what class are they? Farmers.
6560. Do they combine pastoral with agricultural pursuits? Yes, most of them.
6561. What is the nature of the evidence you desire to give to the Committee? Nothing more than this: That I think this is a very desirable route to be adopted, in view of the progress of the district.
6562. Do you know the rival routes which have been staked out? I know the one from Molong to Parkes. I was over that some two years ago.
6563. Did you know the country previous to that? Yes; I was over it many years, travelling with cattle.
6564. You have not had a recent opportunity of observing the settlement on that line? No.
6565. So that you could not compare the two lines on their merits? No.
6566. Have you any knowledge of the routes known as Thornbury's route and Cumming's route? I know Thornbury's route.
6567. Have you any knowledge of Cummings' route? I have been over it the whole way, but I should adopt Thornbury's route.
6568. That, in your opinion, is the best line to construct? Yes, because the material is handier, and the gradients are not so big. I think the line would be shorter, but I am not positive on that point.
6569. Would it pass through country as well settled as the country on the other route? The country is much the same in both cases.
6570. You know the country on the route from Young, through Grenfell, to Forbes? No; but I have been informed about that route. I have seen 4 feet of water in some parts of it.
6571. As a contractor, you have watched the rise and progress of this town? I have.
6572. Is it of late years that it has gone ahead? When I came here in 1866, there were thirty-three houses and four hotels, and now we have eight hotels, and 600 good houses.
6573. Do you attribute this prosperity and the rise of the town, to the construction of the railway, or to the *bonâ fide* settlement of the soil? I think the construction of a railway has brought settlement here.
6574. Settlement was not here before the railway came? Yes, but it was not so large as it is now.
6575. From your knowledge of the country, do you anticipate that there will be a large amount of traffic on this line? It will open up the country from the south to the west, in a direct line.
6576. Do you know the country from Eugowra to Forbes? Yes.
6577. I suppose you have heard many discussions about these various routes? Yes.
6578. Which appears to be the most favoured route? The route to Forbes, *via* Canowindra, I think. I think if it were constructed, it would prove the most payable.

Mr. Donald McInnes, auctioneer and commission agent, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. D. McInnes.
10 Mar., 1890.
6579. *Mr. Lee.*] What are you? I am an auctioneer and commission agent.
6580. Residing in Cowra? Yes. I have been here since 1881.
6581. You were employed by the Railway League at Cowra, I believe, to collect statistics? Yes; I hand in a copy of them.
6582. Will you describe the boundaries of the district within which you collected these statistics? In some instances they extend from here to Canowindra. In some cases they go up to 8 miles, and in other cases not more than 6 miles.
- 6583.

6583. The return you now hand in shows the names of residents on the proposed railway from Cowra to Forbes, the number and area of holdings, the cultivation, the yield per acre, the sheep, cattle, horses and pigs, 8 miles from Cowra and 6 miles from either side of the line, and also within a radius of 8 miles of Cowra? Yes.

Mr.
D. M. Innes.
10 Mar., 1890.

6584. Did you go from farm to farm? No; I have been a grain buyer during this wheat season, and in most cases I took advantage of the farmers coming in. I got the statistics from the men themselves in this town.

6585. When did you collect these statistics? In the month of January; I think about the latter end of the month.

6586. Had the farmers all threshed their wheat at that time? The greater part of the wheat in the district is stripped; it was nearly all stripped, and the wheat was coming in during the month of January.

6587. There are some who reap and bind? Very few.

6588. Would they have threshed at the time you took these returns? Not all.

6589. That being the case how could you arrive at the yield? I saw them personally. In the radius within which I collected these statistics, I know of only a few who did thresh.

6590. But if they had not threshed how could they give you the average yield? Most of them stripped some, and they gave the average of what they had stripped.

6591. Had you any arrangement with the collectors of Canowindra, as to the boundaries within which you would collect these data? The Canowindra statistics were collected before the Cowra League collected theirs; therefore I had the Canowindra statistics before me.

6592. In that case you can tell me whether any names on your list are included in the Canowindra statistics? I am certain they are not.

6593. You have no doubt about it? None whatever.

6594. Did you receive the returns of stock and the carrying capabilities of the land, from the owners? From the owners; I will read you the totals; they are: 157 holders holding 130,403 acres, of which 8,786 acres are cultivated. There are 138,423 sheep, 4,382 cattle, 1,930 horses, and 1,594 pigs.

6595. You swear that this return is correct? Yes, as far as my knowledge is concerned.

6596. You are a grain buyer? Yes; I have been during this season.

6597. That would necessitate your visiting various parts of the district? Yes.

6598. How long have you been buying grain? Since about the 24th December last; that was the date of the first lot I bought. This is my first experiment as a grain buyer. I have been a commission agent and auctioneer in the district for about four years.

6599. What is the impression left in your mind as to the condition of the settlers among whom you have to go? Generally speaking they are fairly well off. This season has been a very prosperous one, and has given them a fair rise.

6600. Do you think they are making a living? I am sure they are. This year they have done fairly well.

6601. You do not think many of them will sell, after compliance with the residence condition? I do not think so, so long as there is an increase in values. I do not know of more than two or three who are intending to sell.

6602. Is not the price of land an inducement to settlers to sell? I have fewer farms in my hands for sale at the present time, than I have had for the last four years. There are more buyers than sellers. I sell a good deal of land.

6603. Have any farms passed through your hands? Yes.

6604. At what price? I sold a farm of 2,006 acres for £7,150; that was along this proposed route.

6605. Was that a conditional purchase? Partly conditional purchase, and partly freehold.

6606. Have you been living in the district for any time? For the last nine years.

6607. Where were you before? I took up a selection in the district, when I came from Victoria.

6608. You were a Victorian? Yes; I have been farming part of my time in Victoria, and I was for some time an auctioneer.

6609. Where were you farming in Victoria? In the Ballarat district, near Clunes, and in the Avoca Valley.

6610. Did you come over on this side to take up a selection? Yes.

6611. You do not appear to have held it very long? It was sold to another Victorian farmer, who has not yet taken possession of it.

6612. Why did you sell? Because it was 12 miles out of town, and I found that it was too far from my business.

6613. Did you sell before the railway came here? No; afterwards.

6614. Did you sell because you found wheat-growing an unprofitable industry? No; I did not.

6615. Did you cultivate wheat? Yes.

6616. Where did you find your market? In the first year we had to send to Blayney—that was before the railway came—and it cost about 1s. 6d. a bushel carriage.

6617. What is the quality of the land, and the average yield per acre compared with the land and yield you had in Victoria? The land in this district is better than any place I have lived in in Victoria for wheat-growing; it will grow a better quality of wheat.

6618. Is the yield better than it is there? In most places. Some places in Victoria are very dry. The Avoca Valley for instance.

6619. What is the average there? Sometimes it is as low as a bag to the acre, and sometimes it is up to four. I never saw it over four, and I have seen it when it was not worth stripping.

6620. How does the price go there? It would be something like the price here at the present time.

6621. According to your return the average here is between 19 and 20 bushels? Taking it roughly this year it would be 26 or 27.

6622. Are these particulars correct? I got the statistics from the men themselves. My family are living about 12 miles out of town, and they cultivate about 40 acres. My own cultivation, this year gave about 35 bushels.

6623. You have no reason to doubt the accuracy of these returns? Not the slightest.

6624. In fact if they gave you continuously very high returns, and you thought they were not correct, you would not put them in? No; I would not swear to them, but I am sure that these returns are approximately correct.

Mr. D. M'Innes. 6625. Then the farmer in this colony would be in a perfect paradise as compared with the Victorian farmer? I do not say that. They do not cultivate such large areas although the yield per acre looks large, they cultivate so little that the profit is comparatively small. The Victorians go in for small profits and large returns.

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6626. Have you seen a total failure in the crop here? I think I have seen one, and that I believe was in 1888. It would not pay that year, certainly. Off a farm I sold, there was a return that year, of one bag to the acre.

6627. Was there any rust this year? In some of the late crops. We do not have it as a rule except in the case of late sowing.

6628. Taking one year with another the wheat crop is a comparative certainty? As long as it is put in in time.

6629. That being the case there is likely to be a large freight of grain and flour for the railway at this place? Yes.

Mr. Henry Dennis, manager and proprietor of the "Fitzroy Hotel," sworn and examined:—

Mr. H. Dennis. 6630. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am manager and proprietor of the "Fitzroy Hotel," Lachlan-street, Cowra.

10 Mar., 1890.

6631. How long have you been here? Since 1875.

6632. Have you observed much improvement in the place since you came here? It has grown nearly three times its size in that time.

6633. Has there been much growth since the railway opened here? Yes.

6634. It has given a great impetus to the place? Yes.

6635. Do you find business as brisk as it was a few years ago? I find that my returns for some months, have been nearer what they were when the railway was in course of construction.

6636. Was it during the construction of the railway that you found your trade most brisk? Yes. Of course it is certain to be brisk then, but the standard business is twice what it was before, or very nearly twice. My weekly takings are nearly twice as much as they were before the railway commenced.

6637. To what do you attribute that? To the construction of the railway.

6638. Causing traffic to go this way instead of by other routes? Yes.

6639. You find more teams now than there used to be? Yes. One difference it has made in my trade I will endeavour to explain: Commercial travellers who used to travel with several horses come by rail now. I have comparatively no business in the stable; but, with the exception of that particular branch, my business has increased considerably.

6640. Do you know the country outside? Yes; from here to Cudal I know it thoroughly well.

6641. Also to Canowindra? Yes.

6642. It is good country? Splendid country.

6643. Is it in large holdings? It is, for the most part, in very decent farm holdings. There are only two stations, and they are Mr. Osborne's and Mr. Sloane's.

6644. How many acres? I could not say.

6645. Do you know if there are any large holdings on the other side of the river? On the western side of the Lachlan there are some considerable holdings, but they are not very large, they are principally farmers. Mr. Watt and Mr. Phillip have holdings of some size, but there is nothing very large. Then there is Mr. Fagan, at Mulgan. That is on the eastern side of the Lachlan, next to Mr. Sloane's.

6646. Then there are three large holders? Mr. Osborne, Mr. Sloane, and Mr. Fagan.

6647. Do you know the country to the north of Cudal? I knew it a good many years ago.

6648. Have you been to Parkes within the last few years? Not within the last ten years.

6649. Have you any further evidence to give to the Committee? I desire to draw attention to the very central position of Cowra, situated as it is, on the loop-line between the Great Southern and Great Western Railways. I think if Thornbury's line were adopted from here to Forbes, it would be a general benefit; it would certainly do more good than either of the other lines, as far as my knowledge goes. Cowra seems to be a natural junction for the traffic. Traffic can be sent from here to the south or to the west. It is in a better position than any other place which has been mentioned to the Committee as a starting point.

6650. How do you make that out? From the geographical position.

6651. Would not Young be more central? No; I think Cowra is in a better situation, having regard to the main lines of railway. The line would pass through splendid agricultural country; there would be no heavy cuttings, and it would be cheaply constructed.

Beilby Kemp, Esq., sworn and further examined:—

B. Kemp, Esq. 6652. *Mr. Lee.*] You are now in a position to give the Committee some information as to the reserves? I find that the reserves in the parish of Kenilworth are 3,500 acres; in Tintern about 2,000 acres. There is a travelling stock reserve in Wattamondara of about 3,000 acres. Most of the other reserves are small.

10 Mar., 1890.

There are a lot of small reserves, but there is a gold-field reserve at Broula of about 29,000 acres.

6653. How does that lie from the town of Cowra? It would be south-west.

6654. Do you know the quality of the land there? No.

6655. Have any applications been made to have that reserve revoked? They would not come to me; there are about 40,600 acres of conditional leases; that includes the converted pre-emptive leases.

6656. The right of purchase is attached to these leases? Yes.

6657. Then as to the revenue of your office? In 1889 the revenue was £11,834.

6658. Has there been a Government sale of town allotments during your time? No.

6659. Do you wish to supplement your evidence in any way? I think I said this morning that there was a great deal of land open, but, after looking at the maps, I see there is not so much as I thought—it is fairly well taken up.

6660. Is there much land available at the present moment? No; very little at the present moment—there is a good demand for it.

6661. That likely to become available, is in the pastoral leases? Yes.

6662. I suppose some of the reserves may be dispensed with, in the public interest? Yes; I think so.

6663-4. I suppose there are some very good water reserves without any water on them? It is quite possible.

TUESDAY,

TUESDAY, 11 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Cowra, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, ESQ. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Mr. Stephen Wright, forwarding agent, sworn, and examined:—

6665. *Mr. Lee.*] What are you? I am a forwarding agent, residing at Cowra.
6666. How long have you followed that occupation? About two years.
6667. At any other place besides Cowra? No.
6668. Have Wright, Heaton, & Co. an agent here? They have.
6669. To what portion of the district do you forward goods? Forbes, Condobolin, Euabalong, and other places.
6670. What is the largest centre to which you forward goods? Forbes.
6671. How many tons do you send a month? During the last twelve months I have sent about 400 tons of loading to Forbes, and along the proposed line of railway. Other agents have also sent large quantities.
6672. Had the railway opened when you started business? The station had just opened when I started.
6673. Do you know what progress has been made since the opening of the line? Some of the principal storekeepers in Forbes got their goods through Cowra immediately the line opened, and they have since continued to do so. The traffic has greatly increased from here to Forbes, and also to Euabalong.
6674. What is the nature of the Condobolin traffic? Generally merchandise.
6675. You have no monopoly of the trade in this district, I suppose;—other agents would forward as well as yourself? Yes.
6676. Do you send any goods to Parkes? A few small lots to Parkes; a good deal of produce has gone from here to Parkes.
6677. Have you been over that part of the country yourself? I have been from here to Forbes.
6678. Are they chiefly horse or bullock drays on the road? They are about equal in number. Last year the horse teams had preference; this year, being a good season, the bullock teams had preference; taking the seasons all through, they are about equal.
6679. Is the traffic about equal all the year through, or is it greater at one time than another in consequence of the back loading during the wool season? It is pretty general throughout the year.
6680. Does much Forbes or Condobolin wool come this way? A good deal of it.
6681. Do you know whether the drays are stopped on the road through bad weather? They have not been at any time during the last two years.
6682. Is any portion of the road subject to flood? In extreme wet weather; but there is nothing to delay the traffic for any length of time.
6683. Taking the country to the south of Condobolin—that is between Condobolin and the main southern line—is there much of the traffic from that part filters into that town? We have some of the traffic from the district between Condobolin and Euabalong. The whole of the traffic from Euabalong has come here during the past two seasons. There has been a good deal of traffic between Cowra and Mount Hope especially during the last season.
6684. That was in consequence of the severe season? That had something to do with it. I forwarded several lots of goods myself to Euabalong.
6685. Has any portion of the Grenfell traffic come through here? Yes; nearly all the Grenfell traffic.
6686. What is the distance of Grenfell from here? Thirty-five miles.
6687. Is it nearer than Young? The distance by road is about the same, but the railway distance is greatly in excess.
6688. Does the railway traffic from Cowra come by way of Blayney, or Murrumburrah? Blayney.
6689. Is there any trade from the south of Cowra? From Murrumburrah and from Albury. Agricultural machinery and flour have come into this district from Albury.
6690. How do you account for that? Last year the district was short of grain.
6691. Was there not sufficient grown in the district to supply the demand? No.
6692. Is there much stock trucked from here? A considerable quantity for both markets. Last year a considerable quantity was trucked for Melbourne.
6693. Do you happen to know how many teams are plying to and from this station and various portions of the district? I have not made an estimate, but I have seen as many as ten or twelve teams a week. On the average, there would be about eight or nine teams a week down the river, from this place to Forbes, Condobolin, and Canowindra.
6694. Does the whole of the Canowindra traffic come here? Yes.
6695. Is there any Eugowra traffic? A little not a great deal—that goes *via* Borenore. Last year we had a considerable amount of wool from Eugowra.
6696. Is there any traffic from Cargo? Yes.
6697. Do they get their goods from here? No; from Orange. A good deal of wool comes here from between Parkes and Forbes. A lot of wool came in from Bogan Gate last season.
6698. Is the grass better on this route? Yes, along the river, and the route is also shorter.
6699. There is more likely to be feed for teamsters—that is one reason for their coming here? The land carriage by team down the river is cheaper than it is the other side.
6700. You are aware that the object of this inquiry is to ascertain the expediency of constructing a line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes;—do you think the Cowra line will suit the bulk of the population in this large area? Well, persons trucking stock or goods from Forbes or Parkes, *via* Molong, would have to return at right angles to take their produce to Melbourne.
6701. You do not know much about the settlement to the north of the Parkes line? No; but from what I have been told by persons residing in those districts, they would prefer to come here.

Mr.
S. Wright.
11 Mar., 1890.

John Plumb, Esq., M.P., sworn and examined:—

- J. Plumb, Esq., M.P.
11 Mar., 1890.
6702. *Chairman.*] You are one of the representatives of the electorate of Carcoar? Yes.
6703. Are you conversant with this district? Yes.
6704. Have you known it long? For some eighteen years.
6705. Where do you reside? At present, in Sydney. I have resided in the Carcoar district for about thirteen years, and for about three years in the Orange district.
6706. While you were living at Blayney, had you any means of knowing the amount of business done at Cowra? I had a fair opportunity of judging of the amount of business, and I know that it was very considerable.
6707. Was it progressive? Yes.
6708. It consisted, I suppose, principally of ordinary merchandize and return loading in wool? Yes; wool and wheat; those were the staple articles.
6709. Do you know whether there was any increase in the wheat? It increased every year during the time I was there.
6710. Did you not have a mill at one time? Yes; at Blayney.
6711. While you were the proprietor of that mill did you buy any Cowra wheat? A little. This country had not then been opened up for agriculture, but I purchased wheat in considerable quantities in this district, after I had given up the business of milling. I bought it as a speculation, I know that each year—under favourable circumstances—that is, when the season would admit of it, the yield constantly increased, and a larger area was put under cultivation.
6712. I suppose the construction of the cross line from Blayney to Murrumburrah, has materially increased the business capabilities of this place? Yes, it stimulated business, also agriculture and other business.
6713. Are the agriculturalists fairly served by this cross line? Those who reside between Cowra and Blayney are fairly served but those at right angles down the Lachlan Valley, are not.
6714. At what distance from a railway line would agriculturalists be served—of course we cannot take a line everywhere? I know that when the line was at Blayney I repeatedly heard the farmers say that it would not be worth their while to put the land they had selected under wheat to any extent while the railway was 40 miles distant. They said that the cost of tilling the land, taking off the crop, threshing it, and the cartage, representing in many cases 6d. a bushel, prevented it from paying. In many cases they did not cultivate as they would do if they had a railway within 20 miles of them.
6715. Do you think that farmers within 20 miles of a railway would be fairly served by it? Well, fairly.
6716. Have you any knowledge of the country between Canowindra and Cudal? Yes, I have been through that country.
6717. What class of country is it? Some of it is good grazing and agricultural land.
6718. Is it equal to or superior to the land about here? No, I think not. The land in the Lachlan Valley and on the Belabula River is some of the best land in the western district. In the immediate vicinity of Cudal the land is very good, in fact, quite equal to the land here; but that is a very small area compared with the area to which I refer.
6719. Do you know the proposed route of railway through Cudal to Eugowra? I have been over it, but not over the surveyed line. I presume it follows the road pretty closely.
6720. Do you know what class of country there is beyond Cudal;—that is to the north of it? Yes. There is a good deal of poor country after you pass the Mandagery Creek; you get then into the iron bark and rough country. There are the Bumberry ranges between there and Parkes.
6721. Have you been to Parkes lately? Not for many years.
6722. Then you do not know of the increase of settlement which has taken place about Parkes? No.
6723. If you were aware that land had been taken up to a considerable extent by settlers not only to the north of the line to Molong, but to the north and north-west of Parkes—that is, 17,000 acres at Kadina and 19,000 acres at Trundle—would you then consider that a line from Cowra to Forbes would be in the interests of the country, and the better line of the two to construct? Yes. I think the line should be constructed to serve both the people in the Lachlan Valley and the people at Parkes, because you could turn off at Eugowra—it is 20 miles from Eugowra to Parkes. The line could be continued through Parkes to Dubbo, to connect with the Western line. The people there would then have the choice of a market in the western country and the market in Melbourne and Sydney—the difference in distance would not be a serious matter. It is 60 miles from here to Parkes, and it is 45 miles from here to Blayney; it would be 105 miles from Parkes to Blayney, whereas it is 91 to Blayney by Molong. They would have the choice of the Melbourne as well as of the Sydney market.
6724. How would that line serve the farmers between Molong and Parkes? Not at all, they would have either to cart to Parkes or Molong.
6725. Would the line you suggest serve the farmers about Cudal and to the north of this place? Yes. As nearly as I can remember it is 16 or 17 miles to Toogong, to a point near Nyrang Creek—that is as near as you would get to the valley in which Cudal is situated.
6726. Do you know Wood's Flat? Yes.
6727. Do you know the proposed branch from there? Yes.
6728. What is your opinion of that line? As far as I have heard it would be the shortest way to connect with Forbes, but there are certain obstacles—there is no permanent water supply at Wood's Flat. I know that the route is a good one, and that it is fairly level.
6729. Do you know that there is a proposal to construct a line from Young through Grenfell to Parkes, Forbes, and Dubbo, right through to Werris Creek? Yes.
6730. If that line were constructed would there be any necessity to construct a line from Cowra to Forbes also? Yes; if a line were constructed down the valley of the Lachlan it would not interfere with the line you speak of—it would be a feeder to it. This line would be extended down the river to Condobolin and Hillston.
6731. Do you think that without making an extension beyond Forbes this line would pay? I do; because the country is capable of wonderful development from both an agricultural and pastoral point of view.
6732. Do you know what the annual cost of the line would be—that is, the working expenses and interest on the capital? I am not an engineer, but I have heard the opinion of those who are in a position to give a fair estimate. I have heard that this line could be constructed for from £3,000 to £3,500 per mile—there being no bridges of any size to construct.
6733. We are informed that the annual charge would be £22,000—would there be sufficient revenue on the

the line between here and Forbes to pay that sum annually? I should not like to state that there would; but I should think the revenue would come pretty close to that sum, if it did not quite reach it—it would at all events pay a considerable portion of it.

6733½. Do you know the country between Grenfell and Forbes? Yes; I have been over it recently.

6734. Is it level? Yes.

6735. Would it be the same class of country upon which to construct a railway, as the country between Cowra and Forbes? No. The route from Cowra to Forbes would be easier because there are 12 miles less between Grenfell and Forbes, that is the Grawlin Plains, which are subject to floods.

6736. Do you know the country from Young to Grenfell? Yes.

6737. Is that more difficult country? Yes; it is more undulating. I am speaking from a contractor's point of view. When I say that it would cost about £3,500 a mile to construct a railway from here, I am leaving out the rails; I am speaking as a contractor would contract.

6738. In your opinion, which would be the proper line to construct in the interests of the country? This line, I think, comparing the different districts and the quality of the land along the routes. There is a larger extent of valuable land to be opened up along this line, and from that point of view, I think the country would be better served by this line than by any other. I am referring now to the Molong and Parkes line, although I cannot speak as to the population along that route.

6739. *Mr. Cox.*] Looking at the matter as a legislator and quite regardless of any local interest, which line do you think would conduce most to the benefit of the whole community? I think a railway should be taken to Forbes from the cross line to Murrumburrah, I would vote against any other line.

6740. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know the country between Cowra and Canowindra? Yes.

6741. Have you a knowledge of the surveyed routes known as Thornbury's route and Cummings' route? Yes, I was over that country recently.

6742. Do these lines pass through country of a good character, and country which is well settled? Yes; the principal part of the distance particularly between here and Binni Creek.

6743. Have you a sufficient local knowledge to say whether it would be more advantageous to adopt Cummings' route or Thornbury's route? The route which goes to the north of Canowindra would be the line to serve the largest number of persons—I do not know which of the two routes that would be; it would be used by the people of Cargo and Toogong—the Cudal people would go to Borenore.

6744. Have you any knowledge of the country between Eugowra and Parkes? Yes, I have been at Parkes through the bush, but that is some sixteen or seventeen years ago. I have been over that particular country only once.

6745. You are not in a position to say whether there are any engineering difficulties there in the way of the construction of a railway? No, I do not think there could be—it is not very difficult country.

Mr. John Muir, District Court bailiff, sworn and examined:—

6746. *Mr. Cox.*] What are you? I am a District Court bailiff.

6747. Do you know the district pretty well? Yes.

6748. Have your services as bailiff been much in requisition lately? Not a great deal.

6749. You are also a farmer? Yes.

6750. Where do you reside? At Cowra, but I have some land out at Binni Creek, 4 miles from Cowra.

6751. Is the whole of that creek taken up by small holders? Yes.

6752. Is it rich soil? Very good soil.

6753. What do you grow on your farm? Wool.

6754. You do not cultivate? Very little. I have 14 or 15 acres under crop.

6755. Do you find wool growing more profitable than cultivation? Yes.

6756. Are there a number of cultivators on Binni Creek? There are three or four who run sheep and cultivate—the rest all cultivate.

6757. What kind of crops do they get as a rule there? Very good crops.

6758. What would be the average yield taking one year with another? About 16 to 18 bushels—this year the average is a long way above that.

6759. Do you know the surveyed routes between Cowra and Canowindra? Yes, the routes join at Butler's; they both go to Canowindra—one leaves Canowindra above it, and the other below it. Cummings' route is surveyed to Butler's, and there it joins Thornbury's—that is to get an easier route.

6760. Of the two routes measured by Cummings and Thornbury, one runs right along the Binni Creek? Yes.

6761. Is there permanent water? There is no permanent water in the creek itself, but you can always find water underneath the surface. It is a sandy creek.

6762. Which of these two routes do you think should be adopted? Cummings' route, I think. There is no rise in Cummings' route at all, in Thornbury's there is a great rise.

6763. In the event of a line being constructed from Cowra to Canowindra, would more land be put under cultivation? Certainly. There would be a greater outlet down the river, than there is now.

6764. Do you know the country between Borenore and Cudal? No.

6765. Or between Canowindra and Eugowra? Yes; I was stock-keeping in Eugowra for some years.

6766. Is that all good country? Yes; it is all taken up.

6767. In what position generally are the farmers;—are they well to do? Yes, pretty fairly.

6768. They are not in the hands of the banks and storekeepers? A good many are in the hands of the banks, but they are pretty comfortable. Land is at a good price within the last five years, it has doubled itself.

6769. What is the value of farm land within a radius of 7 or 8 miles of this place. From £2 10s. to £3 per acre irrespective of the amount due to the Government. I was offered £3 for my land at Binni Creek, and I would not take it.

Joseph Charles Ryall, Esq., journalist, sworn and examined:—

6770. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? At Cowra. I am a journalist, and proprietor of the local paper.

6771. How long have you resided in this district? Twelve years.

6772. During that time have you had much opportunity to see the district? Yes.

6773. And you have come into contact with a large number of the residents? Yes.

6774. What is the nature of the evidence you desire to give to the Committee? One thing I wish to submit, is a statement showing the earnings of the Cowra railway station, compiled from figures furnished to

J. Plumb,
Esq., M.P.

11 Mar., 1890.

Mr. J. Muir.

11 Mar., 1890.

J. C. Ryall,
Esq.

11 Mar., 1890.

- J. C. Ryall,¹
Esq.
11 Mar., 1890.
- to me by different railway station-masters, from the opening of the line up to the present date. The station-master who gave evidence yesterday, has been here only a fortnight, but I have this information from his predecessors—two other station-masters.
6775. You are in a position to say that these statistics are a true copy from the railway books? I am. You will see that the returns are given monthly. They are for 1887, 1888, and 1889, and for one month of 1890. The totals are the same as those given you by Mr. Donnelly yesterday. In 1887, when the train was running only three days a week, and when the line was constructed only to the opposite side of the river, the earnings were £16,026 16s. 10d.; in 1888, shortly after the daily train ran, the total earnings including wool and live stock, were £26,396 3s. 9d. The station-master I believe, in his statistics, did not include live stock and wool. In 1889, the goods, coaching, and wool revenue, amounted to £32,169 19s. 5d.; the live stock earnings have to be added to that. They amount to £4,572 17s. 8d. For one month of January the coaching and wool and goods traffic came to £5,152 12s. 9d., and the live stock earnings to £206 5s. 2d., making a total, for three years and one month, of £86,811 4s. 5d.
6776. That includes the inward and outward traffic from and to Sydney? Yes, the traffic to the south as well.
6777. To what do you attribute the marked increase in the receipts of the railway station during the last half year? To the increase of settlement principally.
6778. Of what character has that been? Farming, generally. There has been an increase in the general population as well.
6779. In the immediate vicinity of Cowra? Yes.
6780. During the twelve years you have resided here have you seen any marked signs of progress in the district? When I reached here twelve years ago, the population was 600; now it is about 1,800.
6781. Do you attribute any large share of the progress of this district to the construction of the railway to Cowra? Yes.
6782. And you think that the construction of the railway to Canowindra, from this point, would be a further advantage? I do; I think the farmers would be induced to put a larger area under crop.
6783. We have heard a good deal as to the suitability of the soil for the growth of wheat; is it also suitable for the growth of fruits, vines, and vegetables? Yes, I can speak from experience. I have had eight or nine years' experience as a farmer—it is particularly well adapted to orchards and vine growing.
6784. Do you know anything at all about the route from Cowra to Canowindra? I have been as far as Nyrang Creek, on the Canowindra route, and as far as Oma, on the Young to Forbes route.
6785. During the past few years has there been any public agitation in reference to any one of these routes? Yes.
6786. What has been the result? Public opinion is almost unanimously in favour of the construction of a line to Forbes from Cowra, through Canowindra and Eugowra.
6787. There seems to be no doubt in the minds of people here, as to that being the right route? There is no difference of opinion so far as that is concerned. Some may be under the impression that it may not be for the benefit of the town, inasmuch as it might take traffic away from it.
6788. That is a local, but not a national consideration? Exactly.
6789. You think that this line should be constructed to serve particularly, the interests of those who have settled upon the soil? Yes; and I think it should be constructed on national grounds as well.
6790. By the construction of the railway the interests of Cowra would also be advanced? Yes.
6791. Is there any further information you desire to give the Committee? There is another matter in reference to the proposed railway from Young, through Grenfell, to Forbes. I had a witness here, who knows the route well, and particularly the country in the neighbourhood of Oma. The country from that point into Parkes is level and subject to floods, especially about Bundaburra and Grawlin Plains.
6792. You do not know that of your own knowledge? I have not been past Oma; the country there is very level, and if the Lachlan waters came over the bank, the whole flat would be submerged.
6793. What is your opinion of the route from Young to Forbes through Grenfell? It would not benefit the Forbes people, as they would have to pay 48 miles extra haulage to get to Sydney.
6794. Would it serve a large population and pass through many holdings? I could not say; I have not been there for eight or nine years.
6795. Generally speaking, the residents of Cowra are in favour of the construction of a line from here to Forbes? Yes.
6796. There are no difficulties in the way of the construction of that line, nor is there any doubt as to its paying capabilities? I have no doubt whatever about it.
6797. You think it would compare favourably with any other line that has been constructed? Yes.
6798. Have you any further statement to make? In the event of a line being constructed from Dubbo, and connected with Werris Creek, a great deal of traffic would be diverted from this line, because this is at the present time a through line to the south. The line from Dubbo to Forbes would not be of any advantage, because the distance would be about equal—that is the distance between Dubbo and Young and Dubbo *via* Cowra to Young—one line would be brought in conflict with the other.
6799. *Mr. Lee.*] You are connected with the Cowra Railway League? Yes.
6800. You furnished the Railway Commissioners with statistics in February last? Yes.
6801. Are the statistics handed in yesterday a copy of the statistics handed to the Commissioners? I think so.
6802. You have given some detailed evidence as to the railway earnings. Are those the same as were furnished to the Railway Commissioners in February? Yes.

Michael Thomas Phillips, Esq., solicitor, sworn and examined:—

- M. T. Phillips,¹
Esq.
11 Mar., 1890.
6803. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a solicitor.
6804. Where do you reside? At Cowra.
6805. Have you been in the district long? Ten years.
6806. Have you seen much progress in it? Yes; there has been great progress, both in the town and in the district, since I came here.
6807. What is the financial position of the majority of the people here—is it sound? It is good, as far as I know.
6808. Are there many persons mortgaging their property? Not a great number. The farmers here seem to be in very good circumstances. 6809.

6809. Have you any knowledge of the country along the route of the proposed line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes? I know the country from Molong to within about 20 miles of Parkes. I was practising at Molong for some years. M. T. Phillips,
Esq.
11 Mar., 1890.
6810. From your knowledge of both districts, which do you consider the more progressive? I have no hesitation in saying that this is the better district.
6811. To what do you attribute the difference in the two places; is the land better, or is it held here in small areas? I think the land is quite as good as in the Molong district, if not better, and it is held in small areas. The land about Molong and Borenore is held by two or three large squatters.
6812. Your experience of these country towns has been that in cases where they are surrounded by large holders, the progress of the town is retarded? Yes; there is no doubt about that.
6813. Do you know the route of the suggested line from Cowra to Eugowra and Forbes? I know the route from here to Eugowra.
6814. You do not know the country beyond Eugowra? Not much about it, I have travelled from Eugowra to Forbes.
6815. From your knowledge of both of these routes which do you think would benefit the greater number of persons—which do you think would be better as a national project? I believe the line between here and Eugowra would be the best.
6816. Why? I think the land is better, and the farms are nearly as numerous on this route. Some part of the route between Molong and Parkes is barren—other portions I admit are very good.
6817. Do you know the country to the north-east and north-west of Parkes? No; but I know the country between Forbes and Parkes, that is a very fair country.
6818. You are speaking from your own knowledge of these portions of the district? Yes.
6819. You think this district would warrant the construction of a line from Cowra independently of any other line in any other portion of the country? Certainly, independently of the Borenore route, and the Parkes route.
6820. Do you believe the country would be warranted in constructing both the line from Molong to Parkes and Forbes, and from Cowra to Forbes, do you think there is any justification for any such course as that? I do not think it.
6821. Knowing that the Government are not likely to construct the two lines, you think this would be the best line in the interest of the Colony at large? I believe it would; I believe the land here is as good as the land on either of the other lines, and that the line itself could be constructed more cheaply.
6822. Do you think this would be the most central line of the three—do you think it would serve the bulk of the population, for instance as well as the line from Borenore to Forbes? I think this would be the best line, because the people of Forbes, and the people beyond, would have a better outlet for their produce in the event of their wanting to send their goods to the southern markets. If they wanted to send to Melbourne there would be much less haulage through Cowra than through Borenore.
6823. But so far as direct communication with the metropolis is concerned the Borenore line would be the most direct route? Yes.
6824. Would it not serve the greater number of people on either side of it, to the north and south? I could not say that positively.
6825. The population to the north of that line would not be served by a line from Cowra to Forbes; would they? They are not very far from Molong only about 15 or 20 miles.
6826. How would the population between the line from Cowra and the proposed line from Molong, be served if your line were adopted? It would not serve them very much.
6827. Taking that into consideration and looking at the matter impartially, do you not think the central line would serve the greatest number of persons? It may serve a greater number. I believe the population on the Borenore line is greater than that on either the Molong or the Cowra line.
6828. Do you think that if the line you advocate were constructed it would benefit the town of Cowra? I believe it would, although the townspeople have different opinions about it—some say it would not. I believe that a railway brings people into the town, and that it must benefit it in the end.
6829. But it would do away with a considerable number of the teams coming in and out of the town? Whichever line comes to Forbes you will have the same result, so far as the Forbes traffic is concerned.
6830. And of course the Lachlan traffic? Yes.

William Ashman Stokes, Esq., manager of the A. J. S. Bank, Cowra, sworn and examined:—

6831. *Mr. Lee.*] What is your occupation? I am manager of the A. J. S. Bank here. W. A. Stokes,
Esq.
11 Mar., 1890.
6832. How long have you been in charge of it? Five years.
6833. Had you been in charge of any bank in the Lachlan district before coming here? Yes; I was in this district some years before.
6834. Are you in a position to judge of the progress of the district? Yes; I think so.
6835. Has the district made much progress during the term of your residence here? Yes; I should say that the population had very nearly doubled. The district itself has shown marked signs of progress. The area under cultivation has increased wonderfully, and the general prosperity of the district is making itself very evident every day.
6836. How many other banks are there here? Two.
6837. Have you resided in a free selection district before? Yes.
6838. Then you have a pretty good idea as to how that class of men start and make their homes? Yes. I was here a year or two after free selection first commenced here, and the prosperity of the selectors has increased very much since that time. They are in a far better position and their holdings are improved. Many of them had very little capital. The greater number of these men are now in a very good position and the value of their land has materially increased.
6839. Do you consider them a permanent class of settlers? Yes, as a rule.
6840. Have you had occasion to think that any number of them have been acting on behalf of capitalists merely to acquire land? No, I do not think I know of one. They are all *bona fide* settlers—men who have come here to make homes for themselves and their families.
6841. Has the progress of this district dated from the opening of the railway? I should say that since we have had a railway here prosperity in the district has been very much enhanced. I refer to the district generally.

- W. A. Stokes. Esq. 6842. How do you account for that? We are brought nearer to a market and the farmers have readier means of getting their produce away. They are not dependent upon a few persons, for the sale of their produce. If persons are not satisfied with the local market, they can seek and generally find a market elsewhere. The railway is also a good means of transit for fat stock.
6843. In other words, the railway is an outlet for all your produce at market rates? Yes.
6844. Previous to its construction, had persons here much difficulty in disposing of their grain and stock? Yes. In the old days when I was in the district before, they had to store their grain and produce until they could find a market. In that way heavy losses were sometimes incurred.
6845. Do you think that persons have cultivated their land more largely since the construction of the railway? Yes, every year we find larger areas being placed under crop.
6846. You are strongly of opinion that railway construction has inspired the people with great confidence? I am sure of it; that applies not only to people in the immediate district, but to people in other districts. Many of these are anxious to come here and have not the means of communication.
6847. Do you think railway communication has enhanced or decreased the value of conditionally-purchased land? I should say it had increased it from 25 per cent. upwards. Conditionally purchased land—that is improved land—here, was worth four or five years ago £1 or 25s. per acre, it is now worth from £2 to £2 10s. per acre, and is sold at those prices.
6848. Do you think the railway has increased the value of town property? Yes; considerably. It has brought about a larger population, and more town accommodation is required in the shape of shops and buildings. The other two banks have been here only some six years.
6849. Have you noticed in the progress of your business whether many inquiries are made by outside people for land? Yes, frequently; and the demand cannot be satisfied. A great many inquiries come from Victoria.
6850. Are there many Victorian men here? Yes; and more are coming, trying to get land.
6851. Do you consider that the farming population are in a satisfactory commercial condition? Eminently so, for *bona fide* farmers.
6852. You consider the district a sound and progressive one? Yes.
6853. *Mr. Cox.*] Is there much indebtedness among the farmers in this district? There is more indebtedness than there would have been, had the seasons been good. We have only lately come through some very bad seasons. If we have fairly good seasons at the present time, the district will be very prosperous.
6854. The indebtedness of the farmers is caused by the seasons, not by improvidence? They have had to improve their land, and have run into debt, principally from that cause.
6855. The year 1888 was a very disastrous year? Yes; there were no crops to speak of in that year.

Mr. Dugald Campbell, saw-mill proprietor, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. D. Campbell. 6856. *Mr. Cox.*] Where do you reside? At Bandon, on the Cowra line, between Eugowra and Forbes.
6857. What are you? I am a saw-mill proprietor.
6858. What is the nature of the timber in the country round about you? I am sawing Lachlan pine and gum now.
6859. In the event of a railway from Cowra to Forbes passing through that country, would you be able to supply railway sleepers? Yes, of gum.
6860. What gum is it? Red-gum—very superior gum. I cut bridge timber for the Blayney line out of the same timber. There is any quantity of gum in that locality; I could cut away for twenty years.
6861. Is there any ironbark? Between Eugowra and Canowindra. I went in to look at it; there is a fair proportion of good ironbark timber all through there. It is some 3 or 4 miles from the cleared road from Eugowra to Canowindra. I have sent away from the district since the commencement of the year, 87,000 feet of pine.
6862. There is no demand for heavy woods? No, the carriage is too high.

Mr. Samuel Amos Rheuben, miller, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. S. A. Rheuben. 6863. *Mr. Dowel.*] Where do you reside? At Cowra. I am a miller and have resided here for fifteen years.
6864. Are you in the habit of purchasing wheat? Yes.
6865. What quantities have passed through your mill in the last two years? This year 20,000 sacks passed through my hands—that is this season, since the beginning of the year.
6866. What do you do with your flour? I have to send it to Sydney, or to the back country. Last year I think I sent 300 tons to Parkes and Forbes.
6867. The larger proportion as a rule you send to Sydney? Yes; but last year they were deficient at Parkes and Forbes.
6868. Sometimes your market is in Sydney, and sometimes in the west? Yes; of course I prefer it in the west.
6869. Have you noticed during your residence in this district, any particular increase in the area of land under agriculture? A great increase.
6870. Has there been an increase in the proportion of land put under wheat? Yes, almost all of it is under wheat.
6871. What is the quality of the wheat grown? It is unsurpassable.
6872. And you can hold your own with your flour in the metropolitan market or out west? Anywhere.
6873. What particular information do you desire to give to the Committee? I think it would be for the benefit of the country, to have a line constructed from here to Forbes.
6874. Do you know the route through which the railway passes? I travel it every few months.
6875. And it goes through a large area of *bona fide* settlement? Yes.
6876. From your knowledge of the settlers, do you think that if the railway were constructed they would be induced to grow more wheat? I am sure of it. I know that one selector on the other side of Goolagong said that if the line were made from here to Forbes, he would grow three times the quantity of wheat he now grows.
6877. Have you sent much to Sydney this year? No, not this year.
6878. Did you send much to Sydney last year? No. It was all sent back west.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

APPENDIX.

A.

[To Evidence of John Alexander Rose, Esq.]

RETURN showing Quantity of Land taken up at Parkes since the passing of the Land Act of 1884.

Year.	Conditional Purchase.	Conditional Lease.	
1885	42,868 acres 2 roods	92,280 acres.	
1886	17,690 "	57,623 "	
1887	53,439 "	138,362 "	
To 14th June, 1888	32,898 "	92,388 "	
From 14th June, 1888 to 31st January, 1890	85,515 "	235,051 "	
	232,410 acres.	615,704 acres.	Total, 858,114 acres.

A 1.

RETURN showing Quantity of Land taken up in the Parkes District, number of Persons Settled thereon, Acreage Cultivated, &c.

Locality.	Number.	Number in family.	Number attending school.	Area of holding	Acreage cultivated.	Sheep.	Cattle.	Horses.	Pigs.
Trundle	No. 1	34	...	69,400	64	21,503	233	141	25
	" 2	58	12	121,985	85	47,294	265	163	14
	" 3	27	3	59,140	248	21,393	145	126	11
	" 4	38	13	38,789	144	20,309	187	144	30
Goobang	" 5	45	7	88,865	337	29,000	144	61	16
	" 6	180	37	12,682	1,469	2,405	457	272	42
Bergamil and Bindogandri	" 7	12	1	1,245	173	.....	30	19	15
	" 8	127	28	58,310	709	12,711	523	172	66
Reedy Creek and Bumbury	" 9	31	9	10,832	786	1,403	173	93	3
	" 10	133	36	6,209	976	1,615	196	90	68
Brolgan	" 11	76	12	21,544	378	7,810	328	153	53
No Mistake	" 12	86	23	7,016	240	4,311	387	123	82
Coradgery and Genanagie	" 13	28	7	5,900	180	35,490	121	137	18
	" 14	56	17	62,392	136	31,148	208	143	20
	" 15 .....	...	...	5,942	22	1,000	2	29	5
Ten-mile Ridges	" 16	41	9	25,997	224	21,600	182	73	35
Kadina and Mickibri	" 17	95	20	38,400	755	2,100	730	...	...
	" 18	26	6	20,420	140	11,200	...	...	...
Parkesborough	" 19	42	13	847	139	10	22	38	17
	" 20	87	19	640	206½	371	15	75	37
Scrubby Plains and Tichbourne	" 21	130	40	256	232	152	46	76	232
	" 22	61	10	30	30	50	25	35	34
Kamandra	" 23	66	13	3,501	242½	300	332	117	67
Goobang and Flagstone	" 24	16	...	124	53	260	11	10	3
	" 25	32	10	2,870	64	1,050	35	45	20
		1,517	345	723,345	8,033	274,485	4,807	2,333	912
	Less numbers and quantities which are shown on sheets 16 and 17, and also on others	24	5	15,360	260	8 700	...	...	...
		1,493	340	707,985	7,773	265,785	4,807	2,333	912

The names on sheets 1 to 18 are all located to the north, west, and north-west of Parkes.

The attached sheets have the signatures of the holders, with the exception of sheets 21 and 22 which are copied, the originals having got destroyed with wet.

Returns from Bullock Creek, Burra Burra, Gelnedry, and Mungay are not here. The population at each place is large, and the area of land alienated great.

B.

[To Evidence of George Henry Sheaffe, Esq]

SCHEDULE showing Alienated, Reserved, and Unalienated Lands between a line (E and W) 20 miles north of Parkes, and a line (E and W) half way between Parkes and Forbes, also between the line (E and W) half way between Parkes and Forbes, and a line (E and W) 20 miles south of Forbes

PARKES				FORBES			
Parish	Alienated	Reserved	Unalienated	Parish	Alienated	Reserved	Unalienated
County of Ashburnham				County of Ashburnham			
Beargaml	12,584	8,600	11,950	Bocobidge	19,344	3,009	586
Bindogandri	11,340	7,159	14,203	Carrowobity	16,220	2,280	
Brolgan	3,520	14,647	1,375	Cookamidgera	3,046	329	2,434
Bumbury	7,806	9,716	11,686	Dowling	987	19,762	1,703
Cookamidgera	2,840	6,256	4,682	Eugowra	6,655	7,654	12,309
Coonambro	1,540	6,455	11,187	Forbes	3,600	19,649	
Curajong	17,157	17,210		Martin		624	
Curumbenya		9,052	27,013	Mumbidge	12,272	10,809	844
Dowling		1,518	297	Troubalgie	10,310	10,165	
Goobang	13,909	6,467		Wanera	7,126	220	9,373
Goonumbla	17,831	4,200	3,297	Warregal	811	186	
Gunningbland	5,592	6,234	17,116	Waagan	17,150	6,800	440
Kamandra	17,118	3,332	3,218	Wise	1,292	19,396	800
Martin	500	18,726		Yariagong	13,056	1,200	4,745
Milpose	15,000	3,887	6,080	County of Forbes			
Muginoble	2,016	16,000		Bandon	13,507	4,960	2,465
Nelungalong	14,088	4,328	19,878	Binda	8,399	5,216	4,085
Parkes	1,800	17,284		Birangan	5,260	2,673	809
Wanera	100		5,904	Bogalong			
Warregal	9,167	3,789	6,069	Boyd	18,267	5,064	10,426
Yariagong	4,530	216	412	Brauln	20,690	3,370	3,668
County of Kennedy				Bundaburrah	19,505	7,018	2,431
Davison	200	4,846	12,266	Cumbijowa	15,319	8,171	
Houston	120	2,210	20,934	Currowong	15,794	1,385	9,521
Kadina	16,010	714		Erasa	17,750	3,500	
Limestone	2,212	5,467	12,706	Goonigal	13,506	1,362	6,262
Micklari	27,000	6,900		Jemalong	18,114	3,134	756
Werdgerly	21,370	4,775	5,650	Kangaroooby	2,822		1,663
Wombin	420	7,731	15,421	Maudry	8,741	3,398	
	225,770	197,699	211,344	Mulyandry	26,120	5,094	3,260
				Nanima	13,507	4,960	2,465
				Ooma	14,307	3,747	3,626
				Tallabung	16,368	5,981	1,498
				Thurungle	16,900	6,853	5,090
				Waayourigong	6,970	3,329	561
				Warraderry	12,636	3,168	11,276
				Warrumba			
				Wheoga	4,474	2,230	
				Wongagong	14,828	6,853	162
					435,976	197,302	95,499

C.

[To Evidence of W. G. Dowling, Esq]

ALPHABETICAL List of Stockowners, with their Addresses, and number of Stock, within a radius of 10 miles on either side of the Lachlan

Progressive Number	Names of Owners in Alphabetical Order	Name of Run or Holding	Nearest Post Town	Acreage	No of Horses	No of Cattle	No of Sheep	No of Pigs
1	Anderson, Fred	Warroo	Forbes	2,560	6		2,600	4
2	Bank, E S & A. C	Wandary	"	21,000	24	70	21,524	3
3	Barry, John	Walla Walla	"	840	4		800	6
4	Beckett, P J	Bellahville	"	1,800	24	20	1,510	20
5	Boland, Bros	Binda	Goolagong	20,440	18	78	21,170	12
6	Brown, Mitchell	Cluster Farm	Budgerabong	990	8	7	1,700	5
7	Brown, Sinclair	"	"	640	6		800	
8	Burns, John	Grawln	Forbes	4,800	8	8	2,312	2
9	Burk, Pat	Meiryganourie	Cowra	700	4		600	
10	Byrne, Mrs Mary	Goolagong	Goolagong	390	5	8	600	2
11	Calvert, W W, jun	Walla Walla	Jemalong	14,184	53	467	15,967	30
12	Chandler, Wm	Yamma	Forbes	2,560	13	100	2,800	10
13	Colletts, Joseph	Southhead	"		6	20	505	
14	Collier, George	Warroo	"	500	9	9	583	
15	Comans, M	Prairie Lands	"	12,000	8	30	11,560	
16	Connell and Dunstan	Dunstan's Farm	Gunning Road	540	9	2	610	20
17	Connell, H	Budgerabong	Budgerabong	1,200	8		1,679	5
18	Coward, H, & Sons	Carrowobity	Forbes	16,000	20	160	48,300	
19	Crow Bros	Wowingragong	"	7,216	7	70	5,669	1
20	Culgan, E	Gunning East	"	13,000	10		11,060	
21	Culgan, Arthur	Nanima	"	2,000	9		1,215	
22	Can, Ed	Bogabigal	"	8,000	6	8	19,050	
23	Cusack, M.	Warroo	"	2,560	8	4	700	4

Progressive Number	Names of Owners in Alphabetical Order	Name of Run or Holding	Nearest Post Town	Acreage	No of Horses	No of Cattle	No of Sheep	No of Pigs
24	Dalgetty, Blackwood	Walla Wallah	Cowra Road	8,000		16	7,940	
25	Dalglish, John	Back Droubalgie	Forbes	20,000	11	9	6,445	2
26	Delaney, Laurence	Waterhole Creek	Eugowra	900	10		700	
27	Dent, J. C	Oma	Forbes	56,000	8	14	36,775	..
29	Donkin, J B	Lake Cowral	Marsden's	35,000	25	25	34,602	4
30	Doyle, Mrs S	Yamma	Forbes	15,000	20	73	13,506	16
31	Doyle, M	Grawlin Plain	"	400	5	4	1,005	
32	Dunlop, A.	South Wilga	"	2,949	1		2,040	
33	Dunn, George	May Farm	Warroo	2,000	8	7	2,000	2
34	Edols, Phos, & Co	Burrawang	Forbes	339,677	154	270	195,166	
35	Elliott, George	Grove Hill	"	2,300	10	5	1,640	5
36	Elliott, Wm.	Ramsay's Lagoon	Budgerabong	640			850	
37	Elliott, Mrs C B	The Gums ..	Warroo	7,640	49	8	12,952	
38	Gatenby, N A, & Co.	Jemalong	Forbes	55,000	28	120	40,796	4
39	Gibson, A F.	Trigalana	Marsden's	60,000	75	612	24,600	
40	Gibbs, H J	Upper Droubalgie	Forbes	10,000	15	10	11,118	8
41	Gibbs, H J	Back Yamma	"	17,000				
42	Gilmartin, Thos	Jemalong	"	2,560	7	8	1,450	
43	Gilmartin, Peter	Yamma	"	669	15	50	90	18
44	Gilmole, C	Bartley's Creek	"	1,500	2	4	876	2
45	Glander, Neols	Finn's Crossing	"	950	10	5	838	1
46	Glennon, John	Goolagong	Goolagong	796	6	18	553	12
47	Govan, Gilchrist, & Co	Weelong and Battery	Forbes	42,436	26	33	25,641	2
48	Green, Demis	Mumbidgle	"	3,575	20	14	1,900	1
49	Hayden, John, jun.	Binda	Goolagong	400	4	3	580	10
50	Hayden, John, sen	"	"	2,500	6	60	850	10
51	Hayden, Patrick	"	"	800	4	4	900	
52	Hahasey, Thos.	Yarragong	Forbes	2,560	10	4	1,392	
53	Hammond John	Yarraville	"	4,336	9	18	3,580	3
54	Hammond, J W.	Mountain View	"	1,960	4	3	2,289	
55	Hanley, Mrs M	Goolagong	Goolagong	120	4	30	725	5
56	Harrison, James	Happy Valley	Forbes	2,823	10		1,014	
57	Hickey, Michael	Budgerabong	Budgerabong	210	1		824	
58	Hilliar, Thos	Mylandra Creek	Goolagong	28,000	14	65	12,000	2
59	Hodges, T H	Gunning	Forbes	640	2		1,254	
60	Hosic, G A	Glen Lee	Goolagong	620	5		3,238	20
61	Jefferies, John	Budgerabong	Budgerabong	518	2	5	524	6
62	Jones, C. A. B	Battery	Forbes	1,280	5		970	
63	Jones, W P	Tomanbil	"	536	5	30	703	
64	Jones, Ed	Cadow	"	49,071	62	300	29,103	40
65	Jones, Sydney	Dunsford	"	1,200	4		1,100	
66	Kelly, Thos	Walla Walla	Cowra Road	1,100	4	36	1,210	5
67	Kennedy, Lachlan	Warroo	Forbes	540	6	24	4,938	9
68	King, Henry	Belmore Park	Budgerabong	1,000	10	6	2,300	
69	Leslie, Thos	Blnk Bonnie	Forbes	7,494	7	47	7,467	3
70	Lowing, W A	Uar	"	11,000	30	26	20,300	60
71	Maher Bros	Wybong	"	1,365	5	6	1,250	
72	Male, J F	Waterview	Goolagong	2,141	5	16	3,530	
73	Male, Mrs T	"	"	1,303	8	13	1,200	7
74	Malloy, Patrick	Forest Lodge	Forbes	3,362	4	10	1,558	
76	Martin, John	Walla Walla	"	1,863	7	82	5,020	40
77	Martin Bios	Oaklands	"	9,000	20	30	8,358	5
78	Martin, John	Wangan Vale	Eugowra	1,440	8	15	6,840	10
79	M'Cormack, Thos	Mooia Mooia	Warroo	3,669	20	67	4,945	3
80	M'Keon, Thos	Boxfield	Goolagong	1,280	11	30	1,432	12
81	M'Phillamy, C S	Warroo	Forbes	54,000	49	76	39,842	
82	M'Phillamy, W B	Corrinnella	"	2,560	2	3	2,000	
84	M'William, A	Kangaroooby	Goolagong	47,485	16	43	13,972	70
85	Morris, Mrs J.	Bogabial	Forbes	500	19	7	600	
86	Newell, Bios	Bandon	"	10,000	27	100	12,060	
87	M'Mil'an, A	Rose Bank	Eugowra	4,942	40	39	6,824	6
88	Nicholas and Reymond	Limestone	Forbes	1,354	60	10	1,612	20
89	Sly, J	Gumbidgewa	"	83	12	6		3
90	Farrand, John	Peel Farm	"	820	12	205		2
92	Ousby, Margaret	Elmsleigh	Cowra	1,761		32	997	
93	Paton, John	Back Creek	"	1,000	12	8	802	5
94	Phillipps, Mrs E.	Canmbra	"	2,334	17	26	3,315	
95	Hennessy, Mrs C.	Merryganourie	"	640	4		250	4
96	Porter, Wm H.	New Park	Forbes	1,210	7		867	
97	Do	"	"	6,000	16	240	6,140	12
97½	Quinn, George	Glenbigh Wilga	"	2,560	5	10	1,212	5
98	Radnage, H.	Eugalong	"	2,560	7	8	1,738	1
99	Rausthorn, Joseph	Grawlin Plain	"	780	40	50	1,550	
100	Richards, Wm, junr.	"	"	2,760	33	6	7,217	
101	Rae, W.	South Lead	"	81	7	21		1
102	Do	Wangan Vale	Eugowra	2,011	27	21	152	7
103	Ridley, Wm, junr	Warroo	Forbes	2,560	14	6	2,000	
104	Ridley, John E.	Myrtle Bank	"	2,560	3	3	488	1
104½	Ridley, G H.	Warroo	"	3,000	9	2	3,000	
105	Robnson, Ben	Eugowra	Eugowra	50,000	40	1,500	15,150	150
106	Rundle, W	Finn's Crossing	Forbes	300	9	1	550	20
107	Ryan, Ed	Nanma	Goolagong	640	6	9	700	2
108	Ryan, Thos	Seldom Seen	Forbes	2,560	4	2	1,800	6
109	Ryan, L	Canmbra	Cowra	1,975	8	2	2,012	
110	Smith, Jeremiah	Corridgey	Budgerabong	1,600	1	7	2,036	1
111	Smith, W	Yarragong	Forbes	2,570	4	2	2,500	
112	Stanley, Oliver	Nelungaloo	"	1,330	5		551	5
113	Speck, Robert	Moobong	"	6,300	11	65	4,669	18
114	Strickland, Mrs M A	Bundaburra	"	20,000	50	1,700	9,910	
115	Sullivan, Michael	"	"	1,317	20		3,000	

Progressive Number.	Names of Owners in Alphabetical Order.	Name of Run or Holding.	Nearest Post Town.	Acreage.	No. of Horses.	No. of Cattle.	No. of Sheep.	No. of Pigs.
116	Suttor, W. H. & Co.	Boyd	Forbes	28,193	13	55	12,744	—
117	Swan, Hugh	Dairy Land	Cadow	1,679	9	.....	1,008	6
118	Sweeny, Michael	Jemalong	Forbes	2,560	6	5	1,412	.....
119	Taylor, Edwd., junr.	Woodbine	„	540	4	14	568	1
120	Taylor, Edwd., senr.	Bundaburra Creek	„	295	3	4	493	1
121	Thompson, James	Mickies Plains	„	8,000	9	28	14,617	1
121½	Wallace, J. W.	Erasa Creek	Oma	1,650	4	.....	1,615	.....
122	Wallace, John	Silverow	Forbes	2,010	16	8	3,060	.....
123	Walsh, M. B.	Orange Grove	„	2,200	14	187	1,500	6
124	Walsh, Maurice	Bungerelingong	Goolagong	1,960	30	200	1,306	12
125	Walsh, James	„	„	1,300	30	200	30	.....
126	West, Major	Nanima	„	16,600	22	38	14,924	.....
127	West, Joseph (Tertius)	Bymbildry	Forbes	640	2	4	6	.....
128	White, Neil	The Gap	Marsden Road	.....	9	21	600	.....
129	White, Lewis	Coobang Creek	Mulgutherie	960	1	.....	1,195	.....
130	Whitmill, J. L.	Geeron	Forbes	7,000	20	40	6,000	10
131	Wilcox, Donald & Co.	Wongagong	„	14,000	18	23	12,500	.....
132	Wilson, John, junr.	Spring Grove	Cowra	1,146	10	19	792	4
133	Wooley, W. T.	The Yarrens	Forbes	2,528	5	2	1,600	.....
134	Tucker, Mrs.	Bogan Road	„	807	4	25	500	10
Total				1,736,184	1,902	6,379	850,647	840

W. G. DOWLING,
Inspector of Sheep.

C 1.

RETURN SHOWING THE STOCK TRAFFIC ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH SIDE OF THE RIVER SINCE 1887.

	Year.	Sheep.	Cattle.		Year.	Sheep.	Cattle.	
South side	1887	383,845	13,263	North side	1887	159,173	1,307	
	1888	699,259	7,569			1888	342,000	5,329
	1889	696,130	8,160			1889	404,917	15,368
Total		1,779,234	28,992	Total		906,090	22,004	

Grand total river traffic—2,685,324 sheep and 50,996 cattle.

In 1887 62,183 fat sheep left the district, chiefly to Homebush.

In 1888 42,961

In 1889 51,000

The crossings at Forbes are on an average 750,000 sheep and 40,000 head of cattle.

W. G. DOWLING,
Inspector of Stock.

C 2.

RETURN SHOWING TRAFFIC IN SHEEP AND CATTLE ON THE VARIOUS STOCK ROADS IN THE FORBES SHEEP DISTRICT, FROM 1ST JANUARY, 1887, TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1889, INCLUSIVE.

Between	And	Sheep.	Cattle.	Total.
1887.				
Dubbo	Parkes	185,241	30,389	215,630
Wellington	„	61,210	18,667	79,877
Molong	„	26,976	.....	26,976
Eugowra	„	12,331	1,095	14,326
Condobolin	„	150,207	9,754	159,961
Orange	Forbes	73,002	65	73,067
Parkes	„	243,917	47,586	291,503
Cowra	„	383,845	13,263	397,108
Condobolin	„	86,171	1,242	87,413
Young	„	267,275	4,532	271,807
Marsden's	„	220,960	37,209	258,169
Dandaloo	„	61,355	8,136	69,491
Marsden's	Morangarell	84,115	33,777	117,892
„	Bimbi	66,173	1,364	67,537
Grenfell	Temora (route only open in 1888)	.....	.....	.....
1888.				
Dubbo	Parkes	320,332	29,870	350,202
Wellington	„	43,210	8,252	51,462
Molong	„	12,080	149	12,229
Eugowra	„	7,400	8	7,408
Condobolin	„	146,005	8,043	154,048
Orange	Forbes	124,739	3,669	128,408
Parkes	„	284,752	39,846	324,598
Cowra	„	699,259	7,569	706,828
Condobolin	„	217,261	1,663	218,924
Young	„	198,779	8,058	206,837
Marsden's	„	247,645	36,087	283,732
Dandaloo	„	112,505	7,944	120,449
Marsden's	Morangarell	289,380	39,319	328,699
„	Bimbi	68,666	6,057	74,723

Between	And	Sheep	Cattle	Total
	1889			
Dubbo	Parkes	266,988	26,851	269,639
Wellington	"	39,780	6,340	46,120
Molong	"	57,464	1,665	59,129
Eugowra	"	23,900	850	24,750
Condobolin	"	109,929	2,995	112,924
Orange	Forbes	128,264	1,903	130,167
Parkes	"	315,096	32,387	347,483
Cowra	"	696,130	8,160	704,290
Condobolin	"	276,653	13,465	290,118
Young	"	206,218	23	206,241
Maisden's	"	259,482	30,201	289,683
Dandaloo	"	104,887	2,441	107,328
Marsden's	Morangarell	156,347	30,691	187,038
"	Bimbi	108,500	23	108,523
Glenfell	Temora	59,913	23	59,936

I, William Gibson Dowling, Inspector of Stock, Forbes, do sincerely and solemnly declare that the figures herein are a true copy of the stock traffic in the years above mentioned

W. G. DOWLING

Declared before me, at Forbes, this }
4th day of March, 1890,— }
G. F. HUTCHINSON, J. P.

D.

[To Evidence of Mr Joseph Bernard Reymond]

RETURN SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN ATTENDING PUBLIC SCHOOLS.
Condobolin, Forbes, and Borenore

Name of School	Number of Scholars	Name of School	Number of Scholars	Name of School	Number of Scholars
Avenel	29	Toogong	23	Kangaroo	11
Bowan	46	Trajerie	22	Cranbury	15
Cadia	31	Yamma	26	Mogong	13
Canowindra	96	Black Mount	21	Galway	19
Cargo	50	Bundaburra Gap	27	Mandagery	9
Curawobitty	11	Gumbidgee	17	Murga	16
Charleville	27	Grove	18	Nangar	23
Coffee Hill	26	Mickies Plains	15	Bungaroo	20
Cudal	131	Tomanbil	34	Binda	22
Eugowra	52	Wairoo	18	Canangles	19
Fan Hill	29	Chaucer	37	Derriwang	23
Forbes	425	Boree Cabonne	12	Forbes R C Schools	312
Goolagong	58	Carr Creek	13	Eugowra do	50
Green Grove	15	Budgerabong	12		
Nyrang Creek	24	Burrawang	9		
South Lead	40	Bungerlingong	14		
					1,970

Condobolin, Parkes, and Molong

Name of School	Number of Scholars	Name of School	Number of Scholars	Name of School	Number of Scholars
Brolgan	66	Meianburn	50	Brolgan Tank	16
Bumbury	32	Parkes	208	Flagstone	25
Deep Lead	26	Parkesborough	28	Limestone	17
Garra	53	Trelowarren	12	Parkes R C Schools	80
Goobang	40	Bundogundra	26		
Gregia	24	Gospers Downs	15		
Mamildia	39	Kadina	12		
					789

E.

[To Evidence of George H Green, Esq, M P]

STATISTICS OF THE GRENELL ELECTORATE

Works and Manufactures—Year 1888.

Number of works, &c	..	17
Hands employed	..	53
Horse power of engines, &c	..	90
Value of machinery and plant	..	£6,415
Value of land and buildings	..	£6,300

Gold mining—Gold sent to Mint for coinage

Year	Quantity.	Value.
	oz	£ s d
1884	386 86	1,544 15 5
1885	377 47	1,495 0 8
1886	259 75	1,010 13 11
1887	339 14	1 314 4 1
1888	127 64	194 13 7

APPENDIX.

Post Office Savings Bank—Grenfell Office—Balance to credit of depositors.

	£	s.	d.
31 December, 1884	1,495	8	3
31 December, 1885	1,972	2	0
31 December, 1886	1,748	15	0
31 December, 1887	1,818	15	0
31 December, 1888	1,490	15	0

Telegraphs—Grenfell Office.

Year	Number of telegrams.	£	s.	d.
1884	3,337	231	10	11
1885	5,148	325	17	2
1886	4,040	245	3	5
1887	4,873	296	17	5
1888	4,943	306	18	9

Money Orders—Grenfell Office

Year	Number issued	£	s.	d.	Number paid [§]	£	s.	d.
1884	903	2,767	13	10	309	1,111	18	4
1885	1,103	3,842	12	2	402	1,176	17	2
1886	1,124	3,188	6	2	432	1,241	6	10
1887	1,207	3,153	0	0	376	1,170	0	0
1888	1,130	2,897	0	0	490	1,444	0	0

*Post Office.**Grenfell.*

	1885.	1886	1887.	1888.
Letters posted	65,433	71,316	76,656	80,067
Telegrams	5,148	4,040	4,873	4,493
Money Orders issued—Number	1,103	1,124	1,207	1,130
" " Amount	£3,483	£3,188	£3,153	£2,897
Money Orders paid—Number	402	432	376	490
" " Amount	£1,177	£1,241	£1,170	£1,444
Revenue—Postal	£692	£659	£585	£723
" Telegraph	£326	£245	£297	£307

Marsdens

	1885	1886	1887	1888
Letters posted	13,269	16,422	16,389	18,840
Telegrams	1,429	1,694	1,470	2,101
Money Orders issued—Number	306	319	311	368
" " Amount	£923	£1,179	£941	£1,171
Money Orders paid—Number	33	29	35	38
" " Amount	£98	£146	£171	£130
Revenue—Postal	£159	£187	£149	£170
" Telegraph	£92	£112	£94	£127

Goolagong

	1885	1886	1887	1888.
Letters posted	5,148	6,126	7,077	0,182
Revenue	£54	£98	£109	£138

Morangieell

	1885	1886	1887	1888
Letters posted	4,842	4,602	6,138	7,938
Telegrams	1,021	892	1,023	1,002
Revenue—Postal			£71	£101
" Telegraph	£63	£54	£61	£59

Schools.

	Enrolment	Average attendance [¶]
Public school—Grenfell	239	177
" Goolagong	65	48
" Marsdens	30	20
" Bogolong	34	20
" Weddin	34	21
" Warradeery	30	25
Private schools—Grenfell (one R. C.)	149	104

Live Stock in Grenfell District

Year	Horses	Sheep	Cattle	Pigs
1884	3,657	906,209	6,151	2,725
1885	3,940	1,233,641	7,656	1,855
1886	4,053	1,048,330	10,163	1,639
1887	4,175	1,349,089	11,595	2,390
1888	4,778	1,595,936	11,895	2,303

Rainfall.

Year	At Grenfell	At Marsdens	At Lake Cowal.	At Goolagong †	At Pinnacle.
1884		13.33	13.45		15.41
1885	3.71*	18.88	20.80	19.28	21.77
1886	32.10	20.89	21.78	31.62	29.66
1887	42.17	30.83	28.00	39.04	35.56
1888	28.87	17.56	16.61	25.73	21.40

* November and December only.

† Naranyi Station

Average

APPENDIX.

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Average area of Holdings in Grenfell Electorate.

1886	1,520 acres.
1887	1,484 „
1888	1,483 „

Holdings in Grenfell Electorate.

Year.	Number.	Hands employed.	Area cultivated. acres.	Area enclosed, but not cultivated. acres.	Area unenclosed. acres.	Total area. acres.
1884	565	.....	8,691	649,025	202,319	860,035
1885	514	.....	7,508	821,853	145,861	975,222
1886	572	1,025	9,912	788,197	81,507	869,704
1887	606	1,153	9,407	836,330	53,630	899,367
1888	690	1,444	8,440	968,726	46,457	1,023,623

Butter, Cheese, and Bacon made.

Year.	Butter.	Cheese.	Bacon and Hams.
1887	83,964 lb.	4,114 lb.	.....
1888	38,443 „	4,128 „	68,622 lb.

Average yield of Wheat per acre.

Year.	Yield.
1883-84	15.1 bushels.
1884-85	13.4 „
1885-86	7.9 „
1886-87	20.5 „
1887-88	11.3 „
1888-89	4.18 „
1889-90	19.96 „

Area under Cultivation.

Year.	Wheat. acres.	Hay. acres.	Other Crops. acres.	Total acres.
1884	4,678	3,302	711	8,691
1885	4,345	2,569	594	7,508
1886	6,512	2,358	1,042	9,912
1887	7,137	1,304	996	9,407
1888	5,141	2,300	999	8,440
1889	7,913	.....	.....	.....

Yield of Crops (principal).

Year.	Wheat	Hay.
1884	61,363 bushels	2,737 tons
1885	45,037 „	1,444 „
1886	137,914 „	3,735 „
1887	77,899 „	1,333 „
1888	16,917 „	771 „

F.

[To Evidence of Mr. Thomas Clyburn.]

CANOWINDRA RAILWAY LEAGUE—SYNOPSIS OF STATISTICAL RETURNS, 1889.

No. of holdings.	Land.		Stock.				Schools.		Mining.	Machinery.			
	Total area in acres.	Cultivation.	No. of sheep depastured.	Cattle.	Horses.	Pigs.	No. of	Attend-ance.	Returns from Miners' Rights and leases by Warden's Clerk, Canowindra.	No. of	Description.	Stampers.	Horse-power.
234	242,727	15,444	214,667	6,700	2,766	865	9	305	£ s. d. 755 5 0	2 1	Crushing..... Flour Mill....	15 ...	} 45
As compared with returns of 1887 hereunder :—													
105	157,362	11,347	104,748	2,830	2,016	1,240	These returns were not taken in 1887.						
Showing an increase of													
129	85,365	4,097	109,919	3,870	750	Decrease of 750							

The above numbers are exclusive of the Canowindra Common returns.

G.

G.

[To Evidence of Mr. Charles Schramme.]

SUMMARY OF POPULATION AND PRODUCE RETURNS TAKEN FROM BORENORE TO MURGA—WITHIN 7 MILES OF THE PROPOSED BORENORE-CUDAL-FORBES RAILWAY ROUTE.

	Number of		Acres of Holdings.	Acres cleared.	Acres of					Number of			
	Holders	Population.			Hay.	Wheat.	Oats.	Barley.	Maize.	Sheep.	Horses.	Cattle.	Pigs.
Cudal—within 7 miles of proposed route	170	1,054	134,170	15,024	1,653	8,812	273	28	1,382	63,836	1,831	3,658	454
Borenore—within 4 miles of proposed route	22	126	5,845	1,968	512	603	18	9	123	...	197	422	40
Cheeseman's Creek—within 7 miles of proposed route	52	318	20,564	3,663	637	1,302	111	8	393	8,336	414	646	154
Murga—within 7 miles of proposed route	52	410	85,114	3,976	166	1,733	2	6	340	19,417	582	775	174
Village of Toogong	10	61	.....	.....	...	...	...	...	...	82	52	57	8
Village of Cudal	70	365	.....	.....	...	...	...	...	...	120	136	101	55
Total	376	2,334	245,693	24,631	2,968	12,450	404	51	2,238	91,791	3,212	5,659	885

Allowing an average of 2 tons of hay, 25 bushels of wheat, 40 bushels of oats, 15 bushels of barley, and 20 bushels of maize per acre—which is a very moderate average for this season's crops in this district—the yield will be :—5,936 tons of hay, 311,250 bushels of wheat, 16,160 bushels of oats, 765 bushels of barley, and 44,760 bushels of maize. To this may be added, from Cargo, Mogong, Merang, Canowindra, and other places south of line, 40,000 bushels of wheat; from Gregra, Manildra, and Mandagery, 10,000 bushels of wheat. Giving a total of 361,250 bushels of wheat grown within a reasonable distance of the proposed route, with other produce in proportion.

Cudal, January 20th, 1890.

CHAS. SCHRAMME,

Hon. Secretary, Cudal Railway League.

G 1.

STATISTICAL RETURNS, ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE POPULATION IN THE DISTRICT THROUGH WHICH THE BORENORE-FORBES RAILWAY LINE WOULD PASS, TAKEN WITHIN 8 MILES OF THE LINE.

The within returns are taken within 8 miles of the proposed Line, and have been compiled by the Committee of the Cudal Railway League from official Government reports, and other reliable sources, for the year 1888.

Cudal, January 20th, 1890.

CHAS. SCHRAMME,

Hon. Secretary, Cudal Railway League.

Public Schools.

(Vide Report of Department of Public Instruction for 1885.)

South of Line.		On the Line.		North of Line.	
Name of School.	Enrolment.	Name of School.	Enrolment.	Name of School.	Enrolment.
Avenal (4)	39	Booree Cabonne	17	Sandy Creek (4)	27
Bowan (3)	53	Cudal	131	Gregra... (3)	49
Cargo (8)	61	Toogong	41	Manildra (7)	52
Cargo Convent School	63	Murga	23	Meranburn (8)	51
Cave Creek (6)	20	Nangar	34	Fairhill, new (3)	23
Coffee Hill (8)	42	Eugowra	44	Greengrove (4)	37
Coffee Hill Convent Schl. (8)	26	Eugowra Convent School	63	Willandra (5)	17
Cranbury (4)	31	Yamma	28	Reedy Creek, Murga (5)	17
Gum Fiat (8)	76	Waugan (?) new		Galwary Creek (7)	24
Trajere (5)	28				
Mogong (8)	19				
Black Mount, new (6)	20				
	478		381		297

Showing 27 Public Schools and 3 Convent Schools, with an enrolment of 1,156.

Post Offices and Letters Posted.

(Vide Postmaster-General's Report for 1888.)

South of Line.	Letters.	On the Line.	Letters.	North of Line.	Letters.
Cargo (8)	27,156	Cheeseman's Creek	1,986	Meranburn (8)	4,968
Cranbury (4)	1,281	Cudal	27,072	Gregra	500
Bowan (3)	1,272	Toogong	4,788		
		Murga	5,403		
		Redbank	1,356		
		Eugowra	12,587		

Total—11 Post Offices: 88,401 Letters.

Telegraph Offices and Telegrams—Year 1888.

Telegrams :—Cargo (8), 999; Cudal, 1,736; Eugowra, 894. Total—3 Telegraph Offices, and 3,629 Telegrams.

Money

APPENDIX.

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Money Order Offices—Orders and Amounts.

	No.	Amount.
Cargo (8).....	587	£1,598
Cudal (8).....	707	1,627
Eugowra	508	1,313
Meranburn (8)	230	553

Total—4 Offices, 2,032 Orders, amounting to £5,091.

Businesses and Other Signs of Settlement.

Branch Bank (A.J.S. Bank), Steam Flour Mill, Cargo (8). Steam Flour Mill, Branch Bank (Commercial Banking Co. of Sydney), Cudal. 3 Savings Banks, viz., Cargo, £299; Cudal, £432; Eugowra, no return.

Public-houses.

South of Line.	On the Line.	North of Line.
P. Cullen, Cargo Road (6). T. Press, Cargo Road (8). Jas. Powers, Cargo (8). Mrs. Mayne, Cargo. R. Hamilton, Gum Flat.	P. Boyle, Barry's Stables. S. Tierney, Keenans. L. Hughes, Cheeseman's Creek. C. Dempsey, Cudal. M. Healy, Cudal. W. Taylor, Cudal. H. Hemfield, Cudal. Alex. Irvine, Toogong. Johanna Williams, Toogong. James Glazier, Murga. J. M. Dwyer, Eugowra. J. Stibbard, Eugowra. D. Chesher, Eugowra.	P. Toohey, Manildra (7). E. Williams, Meranburn (8).

Total—20 Public-houses.

General Stores.

South of Line.	On the Line.	North of Line.
James Powers, Cargo (8). Robert Hutton, Cargo (8).	S. Landauer, Cudal. C. Parker, Cudal. M. Thomas, Cudal. E. W. Turner, Cudal. J. Falvey, Toogong. L. Kirby, Eugowra. J. Davison, Eugowra. C. Sansum, Eugowra. G. Stevens, Eugowra.	L. M'Innis, Meranburn (8). D. Malone, Meranburn (8). H. G. Hanks, Manildra (7).

Total—14 General Stores.

Townships and Villages.

South of Line.	On the Line.	North of Line.
Cargo (8). Gum Flat (9).	Cudal. Toogong. Murga. Eugowra.	Manildra (7). Meranburn (8).

Total—8 Townships and Villages.

Public Halls and Churches.

South of Line.	On the Line.	North of Line.
R.C. Church, Cargo (8). Church of England, Cargo (8). Public Hall, Cranbury (5).	Church of England, Cudal. R.C. Church, Cudal. School of Arts Hall, Cudal. Good Templar Hall, Cudal. Church of England, Toogong. R.C. Church, Eugowra. Church of England, temp., Eugowra.	Public Hall, Gregra (4). Church of England, Manildra (7). R.C. Church, Manildra (7). Public Hall, Manildra (7). Wesleyan Church, Meranburn (8).

Total—15 Churches and Public Halls.

Mining Centres.

Where Gold Reefs are now being worked.

South of Line.	On the Line.	North of Line.
Paling Yard. Cargo. Boney's Rocks.	Toogong.	

Total—4 Mining Centres.

TRAFFIC

APPENDIX.

TRAFFIC—1885.

TRAFFIC FROM CUDAL-FORBES ROAD

Vide Returns at Borenore Railway Station since Forwarding Agents have been established there.

General Merchandise, exclusive of Wool.

	Received for the Road	Delivered from Road
Part of July, 1886	45 tons 8 cwt.	39 tons 18 cwt.
August, 1886	203 ,, 2 ,,	59 ,, 13 ,,
September, 1886	519 ,, 7 ,,	90 ,, 3 ,,
Part of October, 1886	393 ,, 9 ,,	500 ,, 7 ,,
	1,161 tons 6 cwt.	690 tons 1 cwt.

Total Carriage, exclusive of Wool, for about three months, 1,851 tons 7 cwt.

N.B.—Notwithstanding depression in consequence of late dry seasons, and the fact that Borenore Station is only 8 miles on a section of Railway 23 miles in length.

This represents the traffic for about three months in the year 1885. No returns for the year 1889 are at present available—C.S.

Wool received at Borenore Station during above term from Cudal-Forbes Road.

Information supplied by Forwarding Agent.

Station or District	Tons Wool	Station or District	Tons Wool	Station or District	Tons Wool
Mowabla	40	Booberoi	15	Forbes (Besgrove)	3
Warroo	80	Milby	10	(N. A. Read)	3
Murrumbogie	15	Towyal	30	(J and W Thomas)	5
Condobolin (Milne, Falconer, & Co)	160	Geerow	20	(S. Ellis)	3
(Geo. Lee)	40	Bundaburra	25	(J. Kelly)	5
Borambl	30	Condobolin (Scouring Co)	300	(J T. West)	2
Burrawang	400	Forbes (J. Byrnes)	5	(Martin Brothers)	5
Moonbie	20	(W. Jones)	5	(C. Walkden)	2
Cadow	30	Yamma	7	(W. Chandler)	2
Mickabil	20	Botherooney	60	Back Yamma	5
Mamere (F. B. Elliott)	10	Euabalong	10	Toogong	40
Wandary	10	Gulgo (W. Walsh)	10	Nanamt	30
Walla Walla	10	(W. Richards)	5	Meraburn	14
Palesthan	20	Prairie Lands	10	Boree	30

Total, 1,546 tons wool, between July and October. Grand total of traffic, 3,397 tons.

N.B.—The greater part of the wool has yet to come, the above only represents the earliest consignments.

Summary of the foregoing Returns—Year 1888.

Number of Public Schools within 8 miles of line	27
" Convent Schools	3
" Enrolment of Children within 8 miles of line	1,156
" Post Offices	11
" Letters posted	88,401
" Savings Banks	3
" Telegraph Offices	3
" Telegrams	3,629
" Money Order Offices	4
" Money Orders	2,032
" Amount of money orders	£5,091
" Steam Flour Mills	2
" Branch Banks	2
" Public-houses	20
" General Stores	14
" Townships and Villages	8
" Public Halls and Churches	15
" Mining Centres	4
Estimated Population from Borenore to Eugowra, within 8 miles of proposed railway route	3,200

APPENDIX.

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H.

[To Evidence of John Vigar Bartlett, Esq.]

COWRA ROAD DISTRICT.

RETURN of Traffic over Cowra Bridge, from December 19th to 25th, both inclusive.

Description	19 Dec	20 Dec.	21 Dec	22 Dec.	23 Dec	24 Dec	25 Dec.	Totals	Averages daily.
Foot passengers	161	243	315	258	258	475	382	2,092	300
Horsemen and women	126	119	177	43	135	242	215	1,057	150
Spring-carts and buggies	43	93	134	48	97	167	127	709	100
Horse drays	6	28	28	..	38	66	10	176	25
Bullock drays	2	3	4	..	1	..	..	10	1
Horse waggons	2	10	8	..	16	6	..	42	6
Bullock waggons	1	1	4	..	13	2	..	21	3
Sheep	50	400	..	..	..	..	..	450*	65*
Cattle and horses	124	303	351	57	488	364	131	1,818	600*
Bales of wool	..	59	..	..	325	..	..	382†	55
Bags of grain	70	283	270	..	425	273	..	1,321‡	190
Goods outwards (tons)	..	4	21	..	12	4	..	41§	6

* Over 200,000 annually. Daily average nearly 600—10,000 to 20,000 at one time.

† Over 24,000 bales annually. Daily average for four months about 200 bales

‡ During good season 40,000 bags Average for four months about 330 bags daily

§ Goods outwards average about 30 tons per day.

J. V. BARTLETT,
Superintendent of Roads, Cowra District.

I.

[To Evidence of Mr. John Bates.]

STATEMENT SHOWING EARNINGS OF COWRA RAILWAY STATION.

Month.	No of passengers.	Amount of coaching.	Outwards tonnage.	Inwards tonnage	Total amount paid and to pay on goods in and out.	No of bales wool	No. of bags wheat	Coaching and goods earnings.
1888.								
January	301	£ s. d. 306 9 4	Tons cwt qr. 162 2 3	Tons cwt. qr. 155 0 2	£ s. d. 567 14 3	106	124	£ s. d. 874 3 7
February	335	327 6 3	180 11 2	248 6 1	821 14 3	10	133	1,149 0 6
March	452	369 7 9	335 6 0	356 15 1	1,306 9 0	113	870	1,675 16 9
April	481	335 12 4	458 17 1	397 3 3	1,146 8 8	30	927	1,482 1 0
May	320	292 13 2	265 14 1	367 6 3	1,242 11 7	14	283	1 515 4 9
June	311	269 4 1	322 7 2	389 17 0	1,185 9 5	..	423	1,454 13 6
July	254	255 17 9	262 5 0	436 10 3	1,327 9 10	44	13	1,583 7 7
August	329	303 11 7	120 4 1	507 1 3	1,483 3 9	227	..	1,786 15 4
September	419	374 2 10	275 1 2	515 6 0	1,669 18 4	1,273	..	2,044 1 2
October	382	336 4 2	873 5 1	449 6 2	1,417 15 4	4 533	..	1,753 19 6
November	455	353 18 3	1,024 13 0	528 8 3	1,296 15 0	5,573	..	1,650 13 3
December	552	546 12 5	299 4 3	422 15 3	1,070 17 3	1,558	..	1,617 9 9
Total	4,491	4,070 19 11	4,579 13 0	4,773 19 6	14,566 6 8	13,481	2,773	18,587 6 8
Wool receipts (averaging bales at 4 cwt.), 2,696 tons 4 cwt at £2 18s. 8d.								7,808 17 1
Receipts less stock								£ 26,396 3 9
1889.								
January	488	511 12 3	97 10 1	479 13 1	1,443 19 4	316	..	1,955 11 7
February	376	332 7 5	50 14 1	546 1 1	1,402 0 8	41	1	1,734 8 1
March	379	326 11 7	116 10 0	662 14 1	1,498 11 6	169	1	1 825 3 1
April	411	375 15 11	106 14 0	448 19 3	1,257 10 10	71	..	1,733 6 9
May	388	296 4 5	112 9 1	619 18 2	1,246 16 8	26	30	1,543 1 1
June	319	271 17 9	120 13 2	387 15 1	1,015 18 6	..	..	1,287 16 3
July	302	331 11 5	122 15 1	580 1 2	1,302 13 1	35	..	1,634 4 6
August	257	326 2 3	86 17 1	554 18 0	1,483 18 6	..	..	1,810 0 9
September	367	327 8 4	163 14 3	327 12 1	1,528 9 7	591	..	1,855 17 11
October	310	268 9 0	1,550 10 1	615 5 2	1,663 0 6	4,591	..	1,931 9 6
November	337	281 7 8	1,244 5 2	603 9 0	1,679 5 0	6,327	..	1,970 12 8
December	532	472 5 2	1,360 11 1	576 16 0	1,511 10 9	6,430	3,191	1,983 15 11
Total	4,416	4,121 13 2	5,133 5 2	6,403 4 2	17,033 14 11	18,589	3,223	21,265 0 1
Wool receipts, 3,717 tons 12 cwt.								10,904 19 4
Receipts less stock								£ 32,169 19 5
1890.								
January	618	543 3 1	1,859 0 2	509 10 3	3,452 3 2	1,974	13,210	3,995 6 3
Wool outwards, about 394 tons 16 cwt.								1,157 6 6
Total goods and coaching receipts for month ending 31st January, 1890								£5,152 12 9

APPENDIX.

	<i>Live Stock.</i>				Total.
	Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.	
1888—Inwards	31	4	4,884	.....	4,919
„ Outwards	31	815	21,383	2,125	24,354
Totals	62	819	26,267	2,125	29,273
Amount paid and to pay					£2,286 8 10
1889—Inwards	68	41	5,554	20	5,643
„ Outwards	162	2,094	48,285	1,526	52,067
Totals	230	2,135	53,839	1,546	57,710
Amount paid and to pay					£4,572 17 8
Month ending January 31st, 1890—					
Inwards and outwards .....	.....	35	3,541	.....	3,576
Amount paid and to pay					£206 5 2

Abstract of Station's Earnings from Coaching, Goods, Wool, and Live Stock.

	£	s.	d.
1887—Train only running three days per week	16,026	16	10
1888—Daily trains, goods, coaching, and wool	26,396	3	9
„ Live stock	2,286	8	10
1889—Goods, coaching, and wool	32,169	19	5
„ Live stock	4,572	17	8
1890—(Month ending 31st January) goods, coaching, and wool	5,152	12	9
„ „ live stock	206	5	2
Gross earnings for three years and one month	£86,811	4	5

Live Stock Earnings.

	£	s.	d.
1888	2,286	8	10
1889	4,572	17	8
1890 (one month only)	206	5	2
	£7065	11	8

Population in the Borough of Cowra	1,800
Population in the Police District of Cowra	5,000
Thirty-three public and other schools in Police District, averaging daily attendance	1,332

[One Plan.]

1890.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

MOLONG TO PARKES AND FORBES RAILWAY BILL.

(MESSAGE No. 16.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 2 July, 1890.

By Deputation from the Governor,
ALFRED STEPHEN,
Lieutenant-Governor.

Message No. 16.

In accordance with the provisions contained in the 54th section of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses in connection with a Bill to sanction the construction of a line of railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes.

Government House,
Sydney, 2nd July, 1890.

1890.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDICES, AND PLANS,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

COOTAMUNDRA TO TEMORA.

Presented to Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act,
51 Vic. No. 37, section 8.

SYDNEY: CHARLES POTTER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

1890.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable JOHN LACKEY, Vice-Chairman.
 The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN.
 The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
 The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
 The Honorable GEORGE HENRY COX.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esquire, Chairman.
 JACOB GARRARD, Esquire.
 HENRY COPELAND, Esquire.
 JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esquire.
 WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esquire.
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esquire.
 JOHN HURLEY, Esquire.
 CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esquire.

MEMBERS OF THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

HENRY COPELAND, Esquire, Chairman.
 The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esquire.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM COOTAMUNDRA TO TEMORA.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, and the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Cootamundra to Temora," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the Railway should be constructed at a cost not exceeding £3,300 per mile; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section IV, of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

1. The proposed Railway, the first representations regarding the necessity for which were made in 1886, is described as a light line which would leave the Great Southern Railway on the Sydney side of Cootamundra station, and passing in a north-westerly direction for $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles, as far as Yeo Yeo, go from that point due west, through Stockinbingal, to Temora, a total distance of 37 miles 58 chains 14 links. The country through which the line would pass is very undulating; but a route has been chosen which does not present any engineering difficulty, and there are no rivers of any magnitude to cross. The grade will not be more than 1 in 75.

Description of the proposed railway.

2. The estimated total cost of the line is £138,000, or £3,656 per mile. The official description of the line laid before Parliament, and referred by the Legislative Assembly to this Committee, represented the cost as £146,400, or at the rate of £4,086 per mile, for a length of 35 miles 66 chains 14 links; but since then matters in relation to the Railway have been revised, with the result that the length has been increased to 37 miles 58 chains 14 links, and the cost reduced to £138,000, or £3,656 per mile.

Estimated cost.

3. The Railway Commissioners are favourable to the proposed railway, on certain conditions. Their estimates of annual cost are based on an estimated cost of construction amounting to £200,000—an amount which appears to have been stated to them prior to either the railway being proposed to Parliament or the estimates in relation to it revised. This does not, however, affect their conclusions generally considered; and from these it may be gathered that they are favourable to the proposal to construct the railway, if certain advantages to the Railway Department be conceded. The district through which the railway would go is, they say, admirably adapted for settlement, and in the future will prove capable of carrying a large population; but "the settlement at present, while numbering many agriculturists of the best type, is too limited to leave room for the expectation of working expenses being realised. In the district however," they go on to say, "there is a considerable area of Crown lands, which would be much enhanced in value by railway communication, and also one or more valuable timber reserves. If a substantial sum, to be derived from the sale of these lands, were devoted towards the payment of the cost of

Report of the Railway Commissioners.

of constructing the line, and the Railway Department afforded some privileges in the direction of obtaining a supply of ironbark and other timber suitable for railway works, the construction of the line could be recommended, but not otherwise." And they consider that, if the line should be made, the residents of the district should combine together to have the land necessary for the construction of the railway conveyed to the Department free of cost.

Method of the
Committee's
inquiry.

4. In the conduct of their inquiry, the Committee considered it well to first take the evidence of the officers of the Department of Public Works, so that a good general idea of the proposed railway might be had, and then to appoint a Sectional Committee to visit the districts through which the railway would go, and to ascertain from local residents, and from a personal inspection of the country, what evidence, in addition to that given by the departmental officers, there was in favour of the railway being constructed. Before the departure of the Sectional Committee, an engineer connected with the Department of the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways was examined as to an alteration of route which it had appeared to the Committee was desirable, and respecting which, at the instance of the Committee, this officer was specially instructed to obtain information.

Nature of the
country to be
traversed by
the railway.

5. The country which would be served by the railway is chiefly agricultural, specially adapted for the growth of wheat, and suitable also for the cultivation of fruits. Grazing and the production of wool are carried on extensively in various directions, and gold-mining, though not now at all so brisk as it has been, is followed to a small extent. Settlement, principally agricultural, exists extensively along the route of the railway between Cootamundra and Stockinbingal, and in and around Temora; and there are leasehold areas in the district of such a character that it is believed if the railway were constructed they would in a large degree be sought after by selectors, and placed under cultivation. With regard to pastoral pursuits, the Sectional Committee ascertained that there were at least fourteen properties to which the railway would be accessible for the conveyance of wool, and they found that the line would be very serviceable to stockowners for the removal of stock in times of drought. Another circumstance of importance in relation to the nature of the country through which the railway would go, is that though the land is undulating, and the district is intersected by a range of hills, the railway route passes this range through an opening where the grade would be of a very easy kind, and for the whole length of the route no engineering difficulty presents itself.

Choice of
route.

6. A considerable amount of care seems to have been shown in the selection of the route. At the commencement of their inquiry, and until the Sectional Committee had visited the district, it appeared to the Committee that an error had been made in fixing the starting point of the railway at Cootamundra instead of at Wallendbeen. As shown on the plan, the line taken from Cootamundra passes at a sharp angle northwards towards Yeo Yeo, and it seemed to the Committee that it would be much more economical and convenient if it were taken from Wallendbeen westwards, by a straight line, to Yeo Yeo. The Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways could give little more information upon the point than that the instructions had been to make the survey from Cootamundra, and that the possibility of taking the line straight across the range had not been investigated. Instructions were, however, at the instance of the Committee, given to an engineer to visit the locality, and ascertain the feasibility or otherwise of taking the line from Wallendbeen, and his examination of the country led him to conclude that the railway could not be constructed from Wallendbeen except at great additional expense, and generally at much disadvantage, as compared with the route from Cootamundra. This conclusion was afterwards confirmed by the inspection and inquiry made by the Sectional Committee; and there can be no doubt that in choosing Cootamundra as the point where the proposed railway should join the main Southern line, the officers of the Department of Public Works took the right course. Special efforts appear to have been made since the railway was referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly to improve the route generally, and where the grade was at first no better than 1 in 50, the engineers have been able, by making some deviations, to reduce it to 1 in 75. There are no heavy cuttings on the line, and with regard to water-courses, only small creeks that will be spanned by the ordinary openings—a 24-foot span.

7. The prospects of traffic upon the railway, as represented in the evidence taken before the General Committee, are fairly good; but the information upon this point which the Committee consider should carry the greater weight is that gathered by the Sectional Committee, and set forth in their report. The Railway Commissioners regard the settlement at present in the district to be traversed by the railway as "too limited to leave room for the expectation of working expenses being realised"; and though they admit that the district presents great inducements for increased settlement, they decline to recommend the line except on the understanding that the Railway Department be conceded certain important privileges. The traffic officer, upon whose information the Railway Commissioners' report is understood to be based, considers, on the other hand, that the line would pay working expenses, provided the Crown lands in the district, including leaseholds, were thrown open for settlement, in which case every acre of them, he is certain, would be occupied. His report, which he produced before, and read to, the Committee, goes further than this; for, after mentioning that a large traffic is carried on between Cootamundra and Temora, which with proper means of transit would be considerably increased, it states that the character of the country is favourable to a light line of railway which should pay good interest on the outlay. Then in his evidence he describes the settlers about Stockinbingal as "a splendid lot of farmers—some of the best in the Colony," and says that the soil there is better than that along the proposed railway between Culcairn and Corowa, and that the district presents great room for the development of agriculture. The Sectional Committee, in recommending the construction of the line, "are influenced," their report states, "by the evident suitability of the whole district for purposes of husbandry, and its capacity for carrying a large population; and they believe that, though there may not be a prospect of an immediate return sufficient to pay interest on the cost of construction, yet in the course of a few years the expenditure will be fully justified by the results."

Traffic prospects.

8. One of the principal matters upon which the Committee endeavoured to elicit information was that of the estimated cost of the line, their opinion being that if the railway be constructed the work should be carried out as cheaply as possible, consistent with completeness and stability. They recommend, as will be seen by the resolution at which they have arrived, that the cost of construction should not exceed £3,300 per mile, and regarding all the circumstances, they consider that without difficulty the cost can be kept down to this amount. The Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, and the engineer who effected the improvements in the line as at first proposed, did not, when giving evidence, appear to see how any further reduction in cost could be effected; but an examination of their evidence will indicate some directions in which the estimate of the Department may be lessened. The Acting Engineer-in-Chief admits that the country between Cootamundra and Temora is very much the same as that between Culcairn and Corowa, the cost of the proposed line in which district the Committee recommended should not exceed £3,500 per mile, and also that the estimate for the Cootamundra to Temora railway may yet suffer considerable alterations when the matter is further worked out. In all estimates, he states, it is usual to provide a margin for contingencies, and those contingencies may prove to be unnecessary, and the money set down for them will not then be required. So far as the permanent way is concerned, there would not, he says, be any material difference between the cost of the Cootamundra to Temora line and the line from Nyngan to Cobar, the estimate for the construction of which is £2,500 per mile; but there are other differences, he states, between these lines which account for the estimated cost of the one being greater than that of the other. One item is a decision of the Railway Commissioners to charge, in the case of the Nyngan to Cobar line, 1d. per ton for the conveyance of the rails required for the permanent way, and in the case of the line from Cootamundra to Temora, 2d. a ton. The Committee, however, think that the estimate of cost can and ought to be reduced to the amount per mile recommended by them. The country through which it is proposed to take the railway presents no engineering difficulty whatever, and it is clearly a district where, if a line be constructed, it should be a reasonably cheap one. Nearly £6,000 is set down in the official estimate for fencing, and it will be observed, from the report of the Sectional Committee, that they point out a way in which the fencing may be done at a little more than half the cost hitherto incurred for such work.

Possibility of lessening the cost of the line.

Conclusions
arrived at
by the
Committee.

9. The conclusions arrived at by the Committee, as the result of their inquiry and of the visit of the Sectional Committee to the Cootamundra and Temora District, may be summarised as follows :—

- (1) That the agricultural and pastoral importance of the district presents reasonable claims for a railway.
- (2) That the proposed route for the railway appears to have been well chosen.
- (3) That, with railway facilities, settlement and cultivation are likely to largely increase.
- (4) That though the traffic on the railway may not be very great at first, the probabilities are that, with the development of the district, which the railway should bring about, it will speedily increase.
- (5) That the cost of the line should be kept as low as is justifiable with sound railway construction, and that it should not exceed £3,300 per mile.

The evidence in the case, together with the report of the Sectional Committee, was considered by the Committee on Tuesday, 18 March, 1890, and the resolution shown in the following extract from the Committee's Minutes of Proceedings was passed :—

Mr. Copeland moved,—“That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed railway from Cootamundra to Temora, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out.”

Mr. O'Sullivan seconded the motion.

Mr. Garrard moved, as an amendment :—“That the following words be added to the resolution, ‘at a cost not exceeding £3,300 per mile.’”

The amendment was seconded by Mr. Dowel, and, after discussion, passed on the following division :—

Ayes, 8.

Dr. Garran,
Mr. Humphery,
Mr. Cox,
Mr. Garrard,
Mr. Tonkin,
Mr. Dowel,
Mr. O'Sullivan,
Mr. Hurley.

Noes, 2.

Mr. Trickett,
Mr. Copeland.

The resolution, as amended, was then agreed to.

J. P. ABBOTT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 23 April, 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM COOTAMUNDRA TO TEMORA.

WEDNESDAY, 15 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.
JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JOHN HURLEY, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Cootamundra to Temora.

Joseph Barling, Esq., Under Secretary for Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] You are Under Secretary for Public Works? Yes.
2. Can you give us any information in reference to this proposal—the origin of it, and so forth? I think that I need not trouble you with any detailed statement of the steps which led to this proposal, because I now hand in a *précis* of the case which very fully describes all the main steps which have been taken with regard to this proposal. (The *précis* was handed in by the witness and read by the secretary, as follows):—

J. Barling,
Esq.
15 Jan., 1890.

In April, 1886, a petition extensively signed by residents of Temora, Barmedman, and other places concerned, was presented to the Minister by Messrs. Mackinnon and Spring, the local members, praying for railway communication from some point on the Main Southern Line, and stating that the mineral and agricultural resources of the district would make a railway a remunerative undertaking, that Temora is only 30 miles from Cootamundra, Wallendbeen, or Junee, and that a line to Temora might be extended to Barmedman (23 miles), and thence through the rich Bland District to Hillston on the Lachlan *via* Lake Cudgellico and Euabalong, a country unsurpassed in all the elements of prosperity, and the surface being level, and the land still in the hands of the Crown, the cost of making a railway would be moderate. The Minister directed that this line should be placed on the list of railway proposals. On August 18th, 1887, the honorary secretary of the Cootamundra Railway League, forwarded to the Minister a newspaper report of a public meeting held at Cootamundra, at which resolutions in favour of a line from that town to Temora were carried unanimously; and stated that a few days previously a conference of delegates from Barmedman, Cootamundra, Junee, Temora, and Wallendbeen, had been held, and that it was unanimously agreed by them that Cootamundra was the most suitable starting point from the main line, and that it should be accepted by all of them. On September 16th, 1887, a deputation waited on Mr. Secretary Sutherland, to advocate a line from Cootamundra to Temora. The deputation described the route which they desired should be adopted, and represented the distance as 35 miles. The line, they said, would be a cheap one to construct, and they believed it would pay. It would be the best route for an extension to Wilcannia. Timber for sleepers and ballast were obtainable. The Minister promised to visit the locality, and to be guided by what he saw in deciding whether to grant a trial survey or not. A petition and a statistical statement were presented to the Minister. The former is not now on the file, but the latter gives the following particulars:—Population of town of Temora, 1,700; population of district, 2,000; sheep, 35,000; land under cereals, 8,000 acres; gold produced in 1885-6, 15,000 oz.; imports, 2,000 tons; exports, wool, 9,000 bales; sheep skins, 5,000; hides, 1,500. There was also a large production of valuable timber. The deputation further referred to the agreement which had been arrived at by the delegates from the several places concerned in favour of Cootamundra. This compact which, as before stated was unanimous, was however violated almost immediately by Junee (one of the parties to it). In November, 1887, the Council of that place wrote to the Minister urging that the line might be taken from Old Junee *via* Junee Reefs and Sebastopol to Temora, a distance of 32 miles. In June, 1888, Mr. Sutherland visited Junee, when the claims of that place as the starting point of the proposed line were also verbally pressed by the Mayor, who stated that the distance to Temora by that route was only 26 miles. The Minister promised consideration if the distance were as stated. This seems to have alarmed the promoters of the route from Cootamundra, and a deputation waited on the Minister to represent the superior advantages of that route. They reminded the Minister that the question had been fully considered by a conference of delegates, and that after an exhaustive discussion Cootamundra had been accepted without a dissentient voice. They suggested that a projected sale of Crown lands should be postponed, as some of the land would be required for the railway, and the decision to make the line would enhance the value of the portion sold. A petition of the same purport, with something like 1,000 signatures was also presented to the Minister, who, in replying to the deputation, stated that he had driven over the route from Junee, and apart from other disadvantages it had the great one of being further away from Sydney than Cootamundra. He could promise them that a survey (from Cootamundra) should be made, but he did not intend that that should commit him in any way. The sale of Crown lands should be postponed. In the July following three surveyors were sent to make the promised survey, and it appeared by the preliminary report of these officers that the country was so level that it required only the laying of the sleepers for a considerable part of the distance. In August, 1888, an effort was made by the Cootamundra Railway League to obtain a survey from Salt Clay Creek, on the (alleged) ground that it was the shortest route, and passed through good land, but the surveyors had already reported that that route presented engineering difficulties which would involve considerably increased expense, and more than counterbalance the saving in distance. The Minister decided that at all events such survey could not be undertaken then. Soon after in reply to Mr. Mackinnon and the Temora League, the Minister stated that it had been determined to make a trial survey of a line to Barmedman (in continuation of the Temora survey) and on to Hillston. On September 4th, 1888, the united Railway Leagues of the district urged upon the Minister the desirability of making a trial survey of the Salt Clay Creek route, but, doubtless for the reason already

J. Barling,
Esq.

15 Jan., 1890.

given, no action was taken. Some time in 1886 an application was made to Mr. Secretary Lyne for a survey of a line from Coolaman northwards, *ie.* to Hillston and Euabalong, but the Minister, after receiving a report from the Engineer-in-Chief decided that a survey was not warranted. On September 20th, 1888, the project was revived by the persons interested, through Mr. Dibbs, who forwarded to Mr. Secretary Sutherland a memorial which had been addressed to him on the subject. The matter was referred to the Engineer-in-Chief, who reported that a line to Barmedman was already being surveyed and that it would be better to continue this to Hillston. There were three routes to Hillston from Sydney, (1) *via* Carrathool, 479 miles; (2) *via* Coolaman, 441 miles; and (3) *via* Cootamundra, 429 miles the length of new line to be constructed in each case being (1) 60 miles, (2) 132 miles, (3) 176 miles, but No. 3 spaced the country better, and passed through more population. The Minister directed that the survey by Barmedman should be adhered to. On April 3rd, 1889, Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith having been asked to receive a deputation to advocate the Cootamundra-Temora, Barmedman route, and thinking a deputation unnecessary, caused the applicants to be informed by letter that a trial survey had been completed to Temora (36 miles), that an estimate of cost had not been prepared, but it would not be heavy, that the survey had been extended to Barmedman, and was then in progress to Hillston. Soon after another alternative scheme was suggested. In May of the present year Mr. C. S. Smith addressed the Minister, advocating Bethungra as the starting point from the main line on the ground that a saving of some miles of line would be effected, that there is plenty of timber and stone on the route, and there would be no expensive purchases of land to make. The letter was referred to the Railway Commissioners. On April 25th, 1889, a deputation from Cootamundra, Temora, &c., introduced by Messrs. Barnes and Mackinnon, waited on the Minister to urge the immediate construction of the line—Cootamundra to Temora and Barmedman. In addition to the arguments employed they now submitted definite statistics which they had collected and printed. These statistics may be briefly summarised as follows:—1888, population—Temora, 1,146; farmers, 198; their families, 661; labourers, 318; total, 2,323. Sheep, 173,593; cattle, 2,021; horses, 1,220; farmers' holdings, 318,780 acres; land under wheat, 9,145 acres; produce, 188,300 bushels; passengers by coach, 1,730; imports, 20,000 tons; exports, 4,000 tons. The Minister informed the deputation that there was no occasion for them to say anything further, as from what they had said and from a report he had received from the Engineer-in-Chief, he had determined to submit the whole case to the Railway Commissioners. The Commissioners were advised accordingly, and the report furnished by them will be submitted to the Committee. After the reference of the case to the Railway Commissioners further action took place as under:—On June 27th, 1889, a deputation, introduced by Messrs. Dibbs and Gormly, M.s.P., waited on the Minister in the interest of the Coolaman to Hillston proposal. They represented that the district was rapidly turning from pastoral to agricultural pursuits, the soil being admirably suited for wheat culture; that the district produced splendid timber suitable for fencing, and that stone was plentiful. They were aware that other routes to Hillston had been advocated. They did not oppose any other, but they desired before any decision was arrived at to have "a fair show." The proposed line would be a connecting link for the Tumberumba line. Mr. Dibbs said the only way to make the Junee-Hay line pay was to have light lines, such as that now proposed, as feeders to it, and that for such lines our tram motors (for which a use would one day have to be found) might be utilised, travelling at a speed of 8 or 10 miles an hour. The Minister reminded the deputation that if railways were given to every district where they could be made payable many millions would be added to our public debt. He did not think their case was a strong one, but he could promise that no line should be made until an authoritative report on their proposal had been furnished. The Railway Commissioners had been over the route from Cootamundra to Temora and spoke rather favourably of it, especially mentioning the timber. As regarded light lines, Mr. Travers Jones had spoken to him of a system adopted in Queensland of laying steel sleepers on the surface at a cost of £2,000 a mile, and he had drawn the attention of the Commissioners to it. The deputation presented two petitions from persons residing in the several localities in favour of the line, and a statistical statement giving the following particulars:—Population, 508; land, freehold, 196,085 acres; land, leasehold, 53,619 acres; land bearing pine timber, 24,070 acres; land cultivated, 6,623 acres; produce, wheat, 28,475 sacks; sheep as far as collected, 130,120; horses, 683; cattle, 883; wool, 1,660 bales. An undertaking to give the land required free of cost to the Government was also furnished, with the signatures of twenty-one persons. On July 3, 1889, the local Railway League addressed the Minister, with reference to a deputation from Junee which was about to wait upon him to oppose the Cootamundra scheme, stating (1) that a conference of delegates from all the places concerned, Junee included, had unanimously resolved that the line should be from Cootamundra to Temora; (2) that if a line were made from Old Junee to Temora it would involve another junction a few miles from Junee; and (3) that, if such a line were constructed, it would entail a further run of 35 miles on the main line, making the distance so much longer than it would be if the Cootamundra route were adopted. On July 11, 1889, the deputation from Junee referred to above, waited on the Minister, and made representations in favour of their town as the starting point from the main line. The Minister, read to the deputation the statement from the Railway League given above, and asked them if such a conference had been held with the result alleged. They admitted that the facts were as stated, but pleaded that they were not satisfied with the action of their delegates on that occasion. The Minister pointed out that two years had been allowed to elapse, and they only came to him now when they knew the matter was going to be submitted to the Public Works Committee. It was not business-like, but he would send someone over the route they proposed, to ascertain the traffic, &c.

3. The statement just read is a history of the proposal from the beginning? Yes.

4. And so far as you know and can say it is an accurate one? Yes.

5. Is there anything else that you have to say? I have now to hand in, in the first place, the official description of the line which was laid before Parliament. Probably I need not read it, but I would just draw attention to one point. The length is given there as being 35 miles 66 chains 14 links. The proposed line was subsequently revised, namely in November 1889, and the length is now 37 miles 58 chains 14 links. The cost originally given was £146,400, or at the rate of £4,086 per mile; but the revision gives the cost as £138,000, or an average of £3,656 per mile, and the line now leaves Cootamundra at 252 miles 48 chains 86 links from Sydney, and terminates at Temora at 290 miles 22 chains from Sydney, and the proposed station at Temora would be between Schleicher and Baker Streets. Then I have to hand in the Railway Commissioners' report, which is an earlier document still, dated June 20, 1889. The cost of construction is there given as £200,000, and the Commissioners say:—A trial line has in this instance only been made, and therefore a rough estimate of the cost of construction, which may be accepted as fairly accurate, has been given. I think that it might be interesting to the committee if I were to read the opinion of Mr. Whitton, who is now absent from the Colony, as contained in a minute written by him. This is referred to in the *précis*, but I think that you might like it in full. It is dated October 10th, 1888. Mr. Whitton, says:—"I have the honor to inform the Minister that a survey is now being made from Cootamundra to Barmedman *via* Temora, and I think it would be better to continue this to Hillston than to survey a line as suggested, from Coolaman to Hillston, the latter distance being 132 miles, as against 112 miles from Barmedman to Hillston. From Carrathool to Hillston the distance is only 60 miles. The through distances from Sydney by the three routes would be as follows:—(1) Sydney to Carrathool, 419 miles; Carrathool to Hillston, 60 miles; total, 479 miles. (2) Sydney to Coolaman, 309 miles; Coolaman to Hillston, 132 miles; total, 441 miles. (3) Sydney to Cootamundra, 253 miles; Cootamundra to Barmedman, 64 miles; Barmedman to Hillston, 112 miles; total, 429 miles. The length of line to construct in each case would be—No. 1, 60 miles; No. 2, 132 miles; No. 3, 176 miles; No. 3 line appears to divide the country better, and would, I think, pass through a more settled district."

6. Which is number three? The one we have under consideration—a portion of that. I think that is all that I have to state in regard to it. It may be interesting to the committee to know that the inspectors whom it was stated in Parliament the Minister would appoint for the purpose of collecting statistics have this day been appointed.

7. *Mr. Copeland.*] Who are they? One of them is Mr. Sydney Alexander, who has been connected with the chief trial surveys lately, and the other is Mr. Harry Gilliatt, of the Mines Department.

8. *Mr. Garrard.*] Is this line put before us as a line to Temora, or as part of a line on to Hillston? I can only answer for the line before you—from Cootamundra to Temora.
9. *Mr. Cox.*] Has the population increased or decreased lately at Temora? I have not gone into that matter. Mr. Coghlan will be able to give you that information.
10. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you say whether the suggestion made by the Railway Commissioners, that a substantial sum derived from the sale of Crown lands, could be devoted towards defraying the cost of constructing this line? I am able to partly answer that question. In the evidence I gave before this Committee in connection with the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed, occurs this statement which I made with authority:—"While on this question I may mention that a sum of £862,833 has been paid out of the Consolidated Revenue on account of capital charges in connection with railway construction. This amount is chiefly made up of the cost of the Engineer-in-Chief's establishment to date, and a further sum of £1,047,975 has been paid out of the revenue to meet debentures as they fell due. I may also point out,—though no doubt this is common to all railway constructions in the various colonies—that the State land through which the railways pass is handed over to the Commissioners without any credit being given to the land revenue, which in fact means using what would otherwise be land revenue for construction purposes. I find that up to the present time, the quantity of Crown lands taken for railway purposes amounts to 22,300 acres 2 roods 5 perches. The quantity of private land taken is 21,212 acres 1 rood 24 perches, and the amount paid on account thereof to date is £1,238,151 4s. 7d. With regard to the whole of this important question, I am authorized to say that the Ministers for Works and Lands are in consultation with a view to bringing some tangible proposal before the Cabinet in relation thereto. The question of writing down the capital value of any new railways from the proceeds of land, increased in value by the construction of such railways, is to be considered by the Cabinet as a separate question, and it is not thought desirable by the Minister to connect the two matters in an isolated case of railway construction. In the Commissioners' report on another railway to come before this Committee, a similar proposal has been made, and the whole question will, therefore, be more fitly dealt with, apart from such considerations the desirability of railway construction."
11. What date was that? That was on November 12.
12. The Commissioners' report was dated June 20? Yes.
13. So that in the meantime, this proposal of the Commissioners' had been brought before the Ministers, and duly considered? I do not think I can say that any determination has yet been come to in the matter, but it has been considered by the Minister. As far as I am aware, no determination has been arrived at in regard to it.
14. No further action has been taken? No definite action has been taken, but I am aware that it is still under consideration, for the Minister was speaking to me about it this morning. You are aware, I dare say, that in Victoria this matter is made the subject of special legislation, and in that evidence I quoted the sections of the Victorian Act dealing with the matter so far as Victoria is concerned.

J. Barling,
Esq.
15 Jan., 1890.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

15. *Dr. Garran.*] What office do you hold at present? I am Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways.
16. You are personally cognizant of the plans for this railway? Yes.
17. Have you yourself been on the ground? No; I have not been over the ground. I instructed Mr. Alexander to examine the ground, and he has made a report.
18. It is principally on Mr. Alexander's evidence then that your opinion is formed? Yes.
19. You will observe by the plan suspended there that instead of going off as a continuation of the main southern line, where it is running west, the line runs down nearly south to Cootamundra, and then north of it for some considerable distance on this new line;—can you tell us the reason for that sharp angle? Cootamundra was considered the best place for the junction. The application for the trial survey of one of the routes emanated from the residents of Cootamundra, and, besides that, I believe that the most favourable place for crossing that range is opposite Cootamundra.
- 19½. Has there been any flying survey made across the range by a line that would be straighter? No, I think not. This is the only survey that has been made.
20. You cannot say there is any engineering difficulty in the way of a straighter line? No, I cannot. All the instructions we had were to survey a line from Cootamundra to Temora.
21. How much distance would be saved by going straight instead of taking that very sharp dip? That is distance to Sydney?
22. Yes—from there to the bend in the proposed line? About 8 miles. It was proposed to run straight across from Cootamundra, taking nearly a west north-west direction, but the range there is very rough, and the engineering difficulties are greater.
23. Then you have gone north to avoid a difficulty? Yes.
24. You cannot say that the difficulty would have been a bit greater if you had gone straight on the southern line? No, I cannot say.
25. It is rather important that the Committee should know whether there is any greater difficulty there, because on the map the detour seems most unreasonable and unnecessary; as I understand you the object of it is simply to please Cootamundra, with a junction? The instructions were to make the survey from Cootamundra.
26. You have simply acted according to your instructions? Yes. I believe that the possibility of taking the line straight across there has not been investigated.
27. What is that range; is it a difficult range, a lofty range? Not the way we go.
28. I see that the gradients are nothing worse than 1 in 50? No; and those gradients of 1 in 50 will be cut out by proposed deviations, and will not be worse than 1 in 75.
29. There are two or three places where the gradient is 1 in 50? Yes.
30. And you will get rid of them all? Yes.
31. And reduce them to 1 in 75? Yes.
32. And without any material increase in expense? The line examined by Mr. Alexander was cheaper than this.
33. The Committee are to understand that you have got an improved line to Temora with gradients of 1 in 75? Yes.

H. Deane,
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34. What is your estimate now of the cost of the work? The line is somewhat lengthened—it is lengthened very nearly 2 miles, but the total estimate is £138,000, which makes £3,656 per mile.
35. What weight of rail do you give for that? A 60-lb. rail.
36. And on that rail you propose to run the lighter class of your present engines? Yes.
37. So you would not require a special rolling stock? No, not at all.
38. Is there any facility for ballast being got on this line? Yes, there is some ballast to be got, in the first few miles.
39. Is there any suitable railway timber? There is ironbark in the neighbourhood. We pass through some ironbark timber.
40. And the Commissioners, I see, speak of certain facilities being given by the railway Department for carrying timber; does that imply that the timber will have to be brought from a distance? Some of it probably will. I expect the sleepers will be got near the line, but squared timber of all kinds might possibly have to come from a distance.
41. Are we to understand that they look for a small or for a great carriage of timber used in construction towards lessening the first cost of the line? The charge for the carriage of sleepers has always been very heavy.
42. They propose to reduce it in this instance so as to cut down the cost of the line? Yes.
43. They speak of that as almost a necessary precedent to recommending the line—is that to be understood? I have not gone carefully into the Commissioners' report.
44. How much would it save per mile if the cost of timber were reduced; if you are going to get the sleepers on the spot you will not want very much squared timber? The cost of the timber bridges altogether is estimated at only £9,900.
45. How much of that would be for wood material? These are all timber bridges.
46. How much of that would be for the cost of material including timber? About half.
47. That is calculated on the basis of the present rate of carriage? Yes.
48. So the only saving would be the reduced cost of carriage on the material? Yes; say, on £5,000 worth of timber.
49. How much would the cost of carrying that £5,000 worth of timber be? It is very difficult to say, because I do not know where it would all come from.
50. So far as the engineering part of the question is concerned, on which alone you speak, is there any engineering difficulty of any kind on the line? None whatever.
51. No heavy cuttings? No.
52. No difficult streams to cross? No; only small creeks that are spanned by the ordinary openings—24-foot span.
53. The work would be an easy work? Yes.
54. *Mr. Copeland.*] What is the reason why the line was not surveyed from Wallendbeen so as to cut off those two sides of the triangle? I cannot give you any information on that point. I only know that the Engineer-in-Chief had instructions to have a line surveyed from Cootamundra. I am not aware whether his opinion was ever asked.
55. It will be seen that this simply forms two sides of a triangle, whereas one line straight across here (pointing to the map) would save how many miles? I think you would find it would save 8 or 9 miles—not more than that. Without having the matter investigated I could not say how much would be saved.
56. You do not know whether a flying survey has been made across the range here? I do not believe it has; I do not remember anyone having examined it. There never was any survey to my knowledge of the country between Cootamundra and Temora till this year.
57. You say that you have got an improved line now; are the Committee to understand that you have any improvements over and above what is submitted to us here in this statement? If you have the amended statement, that shows all the improvements. Mr. Barling, I suppose, handed it in.
58. This statement includes then all the expected improvements? Yes; it shows a saving of about £8,400. The route is the same as before, only there are some small deviations along the route; the terminus is different in Temora.
59. Can you say what distance this line would be away from the Junee to Hay line in its general course? The two lines are not parallel, and I can scarcely say.
60. Do you think they would be sufficiently wide apart to be likely to have traffic enough to pay, especially when in all probability the only traffic would be wool and live-stock? And some cultivation, I believe there is.
61. Can you say where the cultivation is? Yes, there is wheat cultivation in the neighbourhood.
62. In the neighbourhood of Cootamundra, but not in the neighbourhood of Temora, I think? Only at the Cootamundra end so far as I know. This is a wheat district here—near Stockinbingal.
63. Would you expect to get any wool traffic or live-stock traffic by this proposed line that you do not at present get by the Junee to Hay line. Yes. To tell you the truth, the matters of traffic have been so completely taken out of our hands, that the question has perhaps been rather neglected by the engineering branch.
64. You can simply give the Committee information only on the engineering aspect of the question? I would rather give information only on the engineering question.
65. You have already stated that this would be a line very easy to construct? Yes.
66. You cannot say, speaking in general terms, how far it would be from the Junee to Hay line? Well, Temora is about 30 miles—taking a straight line down on to the Junee and Narrandera line it is about 30 miles.
67. Supposing the Government were to construct a line from Forbes to Menindie, having already in existence the line from Junee to Hay, do you think that then there would be room enough for a payable line on this proposed route—Cootamundra to Hillston? Not considering it as a pastoral country. If it were taken up for cultivation no doubt there would be.
68. But so far as pastoral traffic is concerned you would expect that they would make either to the Forbes-Menindie line, or to the Junee-Hay line, and that you would not be likely to increase the traffic in any way by building this now proposed line; in other words, any pastoral traffic that this proposed line would get would simply be taken away from one of the other two lines? Some portion of it would, but there would be a certain amount of extra carrying, though perhaps not very much.

69. Of pastoral traffic? Yes. I mean this—any produce grown here, wool or otherwise, would naturally come into Temora instead of going down here, or up this way (*pointing to the map*) or any other direction. Anything grown here (*pointing to the map*) and taken to Temora, would give extra carriage. The produce of the district just beyond Temora would be carried along that line, and it would be additional carriage. Any place where the distance to the railway was saved would give extra carriage.

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70. Can you say the distance between Narrandera and Condobolin? It would be about 110 miles in a straight line.

70½. So that supposing that the Condobolin-Menindie line were constructed, the furthest that any place could be away from the railway would be 55 miles? Yes.

71. Supposing that the Government were to decide, or had decided, on the line from Condobolin to Menindie, would you then recommend that this line be constructed? It would only serve a very small district.

72. Would you recommend that it be constructed to Hillston if the other two lines were in existence? Yes, I should, if the country were taken up for agricultural purposes, but not for pastoral purposes.

73. Is the land all fit for agriculture—right up to Hillston? Not all of it.

74. Have you any personal knowledge of the country? No; I have not been there. I can tell only from reports.

75. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] In reply to the Chairman just now, you stated that the gradients would be about 1 in 75, and that there were no engineering difficulties in the way of this line? Yes.

76. Therefore we can take it for granted that the line could be cheaply constructed? Yes.

77. The estimate per mile is £3,656? Yes.

78. Is not that rather high for a very easy country? No; I do not consider that high. It is not a level country.

79. You say that there are no engineering difficulties, and even the crossing of the range is not a matter of very great difficulty? I do not know, I am sure, where any further economy could be exercised.

80. Have you taken into account the cheap system of fencing? The total for fencing is only £5,850—that is not a large amount.

81. Do you think it possible to construct this line at a cheaper rate? I would not advise it—not to make a proper job of it.

82. You are aware that the Committee has recommended the construction of the Culcairn to Corowa line on the understanding that the cost should not exceed £3,000 per mile? Yes.

83. Is that country as difficult as the country between Temora and Cootamundra? I should say that it is pretty much the same. The Culcairn to Corowa line would, if anything, be rather easier.

84. In his evidence before the Committee, Mr. Alexander said that that line could be constructed for less than the estimate, but he would not advise it to be done. I presume that in the same way you are of opinion that this line might be constructed more cheaply, but you would not recommend it? My opinion is this—that the design of the works is most suited for the country, and for the particular class of line. This is only an estimate after all; this is an estimate from a trial survey. It may suffer considerable alterations—some of the items may be reduced when we come to work it out. Certainly no more work would be put into it than was absolutely necessary; but unless you alter the type of construction, practically, you do not reduce the cost of the line. This cost of £3,656 per mile includes an amount for contingencies which it is only fair to take into account. Those contingencies may prove to be nil, and then that money will not be required. It is usual in all estimates to provide a margin.

85. In your evidence you also said the starting-point was fixed at Cootamundra for Ministerial reasons—or you implied that? Instructions came from the Minister to make the survey from Cootamundra.

86. What year was that in? Last year.

87. But in carrying out those instructions you actually added 8 miles of haulage to the line? Yes.

88. That might have been avoided? I cannot say. If the line could be carried across from that other point—Wallendbeen.

89. There appears to be no great difficulty about that; you have to cross the range going to Cootamundra and only once going to Wallendbeen? Yes; but the character of the range will vary very much in its different parts. Cootamundra seems to be the natural point of departure for Temora on the map. The reason why the line is taken in this direction from Cootamundra is that there is a low point in this range—only about 200 feet above Cootamundra—and I think you will find on examination of this range further north that it rises again, much the same as it does in the south.

90. *Mr. Tonkin.*] You know of course that the proposed line from Nyngan to Cobar is to be constructed without fencing? It is proposed, I believe, to construct it without fencing.

91. Is not this similar country, and would not this line do without fencing the same as the other? Any country that is used merely for pastoral purposes could be treated in the same way; there is no reason why, if fences are unnecessary in one part, they should not be abolished in the other.

92. That would reduce the cost, would it not? Yes.

93. Can you tell us why this line will cost £3,600 per mile, whilst the proposed line to Wilcannia will cost only £2,500 per mile; that is over £1,000 per mile difference—33 per cent. on the cost of construction? In the first place the earthworks are slightly in excess here; then the permanent way is higher per mile. In the case of the Nyngan to Cobar line the Commissioners have arranged for the freight on the rails to be 1d. per mile; here the freight has been reckoned at 2d. per mile.

94. But will there be any material difference in the cost of the permanent way? No.

95. The rails will be 60lb. rails in both cases? Yes.

96. And I suppose there will be the same amount of sleepers and ballast in each case? Yes.

97. Then would that penny per ton per mile upon the carriage of the rails make the difference of 33 per cent. on the cost of construction? No; but there are other reasons. If we were to compare the two estimates it would soon be seen where the difference lies.

98. Can you tell this Committee where the difference lies—there is such a great difference? I cannot give you an estimate that will exactly compare with this, because nothing more than what is a rough approximation has really been made of the Nyngan to Cobar line. This has been taken out in detail. Bye-and-by, when all the plans are finished, I shall be able to make an estimate to correspond with this and compare with it. It would be difficult just now to make a comparison of the different items; it would be mere guess-work.

99. Do you mean that the cost as given to us of the Nyngan to Cobar line, £2,500 per mile, is too low an estimate

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estimate—that it cannot be constructed for that;—do you mean that? No, I do not mean to say that. I only mean to say that the estimate is more or less an approximate one. It has not been so carefully made out as this estimate has. I have not the slightest doubt that it can be done, but there are differences in the character of the country and the design of the works which would account for a good deal, I have no doubt.

100. Can you give this Committee any explanation of the difference—this great difference—between the two lines, for the lines will be similar lines;—are there much heavier earth-works or cuttings? Yes; I mentioned that just now. I think I may say that in the way of excavations there is an excess here over the Nyngan to Cobar line of £10,000; that is to say that supposing this country were of the same character as the Nyngan to Cobar line the excavations, the earth-works, would cost only about £8,900; here the excavations are estimated at £18,875. That is one cause of difference. Another cause is the fencing. £5,000 no doubt could be knocked out of fencing if it were not necessary to fence except close to settlements. That would make £15,000. Then there is the permanent way and ballasting permanent way; 1d. per mile extra has been charged. You understand the late Commissioner charged us 4d per ton per mile, but the present Commissioners have agreed to carry the permanent way material at 2d. per ton per mile, but in the case of the Nyngan to Cobar line they have offered to carry it at half that rate. I understand that that reduction applies only to the Nyngan to Cobar line.

101. For the purpose of reducing the expenditure in the construction of this line, would you recommend that the fencing should not be carried out; you know the country the line is going through? I know the southern line, but I have not been across between Cootamundra and Temora.

102. Would you recommend that that should be a railway line without fencing—a cheap line? There would be this difficulty: a great deal of the land is fenced, and where we go through fenced land owned by different owners they would probably insist on the line being fenced. Where we go through Crown land—for the last 15 miles I think it is—we could do as we liked, I suppose.

103. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you read the Railway Commissioners' report on this line? Yes.

104. You notice that they refer to a supply of ironbark in the district? Yes.

105. Have you any information about this particular timber to which they refer? The surveyors have reported that there are ironbark forests there.

106. Can you give the Committee some information about those forests—the nature of them, their extent, and whether they are on the proposed route, or within a radius of how many miles? I believe that the proposed railway would pass through an ironbark belt, and there is, no doubt, plenty of ironbark within a small distance of the line.

107. Then there will be no difficulty in procuring sleepers? No difficulty, I should say.

108. As an engineer, have you any objection to specifying for the use of half-round sleepers of ironbark in this particular line. I am asking you this question with the view of seeing whether the cost of construction could be lessened in any way. As an engineer, would you recommend in your specification that half-round sleepers should be used—that this innovation should be made on this particular line, where there is a large quantity of ironbark on the route easily accessible? I would not recommend it. I would endeavour to make the specification for sleepers as easy as possible. Good sound sleepers should be used, but I would not be so particular about their being absolutely rectangular and showing no sap at the edges.

109. What difference would that make in the cost of the sleepers—the way you propose now to specify for them, as different from the ordinary sleepers as at present used? I do not think that it would make very much difference. It would certainly admit of smaller trees being used, but where larger trees were obtainable, of course a considerable proportion of the sleepers provided would still be rectangular—still come up to the old specification, you might say. It would only enable the splitters to get in sleepers of somewhat inferior quality—sleepers from the outside of the tree.

110. You have no idea what the reduction of cost would be then? I think one might put it down at about 6d. per sleeper.

111. The country, if I understand you aright, is of an undulating character? Yes.

112. Involving more earth-works than there would be on the Culcairn to Corowa line? Yes.

113. That accounts for the difference in the cost—the increased cost in your estimate? That accounts for the increased cost of the earth-works.

114. The difference of cost is chiefly made up by the earth-works in the two estimates? Yes. If I remember aright, the estimate for the Culcairn to Corowa line was £4,100 per mile—this is really cheaper than the line from Culcairn to Corowa—but the Committee's recommendation was £3,500.

115. You could not recommend in the construction of this line the use of half-round sleepers? No.

116. You are aware, I presume, that they are used in the construction of lines in America? I would not like to go by American practice altogether. I know that lines in America are very often made in a very flimsy manner. Population springs up at the end of the line and along the line, and it pays them to renew the works in a substantial manner. This is being done more or less throughout the country.

117. Would it be advantageous for a policy of that description to be carried out in New South Wales? I do not think so, because the Government can always borrow money at a cheap rate; whereas in America a company has to construct the line. Looking upon it as a speculation, if a private company in America were able to get the money and lay the lines in a substantial manner, it would most decidedly be better to do so than to lay them in a flimsy manner, and afterwards to have to renew the works.

118. What does the Department pay for sleepers now? *Mr. Eddy* told me not very long ago they had a contract at Dubbo for ironbark sleepers at, I think, 2s. 11d. each, delivered at the station.

119. The whole of the bridges are of timber? Yes.

120. *Mr. Lee.*] Can you tell the Committee how the difference in cost is arrived at as between the estimate made in June, 1889, and this made in November of the same year; the first estimate was for 35 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles at a total cost of £200,000, and the revised line shows a longer length at a very much reduced cost—£138,000; how is that arrived at? It is chiefly due to a revision of the necessities of the line, and an alteration in the economy of construction. The excavations amount, I see, to about the same thing per mile, and other expenses are very similar. There is a saving of about £2,000 in bridges; the permanent way and ballasting has been cut down £4,000; and diversions of roads which we put down to cost over £2,000 have been cut out altogether.

121. Did this revision of the line take place after it had been referred by Parliament to the Public Works Committee? Yes.

122. It was referred by the Legislative Assembly on September 27th, 1889? Yes. It was after that—
about the time when I instructed Mr. Alexander to examine the country. H. Deane,
Esq.
123. In other words, since the line has been referred by Parliament, your department has taken every
precaution to straighten the line, and reduce the cost as much as possible? Yes. 15 Jan., 1890.
124. Does that really express your meaning; that is to say, the line which the Committee now have before
them is the result of your subsequent labours? Yes. I should say that my views have not altered in the
slightest about the character of the work required for this line, but I have been through the estimate and
revised the prices, and cut them down to correspond with some other lines.
125. Do you think that you have cut them down below the contractors' prices? No; I think not.
126. You think that the line could be constructed for that money? Yes. For instance, in the first estimate
we had for ballasting 5s. 6d. per yard; that stands now at 4s. 6d., and I am sure it can be done for that,
as ballast is obtainable on some parts of the line; then, sleepers were originally put at 4s. 6d., but we
can, I think, get them at 3s. 6d.
127. Your department has revised this line since it has been submitted to Parliament, and you are now
speaking of the revised figures before the Committee? Yes.
128. Consequently those figures have passed through your hands? Yes.
129. Are you of opinion that it would be safe to go even lower—to reduce the cost of this line, having in
view the public safety? No; I would not recommend that.
130. You think that that is the lowest price at which this line could be constructed? Yes; that is to say,
as I pointed out before, an amount has been allowed for contingencies, which we might not have to draw
upon.
131. That is allowed in all cases? Yes; it is a usual thing in making estimates. I believe that this line
could be constructed at this rate if the contract be let within the next few months, but if it had to stand
over for a couple of years, and business became brisker in the colony, wages might rise, and we would have
to pay more.
132. *Dr. Garran.*] You said that the Commissioners proposed to carry the rails for the Cobar line at 1d.,
and for this at 2d.? Yes.
133. What is the schedule rate at the present time, without any favour, for rails? I think it is 4d.
134. That has been the rate hitherto charged? Yes.
135. Is it in the power of the Commissioners to charge one extension 1d. another 2d., another 3d., and
another 4d.? Really that is a matter which I have not considered.
136. But in their calculation they propose to give Cobar an advantage over this line? Yes.
137. And this line an advantage over the schedule rate? Yes.
138. So in comparing one branch with another, we shall always have to bear in mind that little bit of
favouritism? The rate for the carriage of rails is of course a rate which can only apply to the construction
department; nobody else has rails to carry except to a very infinitesimal extent.
139. I mean that when we compare the cost of one line with the cost of another we must look to see if the
Commissioners give any special favour in the cost of carrying the rails? Yes.

THURSDAY, 16 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN.)

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed railway from Cootamundra to Temora.

Stanley Alexander, Esq., District Engineer, sworn, and examined:—

140. *Dr. Garran.*] What is your status? District Engineer. S. Alexander,
Esq.
141. Did you survey the proposed line? It was surveyed whilst I was in charge of the department. 16 Jan., 1890.
142. Have you been over the ground yourself? Yes.
143. Have you been over the ground near Wallendbeen where the line might make a short cut from the
262-mile peg instead of going all the way to Cootamundra and making that sharp angle? No. I think
that the line would have to pass over the range or to go the way that it goes now.
144. Would it not be practicable to have a much straighter route from Sydney to Temora? I think it is
possible, looking at the map, but Mr. Firth will be able to give you more information on that point.
145. Have you had anything to do with the preparation of the estimates of the cost of the line? Yes;
I prepared them.
146. And, as far as you know, they are trustworthy? Yes.
147. What is the weight of the rails which you provided for? 60lb.
148. What is the difference in cost per mile between 60lb. and 40lb. rails? Roughly, about £200.
149. Would the 60lb. rail carry the lightest of our present locomotives? It will carry them all.
150. And the 40lb. rail would necessitate a separate class of engines? Yes.
151. And that is such a disadvantage that you think it better to spend £200 a mile extra and use the
60lb. rails? Yes.
152. You have no hesitation in recommending the 60-lb rail? None whatever.
153. We are told that the gradients will be reduced from 1 in 50 to 1 in 75? Yes; you can depend on
that.
154. And that will necessitate an increase in the length of the line by two miles? Yes.
155. You recommend that? Yes.
156. Will it not involve any dangerous curves? No.

- S. Alexander, Esq.
16 Jan., 1890.
157. It will be in every way a better line than the original one? Yes.
158. You believe that the gradient can be reduced to 1 in 75? Yes; you can make sure of that—possibly it may turn out better.
159. There may be improvements? Yes.
160. Taken as a whole it is a line of cheap construction? Yes.
161. It presents no engineering difficulties? None.
162. You think it could be made, at present contractors' prices, within your estimate? Yes.
163. Have you gone into the question of traffic? No.
164. You have confined your attention to the engineering part? Entirely.
165. Is the country as far as Temora a wheat-growing country? It is.
166. Would it be as far as Barmedman? I was told so at Temora.
167. How far is Temora from the line that goes to Narrandera; what is the breadth of the belt of country between the two lines? About 35 miles.
168. Then between the two lines there would be no point distant more than 17 or 18 miles from a railway? No.
169. And the two lines gradually widen out from the junction? Yes.
170. They form two sides of a triangle virtually? Yes.
171. *Mr. Tonkin.*] When was the fresh survey made that reduced the grades from 1 in 50 to 1 in 75? There has been no fresh survey made.
172. Then how has the alteration been brought about? From an estimate which I formed after having inspected the line.
173. Did you have to go over the ground to make that alteration? Yes.
174. And without surveying the line you could see that the gradient could be reduced? Yes.
175. When was the survey according to which the grade is 1 in 50 made? It was commenced on August 1st, 1888, and ended on the 17th September, 1888.
176. And when did you inspect it and alter the grade? I was there in October last year.
177. Do you think that any reduction could be made in the price per mile, £3,656? I do not think so.
178. You know the proposed line from Nyngan to Cobar and Wilcannia? Yes.
179. You know that the estimated cost of that line is £2,500 per mile? Yes.
180. Can you explain why the proposed line from Cootamundra to Temora should cost 33½ per cent. more than the line to Wilcannia? I have never seen that country.
181. Have you seen any country presenting less engineering difficulties than the route of the proposed line from Cootamundra? I have seen railways in flat country with perfectly porous soil which did not require any bridges.
182. Was that in this country? No; in India.
183. Have you seen any railway route in this country affording greater facilities for the construction of a railway than the route of the proposed line? No.
184. Do you think it is necessary to fence in this line? The line must be fenced, because it goes through alienated land.
185. Do you know what the difference in the cost would be if there were no fencing? The cost of the fencing amounts to £5,850.
186. For how many miles of line? Thirty-seven and three-quarter miles.
187. What sort of a fence is it to be? Wire.
188. Without any top-rail? Yes.
189. How many wires will there be? Seven.
190. Do you know the depth of the deepest cutting on the line? They are very small, from 5 to 7 feet.
191. You are quite confident that the estimate £3,656 a mile could not be materially reduced? Yes. Almost exactly half of the estimate is for ballast and permanent way.
192. Is there any difference between the permanent way of the proposed line from Cootamundra to Temora and that from Nyngan to Cobar? I am not sure, but I think that the sleepers estimated for the Nyngan to Cobar line were not ironbark; and I do not suppose that such good ballast was provided for, simply because it was not to be got on the Cobar line.
193. Would that make any material difference;—if you could get good ballast readily would it not be as cheap as bad ballast? No; if you have to use bad ballast you will use almost anything.
194. Are you quite sure that you are not making a mistake in your estimate? I am not making a mistake.
195. Did you estimate the cost of the Cobar line? No.
196. You do not know anything about that line? No.
197. When you made the alteration in the grade was that before or after you investigated the grades on the Crookwell line? It was after.
198. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you propose to carry this line any further than Temora? It is surveyed to Hillston.
199. What distance is that from Temora? 121 miles.
200. You said that you had been over both the surveyed routes? Yes.
201. In reference to the one which you recommend to be adopted, could you tell the Committee the character of the country through which it traverses and the description of the timber? It is not a new line altogether, only deviations from the surveyed line. Near Cootamundra it is all agricultural land.
202. Are there any forests of timber? The land is for the most part under cultivation or fit for cultivation, except on the ironbark ridges, near Gundibingar.
203. Are there any good forests or reserves of timber within a radius of 10 miles of the railway? There are ironbark ridges all reserved.
204. Is it good ironbark? It is stunted.
205. Would you have any difficulty in that country in obtaining timber for bridges and sleepers? The sleepers could all be got there.
206. And the timber for the bridges also? I think for the piles, it could be, but not squared timber. It will be too short.
207. You propose to have ironbark sleepers? Yes.
208. Would you, as an engineer, recommend that half round sleepers should be used for the purpose of cheapening the construction? No.

209. For what reason? When engineers speak of half-round sleepers they mean pine sleepers. They are split down the middle, giving a perfectly clean surface, and all the sleepers being exactly alike. They make as good a road as squared timber; but if we attempt to use half-round sleepers made of gum timber we get sleepers of all shapes and sizes. It is impossible to make as good a road with them.
210. All over the world half-round sleepers have been used to cheapen construction;—do you think it possible that half-round ironbark sleepers could be used? Of course they could be used.
211. In your opinion the construction of railways with safety and solidity would not be affected if half-round sleepers were used? It would not be affected.
212. What is the cost of the sleepers which you use? 3s. 6d. each.
213. And you would use about 2,200 to the mile? About 2,000 to the mile.
214. If half round sleepers were used do you think that there would be a considerable reduction in the cost of construction? Yes.
215. What ballast would you recommend? I think it will all be quartz on this line.
216. Local ballast? Yes.
217. So you could not cheapen the line except by reducing the cost of the sleepers by using half round timber? I do not wish to be understood as recommending it. You can make a cheap railway, but when you come to maintain it you will find that it will run away with your revenue if you have not used first-class timber.
218. *Mr. Cox.*] You spoke of a range between Cootamundra and Temora;—what range is it? I really do not know. It has a great many local names. It divides the Lachlan from the Murrumbidgee.
219. Is that a broken range or grassy hills? It is a broken range.
220. Is there a difficulty in finding a gap through that range? The gap that the railway is to go through is a very easy gap. It is an extraordinarily easy gap.
221. In the event of its being taken across that range from a point on the railway nearer to Sydney do you know whether there would be any difficulty in crossing the range? I do not know the country.
222. Do you know whether that range has ever been inspected by surveyors? I do not think it has been.
223. So that the present line was projected merely to connect Temora with Cootamundra? Yes.
224. Irrespective of the securing of any nearer route to the metropolis? Yes.
225. *Chairman.*] Do you know who was the surveyor who laid out that line? There were three. Messrs. Bode, Chalmers, and Kennedy.
226. Would they be available for examination by a Sectional Committee on the route? I think two of them are out at Wentworth, and the other at Mudgee.
227. *Mr. Garrard.*] Did you say that Mr. Firth knew something about it? Yes, about the range.
228. *Mr. Cox.*] What directions were given to the surveyor who laid out the line to connect it with the Southern line at Cootamundra? To start from Cootamundra.
229. *Chairman.*] If the railway is to open up the agricultural lands in that district, there is no reason why it should go to Cootamundra to do that, is there? I do not think there is.
230. I suppose you could look the matter up and see what exploration was done with the view of connecting the line to Temora with any other part of the railway, and let the Committee know at some other time? Yes.
231. Do you think any instructions were given to connect this line with the main line higher up? I do not think so.
232. This estimate for fencing, I suppose, includes all the crossings and gates? It does not include the gates; the gates are included in the level crossings.
233. Then do you not think that £77 a mile for fencing is an outrageous price? The object of the fence is to keep stock off the line, is it not? I have estimated that there are 26,000 roods of fencing at 4s. 6d. a rood. That is 80 miles of fencing, 40 miles for each side of the railway.
234. Do you not think that fencing of the same character as that which is used in the district will do for a railway? Could it be put up for less than 4s. 6d. a rood?
235. I should think so. The squatters do not pay that for fencing? Fencing does not make the railway work better or bring any more revenue—it is purely a matter of insurance.
236. Yes, but in the aggregate, all these things “tot” up. You have an item of £9,000 for stations, that looks pretty stiff for an unsettled district, does it not? I have the details here.
237. Are the buildings to be of brick? No, of timber.
238. Timber platforms? Yes. The first is at Stockinbingal. There are to be three stations—one at Temora and two intermediate ones. These intermediate stations consist of a fourth-class passenger building estimated at £200, a third-class goods-shed £180, two cottages at £350 and £275, and a platform at £203; at Temora is proposed a third-class passenger building £300, platform £250, two cottages, a second-class £350, and a third-class £275. A second-class cottage costs about £350; a third-class cottage about £275. There are to be trucking yards at each station which cost altogether £500.
239. Are the plans of station buildings submitted to the Railway Commissioners for their approval before the department adopt them? I do not think that they have been hitherto.
240. Do you think they ought to be? Yes, but since the Commissioners were appointed hardly anything has been built.
241. But before the buildings were put up would not the Commissioners be consulted? I should think they ought to be. In fact I think the Act provides that they shall have the fixings of the stations.
242. What you have given us amounts to £7,000. What do you provide for at the Temora station? A timber platform, £250; a third-class passenger building, £300; a second-class goods-shed, £525; a second-class cottage, £350; and a third-class cottage, £275; and trucking yard, £200.
243. What is the total for Temora? £1,681 and £200 makes £1,881. There are trucking yards at each station.
244. *Mr. Garrard.*] How much for them? I have not the details here. I suppose about £500 for the whole line.
245. *Mr. Trickett.*] Have you ever devoted your attention to the question of the adoption of the cattle stops such as are used in America? There are ten crossings with cattle stops, three with gates, and there are 40 private crossings.
246. *Mr. Dowel.*] Are there any railway contracts in existence at the present time? None.

S. Alexander,
Esq.
16 Jan., 1890.

- S. Alexander, Esq., 247. When was the last tender called for for railway construction? It was for the North Shore line, fully two years ago.
 248. When tenders were received for that line were not the rates considered very low? Yes, I think they were. I am only speaking from hearsay.

16 Jan., 1890.

G. J. Roberts, Esq., District Traffic Superintendent, sworn, and examined:—

- G. J. Roberts, Esq., 249. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your position in the railway service? District Traffic Superintendent.
 250. Have you had anything to do with the proposed line from Cootamundra to Temora? I have reported upon it from a traffic point of view.
 251. Have you been over the line of country between Cootamundra and Temora? Yes, as far as Barmedman.
 252. Have you submitted an estimate of the traffic to the Commissioners? Yes.
 253. Have you seen the report which the Commissioners have laid before the Committee? I have not.
 254. Do you know the totals of your report? No; I furnished the statistics, and they were made up in the office, I believe.
 255. Is the statement of the Commissioners' based on your report? I believe it is.
 256. Is the country between Cootamundra and Temora agricultural or pastoral? Both.
 257. Is there much agriculture going on around Temora? To a very large extent.
 258. Whereabouts is it going on to a very large extent? From Stockinbingal, and at Temora itself.
 259. On the route of the proposed line? Yes.
 260. Did you go by the ordinary road, or by the route of the line? By both routes.
 261. Is there more settlement on the road than on the route of the line? It is about equal.
 262. Where do you find a large extent of agriculture? At Stockinbingal.
 263. Is there much at Barmedman? Very little there.
 264. Is Temora a mining township? It is more of an agricultural district. There is very little mining there now.
 265. Do you think that the line if constructed would pay? I believe it would.
 266. Immediately on its construction? No.
 267. What do you mean by paying—covering the working expenses? Yes.
 268. Paying the working expenses without considering the interest on the capital? Yes.
 269. You think that the line would pay working expenses? Yes; providing that the Government cut up the leasehold land there. I mentioned that in my report.
 270. With the Crown lands left as they are would it pay? I have very much doubt about it.
 271. Then it is a problematical affair. If the Government do not cut the land there is no chance of its paying? It might possibly. There is a great deal of Government land there.
 272. What is the tonnage of the traffic from Cootamundra to Temora? I left Cootamundra last night. There are no less than twenty teams travelling from Stockinbingal to Cootamundra with wheat.
 272½. How much of that should we get? We should get it all. They complain of the great expense of cartage.
 273. Is it not all down hill to Cootamundra? No; there is a large hill round which we should have to run the line.
 274. That wheat traffic is only for a few weeks in the year? Yes.
 275. What other traffic is there? Wool, sheepskins, tallow, &c.
 276. How much wool that at present goes into Cootamundra would the line intercept? The wool would be intercepted at Stockinbingal and Temora. The quantity I cannot estimate.
 277. What is the yield? I have my report here and I will read it:

District Superintendent's Office, Junee Junction, May 29, 1889.

Cootamundra to Temora Railway.

Sir,

I have the honor to report that I left Cootamundra on Friday morning, the 24th instant, and drove along the proposed railway route to Temora and Barmedman, and returned to Cootamundra on the Monday afternoon following.

Although your instructions were to report on the line to Temora, I took it upon myself to go as far as Barmedman in order to collect all information respecting the probable traffic from that locality and also satisfy myself what amount of business we might expect in the event of the line being extended there, or only as far as Temora.

The distance from Cootamundra to Temora and Temora to Barmedman are 35 and 32 miles respectively, and for the whole distance with few exceptions, such as the iron-bark ridges, the country is well adapted for agricultural and pastoral pursuits.

In the absence of a tracing of the surveyed line there are, as far as I could judge, no serious engineering difficulties to contend with, the gradients being light, with plenty of timber and ballast at short distances along the line of route.

Sidings and station accommodation would be required at the following places, in the event of the line being adopted, viz.:—

- Stockinbingal, about 14½ miles from Cootamundra.
- Temora, about 35 miles from Cootamundra.
- Halfway House (Kavanagh's), about 10 miles from Temora.
- Barmedman, about 22 miles from Temora.

In course of time I have no doubt sidings will be required between Stockinbingal and Temora, and perhaps between Cootamundra and Stockinbingal.

From returns furnished me by Mr. Woodhouse, secretary of the Stockinbingal Railway League, I find that within a radius of 10 miles (north side of the line) there are forty-one selectors, &c., owning 127,388 acres, 3,260 acres under cultivation, 107,200 sheep, 1,014 bales wool, 1,149 large stock, 326 pigs, 4,000 acres in reserves, 500 population.

Within a radius of 6 miles (south side of the line) there are nineteen selectors, &c., owning 38,350 acres, 4,060 acres under cultivation, 28,600 sheep, 286 bales wool, 1,079 large stock, 277 pigs, 1,470 acres in reserves, 160 population.

It is estimated that the incoming traffic is about 600 tons, and the outwards traffic about 3,200 tons, wheat and wool.

In addition to the selectors, &c., referred to it is asserted that a siding at Stockinbingal would benefit a great number residing outside the distances quoted.

From Stockinbingal to Temora, distant about 21 miles, there is very little settlement along the route; however, the line passes through Gundibengal and Combaning leaseholds, which will be available for future settlement. I was informed that already something like 15,000 acres had been surveyed, and cut up into small holdings from 50 to 280 odd acres each, which will be readily bought up when submitted to auction. This will tend to considerably increase the population and traffic between these two places.

Herewith will be found printed statistics showing the resources of the Temora districts, and in submitting same I was requested to mention the fact that the population has considerably increased since it was completed and printed.

The

The town of Temora consists as follows:—Places of business other than hotels, 38; hotels, 17; manufactories and other industries, 9; general carriers, 22; court-house, police offices, post and telegraph offices, mining registrar, public school, hospital, four churches, two halls, three theatres. The estimate tonnage is 2,676 tons (inwards and outwards). The average rate per ton for general goods between Cootamundra and Temora is £2 per ton. There are six mail coaches connected with the town, carrying mails to and from Cootamundra, &c. A neatly turned out newspaper published by Mr. James Meehan, "The Independent," a well equipped fire brigade, besides public recreation ground, show ground, &c. The stock slaughtered are 684 cattle, 2,850 sheep, 140 pigs; hides and tallow sent away, about 38 tons. The average attendance at schools is—public, 140; Roman Catholic 96. There is also a private school.

The carriage of wheat between Temora and Cootamundra ranges from 4d. to 9d. per bushel.

The fare by coach between Temora and Cootamundra is 10s. It has been officially announced that the various squatting holdings around Temora will not be renewed at the expiration of present leases, but will be available for selection. A marked increase in the population has taken place since the breaking up of the drought. A valuable tin country has been opened up at Mandamah, within a half day's journey from the town. A very extensive traffic to Temora is done from Wollongough, Broken Dam, Murrool Creek, Big and Little Mimosa.

Between Temora and Barmedman the distance is 22 miles. The population is very small, but there is plenty of Government land available for settlement in the event of the Government cancelling the leases and submitting them to auction.

The following particulars were furnished to me by Mr. Gibson, the secretary of the Railway League at Barmedman:—

Population of the town, 250; district, about 500. The town consists of—4 hotels, 3 stores, post and telegraph offices, savings bank, 1 public and 1 private schools—daily attendance 70 and 10 respectively, 1 steam-mill, 1 blacksmith, 1 butcher 1 baker, 2 churches, police station, court-house, lock-up, pound, 1 undertaker, 1 crushing battery of twenty-five stampers, 2 pumping and winding machines. There is no alluvial digging, but quartz reefing is being carried on. During the last three years 13,000 oz. of gold have been forwarded, of the average value of £3 17s. 6d. an oz., equal to the sum of £50,375. A good deal of English and colonial capital is to be invested. The steam saw-mill is turning out 12,000 to 15,000 feet of timber per month. The tonnage for the hotels, stores, and butcher average about 127 tons per annum. The rate of carriage is from £4 to £4 10s. per ton, 1s. 4d. per bushel for wheat; 450,000 acres of Crown lands are available for selection, but owing to its distance from the nearest railway station it is not utilized. The statistical returns of Barmedman, Marsden, and Morangarell taken from the acting clerks of petty sessions show that there are twenty-three leaseholders and fifty-five farmers occupying an area of over 1,400,000 acres of land carrying 500,000 sheep, 1,600 cattle, 700 horses. The amount of revenue the Government received from stock owners as assessment is over £600.

The whole of the farmers round Barmedman having settled subsequent to the passing of the Amended Land Act of 1884, the area under cultivation is necessarily limited, the men being fully occupied erecting such improvements as were made compulsory by the Act, such as fencing (from 8 to 10 miles per C.P. and C.L. of 2,560 acres), dam-making, ring-barking, &c., &c. There are however some 500 acres under wheat and oats, &c, principally for domestic purposes. The wool returns are 1,000 tons or 5,000 bales per annum. The surrounding country is for the most part in a state of nature, but with railway extension promised would undergo such a change at the hands of small settlers as would not only increase the carrying capabilities to more than double the present numbers, but would have the effect of inducing the farmers to increase the cultivated area to ten times the extent. The distance to railway carriage at present making it impossible for farmers to grow crops profitably.

In addition to the above statistics I also beg to attach returns from Junee, old Junee, Coolamon, and Cootamundra as furnished by our own officers as showing the amount of traffic from Temora district.

In conclusion there is no doubt that a large traffic is carried on between Cootamundra and Temora, and with proper means of transit would be considerably increased.

The character of the country is favourable to the construction of a light line of railway which should pay good interest on the outlay. I cannot however see my way to suggest a continuation of the line beyond Temora at present, as the population and probable traffic do not, in my opinion, warrant it. No doubt it will be necessary at some future date to continue the line to Barmedman and eventually on to the Lachlan.

The requirements of the selectors, &c., between Temora and Barmedman will be greatly assisted by the construction of the line to the former place.

Since my return home I have received the enclosed letter from Mr. P. Heffernan, J.P., of Clear Hills, near Temora, in which it will be seen that he advocates the line to Temora being started from Bethungra instead of Cootamundra.

Beyond believing the Bethungra route to be the shorter, I cannot venture to give any reliable information or express any opinions on the subject advanced by Mr. Heffernan in its favor.

The Chief Traffic Manager, Redfern.

P.S.—Since writing my report yesterday, I am in receipt of tracing of surveyed line, and am returning to you by up mail to-night.

I have, &c.,

G. J. ROBERTS.

Junee, 13th June, 1889.

Proposed Railway—Cootamundra to Temora, and vice versa.—Probable working expenses.

MR. HACKETT, Locomotive Inspector, Harden, informs me that one engine will do the service with one driver at 14s, one fireman at 10s., a cleaner at 7s., and stores 9s., or a total cost of £2 per day. The traffic expenses will be as under—One guard at 10s. per day, one porter in charge at Stockinbingal, 45s. per week; one station master, Temora, at £150 per annum; one porter at 7s. per day, and a junior porter at 30s. per week at Temora, and gatekeepers, say, 25s. per week. This gives a yearly cost of £1,442 5s., and to this must be added the cost of wear and tear, and permanent way expenses. My calculations are based on the assumption that it will be a seven-day service on this branch, and that the trains are to run in connection with the present up and down mails. Mr. Hackett's estimate does not include coal, nor does mine include traffic stores.

Chief Traffic Manager.

G. J. ROBERTS.

278. Where do the people of the Temora and Barmedman districts find a market now? At Cootamundra and Sydney.

279. Is not a large portion of their produce sent to Junee? No.

280. Not any at all? Only to a small extent.

281. But there is a traffic to Junee? Yes. That is owing to the differential rates. The people in that district are in the habit of getting stores sent to Wagga Wagga by railway, and carried to Temora by teams, but their proper outlet is Cootamundra.

282. Their goods are forwarded to Cootamundra to be sent either north or south? The traffic comes this way.

283. Therefore if the line struck the main line nearer Sydney, it would be to the interest of the Temora people? Yes.

284. Do you know anything of the country to the north of Cootamundra? I know all the country there.

285. What is the nature of the country between Yeo Yeo and Wallendbeen;—is it more difficult than the country between Cootamundra and Yeo Yeo? Yes. It may be a little more broken and undulating.

286. Would it not be more to the interests of the Temora people if the branch line started from Wallendbeen instead of Cootamundra? Yes. It is the shorter distance to Sydney.

287. Do you know whether much produce from Cootamundra goes south? Not a great deal.

288. Their natural markets are at Sydney, and the towns along the line? Sydney and Goulburn.

289. Your assumption that the line would pay working expenses is based on the supposition that large areas of Crown lands will be thrown open and occupied? Yes.

290. With the present population is there anything to warrant the construction of the line? I do not think it would be a paying speculation; but I am certain that if the land were cut up, every acre of it would be occupied.

- G. J. Roberts, Esq., 291. Does not that apply to many parts of the Colony? The character of the country is not suitable to settlement in some parts.
- 16 Jan., 1890. 292. Is not the land immediately around Temora of rather a poor description? No.
293. Have you gone over the ground about there? I have travelled all over it.
294. And you think that the country, say, for 7 miles out of Temora, towards Cootamundra, is good country? Yes; there are one or two stringy-bark ranges in it; but as a whole it is a splendid bit of country. It will be expensive clearing it.
295. Mr. Copeland.] What is the nature of the soil? It is red soil.
296. And a pretty good depth? Yes.
297. Is there any pine scrub? Yes, I noticed it particularly beyond Temora, to the westward. There is some splendid ironbark between Stockinbingal and Temora.
298. Suitable for sleepers? Yes, and for fencing.
299. You said that if the leasehold areas were cut up and thrown open to the public, a great deal of it would be taken up? I believe that all of it would be taken up.
300. Do you know how long the leases have to run? I understood that they had to run till the end of last year.
301. Can you say whether the whole of the land on the resumed area is taken up? I could not.
302. Do you know whether there are any reserves which could be thrown open? Yes. I refer to them in my report.
303. Those reserves are good land and would be selected? Yes.
304. Mr. Hurley.] You referred to some tin-bearing country? Yes.
305. Did you visit it? Yes; I have travelled through a portion of it.
306. Can you form any idea as to the probable returns? No; I do not think anything came of it after all.
307. Mr. O'Sullivan.] You have had some experience in gathering traffic estimates, have you not? Yes.
308. You reported on the proposed line from Culcairn to Corowa, did you not? I did.
309. Is the settlement on this line anything like that on the proposed line from Culcairn to Corowa? As far as Stockinbingal there is even more settlement, that is for a distance of 15 miles, out of Cootamundra. Beyond that there are only a few settlers on the land to Temora.
310. Do you consider the settlement there of a *bona fide* character? Yes. They are a splendid lot of farmers about Stockinbingal, some of the best in the colony.
311. Do they send their wool to Sydney or Melbourne? Principally to Sydney.
312. Is the soil there as good as that on the proposed line to Corowa? I believe it is better.
313. You consider that there is great room there for the development of agriculture? I do.
314. Do you say that Temora is a worked-out gold-field? Pretty well. There was very little doing when I was there.
315. Is there any unprospected auriferous country there? I believe there is.
316. And there is likely to be another rush or two? I believe there will be.
317. Mr. Cox.] Do you know the country between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? I have never travelled across it, but I believe it is excellent country. Some of the best farmers are at Jindalee.
318. Can you account for the line going from Cootamundra, and being so many miles longer than it would be if it started from Wallendbeen? I cannot. It might be a little more expense to cross the range there. It is 12 miles from Wallendbeen to Cootamundra.
319. What is the distance from Cootamundra to Yeo Yeo? Between 8 and 10 miles.
320. Mr. Humphery.] Is the land between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo as suitable for agriculture as that between Cootamundra and Yeo Yeo? I think so. Mr. Gibbs, of Berthong, owns a large tract of country between Yeo Yeo and Wallendbeen.

Thomas R. Firth, Esq., Assistant Engineer, in Charge of Trial Surveys, sworn, and examined:—

- T. R. Firth, Esq., 321. Mr. Copeland.] What is your position in the service? Assistant Engineer, in Charge of Trial Surveys.
- 16 Jan., 1890. 322. Have you been over the route of the proposed line from Cootamundra to Temora? No, I have not been over it since the survey was made. It is about fifteen years since I was over that part of the country. I have been as far as Stockinbingal.
323. It is proposed that this railway shall branch off at Cootamundra, making a detour to the northward. Do you know anything about the range where the surveyed line traverses it? Yes, I know the country in the direction of Wallendbeen.
324. What sort of a country is it between Yeo Yeo and Wallendbeen? The range would be rather difficult to get down, but after having got down there would be no difficulty at all.
325. Would it be any more difficult to cross the range in a straight line from Wallendbeen than to cross it at an angle? Yes, considerably more.
326. In what does the difficulty consist? It is much higher, and there are so many spurs running out.
327. Is there any gap through which the railway can be taken between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? I examined with the view of taking the Wagga Wagga line through there, but I could only get down with 1 in 40, and it would be much more expensive than crossing the range at the bend in the proposed line.
328. Do you consider it a good proposal to start the line at Cootamundra and make that angle? If I had to make a line from Sydney to Temora I should go that way.
329. Would you not endeavour to take the line by Wallendbeen? I should.
330. Have you examined the range so as to be sure that the spot where the line makes this angle is the only place at which the range can be crossed? It can be crossed in a line from Yeo Yeo to Wallendbeen, but not at the same cost. It might, perhaps, be necessary to go a little further back than Wallendbeen.
331. Do you not think it likely that there would be a gap? The range is very steep and rugged on the north-western side.
332. What would be the additional height to rise in getting across the range where you suggested? You would rise no higher than you do on the Southern line.
333. Then where is the difficulty of crossing? The difficulty is in getting down on the other side. It falls rapidly and there are a great many spurs.

334. Would there be no chance of carrying the line along the range? It would have to be carried along the range and you would have to cross the spurs. That is what causes the expense. The line would have to skirt along the range and to be gradually dropping. You would have to follow the range for some distance and to be crossing the spurs all the time.

T. R. Firth,
Esq.

16 Jan., 1890.

335. You are aware that if the line was taken in a direct line from Wallendbeen 12 miles would have been saved? Very probably; but I do not suppose you would shorten the distance of construction.

336. But there would be 12 miles shorter haulage? Yes.

337. The question is, are the difficulties of such an insurmountable character that the line must start from Cootamundra, thus making 12 or 13 miles extra haulage from Temora to Sydney? I do not think so. I could get a grade of 1 in 40.

338. I suppose, by a further examination of the country, you could get a better grade? We might get a grade of 1 in 60. I would not say that even a better than that might not be got. It is fifteen years since I examined that country. A grade of 1 in 40 would have satisfied us then.

339. Are there no steep grades on the present route? No. They are 1 in '75.

340. Do you know whether the country west of Wallendbeen is good for agricultural purposes? It is very good country to the top of the range; then it is good grazing country until you get down, after which there is more agricultural country.

341. Do you know anything of the country beyond Yeo Yeo in the direction of Temora? No.

342. Do you know anything of the geological formation about Yeo Yeo? It is shale and schist.

343. Would there be any difficulty in getting ballast? No.

344. Do you remember what timber there is? There is a little ironbark on that range.

345. Suitable for sleepers? Yes. There is no big timber.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and further examined :

346. *Chairman.*] You have been sworn in this inquiry? Yes.

347. As far as the Committee can gather there does not appear to have been any exploration made by your Department, as to the possibility of connecting the proposed line with the main line further north than Cootamundra? No.

H. Deane,
Esq.

16 Jan., 1890.

348. Can you give any reason why that was not done? Since giving evidence yesterday I have looked into the question of a junction at Wallendbeen, and I find that when the matter was considered that idea was rejected, and Cootamundra was selected as it was already the junction of the Gundagai line. It was considered undesirable to increase the number of junctions. It was also considered that stock coming right across from between these two districts, Temora and Gundagai, in that direction would be better accommodated at Cootamundra than by having to go to Wallendbeen.

349. Then the matter was considered by the Department? Yes.

350. Would that connection add materially to the expense of maintenance? Yes, Wallendbeen is a small station at present. There would have to be an increase in the staff, and an alteration in the station yards.

351. Would there not be a saving of 10 or 12 miles to the people of Temora in going to Sydney? There would be some saving. I estimate it at 8 or 9 miles; it might be 10 or 12.

352. *Mr. Copeland.*] Have you any reason for thinking that the stock would require to be moved on that line from Temora down towards Gundagai? I really have not considered the matter myself. It would be convenient to take stock along by Gundagai, and if the line were extended to Tumut it would be taken on to the high land.

353. Suppose that people at Hillston, Barmedman, and other places wished to send stock to Cootamundra, could they not do so by sending them to Wallendbeen, and keeping them in the same trucks which could travel back and get on the Gundagai line? Yes; but there would be the extra travelling.

354. And if they wanted to send the stock to Sydney there would be less travelling? Yes; that would be a great advantage. There would probably be more traffic in the direction of Sydney than across the country to Gundagai.

355. Then the real difficulty seems to be in the department not wanting to create another junction at Wallendbeen? Yes; and another is that the line would be more costly if made from there.

356. But have you had that ascertained by actual examination? I have spoken with Mr. Firth on the subject.

357. We have had his evidence to-day. He has not been over that country for fifteen years, but he thinks that the line could be constructed from Wallendbeen? Yes; but he told me that it would be at a considerably higher cost. The best way would be to send someone down there to ride over the country and form an opinion. He could proceed from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo, and then return to Cootamundra.

358. When could you get that done? I could send someone at once, and let you have a report by the end of next week.

359. *Dr. Garran.*] As far as the agricultural traffic is concerned the market would be more in Sydney than down south? Yes.

360. Therefore a straighter line would suit the farmers the best? I should consider that it would.

361. And as to stock it would all depend on whether it was going south or going to Sydney? Yes; or going across the country.

362. You are positive that as far as traffic is concerned a straighter line would be better? Yes.

363. But not so sure about the stock? No.

THURSDAY,

THURSDAY, 23 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).	
The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.	JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.	

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Cootamundra to Temora.

William Hutchinson, Esq., District Engineer, sworn, and examined:—

- W. Hutchinson, Esq.
23 Jan., 1890.
363. *Mr. Copeland.*] What position do you hold? I am a district engineer in the Railway Department.
364. For which district? No particular district—I am merely what they call a “district engineer.”
365. You were sent up, I believe, by the department to examine the country between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? Yes.
366. What time did you spend in that examination? Four days.
367. Did you make a very critical, close examination of it? Yes.
368. Or did you merely ride over the track? I walked a good deal about the place and rode as well.
369. Did you know the district before you went? No I did not know the district at all before I went.
370. Did you have anyone with you to point out any gaps or lower altitudes, or anything of that kind? Yes. The first day I went out I had a man who was said by the people there to know the district better than anybody else in the place. He pointed out where he thought it was possible to take a railway.
371. What is his name? Stacey.
372. What is he in the district? He is a selector. I do not know what exactly he is besides that. He keeps horses and that sort of thing.
373. Did he accompany you on the whole journey? He took me over the range, down to where the country was level, and I did not require him. And besides this man I had two or three others who came on Monday and Tuesday with me. One gentleman, a Mr. Gibb, who knows the country very well, took me.
374. By this map it would appear that the direction you have taken was across the range, right in the face—at right angles? Yes.
375. Would it not have been possible for you to have got a better grade if you had taken the range on the eastern side sideways. Your course has evidently been nearly west in crossing the range; you have ascended the range on the face and then crossed down again immediately. What I want to know is whether you examined the country with the view of carrying the railway farther south on the cap of the range, getting up one side gradually and coming down the other side gradually, in the direction of this red mark? You could not go south of the point shown on this map where the line is taken, as the range is higher. Where it is marked blue there is a gap where the old traffic used to go years ago.
376. Would it not be possible to find a spur on the eastern side of the range leading up? Not in my opinion.
377. Did you examine the country with that object? Yes. I examined the country all through here. This map does not show the range correctly at all. It is all rangey country—you get into a lot of ranges here. It is not merely one range—the range extends 2 or 3 miles.
378. I suppose where the map shows the land has been selected these selections are off the range? No; on the range.
379. You were ascending how far from where this line intersects the range? For about 2½ miles, I should think.
380. What, the whole time? Yes; a gradual ascent.
381. You think that by curving the line further to the south, and letting it run to a greater distance on the range, you could not make a more gradual descent? No; you get into very rough country. By going south of the blue line on the plan you get into much rougher country—rangey country.
382. What object had you in taking the line so far to the north in this curve? To get down a gully here, as indicated on the map.
383. And from your examination you think it would not be practicable to take the line farther south in the direction I have marked? I think not.
384. Why have you extended this blue line before junctioning with the previous survey? It gives a little better country the way the blue line is shown. You might go down where that curve is shown but it would not be quite so easy. You must cross the Congo Creek at the point shown on the blue line.
385. What in respect to agriculture is the nature of the country on the course of this line that you examined? Some of it is good agricultural land; some of it is land fit only for grazing purposes.
386. Is it as good as the land on the red line? No, not as level; not as good for agriculture, and there is not as much agriculture on it.
387. There seem to be a large number of selections? This land after you get out 3 miles from Wallendbeen Wallendbeen in nearly all in the hands of a squatter.
388. The people generally in the district about Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo—were they favourable to this line you went to examine? The people about Yeo Yeo did not care which way the line went, as either way it comes through Yeo Yeo. Of course it was a little less haulage for them, but they did not seem to care much about that.
389. I suppose you did not go out as far as Temora? Oh, no. I went as far as Stockinbingal, shown on that plan.
390. Did the people at Wallendbeen express any opinion in favour of the shorter route? Yes; those that I spoke to at Wallendbeen were all anxious it should go from Wallendbeen.
391. I think you say there would be a grade of 1 in 40 for about 2 miles from the point marked B on the plan to the timber reserve 1,274; would it not be possible to improve on that grade of 1 in 40? I do not think so.
392. The rest of the line seems to be a fairly suitable grade, is it not? Yes, the grade on the rest of the line is fairly good. I think you could get 1 in 75.
- 393.

W.
Hutchinson,
Esq.
23 Jan., 1890.

393. All except for these 2 miles? Except for those 2 miles.
394. And that would be 1 in 40? Yes, I do not think anything less.
395. You think that with a more careful examination you could not improve on the grade? I do not think so.
396. Did you form any estimate of the cost of taking the railway by that route? No.
397. Did you notice any rocks suitable for ballast, or what timber there was on the ground? There would be good gravel ballast on the ironbark reserve shown on the plan, and timber suitable.
398. Timber suitable for sleepers? Yes.
399. Would the timber be any better on that route than on the Cootamundra route? About the same.
400. Then as an engineer, although the distance is very much farther to go round by Cootamundra—for the people to send their produce (say) from Temora round by Cootamundra to get to Goulburn—still as a professional man do you think it would be advisable for them to pay all that additional haulage? I think that the cost of this line from Wallendbeen would be very much greater than the one from Cootamundra.
401. Can you give any idea as to how much greater? No, I would not give an opinion as to how much greater without seeing a detailed section of the line.
402. What you mean I suppose, is that it would be greater per mile? Yes. The chief difference would be in excavation; there is very little on the other line, but the cuttings would be considerable on this line.
403. Can you say how much it would shorten the distance between Temora and Wallendbeen? About $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The line from Wallendbeen to the junction of the Cootamundra to Temora line would be about $14\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
404. And do you think that you spent sufficient time in examining the range with the view as I pointed out of carrying the line along the range for some distance, and so getting a more gradual descent? Yes. I do not think that by any further examination you would get a better line. You are practically fixed to one or two points; you could not cross anywhere else.
405. I suppose you do not think there is any other route that could be extended successfully, say, starting from some point other than Wallendbeen, so as to shorten the whole distance? No. The only place where I think it would be possible to start from is Nubbo siding, but that would lengthen the line considerably, and then it would be very rough.
406. Is that on the Goulburn side of Wallendbeen? About 4 miles on the Goulburn side of Wallendbeen.
407. What you mean by that is it would make the line to be constructed much longer? Yes.
408. But even then the whole journey from Temora would be much shorter than the one proposed by Cootamundra? Yes. I am very doubtful as to whether you could get a line that way. I only mention this because the people there thought it might be done. I did not examine the country in any shape or form there.
409. They thought it might be done? Yes, in the same way they thought the line could easily be taken from Wallendbeen to Temora.
410. Can you give the Committee the actual distance between Wallendbeen and Temora by the line you examined and also the distance by Cootamundra to Temora? If I could see the plan again I think I could, approximately. (*Witness looked at the plan.*) The line by Cootamundra to Temora would, I believe, be 289 miles from Sydney; the other line, by Wallendbeen, would be about $279\frac{1}{2}$ miles. There would be a saving of about $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
411. Your opinion is that the country on the Wallendbeen line is not so good as that on the Cootamundra line for agriculture? Yes. It is much more rangey, rougher country—altogether not so suitable for agriculture.
412. Still, judging from the map, it appears that there are a very large number of selections to which the Wallendbeen line would be beneficial; are all those selections used for grazing purposes? The greater number of them. I understand from Mr. Gibb the squatter there that these selections all belong to him now—the greater number of them.
413. Was Mr. Gibb favourable to the Wallendbeen line? Yes, very.
414. Did Mr. Gibb accompany you on the journey? Yes, on the second day—on the Tuesday he took me over to two gaps he thought were suitable to take the line through.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Cootamundra to Temora.

APPENDIX.

A.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 20 June, 1889.

Proposed Branch Line of Railway—Cootamundra to Temora—35½ miles.

IN accordance with section 13 of the "Public Works Act, 1888," we beg to report as under :—

Cost of construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief estimates the cost of construction of a single line of railway (exclusive of land and compensation) at £200,000

Annual cost—

Interest on cost of construction, at 3½ per cent. £7,000

The estimated cost of working the line would be as under :—

Traffic expenses £1,147
Permanent-way expenses 4,500
Locomotive expenses 1,850

7,497

£14,497

A trial line has in this instance only been made, and, therefore, a rough estimate of the cost of construction, which may be accepted as fairly accurate, has been given. The interest on this cost, and the expense of working, will amount to £14,497 per annum, and to this must be added the interest on the cost of land to be resumed and the purchase of rolling stock. To meet this annual expense a considerable amount of traffic would be required, and although the district which would be served by the proposed line is admirably adapted for agricultural settlement, and will, in the future, prove capable of settling a large population, the settlement at present, while numbering many agriculturalists of the best type, is too limited to leave room for the expectation of working expenses being realized. In the district, however, there is a considerable area of Crown lands, which would be much enhanced in value by railway communication, and also one or more valuable timber reserves. If a substantial sum, to be derived from the sale of these lands, were devoted towards the payment of the cost of constructing the line, and the Railway Department afforded some privileges in the direction of obtaining a supply of ironbark and other timber suitable for railway works, the construction of the line could be recommended, but not otherwise.

We consider that the residents in the district should combine together to have the land necessary for the construction of the line conveyed to the Department free of cost, if the line is made.

The seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales
was hereto affixed this twentieth day of June, in the
presence of,—

HUGH M'LACHLAN.

{ E. M. G. EDDY,
Chief Commissioner.
W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.
CHARLES OLIVER,
Commissioner.

B.

OFFICIAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

Cootamundra to Temora—Length, 35 miles 66 chains 14 links.

The estimated cost of constructing this as a light line of Railway is £146,400, or £4,086 per mile, exclusive of cost of land and compensation.

THIS branch line leaves the Great Southern Railway on the Sydney side of the Cootamundra station at 252 miles 43 chains 86 links from Sydney, and is terminated near Temora at 288 miles 30 chains from Sydney, being a length of 35 miles 66 chains 14 links.

The character of the country passed through is very undulating. A surface line has been designed in order to reduce the cost of construction.

No rivers of any magnitude are crossed.
August, 1889.

Revised on November 8, 1889.

Length, 37 miles 58 chains 14 links; cost, £138,000; average per mile, £3,656. Leaves Cootamundra at 252 miles 43 chains 86 links from Sydney. Terminates in Temora at 290 miles 22 chains. Proposed station at Temora would be between Schleicher and Baker streets.

C.

APPENDIX.

C.

DETAILS OF ESTIMATED COST OF PROPOSED RAILWAY.

PROPOSED Railway from Cootamundra to Temora—Estimated cost of constructing a single line of Railway (exclusive of cost of land and compensation).

Length of main line, 37 miles 58 chains ; length of sidings, 1 mile 35 chains ; total, 39 miles 13 chains.

Class of Work.	Estimated cost of works of each class.		Total cost.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Excavations.....			18,875	0 0
No. —Box drains.....			1,540	0 0
Bridges—				
No. 27—Treble spans of 6 feet	2,491	10 0		
No. 4—Bridges of more than 3 spans of 6 feet, aggregating 25 spans	677	15 0		
No. 19—Single spans of 10 feet 6 inches	3,609	15 0		
No. 1—Double spans of 10 feet 6 inches	164	10 0		
No. 2—Treble spans of 10 feet 6 inches	333	10 0		
No. 6—Bridges of more than 3 spans of 10 feet 6 inches, aggregating 57 spans	2,624	5 0	9,901	5 0
No. —Bridges of more than 3 spans of 24 feet, aggregating spans				
No. —Level crossings			3,240	16 0
Permanent way and ballasting			68,856	16 5
No. —Stations			9,067	5 0
No. —Water supplies			2,000	0 0
Fencing			5,850	0 0
Signals			600	0 0
Cost of works			119,931	2 5
Engineering and contingencies	15 per cent.		17,989	13 4
Total (say)	138,000	0 0	137,920	15 9
Average cost per mile (say).....	3,656	0 0	3,655	19 0

H. DEANE,
Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

Engineer-in-Chief's Office, 15 January, 1890.

D.

COOTAMUNDRA TO TEMORA RAILWAY.

Book of Reference to Parliamentary Plan.

No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of			Remarks.
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.	
County of Harden, parish of Cootamundra.						
1	G. S. Railway.....		Crown		Crown.	
2	Town allotment, house and fence		Jas. Cameron		John Hawkins.	
3	Hovell-street		Crown		John Kelly.	
4	Town allotment fenced		James Gunning.....		"	
5	"		Mrs. Healy		Peter Brown.	
6	"		John Smith		"	
7	Street		Crown		"	
8	Town allotment fenced		"		"	
9	Yass Road		"		"	
10	Grass paddock		John Morris.....		John Morris.	
11	"		"		"	
12	"		Edward Quinlan		Edward Quinlan.	
13	"		John Morris		John Morris.	
14	Reserved road.....		Crown		"	
15	Grass paddock.....		J. Hurley.....		J. Hurley.	
16	Racecourse		Trustees of Race-course.		Trustees of Race-course.	
17	Grass paddock, house, &c,		J. Canty		J. Canty.	
18	Crown land		Crown		"	
18a	Berthong Road		"		"	
19	Grass paddock		William Corby		Wm. Corby.	
20	Reserved road.....		Crown		"	
County of Harden, parish of Tindallee.						
21	Reserved road.....		Crown		"	
22	Paddocks partly cultivated		John Hurley		Wm. Corby.	
23	Cultivation paddock		William Freer.....		Wm. Freer.	
24	Reserved road.....		Crown		"	
25	Grass paddock		William Remhan		Wm. Remhan.	
26	Reserved road.....		Crown		"	
27	Grass paddock		William Remhan		Wm. Remhan.	
County of Bland, parish of Yeo Yeo.						
28	Grass paddock		Wm. Reardon.....		Wm. Reardon.	
29	Reserved Road		Crown		"	
30	Grass paddock, brush land		Wm. Reardon.....		Wm. Reardon.....	Sheep run.
31	"		G. R. Davidson		G. R. Davidson	"
32	"		Wm. Reardon.....		Wm. Reardon.....	"
33	"		E. R. Raymond.....		E. R. Raymond	"
34	"		John Noonan		John Noonan	"
35	Travelling stock reserve		Crown		"	

No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of.			Remarks.
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.	
County of Bland, parish of Stockinbingal.						
36	Town subdivision .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
37	Travelling stock reserve .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
38	Bush land .....	.....	J. T. Mackenzie .....	.....	J. T. Mackenzie	Sheep run.
39	" .....	.....	W. H. Matthews .....	.....	H. Bull	"
40	" .....	.....	.....	.....	— Sharpe	"
41	" .....	.....	F. Souther .....	.....	— Stokes	Partly cultivated
42	" .....	.....	— Stokes .....	.....	— Sharpe	"
43	" .....	.....	— Sharpe .....	.....	J. J. Mackenzie	Reserve.
44	" .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	J. T. Mackenzie	Sheep run.
45	" .....	.....	.....	.....	J. Mulcahy	
46	Wheat paddock .....	.....	J. Mulcahy .....	.....	.....
47	Travelling stock reserve .....	.....	Crown	Executors of the late Wm. O'Brien, in trust.	.....
County of Bland, parish of Gundibindyal.						
48	Grass paddock .....	.....	Executors of the late Wm. O'Brien, in trust.	.....	Executors of the late Wm. O'Brien, in trust.	
49	Bush land .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	" "
50	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	" "
51	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	— Cope	Sheep run.
52	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....	W.R., 200
53	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....	Sheep run.
54	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....	Reserve 1820.
55	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....	Sheep run.
County of Bland, parish of Combaning.						
56	Travelling stock reserve 1,470... ..	.....	" .....	.....	— Cope	Sheep run.
57	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....	"
58	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	" .....	"
County of Bland, parish of Bundawarrah.						
59	Bush land .....	.....	" .....	.....	— Cope	Sheep run.
60	Town common .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
61	Racecourse .....	.....	Trustees of Racecourse.	.....	Trustees of Racecourse.	
62	Town common .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
63	Main road from Cootamundra .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
64	Town common .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
65	Main road from Young .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
66	Town common .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....

H. DEANE.

E.

REPORT BY MR. DISTRICT-ENGINEER HUTCHINSON ON THE COUNTRY BETWEEN WALLENDREEN AND YEO YEO.

Railway Construction Department, Sydney, January 22nd, 1890.

Memo. to the Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

IN compliance with your verbal instructions of the 16th inst., I beg to inform you that I have examined the country between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo with the view of obtaining a practical route for a line of railway, and I have marked on the attached county map the only way in which, in my opinion, a line could be taken.

From Wallendbeen to the commencement of the Dividing Range at A an easy line could be obtained, with gradients not exceeding 1 in 75. For the next 2½ miles the line would have to be taken over broken and ridgy country to the summit of the Dividing Range at B; on this portion of the line it might be possible to adopt 1 in 75 as a maximum grade, but to do so would entail curving the line about a good deal, and a considerable amount of excavation and embankment. From the summit of the divide at B the country falls quickly to Timber Reserve No. 1274, and the line could only descend this range by means of a gradient of 1 in 40 for about 2 miles. From Timber Reserve No. 1274 to within half-a-mile of Congo Creek the line would be easy and the gradients flat; from this point the line would ascend to a gap in the range on the south side of Congo Creek and descend again to level country, after which the line would be an easy one to the point of intersection with the line from Cootamundra to Temora.

W. HUTCHINSON,
District Engineer.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

RAILWAY FROM COOTAMUNDRA TO TEMORA.

REPORT.

THE Sectional Committee appointed to "inspect, inquire, and report with reference to the proposed Railway from Cootamundra to Temora," have the honor to submit the following Report:—

The Committee left Sydney on the evening of Friday, the 31st January last, and arrived next morning at Cootamundra, where a sitting was held in the Court-house, and seventeen witnesses examined. The evidence of two more witnesses was taken in the evening at the "Albion Hotel." On the following Monday the Committee proceeded to Stockinbingal, and held a sitting at Woodhouse's hotel, where eight witnesses were examined. On the same afternoon the Committee proceeded along the route of the proposed railway to Temora, which was reached about 6 o'clock in the evening, when arrangements were made for procuring evidence. Next morning the Committee met in the Court-house at Temora, and examined twenty witnesses, including three from Barmedman. The presence in Temora of these witnesses from Barmedman rendered it unnecessary for the Committee to proceed to that place as intended, and on Wednesday they started for Wallendbeen, *via* Stockinbingal. They were met at Stockinbingal by a number of residents of the Wallendbeen District, who drove them over the suggested route from Stockinbingal to Wallendbeen, through the Fresh Water Spring Gap. They arrived at Wallendbeen in the evening, and examined three witnesses—additional to four others from Wallendbeen already examined at Cootamundra—after which they left by train for Sydney, where they arrived on Thursday morning.

The Committee find that the proposed railway will run from Cootamundra 12½ miles in a north-westerly direction as far as Yeo Yeo, and thence due west to Temora, *via* Stockinbingal.

An alternative route has been suggested running from Wallendbeen on the Main Southern Line, and joining the proposed line at Yeo Yeo, a distance of 14½ miles. The length of the proposed line from Cootamundra to Temora is 37½ miles, and of that from Wallendbeen 39½ miles. The haulage from Temora to Sydney, *via* Wallendbeen, would be 9½ miles less than that *via* Cootamundra, but the suggested route, besides being 2 miles longer, would be more difficult and costly to construct.

The country along both routes may be regarded as equally suitable for wheat production, and the soil and climate of the entire district to be served by the railway are eminently adapted for the growth of wheat, the former being of a rich chocolate description. There is a very large area of country in the leasehold areas and reserves which could, and, if railway facilities existed, probably would, be speedily selected and brought under cultivation,

The Committee found that extensive agricultural settlement had taken place along the proposed railway route to Stockinbingal, in the vicinity of Wallendbeen, and in the neighbourhood, as well as within a considerable radius of Temora. On the land to be served by the line to Stockinbingal the evidence shows that there are sixty-seven settlers holding an aggregate area of 75,174 acres, notwithstanding that a very large area of country is reserved for timber, water, and gold-mining purposes, much of which might be made available for agricultural settlement by being thrown open in special areas. The yield of wheat per acre in a good season is abnormal. The average this year is stated to be about 20 bushels to the acre, but instances were cited in which a very much larger yield was obtained. The land lying towards the Lachlan River was also reported to be admirably suited for agriculture; but owing

to

to the heavy rates charged for the conveyance of wheat to the railway, only a limited wheat cultivation is at present carried on in that part of the district. The high rates of carriage, and the difficulty in obtaining teams at harvest time, are serious drawbacks to the profitable occupation of the land. Nevertheless, there appear to be many inquiries for land in the district by members of the agricultural class.

The soil in the vicinity of Temora is well suited for vineyards and for horticulture. Some very fine specimens of grapes, apples, figs, plums, &c., were produced before the Committee as evidence of this; but up to the present time the pursuit of fruit-growing has not been followed to any great extent. However, those who have tried the experiment are confident that if cheap and easy access to a market were provided, the fruit industry would become a very profitable one at Temora.

There appear to be at least fourteen station properties to which the proposed line would be accessible for the conveyance of wool. As the railway, if constructed, would join the Gundagai line at Cootamundra, it would be likely to prove most serviceable to stock-owners for the purpose of removing their sheep to summer country in times of drought. The evidence clearly indicates that during the last drought a very large number of sheep were moved from the back country along the route of the proposed railway; and as there are three travelling stock routes in the vicinity of Cootamundra the proposed line would very likely also be used for the transportation of stock to the local and metropolitan markets. In dry seasons a considerable return might be expected from the conveyance of fodder from the southern districts to the back country.

The township of Temora came into existence on the discovery of gold there about the year 1880, and for a considerable period it was a flourishing centre of business, with a large population. Gold-mining has, however, declined to a minimum; very few men are now engaged at alluvial working, and only a small number find profitable occupation at reefing. The town, which at one time appeared very much depressed, shows signs of revival, and now possesses a population of over 1,000 people. There are sixteen licensed hotels there, and the general trade of the place appears now to be on a sound financial basis, the town being principally supported by the agriculturists of the surrounding districts.

The passenger traffic between Temora and Cootamundra is not at the present time very considerable.

There is a belt of excellent ironbark timber in the range between Stockinbingal and Temora, and abundance of suitable ballast is to be found along the entire route.

No difficulties are presented by the country through which it is proposed that the railway should be carried, and the engineers have taken care to ensure an easy grade by crossing the dividing range through a gap in which there is a scarcely perceptible rise. As far therefore as its physical features are concerned the country does not offer the slightest obstacle to the construction of a cheap line of railway.

A deviation has been suggested by the Engineer for the purpose of avoiding ground worked by the miners, and obtaining a better entrance to Temora and a more suitable station site.

As the result of their inquiry the Committee desire to recommend that the line submitted to them should be constructed to Temora, *via* Stockinbingal, from Cootamundra.

They have arrived at this conclusion from the evidence adduced before them, all the witnesses, with the exception of those from Wallendbeen, being of opinion that the interests of the district would be better served by communication with its local trade centre, Cootamundra. This town is the point of junction with the Gundagai line, and is therefore better adapted for travelling stock purposes than Wallendbeen. The Cootamundra line will also be more suitable for the conveyance of agricultural and other implements that are imported from Victoria and South Australia. It will have the advantage, besides, of being nearer to the Southern districts, from which fodder is obtained in times of drought. Added to this, it may be said that the majority of the farmers likely to be served by a line from Wallendbeen are within 7 miles from that place or from Stockinbingal, and therefore will be fairly well provided for in the matter of railway communication, if the line goes from Cootamundra. The line from Cootamundra will be shorter, and the cost of construction very much less, than that from Wallendbeen. All these advantages,

advantages, in the opinion of the Committee, outweigh the fact that the Cootamundra route will entail a haulage of $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Sydney or Goulburn more than would be the case if the railway were taken from Wallendbeen, and they have therefore no hesitation in recommending the line, as proposed, in preference to that suggested *via* Wallendbeen. In these views your Committee is supported by the evidence of all the witnesses, save those from Wallendbeen.

In making this recommendation, the Committee are influenced by the evident suitability of the whole district for purposes of husbandry, and its capacity for carrying a large population; and they believe that, though there may not be a prospect of an immediate return sufficient to pay interest on the cost of construction, yet in the course of a few years the expenditure will be fully justified by the results.

In conclusion the Committee would point out that as the country between Cootamundra and Temora offers no engineering difficulties, and as timber and ballast are to be found in abundance along the route this railway should be constructed at a minimum cost.

As the average cost of railway fencing has not been less than £100 per mile, and as it appears from the evidence taken during this inquiry that men in the district are willing to erect similar fencing at a cost of £55 per mile, the Committee are of opinion that it would be conducive to the public interest if a separate contract were let for fencing, as the cost of construction would be materially lessened by bringing the work within the range of local competition.

11th February, 1890.

HENRY COPELAND,
Chairman.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM COOTAMUNDRA TO TEMORA.

[TAKEN BEFORE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.]

SATURDAY, 1 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at Cootamundra at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

HENRY COPELAND, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY. | EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

The Sectional Committee proceeded to consider the proposed railway from Cootamundra to Temora.

James Alexander Kenneth Mackay, Esq., grazier, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman*] What is your occupation? I am a grazier. My father is a grazier, and I live on his property.
2. Where do you reside? At Wallendbeen.
3. Do you carry on any agriculture? We had this year about 320 acres under wheat.
4. Do you send the wheat to the Wallendbeen railway station? We send it to the Wallendbeen station when shipping it away.
5. What distance are you from the Wallendbeen station? About 2 miles.
6. Have you had your harvest? Yes.
7. How many bushels has it yielded to the acre? I could not be quite certain, but I should say about 20.
8. Then with reference to the railway to Temora, you are not personally interested in the matter, seeing that you are already near enough to the Wallendbeen railway station? No. For the purpose of sending away wheat we should not use the Temora railway at all. We have our railway at Wallendbeen.
9. And the same remark applies in reference to stock? Yes. Our stock would go to Sydney, as it does at present, even if we did get the line from Temora to Wallendbeen.
10. Do you know the country personally between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? I cannot say I know it well—I have been over it. I went over the proposed line. Yesterday I went through the gap spoken of by Mr. Hutchinson in his report. I drove through it.
11. I suppose there is no difficulty in driving a vehicle across the gap? Well, it is a rough road. It is country that has been ringbarked, and a great deal of the timber has fallen. Myself and a friend started yesterday, and we drove right through the whole of what is called difficult country. I cannot say that it was easy driving, but at the same time it was quite possible to drive through it.
12. I suppose, personally, you are in favour of the railway being taken from Wallendbeen instead of from Cootamundra? Yes. I would prefer that route, although we have interests in Cootamundra as well as in Wallendbeen. We will be benefited whichever way the railway goes.
13. Taking a public view of the question, in your opinion should the railway start from Cootamundra, or from Wallendbeen? I think from Wallendbeen.
14. What is your opinion for thinking so? Because at least $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles of haulage would be saved—possibly more. I am going by Mr. Hutchinson's report. The Wallendbeen route would bring the railway a certain number of miles nearer Sydney. I presume the line is intended to tap Hillston and the back country. I know the sympathies of that country to be as a rule thoroughly Victorian, and I think the nearer you can bring your terminus to Sydney the better, at any rate for Sydney.
15. You are aware that there is some idea that if the line were connected at Cootamundra it would be convenient for the people who have stock in the western country—Hillston and round there—to send their stock in droughty seasons to the hilly country about Tumut, by sending them on the Gundagai line;—do you think the line would be used for that purpose, and that the people would send their stock from Barmedman, Hillston, or Temora? I am doubtful. I should think it would be an exceedingly expensive experiment.
16. Has it been the practice to send stock to the mountain ranges from the country about Temora and west towards Hillston? Yes, there is no doubt that a great deal of mountain country is made use of.
17. What part of the country? Up about Tumut. I have never been there, but from all I have heard, I know it is made use of extensively for sheep.
18. If the railway were constructed to Cootamundra, do you think the people would be likely to send their stock by rail to Cootamundra and on to Gundagai? I doubt it myself.

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- J. A. K. Mackay, Esq.
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19. Do you think it would be cheaper for them to travel the stock to the mountains? I do. In big lots, such as theirs would be, I do not see how it would pay.
20. If the country was dry, and there was little feed on the road, would they not be likely to avail themselves of the railway? They might possibly do so for the removal of valuable sheep, which they would rather go to a big expense than lose, but as regards ordinary sheep it is a long way, and the cost would swallow up all the good.
21. I suppose there are plenty of travelling stock routes in the neighbourhood? There is a travelling stock route from Wallendbeen out as far as Lake Cudgellico. It is a very good one. The only thing is that it has been given into the hands of the squatters to a great extent and there is never any grass upon it. But if that were remedied there would always be grass as far as I can see. I have travelled sheep on it myself, and I have found that it is a very good stock route, but nearly all held by the various land holders, who have deliberately eaten it down.
22. Are there any stock routes from Cootamundra or from Wallendbeen in the direction of Tumut? In most cases the land here has all been sold, and there are simply the roads. I could not say anything with regard to a stock route from here to Tumut; there may be one I do not know.
23. How many stock do you run? On Wallendbeen from 10,000 to 11,000 sheep, 300 head of cattle, and about seventy horses—that would be the average.
24. I suppose your father is the proprietor of the run? Yes.
25. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Which do you think would constitute the larger volume of traffic—the local trade from Temora to Cootamundra, with the starving stock thrown in, or the traffic that would arrive from Temora to Sydney, *via* Wallendbeen—I mean comparing the local trade, which would naturally go to Cootamundra with the trade that would go to Goulburn and Sydney, *via* Wallendbeen? I should be inclined to think that the trade would work towards Goulburn and Sydney—Sydney principally; it nearly always does. As a rule when people have an opportunity they go to Sydney for their goods, because they can obtain them cheaper there if they purchase in anything like a large quantity. I do not say they would get better quality.
26. Is not Temora regarded from an agricultural point of view as an offshoot from Cootamundra? I could hardly say. I have hardly thought of Temora as an agricultural centre, and as I have never been there, I could not give an opinion on the subject. I have never heard Temora spoken of as a very large agricultural centre, but I believe it is becoming one.
27. Do the Temora people look upon Cootamundra at the present time as their trade centre? That I could not tell you, because I know nothing about them.
28. *Mr. Humphery.*] What is the distance from Wallendbeen to the commencement of the Dividing Range? About $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
29. I mean the commencement of the range, not the top—along the proposed route? The proposed route runs to a certain point, and then suddenly dips and goes right into the gap. This point, I should think, would be about 4 miles from the railway station.
30. For the next $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, what kind of country is there? That is the only difficult country—that is through the gap.
31. What is the character of the country from the summit of the Dividing Range, marked A on Mr. Hutchinson's map, to timber reserve 1,274? It is the only rough country on the line; it is a long valley.
32. Rough country unsuitable for settlement? Well, just immediately where the line is.
33. Is that your answer? My answer would certainly not be that it is unfit for settlement any distance away. I am merely speaking of the spot where the line goes through. The country becomes good a very short distance out on each side, but where the line actually goes, and where there is a hill running up on either side, the land there would not be suitable for settlement.
34. What length of line would run through bad country—that is to say, what is the distance from the commencement of the Dividing Range to timber reserve 1,274? I should think about 2 or $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles—that would be the gap.
35. *Chairman.*] What you mean is that it is only in the valley itself that the country is broken and bad, and that when you get out of the valley the country is better? It is still hilly, but it is excellent soil. It is good country; in fact, I do not suppose there is any bad soil at all. It is rough. It would be unfit, for instance, to build upon the side of the hills.
36. Is it red soil? Yes; it is red soil right through.
37. So that the land on both sides of the gap is good, but the land in the gap itself is broken? It is very broken. I may say that it is hilly country in any case through there, but it is good country.
38. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is it suitable for agriculture? Parts of it are, but there are other parts that I think would be more suitable for grazing. It is excellent grazing land. The soil is suitable for agriculture, but in places it is rather hilly.
39. Could it be ploughed? Certainly, most of it could. A man will plough almost anything if the soil is good. It is merely a matter of more horse power or more bullock power.
40. What is the distance from timber reserve 1,274 to Yeo Yeo? I could not tell you exactly.
41. Are you familiar with the route? I am not. I went over it yesterday. I know that a great deal of it is very good country, and that the moment you come out of the gap of which I have spoken the land becomes very favourable for agriculture. You will see flat country there admirably adapted for agriculture.
42. What knowledge have you of the surveyed route from Cootamundra to Yeo Yeo? None whatever.
43. You have not been over it? No.
44. Are you able to express an opinion as to whether the proposed route from Cootamundra to Yeo Yeo would serve a larger number of people than the suggested route from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo? I am unable to answer that question, because I do not know the extent of population along the line.
45. And your opinion that the line would be better from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo is based on the fact that it would save 9 miles of haulage? That it would save 9 miles of haulage, and have a tendency to bring traffic towards Sydney instead of its going to the rival capital.

James Matheson Mackenzie, Esq., station manager, sworn and examined:—

- 46 *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Wallendbeen.
47. What is your occupation? I am manager of the Wallendbeen station.
48. The station about which Mr. Mackay has just been giving us information? Yes.
49. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] In which direction does the Wallendbeen Run lie from the town of Wallendbeen? To the east and south;—in fact the railway line goes through the run.
50. Would the proposed line from Temora to Wallendbeen, *via* Yeo Yeo, touch the Wallendbeen Run? No; it would not go through an acre of it.
51. What point on the existing railway line do your teams make for? Wallendbeen.
52. Do you get your stores from Wallendbeen or from Cootamundra? From Wallendbeen.
53. Do you know of any other stations whose wool is sent to Wallendbeen? Yes, a great number.
54. Will you name them? Mr. Gibb, of Berthong; and Messrs. Lackey, Wallace, and Mills send their wool to Wallendbeen, as do also a great number of smaller station-owners.
55. In which direction do these stations lie? Mr. Gibb's station, and Messrs. Lackey, Wallace, and Mills' station lie north from Wallendbeen.
56. Are they all north from Wallendbeen railway station? The two I have mentioned are. There are, of course, a lot on the south.
57. Then those you have mentioned are not on the proposed railway line from Temora to Wallendbeen, *via* Yeo Yeo? Yes, they are partly on that line.
58. Do all these stations draw their supplies from Wallendbeen? I believe so.
59. What stores are there at Wallendbeen by which they can be supplied? The supplies come from Sydney by train to Wallendbeen.
60. They get their stores from Wallendbeen because that is the nearest station to them? Yes.
61. Wallendbeen would be regarded, then, as their market and trade centre? Yes, that is as far as the trucking of stock is concerned, and the sending of their supplies, and wheat, and so forth.
62. Do you know the country between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? I do.
63. What is your opinion of it? I think it is very good.
64. Good for what? For agricultural purposes—with the exception of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles or 2 miles.
65. Are there many settlers there? Yes, a few.
66. If it is good country why has it not been more settled? Because it is partly in the hands of Mr. Gibb and Mr. Sinclair.
67. Leasehold area? Yes, part of it.
68. Is this land likely to be sold when the leases expire in July next? I think so.
69. Do you know of any people who are preparing to settle out that way? I do.
70. Do you regard that as difficult country for a railway to go through? No. I do not think it is.
71. Have you travelled over the route referred to by the previous witness? Yes, I could drive a four-in-hand over it without any trouble.
72. Have you ever driven across there? I have.
73. And did you have any difficulty in getting through? Not the slightest.
74. Did the route you took go anywhere near the proposed railway line? The proposed line was the route I took.
75. What stations lie upon the line of route from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo? The station of Messrs. Lackey, Wallace, and Mills, Mr. Gibb's station, called Berthong, and Geraldra, Mr. George Davidson's station.
76. Does not the station of Messrs. Lackey, Wallace, and Mills, lie north of Wallendbeen? Yes.
77. And north of the line of railway? Yes.
78. Does not Berthong also lie off the line of railway? Yes.
79. I mean the proposed line of railway from Temora by Yeo Yeo? That line would go through part of both stations.
80. Through part of Nubba? Yes, and part of Berthong too.
81. Where is the Nubba homestead? About 3 miles from the Wallendbeen railway station, to the north.
82. Would not the manager of Nubba send his wool teams to the existing southern line of railway in preference to the proposed line? I suppose he would.
83. Then the proposed line would be of no use to Nubba? I could not say that. If they got settlement there of course it would be good for them.
84. How far are the shearing sheds and the homestead of Nubba from the main southern line? About 3 miles.
85. And they stand to the north of Wallendbeen, do they not? Yes.
86. Therefore they are off the line of route taken by the Yeo Yeo line to Temora? Yes.
87. Will the same remark apply to Berthong? Yes, I believe it will.
88. Where have they been in the habit of sending their wool? To the Wallendbeen railway station.
89. Could they strike the proposed line of railway if there was a platform or station available? They might; they would save 3 or 4 miles if they did.
90. Would they be likely to unload for the sake of 3 or 4 miles? That I could not say.
91. What other stations are along the proposed Yeo Yeo line? Geraldra.
92. Any others? There are several further on.
93. Do you know their names? There is one just on the boundary—Reardon's.
94. What is the name of his run? The Oaks.
95. How many selectors do you think there are between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? That I am not prepared to say—a good many.
96. Are there twenty? Yes; more.
97. Do you think there are fifty? Yes. There will be seventy between that line and the other line.
98. How much agricultural land is likely to be thrown open when the leases fall in in July next? There are about 4 or $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles of Crown lands there reserved. It is for the Government to please themselves about that.
99. Do you think there will be 20,000 acres of leasehold fit for agricultural purposes thrown open in July? That I could not say.

J. M.
Mackenzie,
Esq.

1 Feb., 1890.

J. M.
Mackenzie,
Esq.
1 Feb., 1890.

100. How would you prefer the railway to go, speaking as a man having regard to the national interest and altogether apart from any local prejudice? I think it should go to Wallendbeen. By doing so 10 or 11 miles of haulage would be saved in the first place.
101. Where do you send your stock in dry seasons to escape the drought? Wherever we can get grass land.
102. Where can you get grass? I do not know. I have had no occasion to send sheep away for grass. We send them sometimes out to our back stations at Condobolin.
103. Do you send them further out west? No.
104. In time of drought? We sent them out there to save the grass on the station here.
105. In time of drought where do the pastoralists generally send their starving stock? To Tumberumba, in the mountains.
106. Which way would they take their stock? Through Cootamundra and through Wallendbeen. I have seen 10,000 sheep on the reserve.
107. Why do they go through Cootamundra? Because I suppose it is the nearest track for them.
108. Is it because the railway goes from there to Gundagai? I do not think so.
109. Do they use the railway at all from Cootamundra to Gundagai? I do not think so—I am not sure.
110. Why do they go through Wallendbeen with their stock? Because it is a direct route from Forbes and *via* Young and Hillston to the mountain runs.
111. By which route do the larger number go? That I could not say; but I have known 10,000 sheep on their way to the mountains to be camped on the reserve at Wallendbeen on one night.
112. Do you think if a line of railway were run out to the west towards Hillston, that the pastoralists in that direction would use the line to send their starving stock to the mountain runs to escape the drought? I do not think so. It would hardly pay them.
113. You think they would prefer to travel their stock? I believe so.
114. Is there any danger of their losing their stock on the way, owing to the want of grass? I think they would chance that sooner than pay the railway rates.
115. How long would it take to travel a flock of sheep from the neighbourhood of Hillston to the mountains? About two months.
116. How long would it take to convey them by railway? I could not say.
117. Do you think it would forty-eight hours? Yes, more.
118. Suppose it took sixty hours, do you think the stock proprietors would run the risk of a two months' journey in a time of drought when, by using the railway, they could send their stock to the mountain run in a sixty hours? I could not say what others would do, I can only speak for myself.
119. But as a man having an eye to business and to the security of your stock, which would you do? Sooner than pay the high railway rates I would travel the stock.
120. You would rather travel your stock for two months in time of drought, when there is no grass on the stock route, and run the risk of losing three-fourths of the stock? Yes. If you sent them by railway you would lose three parts of them before you got them out of the trucks.
121. Do you think that is the general opinion amongst pastoralists? I think so.
122. That they would rather travel their stock a two months' journey than pay the starving stock rates for a railway journey of sixty hours? I can only speak for myself—I know I would.
123. *Chairman.*] Would not the Nubba people use the Wallendbeen railway station? Yes.
124. So that if the line were constructed from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo they would not use it? I do not suppose they would.
125. They would still go to Wallendbeen station? Yes.
126. Is the Wallendbeen railway station nearer to Berthong than is the Nubba railway station? Yes.
127. Then do not the Berthong people use the railway station? No, they do not.
128. If the line were constructed from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo, would not the Berthong people still continue to use the Wallendbeen railway station? That I could not say. Berthong would be about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the proposed line, and it is now $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Wallendbeen railway station.
129. And how far from Nubba? About 3 miles from Nubba homestead.
130. Then the Berthong people and the Nubba people would both continue to use the railway station on the existing main Southern line? Nubba, I suppose, would, but I do not know about Berthong; they would save about 5 miles by sending to a platform on the proposed route.
131. Would they not have to pay a considerably increased railway freight if they used the line between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo;—would they not have to pay so many miles more haulage than if they used the Wallendbeen station? Yes; they would have to pay for 5 or 6 miles more haulage.
132. Then in all probability the Berthong people would use the Wallendbeen railway station? Very likely.
133. And the Nubba people would also continue to use the station on the main Southern line? Yes.
134. You are well acquainted with the nature of the country;—do you think any better route could be chosen to get through the gap than the one selected by the surveyor? I do not think so.
135. You do not think there is any better method of getting down off the range? I do not think there is, and I have known the country for the last thirty years.
136. How many selectors are there at Wallendbeen? About fifty or sixty.
137. These are *bona fide* selections in which the owners of the station have no interest? Yes.
138. Are these selectors cultivating their land? They are.
139. Growing wheat? Yes.
140. Any other crops? Yes, maize and potatoes, and they also graze a few sheep.
141. Do they get pretty good crops of wheat? They do.
142. What is about the average? I believe some of them have got as high as 40 bushels to the acre.
143. What do they generally get in maize? That I could not say.
144. What is the yield of potatoes? About one ton to the acre, I should think.
145. *Mr Humphrey.*] Is there any maize grown there? Yes. There is some growing there now.
146. Are the selectors on Wallendbeen fairly served by the existing railway? Yes.
147. Then the suggested line between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo would not be for their benefit? Not for the benefit of those on Wallendbeen, but there are a number of selectors on the west side of the southern line who would benefit largely by the proposed railway to Wallendbeen.
148. How many? About seventy.

149. On which side of the main line of railway is the Wallendbeen Run? On the south-east side.
150. All of it? Yes.
151. With regard to the selectors whom you say would be benefited by railway from Yeo Yeo to Wallendbeen, what distance are they from the existing railway? Some of them are quite close.
152. What distance? Some of them are right along the route of the proposed line.
153. How far are they from the existing railway? Five or six miles.
154. Is that the greatest distance? There are some 7 or 8 miles away.
155. Then none of the selectors referred to by you are more than 7 or 8 miles from the existing railway? About 7 miles.
156. You have referred to the Government reserve—what distance is that from the existing railway? I think about 7 miles, the proposed route going through it.
157. You said there were also some unalienated Crown lands? There is part of the timber reserve, and there is another reserve which goes on to Congo.
158. You are referring to timber reserve 1,274? Yes, and about a mile further on there is another reserve.
159. How far is that from Wallendbeen railway station? The timber reserve is about 7 miles from the existing line.
160. Is that timber reserve suitable for agricultural settlement? It is.
161. The whole of it? Yes, I believe so from what I have seen of it.
162. What is the extent of the reserve? I cannot say.

J. M.
Mackenzie,
Esq.
1 Feb., 1890.

Mr. James Boxsell, farmer and grazier, sworn, and examined:—

- 163 *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Cullingah, adjoining Wallendbeen.
164. What are you? A farmer and grazier.
165. How much land do you hold? About 2,600 acres.
166. Is it all purchased land? It consists of selections.
167. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Cullingah is the name of a station on the main southern line is it not? Yes, but that is on the other side of Harden in quite a different direction.
168. Where does your farm stand from Wallendbeen? It is about 8 miles to the east of Wallendbeen.
169. Anywhere near Berthong? About 16 miles from Berthong.
170. What station are you near? Mr. Mackay's old Wallendbeen station.
171. Then you are not on the route of the proposed railway? No.
172. And you are not likely to be affected by it? No.
173. Can you speak as to the character of the country between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? Yes. For about six or seven years I have been buying wheat as an agent, and I have been round most of that district. It consists of about the best agricultural land I have seen in the district. Most of it is composed of chocolate-red soil, and I have bought some of the largest crops there that have been grown in the district.
174. How many selectors would you find out there cultivating wheat? I could not exactly tell you.
175. Could you not state the number approximately? There may be forty or fifty, and perhaps more.
176. Would fifty be a fair statement? I daresay it would.
177. Are those fifty selectors on the line of route between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? Yes. Most of them are on this side.
178. Are they within 5 miles of the route on either side? Yes, about that.
179. And would they be likely to be served by the railway if it were carried that way? They would. If there was a platform at Berthong or somewhere in that locality it would save them a great deal of haulage.
180. Are these selectors permanent? Yes, some of them have been there for sixteen or seventeen years.
181. They are permanent selectors and do not occupy the land in the interest of the station? Yes.
182. Is there much more agricultural land to be taken up? I am informed that a great many reserves are to be thrown open; in fact they are already measured in a 160-acre blocks, and I know several people who are looking out for them although they are small blocks.
183. Can a man make a living out of 160 acres? If it is good land he can.
184. But are not the leasehold areas on the runs out there to be thrown open in July? I believe so.
185. And is the land on the leasehold area good? Yes. There are a few ironbark ranges, but they produce timber, which could be used as sleepers for the railway.
186. Do you think there is likely to be a rush of settlement on the leasehold area? Yes; I have seven sons of my own I want to send them out as soon as I can get a place.
187. So that in July next there is likely to be a rush of settlement along the proposed route from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo? Yes.
188. Is not the country very hilly there in parts? Only the little bit at the gap.
189. For what distance do you think the hilly country extends? I should say for about 2 or 2½ miles.
190. The distance between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo is about 12 miles? About that.
191. So that 10 miles of the country may be considered as suitable for agriculture? Yes.
192. Where do these farmers go for their stores? Most of the big farmers send to Sydney for their stores, as I do.
193. To what railway station? To Wallendbeen.
194. And where do the smaller farmers get their stores from? Some go to Cootamundra, and some to Wallendbeen.
195. Which line of railway do you think would serve them best—the one from Temora to Wallendbeen, or the one from Temora to Cootamundra? I believe the line to Wallendbeen would best suit the farmers I have mentioned.
196. Have you noticed which way the travelling stock proceed to the mountain runs? I have seen some going both ways. I have not seen so many on the Cootamundra side, because my business is more in the direction of Wallendbeen. But I have seen a lot of sheep on both sides.
197. Are they in the habit of walking the whole distance? They generally drive them, because there has been no other way of getting them to the mountains, except since the Gundagai line has been opened. Whether they go there or not I cannot say.

Mr.
J. Boxsell,
1 Feb., 1890

Mr.
J. Boxsell.
1 Feb., 1890.

198. Suppose this line were taken on from Cootamundra to Hillston, do you think it would be of any advantage to the owners of starving stock in enabling them to get their sheep to the mountain runs? I daresay it would, if they left them too late.
199. Would they be likely to use the railway or would they drive the sheep the entire distance? They would have to use the railway if the stock got too poor to travel. But as a rule they generally start in time to take them by the road.
200. Referring to these agricultural settlers, you think they are well established in the district, and likely to remain? Yes.
201. What is about their average crop? The constable told me that the average is about 20 bushels to the acre this year. The yield in some instances has been as high as 30 bushels.
202. What is the average size of their holdings? I could not exactly say. Most of them have got a little over their 640 acres. Some have double that area, and some of the holdings reach 2,000 or 3,000 acres in size. There are some big and some small. The smallest quantity of wheat I got was 500 bags, and in other cases I got 2,000 bags.
203. These selections are all in the eastern division? I do not know exactly the division.
204. How do they hold more than 640 acres if they are in the eastern division? They took up two selections years ago. A selector would take up one in his own name and one in the name of his son.
205. By combining their children's selections with their own they hold a larger area? That is so.
206. Is it your opinion that this agricultural settlement will increase? Yes. Mr. Gibb himself says that he will throw open his run for agriculture. In another year these runs will be all open for settlement. I come from Illawarra, and I know that Mr. Berry, who was a great squatter there many years ago, cut up his land into farms, and it has been let for the last twenty or thirty years. All the land on his property is fetching from 10s. to £4 an acre.
207. And your opinion is that the squatters will see the advantage of that directly, and will cut up their land and let it, and that a clerk will do their business instead of a boundary rider? Yes. There is splendid agricultural land, the greater part of which lies on the north side of the railway route from Temora to Wallendbeen.
208. What crops besides wheat do the selectors grow? Wheat is the principal crop. They grow corn sometimes; but maize-growing, as a general rule, is not a success.
209. Do they grow oats? Yes; large quantities of oats.
210. Are there any vineyards in the district? There are a few, but they are on a very small scale. Grapes do exceedingly well, and I have often wondered why vine-growing has not been more general in this district.
211. Is there any other special crop besides wheat? No. It is the main thing all through the district. There is no doubt that if the price of wheat keeps low the farmers will turn their attention to something else.
212. *Chairman.*] Which is your market? Most of my wheat goes to Goulburn?
213. I suppose that is the market for the people of this district generally? Yes.
214. Is there a flour-mill at Wallendbeen? There was one, but it is now closed.
215. Do you know whether there are any flour-mills at Cootamundra? There was one, but it is closed.
216. And they are not grinding in the district at all? No.
217. All the people send their wheat to either Goulburn or Sydney? Yes.
218. Do you grow any fruit in the district? There is a little fruit, but it is not gone in for extensively.
219. They do not send any to market, I suppose? Only to the local market.
220. *Mr. Humphery.*] You said that the land was similar and of equal value to that of Mr. Berry, at Illawarra? No. I merely wished to show that in time the land might become the same—that it could be cut up into farms, and in that way the owners could make more money out of it with less labour. They cannot make nearly as much from sheep and cattle as they can by cultivation.
221. You said that Mr. Berry received from 10s. to £4 an acre a year for his land? Yes.
222. For what part of his estate does he get a rental of £4 an acre? For some on the river bank.
223. Can you mention one farmer who pays £4? I could not give you any names, because it is so long since I was there. In some instances, the land was let on halves, and it was so productive that Mr. Berry received a very high return.
224. Can you mention one farmer who paid as much as £2 an acre? I believe Mr. Lewis McIntyre paid more than £2 for some of the good land.
225. Is not the average rent paid for the country round there from 15s. to 30s.? Yes, that is generally about the average, but the land along the river banks is very valuable.
226. Is there any comparison between the land on Berry's estate and the land which would be served by a railway from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo? I admit that Mr. Berry's land is a good deal better. I only referred to Mr. Berry's estate as an illustration of how I thought it was likely this land would be dealt with. I said that these stations would be cut up in the same way that the Berry estate was cut up, and that they would be more profitable under agriculture than as grazing land.
227. Which, in your opinion, is the better land for agricultural settlement—the land between Cootamundra and Yeo Yeo or the land between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? The land between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo.
228. Notwithstanding its mountainous character for about 4 or 5 miles? Yes, I think the quality of the land will make up for that.
229. You think there will be a greater number of settlers between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo than between Cootamundra and Yeo Yeo? Yes, as soon as the reserves are thrown open.
230. What other products besides wheat are sent by railway? I do not know of any. I have seen a little corn sometimes in a good season, but as a general thing there is not much besides wheat and oats.
231. When will the wheat harvest be despatched by rail—in what month of the year? The farmers have been sending it away for about six weeks, and they will continue to send it for a month or six weeks longer.
232. Over what period would the traffic extend? I suppose for about two months or a little over.
233. And what traffic would there be for the railway during the remaining ten months of the year? There would only be the wool, as well as a few fowls and pigs, and perhaps fat sheep.
234. When would the wool be sent in? About September, October, or November.
235. The carriage of supplies from Sydney, I suppose, would extend over the entire year? Yes.

Mr.

NOTE (on revision): There are three reserves near the Wallendbeen railway station with a never failing spring of water.

Mr. James Drummond, storekeeper, sworn, and examined :—

236. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Wallendbeen.
 237. What is your occupation? A storekeeper.
 238. Have you any personal knowledge of the country between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? I have for a distance of about 4 miles. I have not been out much further in that direction.
 239. You are acquainted with the country lying between the Wallendbeen railway station and the mountain range? Yes.
 240. Do you send many goods from your store out west and in that direction? No, I do not do business in a large way, and I have not sent out large quantities of goods to the west.
 241. Do you receive any consignments from the west? No. Our trade, being a small one, is entirely with Sydney.
 242. I suppose you are of opinion that it would be better to bring the line from Yeo Yeo to Wallendbeen? The principal argument in favour of that route is the saving which would be effected in haulage to the extent of a few shillings a ton.
 243. From your experience as a business man can you say whether the people near Wallendbeen and along the proposed railway from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo are in the habit of sending their goods southwards towards Wagga Wagga, or do they send the whole of them northward towards Goulburn and Sydney? As far as I know, towards Goulburn and Sydney.
 244. Do you consign any goods yourself as agent for any of these people? Small lots sometimes but not much. I have not done much agency business.
 245. And so far as you are aware the people of the district do their business with Goulburn and Sydney and not with Wagga Wagga and Albury? Exactly.
 246. They are not in the habit of sending their goods to Melbourne, or of obtaining their stores from Melbourne? No, not as a rule. There might be an isolated case, but the rule is to trade with Sydney.
 247. Do you understand farming? I am not well up in it, but I have been farming for a time.
 248. What in your opinion is the character of the soil along the 4 miles of the proposed railway route from Wallendbeen with which you are acquainted? It is very good. I did not go down into the gap referred to by other witnesses, but as far as I went the land appeared to be very good, but there is not much of it. For the first 3 miles from Wallendbeen the land is principally embraced in the Nubba and Berthong properties. There is not much of it in cultivation, with the exception of that held by three small farmers.
 249. You are, I believe, the secretary of the Wallendbeen Vigilance Committee? Yes.
 250. Have you any data or statistics to lay before the Committee? I cannot say that I have anything prepared. I only knew the other day that the Committee were coming; and I had not an opportunity of obtaining as much information as I should otherwise have collected.

Mr. J.
Drummond.
1 Feb., 1890.

William Augustus Byrne, Esq., Mayor of Cootamundra, sworn, and examined :—

251. *Chairman.*] I believe you are Mayor of Cootamundra? Yes.
 252. How long have you held that position? During the last year.
 253. Have you been an alderman long? Yes.
 254. For how many years? About four years.
 255. Are you in business in Cootamundra? Yes, in the stock and station agency business.
 256. I presume you have a pretty accurate knowledge of the country round about? I have. I have known the country for a very long time.
 257. For how many years have you resided in the district? I have resided permanently in the district for about thirteen years, but I have been acquainted with it for about twenty-five years.
 258. Speaking as Mayor, can you tell the Committee the value of the property within the Municipality of Cootamundra? I have omitted to obtain that information, but have sent the clerk for it. The town was incorporated on the 20th May, 1884. The rates received up to the 31st January, 1890, amounted to £3,901 11s. 8d. The amount expended up to the 31st January, 1890, was £10,351 1s. 11d. The population of the borough is 1,600. The figures will show a large increase in the capital value since the borough was incorporated.
 259. Can you tell the Committee the amount of money collected in rates for last year? A little over £800, I should think.
 260. Has the Municipality any debt? Yes, about £1,000 or £1,100.
 261. Have the business people of Cootamundra, the storekeepers and others, any direct trade with Temora and Stockinbingal? Yes; there is direct communication by "road," and I think the business taking place between Cootamundra and the localities mentioned will amount to about £12,000 or £13,000 a year.
 262. What can you tell the Committee with reference to stock in the district which the proposed railway from Cootamundra to Temora would serve? I consider that in time of drought the railway would bring from the country lying on this side of Temora from 70,000 to 80,000 sheep, which would be carried by rail direct to Gundagai, and I should think would be brought back by rail. The railway would serve a similar purpose in regard to the country beyond Temora. A very large quantity of stock would be brought from there to Gundagai. In fact stock from right across to the Lachlan would, in dry seasons, go to Temora, and be trucked through to Gundagai. If they had to go by rail *via* Wallendbeen, unnecessary inconvenience and expense would be entailed on the owners.
 263. Are people in the habit of sending their stock to the Tumut district and to the mountain runs? Yes, they frequently had to do so within the last seven or eight years.
 264. Did they send any last year? The mountains were all taken up last year, when the drought, although short, was very severe.
 265. Was the country taken up by people living between here and Temora, or between here and Hillston? Between here and Hillston, and also by people between here and Temora. A grazier living between here and Temora owns a very large run on the mountains.
 266. In sending their stock to the mountains did those people make use of the railway from Cootamundra to Gundagai? In some cases they did, but as a rule they did not.

W. A. Byrne,
Esq.
1 Feb., 1890.

- W. A. Byrne, Esq.
1 Feb., 1890.
267. What reason have you for believing that if this railway were constructed to Temora they would make use of it for that purpose? They generally keep the sheep on their runs until it is impossible to keep them there any longer, and by that time the travelling stock routes are completely bare of grass, and I should think it would be to their advantage to get the sheep to the hills as soon as possible.
268. But does not that argument also apply to the railway between Cootamundra and Gundagai at the present time? Certainly; but the distance is much shorter than would be the case if the line were constructed to Temora. Having to travel the stock to Cootamundra, it would be scarcely worth their while, if the sheep were at all strong, to truck them to Gundagai, which would be only a distance of 35 miles.
269. Is the district provided with travelling-stock routes in the direction of the mountains? Pretty fairly; but, as in other portions of the Colony, in dry seasons there is never a blade of grass left on these reserves.
270. Is there any water? No; not much water in this part of the country.
271. How do the stock get water when they take them to the mountains? They get along the best way they can. They get a drink now and again, and of course the losses by death are very great.
272. Those who live are allowed to live, and those who cannot, die? They die all along the road.
273. Is this district very much subject to drought? Very much.
274. How is it then that it generally manages to grow pretty good wheat crops? It seems to me that wheat crops require very little rain, if they happen to get that little at the right time.
275. What sort of season had you last year? An exceptionally good one.
276. When was the last drought? Last year. The last spring was a wet one, and that was a good season, but the year previous to that was a very dry one.
277. Was there much loss in stock? Yes. Although it was only a short drought it was very severe, and the losses in stock were considerable.
278. That was in 1888 and the beginning of 1889? Yes.
279. During that period of drought were there many sheep sent away to the mountains? Yes; and especially from that part of the country.
280. Does the stock in the district mostly consist of sheep, or of sheep and cattle? Sheep principally. The people only keep a few cattle—sufficient to supply their own requirements.
281. I suppose it is considered a good sheep district? Yes, excellent. It is sound sheep country.
282. Can you say how many sheep, cattle, and horses are sent per annum from the western district—say between Temora and Cootamundra? I should say that last year there must have been between 60,000 and 70,000 sheep sent from the country lying between here and Temora.
283. Where were those sheep sent to? To Tumut and the mountains.
284. I am speaking now rather of fat sheep—were there any sent to Sydney or to Goulburn? Not many.
285. Were there any sent south to Wagga Wagga, Albury, or Victoria? No. We had no fat sheep last year to send.
286. When they do have fat sheep is it their practice to send them to Sydney or to Victoria? Mostly to Sydney. Occasionally they send a few lots to the Albury market, but as a rule the sheep go on to Sydney.
287. That being the case do you not think it would be an advantage to the people if the line were constructed to Wallendbeen, and a saving in haulage effected of 9½ miles? As regards fat sheep it would certainly, but the number of fat sheep carried would only be in the proportion of about one to twenty as compared with store sheep, if the line were extended to Temora.
288. The traffic in store sheep is greater than the traffic in fat sheep? Certainly. The whole of the poor sheep on these stations have to go to the mountains in a dry year, and the largest of the stations between here and Temora has not more than a couple of thousand of fat sheep to send there, so that it would be about 20,000 of store sheep as against 2,000 fat sheep.
289. Have you any reliable information with reference to wool? Not as to the number of bales.
290. Do you know what is the opinion of the people living say between Stockinbingal and Cootamundra? They are decidedly in favour of the Cootamundra line, which is a comparatively level one.
291. I suppose there are business relations between Cootamundra and Temora? Yes. The land office for the Temora district is located at Cootamundra. Temora is a portion of this land district, and the people do their business here.
292. So that the selectors at Temora have to come to Cootamundra to transact their land business? Yes.
293. Therefore if the line were constructed to Wallendbeen they would have to travel from Wallendbeen to Cootamundra to do their land business? Yes, they would have to come back here.
294. Is there not a local land office at Temora? No. And it is a very good agricultural district. The land around Temora is very good, and settlement has taken place there to a large extent.
295. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Has there been a large increase of population in Cootamundra during the last few years? Yes.
296. Could you supply the figures from the electoral roll during the last three years? Yes.
297. Have you any auriferous country around this district? We have the Muttama reefs.
298. They are not along the proposed line of railway? No. They are on the Gundagai line.
299. Is there any auriferous country between here and Temora? Gold has been discovered in different places between here and Temora, but not in payable quantities.

Frederick Pinkstone, Esq., journalist, sworn, and examined:—

- F. Pinkstone, Esq.
1 Feb., 1890.
300. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Cootamundra.
301. What is your occupation? I am a journalist.
302. With what paper are you connected? The *Cootamundra Herald*.
303. Have you prepared any statistics with reference to the agricultural productions of the district? Yes; I have collected statistics.
304. Do those statistics apply to the country west of Cootamundra? Yes; between here and Stockinbingal, a distance of about 20 miles. The figures refer to the year 1888, but those for the subsequent season will show an increase of from 25 to 30 per cent. There are sixty-seven settlers living between Cootamundra and Stockinbingal, who occupy a total area of 75,174 acres. I may say that the figures apply to a distance of 20 miles from Cootamundra, or about 5 miles beyond Stockinbingal.

305. But the sixty-seven settlers to whom you have referred live along the proposed railway? Yes. All these people would be interested in the platform at Stockinbingal. F. Pinkstone,
Esq.
306. What distance have you taken from the route of the railway on either side? They are all within 6 miles at the outside. There is not one of them more than 6 miles from Stockinbingal platform. The total area they held in 1888 was 75,174 acres. They are all selectors, and in that year they had only 3,000 acres under crop, but it was a very dry year. The number of horses was 2,185, and of sheep, 138,570. The number of cattle I have not totted up. The average population is about ten persons to each holding, and they are all on the northern side of the road to Temora. Mr. Miller was to collect the statistics for the southern portion, and these were all published in my paper of the 3rd September. 1 Feb., 1890.
307. Have you any information with reference to the production of wheat either in this year or last year? The statistics for this year will show an average production of about 20 bushels to the acre throughout the whole district by the people to whom I have referred. The district of the police sergeant only extends for about 4 or 5 miles out of Cootamundra. The statistics for the country beyond that would be collected by other persons than the local police.
308. Can you tell us how many acres were cultivated this year? I can give you a rough estimate. I should think that amongst the people I have mentioned there would be about 5,000 acres under crop.
309. You do not know anything about the average yield, I suppose? From the returns sent to me as a journalist, the average yield is not below 20 bushels. The total aggregate yield for the whole district surrounding Cootamundra will be about 100,000 bags of wheat, or between 400,000 and 500,000 bushels.
310. Can you say what the average yield of wheat has been for a number of years? I think our lowest yield has been about 11 bushels, in a season in which there was a drought throughout; but when the rainfall is fairly distributed through the year, the average yield is about from 17 to 20 bushels.
311. Then, I suppose, we may take it that the general average production is about from 11 to 20 bushels? Yes. Those are the actual figures according to the returns.
312. I suppose there is nothing else cultivated in the district to any extent besides wheat? Yes; hay is grown very largely.
313. Where is the wheat sent to? It is sent chiefly to Cootamundra and sometimes to the southern district. One year we did a very large trade with the south-western line in hay. The sheep-owners there had to come up here and buy the stuff and take it down to feed the sheep.
314. In a season of drought? Yes. The principal crops grown consist of wheat, oats, and hay. There is also produced sheepskins, tallow, hides, and a few other things.
315. I suppose you have no statistics with reference to those other articles? No.
316. As a pressman and a man supposed to be acquainted with public opinion, what are you prepared to say is the general opinion of the people whom this railway would benefit with reference to its going to Wallendbeen or to Cootamundra? You will find that the people from Wallendbeen to Clifton—that is two-thirds of the way from Wallendbeen to Stockinbingal—are indifferent as to whether the railway goes to Wallendbeen or to Cootamundra. Beyond that point, at Stockinbingal, and on to Temora and Barmedman, and Hillston, the whole of the people are in favour of Cootamundra. As an argument in favour of Cootamundra I may mention that the traffic by road has always naturally gone to that place.
317. That is since the main line was constructed to Cootamundra? No, at all times. Before the railway was constructed to Cootamundra the road trade of those districts centred here. In 1877, for instance, the Vigilance Committee at Cootamundra received a petition from all these people in the back country asking for the bridging of the Bland Creek at the Stockinbingal township, in order to facilitate communication with Cootamundra.
318. But was there a Vigilance Committee in existence before the railway was built? Yes.
319. I suppose the railway was under construction then? Yes. It was then as far as Binalong. The line now under consideration was first proposed in 1877 by Mr. Sutherland, and I have an extract from his speech. It was proposed to enable the people in the pastoral country to send their stock into the mountain country, and to enable the people of Tumut, Gundagai, and Cootamundra to send into the western country produce which could not be obtained there.
320. Can you say whether the population out west is increasing to any appreciable extent? Between here and Barmedman it is increasing very fast. The Temora diggings broke out about 1881. Up to that time there were only about two or three scattered selections in the district. I can say from my own knowledge that since then there have been applications for nearly twenty public schools through that district. This fact will illustrate the increase in the population.
321. *Mr. Humphery.*] The Committee understand you to say that the whole of the farmers referred to by you reside within a radius of 6 miles of Stockinbingal? Within 20 miles from here; and none further from Stockinbingal than 6 miles.
322. If you look at the route on the map it will appear that the line between Yeo Yeo and Stockinbingal would serve the farmers you speak of. Yeo Yeo and Stockinbingal are the same.
323. Therefore it would be a matter of indifference to them whether they send their produce to Wallendbeen or to Cootamundra? In speaking of the people who were indifferent as to that, I referred to those between Wallendbeen and Clifton.
324. I want you now to concentrate your attention upon Stockinbingal. If the farmers to whom you refer are within a radius of 6 miles of Stockinbingal, would it not be a matter of indifference to them whether the line were constructed from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo or from Cootamundra to Yeo Yeo? No. You will find that the whole of the people at Stockinbingal will declare for Cootamundra.
325. I do not wish to know what they will do, but I want your reason for believing that they will be better served by a line from Cootamundra to Yeo Yeo than by a line from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo? The reason is this: Cootamundra is within their own land district, while Wallendbeen is within the Young land district. They do a very large trade with Cootamundra—a trade worth thousands of pounds per annum—and they do no trade at all with Wallendbeen.
326. Assuming the survey to be correct, would not a line to Wallendbeen reduce the haulage by 9½ miles? Yes.
327. And except as regards the trade relations which exist between Cootamundra and Stockinbingal the line to Wallendbeen would be most convenient? It would be a shorter line.
328. Do you think that the importance of the relations which have grown up between Cootamundra and Stockinbingal would justify the construction of that line although the haulage would be 9 miles greater from

- F. Pinkstone, from Sydney? Yes. But fully one-third of the traffic of this line will not go to Sydney. About two-thirds of the traffic would go to Sydney and Goulburn, and I believe that one-third would be entirely lost by constructing the line from Wallendbeen.
- Esq.
1 Feb., 1890.
329. Why? Because of the inconvenience.
330. What is the nature of the traffic you speak of? Tumut, for instance, does a large trade with these districts at the back in cheese and maize. Maize cannot be grown in the districts out here except in exceptionally good seasons.
331. And as for the live stock? There is a large traffic in live stock to the pastoral districts from Tumut every year.
332. And would it be more convenient for the people living beyond Stockinbingal and at Stockinbingal to send their live stock in time of drought by way of Cootamundra in preference to Wallendbeen? Certainly. They would have to go through a junction at Wallendbeen and they would go straight across through Cootamundra.
333. Do you think that all these advantages would neutralize the benefit the people would derive from the saving of haulage? I certainly think so.
334. I am not asking you as a resident of Cootamundra, but I am asking your opinion as a public man? I am speaking in the interest of the railway as a matter of general policy. Personally I am quite indifferent as to whether it goes to Wallendbeen or Cootamundra.
335. And you think that the advantages would be so much greater by having a line constructed between Cootamundra and Yeo Yeo that the saving in haulage which would be effected by taking it to Wallendbeen would be neutralized? Yes. There are strong reasons in favour of Cootamundra. You will find that it is almost central between two junctions. There is the junction at Harden for the traffic from the western line, and the junction at Junee for the traffic of the Narrandera line, and Cootamundra fairly divides that traffic. There is a very large traffic from the south, coaching traffic as well as train traffic, and those people instead of travelling 86 miles—say from Junee to Temora, *via* Wallendbeen—would prefer to go 32 miles across from Junee to Temora. I believe also if the line is constructed to Wallendbeen it will be necessary to maintain the road traffic between Cootamundra and Temora. The Cootamundra route would concentrate the whole of the traffic of this proposed line, whereas Wallendbeen would lose one third of it.
336. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] I noticed a large number of bags of wheat stored at the railway station at Cootamundra—where did that wheat come from? Principally from the Stockinbingal country and south of Stockinbingal.
337. Why has not that wheat gone to Wallendbeen? The traffic from the farmers never goes to Wallendbeen.
338. Then at the present time Cootamundra is the natural trade centre for the wheat farmers of the district? Yes. To my knowledge there have been on the road between Cootamundra and Stockinbingal over twenty hired teams engaged in drawing wheat besides all the private teams.
339. What is the cost of carriage per bag of wheat from the Temora district to Cootamundra? They get on an average about 1s. per bag—from 1s. to 1s. 6d. I have heard of their paying as high as 2s., but I think that was an exception.
340. Would 2s. a bag be a prohibitive price? I think so. I do not think that the farmers could afford to pay 2s. a bag for carriage when they only get 3s. or 3s. 2d. a bushel for the wheat.
341. Do the wheat buyers come to Cootamundra? Yes. Mr. Heaton, for instance, and another buyer have been scouring the district for wheat.
342. And where is the wheat of the farmers on the Temora side supposed to be delivered? It is delivered in Cootamundra. We have been asked to obtain a market reserve in the township, principally for the convenience of these people. The desire is to have a market so that farmers will be able to send in samples of their wheat, and buyers may come and bid publicly for the produce.
343. Do you think that Cootamundra is merely a temporary trade centre or a lasting trade centre? I can prove that it is a permanent trade centre. It has been the permanent trade centre for the whole of that district, to my knowledge, for thirteen years, when the population of this town was only about 150. The population now is 1,600 or 1,700 within the borough alone.
344. At the time of the goldfields was this the point of departure for Temora? Yes. This was the point from which the road was started, and also the telegraph line. The Young people tried to divert the traffic to the road *via* Young to Murrumburrah, but they could not succeed, and Cootamundra was established as the centre. But for the fact that the differential rates drive a great deal of the trade of Temora and the back country to old Junee the traffic by Cootamundra would be at least double.
345. Are the settlers round Cootamundra connected by family ties with those of Temora? I do not know that they are very largely connected by family ties—there may be some family connections.
346. Are many of the sons of the settlers round Cootamundra settled in the Temora district? Yes, a good many of the sons of settlers in the Cullinga district have gone to that neighbourhood, principally to the south of Temora.
347. Do many of the farmers out towards Temora run stock? Yes. Their industry consists of sheep and wheat growing combined. The sheep manure the land and increase its fertility.
348. Has Mr. Primrose a farm out that way? No; his farm is on the other side.
349. What has been your observation of the travelling of starving stock;—do the stock-owners come this way or *via* Wallendbeen to the mountain runs? There is only one man who goes *via* Wallendbeen, and that is Mr. Gibb, of Berthong. He has a station in the mountain country, at Tumut, and he is in the habit of sending his stock through Wallendbeen to the mountain country. But the whole of the stock from the Bland and away towards the Lachlan come through Cootamundra.
350. Does Mr. Gibb send his stock by train to Gundagai? No, he generally travels. The distance by train is very short, and you would have to go through a junction.
351. How do the pastoralists on the Bland send their stock? By road chiefly. But their sufferings have been very great. I know of my own knowledge that the Messrs. Jamieson, in 1888, lost nearly the whole of their stock because they were unable to remove them. If the line were extended into the country they would certainly send their sheep by rail, because in dry summer seasons it is impossible for them to travel by road.
352. Why do they not use the line between Cootamundra and Gundagai? If you make inquiries you will find that some time ago the Department were unable to supply the trucks to meet this very traffic. A drover brought

- brought last year a flock of sheep from the western country and they were almost lost on the road. I F. Pinkstone, Esq.
knew him to pay £60 for the lease of a 40-acre paddock at Cootamundra for ten days, to save the lives of his sheep, whereas had he been able to send them by train he would have saved the whole of them. 1 Feb., 1890.
353. If the line were ultimately extended to Barmedman and on to Hillston, do you think it would be availed of by pastoralists as a starving-stock line? I am certain of it, especially at the half rates, or starving-stock rates allowed by the Commissioners. I am positive they would not travel by the road unless the rainfall was evenly distributed through the year, and it is a characteristic of this district that it is not evenly distributed.
354. And which would be the more advantageous route for these pastoralists who desire to send their starving stock to the mountain runs—*via* Wallendbeen or Cootamundra? They would never send to Wallendbeen unless they were compelled. I am quite prepared to swear that these people would never send their stock to Wallendbeen unless they were compelled to do so.
355. Would they not have to go round two sides of a triangle in order to reach Cootamundra *via* Wallendbeen? Yes. Then there is a great quantity of stock brought in—cattle, for instance—that are trucked to the Albury market. They come in from the Queensland side. There is a very large traffic in cattle, and if they could be conveyed by the Temora railway this traffic would be greatly increased.
356. Is not there a travelling-stock route from Queensland *via* Forbes and Morangarell? Yes, and they come in very largely at Morangarell.
357. If this line were extended to Barmedman and Hillston, it might divert the travelling stock route from Queensland to Cootamundra? Yes, a great many of the stock would come in there, and they could be trucked direct to the Albury market, instead of having to travel by road.
358. And this would considerably shorten the distance and the time? Yes.
359. You have given some evidence with regard to agricultural statistics. You were at one time a delegate at the Farmers' Conference, representing the farmers of this district? Yes, in 1883.
360. And therefore, you have had an opportunity of posting yourself up on the subject? Yes.
361. And we can accept your statements as authoritative? Yes.
362. *Mr. Humphery.*] If the line were constructed from Cootamundra to Temora, do you think it would be used to any extent for the removal of stock unless the line were also extended from Gundagai to Tumut? I think it would be availed of as a stock line even as far as Gundagai, because this pastoral country at the back extends for about 150 miles, and if the line were carried there I think the stock would be shifted, because of the difficulty of getting water.
363. Even if the line from Gundagai to Tumut were not constructed? Yes. They have only 25 miles from the Murrumbidgee to Tumut, and there is a good deal of summer country about the Murrumbidgee that they could occupy, so that they would not require to travel much beyond the Murrumbidgee. The Murrumbidgee is, to all intents and purposes, the terminus of the starving-stock traffic.
364. *Chairman.*] You are connected with the *Cootamundra Herald*, are you not? Yes.
365. And you keep a rain gauge there? Yes, I have kept it since the beginning of 1885.
366. During 1889 there was, according to that gauge, a rainfall of 21 inches 71 points? Yes, that is the town record. The rainfall was larger outside the township.
367. And during 1885, according to the same gauge, the rainfall was 26·65 inches? Yes. The highest registered has been 40 inches.
368. During 1886 the rainfall was 28·29 inches? Yes.
369. And during 1887 it was 40·79 inches? Yes.
370. And during 1888 it was 12·07 inches? Yes. That is the year for which I gave the agricultural statistics. I have been requested to state that the Lower Murrumbidgee people truck very largely here to the mountain country.
371. From what particular direction? From the runs along the south-western line. Those are the districts we have supplied with fodder sometimes, and they send their stock by rail to Gundagai in the direction of Tumut.

William Augustus Byrne, Esq., Mayor of Cootamundra, sworn, and further examined:—

372. *Chairman.*] What was the capital value of the ratable property within the borough of Cootamundra W. A. Byrne, Esq.
in 1884? £169,862. 1 Feb., 1890.
373. And what was the capital value in 1889? In that year it had risen to £203,769 showing an increase in the capital value of the ratable property of £33,907.

Mr. Archibald Booth, schoolmaster, sworn, and examined:—

374. *Chairman.*] What position do you occupy in Cootamundra? I am head master of the public school. Mr. A. Booth, Esq.
375. Have you any information in reference to the progress the school is making? Only the official records. I have only been here three weeks. 1 Feb., 1890.
376. How many children have you in the school? 190.
377. What is the average attendance? 150.
378. Can you give us any comparative figures with regard to the average attendance? In 1888 the average was 112, and during the past month it has been 150. In 1888 the number of boys was 66, and the number of girls 46.
379. Is there only one public school in Cootamundra? That is all.
380. Can you say what other schools there are? There is a convent school, and I believe there is one and probably more than one private school.
381. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How many schools are there between Cootamundra and Temora? I could not say.

Mr.

Mr. Thomas Parker, senior sergeant of police, sworn, and examined :—

Mr
T. Parker.
1 Feb., 1890.

382. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am senior sergeant of police at Cootamundra.
383. How long have you been in the district? I have been nearly fifteen years in the Cootamundra district, and I was four and a half years at Murrumburrah.
384. You are employed by the Government to collect statistics for the district? Yes.
385. Can you give us any two years as evidence of an increase or decrease in the population of the district? Since I have been in Cootamundra the population has been increasing every year. Since I took charge it has increased by 200 or 300.
386. Have you any statistics—say for 1885? I have not any with me.
387. At any rate you are under the impression that the population is increasing? Most certainly.
388. Increasing pretty rapidly? The increase this year has not been so great as in the previous year.
389. What was the population last year? About 2,000 in my portion of the district independently of the population in the borough.
390. What is included in your portion of the district? To take the population I have to go as far as 20 miles from here, but as regards the collection of statistics the Dividing Range is only 6 miles from Cootamundra.
391. 20 miles in which direction? In the direction of Stockinbingal and Gundabingal. About 1,500 or 2,000 would be the population in the Cootamundra district, and taking Gundabingal and Stockinbingal and the other places between here and there.
392. That would be within a range of how many miles of the proposed railway from Cootamundra to Temora—what distance on each side of the line? I go for about 8 or 10 miles on each side of the line.
393. About what proportion of the people would be served by the proposed railway to Temora? All the Stockinbingal and Gundabingal people would be served by the railway. They all live within easy distance of it.
394. And the population you think is increasing pretty rapidly? Yes; and the settlers are going further back towards Barmedman.
395. The population you gave just now was for last year;—has the population for this year been taken? I have the papers at the office.
396. Can you say what the increase has been since last year? The increase has been about 100. I refer to the population outside the borough.
397. Can you say how many additional names have been placed on the electoral roll since last year, or going back two or three years? I will have to count them up before giving an answer.
398. You are of opinion, however, that the population is decidedly on the increase? Yes, decidedly.
399. I suppose you are generally riding around the district? Yes; I know the district very well.
400. Can you say whether it is progressing with regard to agriculture—are the people cultivating more land than they did a few years ago? They cultivated more this year than they did in any previous year. They went in very heavily this year for cultivation. Some of the settlers this year have harvested as many as 10,000 bushels of wheat.
401. *Mr. Humphery.*] Have you been beyond Stockinbingal towards Temora? Yes, several times.
402. Do you know the country well? Yes; pretty well. I have travelled backwards and forwards between Temora and Cootamundra.
403. Do you know the route of the proposed railway? I have not been along the route particularly, but I know the country.
404. Can you say if the land on both sides of the proposed route from Cootamundra to Stockinbingal is first-class arable land? Yes; it is all first-class arable land. I can say that with certainty.
405. What is the character of the land from Stockinbingal on to Temora? It is all good land, except where it goes across the ironbarks. It is good country on both sides of the ironbark range.
406. How many miles of the proposed railway route would not be first-class arable country? I think only about 6 miles.
407. Then with the exception of 6 miles, the whole of the land on both sides of the proposed route would be suitable for agricultural purposes and for settlement? Yes. It would be settled upon if it were accessible to the settlers.
408. For what distance on either side of the line? Right along the line. It extends for over 20 miles.
409. Then it is all good? Except the portion that goes round by Wallendbeen—I would not answer for that.
410. Do you know the country between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? Yes; I have travelled over it, and know it well.
411. You believe you are qualified to express an opinion as to the merits of the proposed routes as far as the land is concerned? As far as my private opinion is concerned, I certainly think that the route from Cootamundra, *via* Stockinbingal to Temora, is the more preferable one, and for this reason: There are very few settlers on the road from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo. On the right of the route from Wallendbeen is the Nubba Station, Mr. Gibb's run, Mr. Davidson's, and a portion of another run. On the left side of the route from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo Creek, there are about five settlers.
412. Are we to understand that there is more land, and of a character better adapted for settlement between Cootamundra and Yeo Yeo, than between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? Most certainly, when the reserves are thrown open; they are good for any purpose. There is a large reserve on the Yeo Yeo Creek at Stockinbingal, and if it were thrown open, farmers would go and settle upon it.
413. But I am speaking of the two routes—one between Yeo Yeo and Wallendbeen, and the other between Yeo Yeo and Cootamundra? The route from Yeo Yeo to Cootamundra is a long way before the Wallendbeen route.
414. *Chairman.*] Are there not a number of farmers settled on the northern side of the line between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? I am not aware of any settlers along there, except Mr. Gibb's property. There was a settler named Mulcahy living there, but he has removed to Stockinbingal.
415. Then all these selections we see on the map are on the runs? Yes; except close to the township of Wallendbeen, where a man named Isard has a selection.
416. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you know why the selector you refer to removed from the neighbourhood of Wallendbeen to Stockinbingal? He used to live at Congo about 7 miles from Wallendbeen.
417. Can you state the reason why he removed from there to Stockinbingal? Probably he wished to obtain more land. Where he is now living there is more land to cultivate. 418.

418. Is the soil better at Stockinbingal? Where Mackay lived, the soil was very good. It was called the Black Springs—it was black soil. I daresay he left for the purpose of getting more land.
419. In riding to Temora have you noticed any increase of settlement along the line of road? Not for some years, but some of the selectors have increased the number of their farms, and bought others out.
420. Then some of the selectors in the neighbourhood have been selling out? Some of them have been selling out and getting larger runs.
421. To whom have they been selling out? Mr. Currey sold out a large block to Mr. Emery.
422. They have not been selling out to the pastoralists, but to each other? Yes; selling out to each other.
423. Does the proportion of cultivation go on the same? Yes; in fact there is more cultivation this year.
424. Have you noticed which road is taken by the wheat and wool teams coming in? The Cootamundra road between here and Temora.
425. They all make for Cootamundra? Yes, even from the Marsden direction.
426. Do any of the teams on the Congo side make for Cootamundra? Yes; a man named Mackay brought his team to Cootamundra from the Congo Falls.

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T. Parker.
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Mr. John James Miller, stock and station agent, sworn, and examined:—

427. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Cootamundra.
428. Are you in business? Yes, as a stock and station agent.
429. Have you prepared any information for the Committee? Yes, I have a return with regard to stations and station produce.
430. And you will hand in that return as evidence? Yes. I know it to be correct, because the figures are from the official record. The area of land is taken from the number of acres of Crown land which each station holds. The total is about 1,500,000 acres of Crown land held by stations.
431. Can you say what proportion of these are in the leasehold area? The greater part of them.
432. I suppose there is scarcely any resumed area left unselected? I could have given the quantity. The greater part would expire in July and the balance is held for another five years.
433. Some of these lands referred to are in the Central Division? Yes, the majority are in the Central Division. The following is the list:—

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Stations.	No. of Sheep.	Bales of Wool.	Distance from Temora Railway.	Present distance to Railway.	Area Crown Lands.	Rent of Run.
Barmedman.....	40,000	400	22	55	40,251	£ 291
Narraburra	15,000	150	12	40	45,851	290
Geraldra	50,000	600	10	25	8,974	260
Carumbi	15,000	150	20	38	3,348	62
Gundabingal	20,000	200	.....	22	18,730	60
" North	15,000	150	3	30	26,050	180
Combaning	25,000	250	7	24	23,665	165
The Oaks.....	10,000	120	3	11	91,909	533
Mimosa	50,000	600	14	30	91,909	533
Mandamar	20,000	200	18	45	35,838	215
W. Mandamar	20,000	200	25	45	48,650	488
Wyalong 1	25,000	250	50	80	61,380	298
" 2	10,000	100	35	65	22,368	127
" 3	18,000	180	25	65	39,215	132
Buddigower.....	50,000	600	40	70	164,899	991
Trungley	12,000	120	12	45	45,046	288
Quondary	5,000	50	17	45	10,350	46
Back Creek	20,000	200	40	80	36,404	206
Bland	40,000	500	40	65	39,241	275
Lake Cowal	60,000	700	70	95	149,614	886
Woollengough	25,000	250	75	130	42,550	215
Bolygamy	15,000	150	70	130	30,485	177
Merrigreen	25,000	250	70	130	25,345	380
Yalcogren	20,000	200	70	130	44,480	209
Youngara	20,000	200	80	140	32,252	195
Kildary	30,000	300	35	50	68,900	344
Ungaree	20,000	200	70	120	42,321	371
Bygaloree	50,000	600	100	140	123,040	767
Totals	775,000	7,870	.....	.....	1,499,215	9,353

434. What portions of the district have you included in this list? I have included within 100 miles of Temora.
435. These are stations that will make use of the Temora line, and you have taken a radius of 70 miles from Temora? Not exactly a radius, because I do not include those stations that would send their wool to Coolamon, on the south-western line.
436. Have you included in the list any of the stations lying between Temora and Cootamundra? Yes.
437. And also to the westward of Temora for 70 miles? Yes—all the wool that would come through Temora by the railway to Cootamundra.
438. Have you given the quantity of the wool? Yes.
439. Do you do business as agent with the whole of the stations referred to? Yes; with the exception of one or two. We have business with pretty nearly all of them. We know pretty well what sheep they shear, and this is an estimate. We average 100 sheep to the bale, which is rather a low estimate.
440. You have not given the figures from the actual clip? No.
441. Then this return must only be taken as an estimate? Yes, it is an approximate return, but in every instance I have kept under the mark as much as possible.
442. Do you think it would suit the interests of these people to have the line constructed to Cootamundra or to Wallendbeen? If the line went to Wallendbeen the wool would go direct through to Sydney; but on the other hand, as they do all their business with Cootamundra it would put them to considerable inconvenience to go to Wallendbeen, and if the line went to Cootamundra it would enable them to send their

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their stock through to the mountains. I could give you a pretty good idea of how much stock went through last year to the mountains, and how many of the pastoralists own mountain runs, and how many of them are likely to make use of the railway.

443. What quantity of stock went through last year? I estimate that during the drought last year about 250,000 sheep went through here to the mountains. The figures for ten stations are as follows:—Reardon, 20,000; Samuel Wilson, Son, & Co., 15,000; Davidson, 8,000; Hiawatha, 11,000; Morangarell, 8,000; Combaning, 40,000; Temora, 15,000; Narraburra, 5,000; Carumbi, 10,000; Berthong, 20,000; that gives a total of nearly 150,000. Those were the larger lots, and there were a number of small lots of about 2,000, and some went through of which I have no knowledge.

444. The whole of these travelled by road—none of them went by railway? The rams were pretty nearly all trucked.

445. Then there was, as an actual fact, a number of rams trucked to Gundagai? Mostly all the rams are trucked, because it knocks them about travelling on the road. They were trucked from Cootamundra to Gundagai. One man was sending in 5,000 sheep from a station about 60 miles from Temora. He got them as far as Cootamundra, but could get them no further, and we as agents sold them there. They could hardly stand up. They sold as low as 4½d.—on terms at twelve months' bills. If there had been a railway from Temora they could have been trucked through, and their lives would have been saved, because they were knocked up by the rough travelling. They were pretty well done when they got to Temora, and when they got here they were worse. If they are weak when they get to the mountain country, the sheep will die there.

446. Are many sheep sent from here to Sydney or Goulburn? Yes; a good many fat sheep are sent to Homebush.

447. Are any sent to Victoria? Not lately. We have sent a good many to Victoria one time and another. The markets fluctuate; sometimes the sheep are sent to Melbourne, and sometimes to Sydney.

448. You send them wherever the market is best? Yes. With regard to the land on the Berthong Station, I find that there are 11,000 acres of Crown lands spotted over that run.

449. Available for selection? A great portion of the land forms part of reserves which would have to be revoked. There is one reserve through which the proposed railway route from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo runs. It is a timber reserve consisting of ironbark. The balance of the 11,000 acres is made up of land within several other reserves on the run. With regard to Nubba, I do not find any record of reserves. I think it is all purchased land.

450. Mr. Humphery.] Do you think that in dry seasons any appreciable quantity of fodder would be sent from Sydney or elsewhere to Temora as a distributing centre? In dry seasons the fodder comes from different parts. We have to buy fodder ourselves in very dry seasons, and in some seasons we have sent it away.

451. Would Temora be a good distributing centre for fodder in dry seasons? Yes; I think it would. In very dry seasons they must get their hay from somewhere. But Temora, as it is going on now, with agriculture increasing, would grow enough in good seasons.

452. I am referring to times of drought? The farmers would store their straw and hay, so that it would be available for them in dry seasons.

453. Mr. O'Sullivan.] Is there not a good trade in fodder done between Cootamundra and the Corowa district in times of drought? We have done a great deal of trade with Hay.

454-5. It would be a shorter distance to convey the fodder by way of Cootamundra to Temora than by way of Wallendbeen? Yes. Most of the stations that have suffered from the drought lie between Hay and Condobolin, and the line from Cootamundra to Temora goes straight to tap that district.

456. Which do you think would be of more importance to the pastoralists owing the thirty stations you have mentioned—a saving of 9 miles of haulage for their wool by way of Wallendbeen, or a cheaper and speedier means of transit for their starving stock to the mountains *via* Cootamundra? There are two arguments in favour of the Cootamundra route. The pastoralists will be able to do their business with Cootamundra direct instead of having to go *via* Wallendbeen, and the line will afford them the means of speedy transit for their sheep to the mountain country.

457. Which would be of more importance to the pastoralists—the saving of 9 miles of haulage of the wool to Sydney or the cheap and speedy transit to the mountain runs? The safety of the stock is of more importance than the saving of a few shillings on a bale of wool; because in a week they might lose thousands and thousands of sheep. On one station alone about 20,000 died in about three weeks, the sheep being unfit to travel. That station is about 25 miles from Temora. If the sheep could have been trucked their lives might have been saved.

458. If this line goes on to Hillston, how far would it be from the Mount Hope Copper-mine? I cannot say.

Charles Herman Burton Primrose, Esq., Police Magistrate, sworn, and examined:—

C. H. B.
Primrose,
Esq.
1 Feb., 1890.

459. Chairman.] Do you reside at Cootamundra? I do.

460. What position do you occupy in the Public Service? I am police magistrate here.

461. And land agent? No; I was a land agent up the 1st October last.

462. Can you give the Committee any information with reference to land matters? I can.

463. Have you prepared any statement? Yes. The number of selections held in the district is 3,615.

464. What country does the district embrace? It embraces the whole of the Temora district. It extends about 10 or 11 miles to the north and north-west. It extends, I should think, for a distance of somewhere about 45 miles.

465. Can you tell the Committee what land has been selected within a radius of 20 miles on either side of the proposed railway from Cootamundra to Temora;—we want to know what selections will be affected by the proposed railway? Nearly the whole of that land is selected with the exception of the reserves. All the available land is selected.

466. All the available land on the route of the proposed railway? Yes; except the reserves and the leasehold area.

467. Is there any land open for selection other than the reserves and the leasehold area? I could not say without looking at the office maps, but I do not believe there is.

468. But speaking in general terms, the whole of the land that is available is selected? Yes. If it were not selected it would be readily taken up.

C. H. B.
Primrose,
Esq.
1 Feb., 1890.

469. And the figures you have prepared refer to the land district as a whole? Yes.
470. That would embrace land that is away from the railway line? Yes.
471. Can you give the Committee any information with reference strictly to the land that would be affected by the proposed railway—could you say how much land has been selected within a radius of 10 or 11 miles of the proposed railway route? I could not. Nearly all the land that has been taken up of late years has been in that direction, because there has been no other land available.
472. Perhaps we might take the figures you have prepared, and you could say that much of the land would not be affected by the proposed railway. The figures will show what amount of settlement has been taking place in the land district? The only land that has been available for selection for many years past has been in the direction of Temora.
473. There is no Land Office at Temora? No.
474. So that all the selections in the neighbourhood of Temora would be made at Cootamundra? Yes, and within the last ten years.
475. Could you supply the Committee with the number of the selections and the area taken up in the vicinity of the railway line? I could get that information, but it would take some time. No doubt it could be forwarded on to Sydney. The Land Office was opened at Cootamundra in 1877. In 1881 there were 307 selections, most of which would be in that direction. In 1882 there were 206 selections; in 1883 there were 162; in 1884 there were 180; in 1885 there were 119; in 1886 there were 84; in 1887 there were 74; in 1888 there were 32; and in 1889 there were 66. The greater number of these selections would be in the direction of Temora.
476. How much revenue is the Government receiving from the land selected in this district? In 1888 the revenue was £11,852; and in 1889 it was £12,073 5s. 5d.
477. That is by yearly instalments? Yes, and other collections, but principally instalments.
478. And deposits on selections? Yes. The land revenue for the year 1888, including instalments, was £14,624, and for 1889 £16,814.
479. Can you say what balance is due to the Government on conditional purchases in this district? I could not do so without a little calculation. The March collections for 1888 were £11,852, and for 1889 £12,073.
480. Those figures do not include the pastoral lease rents? No, except the conditional leases. The pastoral leases are station properties. They are not included.
481. Have you the figures with regard to the pastoral leases? No. Those payments are made direct to the Treasury, and do not go through the local office.
482. From your knowledge of the district, do you anticipate that when the leasehold areas are thrown open to the public the land will be selected rapidly? I think so. In fact, I feel sure of it. There is a demand for every available acre of land in the district.
483. So that the population will reasonably be expected to increase considerably during the next few years? Certainly.
484. And the produce from the land will also proportionately increase? Yes.
485. Do you hold the office of Registrar of Births? Yes.
486. Can you tell the Committee the number of births registered within the last few years? With regard to the district through which this railway would run, I have nothing to do with that, because I am merely an Assistant-Registrar of the Gundagai district, which only extends about 5 or 6 miles, and does not touch the county of Bland at all. I have the returns for 1888 and 1889, but they do not touch the county of Bland through which this railway goes.
487. Can you say how many teams ply between Cootamundra and Temora—wheat, wool, or general teams? I could not give any idea as to the number, but during the last few years I have frequently had to go to Temora, and I have noticed a great number of teams going backwards and forwards carrying wool, wheat, and stores of all kinds.

Mr. William Miller, stock and station agent, sworn, and examined:—

488. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Cootamundra.
489. What is your occupation? A stock and station agent.
490. I suppose the evidence you will give will be similar to that given by your brother, Mr. J. J. Miller? Yes; I could give information concerning wool, stock, and other matters, and also in reference to the country extending beyond Temora.
491. Perhaps you would tell the Committee what information you could give? I have drawn a rough sketch of the river Lachlan from the Murrumbidgee up to its source at Forbes, showing the country intervening between the south-western line and the western line. The proposed line to Hillston would run nearly equi-distant between the two. The country lying between the Hay line and the Bourke line is nearly all Crown land, and there is a very small proportion of freehold land. South of the Hay line, and through Riverina, it is all purchased property. The country about Hillston is all Crown land, with the exception of a very small proportion of purchased land. The resumed area on all those runs is nearly all taken up by selectors. There is a very large new population, which has come there during the last three or four years, since the passing of the Act of 1884. That is all good agricultural country, or nearly all of it, and there are about 5,000,000 acres of Crown land between the Hay line and the river Lachlan, which this proposed railway would traverse if it went right through to Hillston or any other point on the Lachlan—say Cudgellico, or any other point which may be made the terminus. There is a very large population of selectors there. I have been all through that country lately. All the resumed area, all that part open for selection—all the best of it—is already taken, and the occupants are all new families, principally Victorians, and I estimate that in five years time there will be a very large area under agriculture.
492. And do you anticipate that when the leasehold areas are thrown open they will be readily taken up? The population will increase at the rate it has done during the last five years.
493. And you think there will be people enough to select the land comprised within the present areas? Yes.
494. Suppose there is a railway taken from Orange to Forbes along to Menindie; that will circumscribe the distance very much between the Hay line and the Forbes-Menindie line;—do you think there will then be sufficient space between the Hay line and the Forbes-Menindie line to allow of another railway running to Hillston? Most decidedly. There is an enormous tract of country there.
495. What do you anticipate that these western selectors will do with their land? They will only run sheep until they get railway communication.

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496. Do you think it would pay to send wheat from Hillston to Sydney? Yes. The very large area they could put under cultivation would facilitate it. If they were only to grow small areas it might not pay, but the tremendous extent of country capable of being put under wheat, oats, and other crops, would enable them to make it pay.

497. Do you think that the climate of Hillston and the neighbourhood would grow oats? The climate between Cootamundra and Hillston is much the same as it is at Cootamundra.

498. Do oats grow at Cootamundra? Yes. Heavy wheat crops have been grown in the district.

499. Are there any oats? I have seen the heaviest crop of oats, or at any rate equal to anything I ever saw in my life, about 70 miles the other side of Temora—half way between Temora and Hillston.

500. Is the country there higher than it is here? I should think it is about the same. There is only a difference of 8 feet between Cootamundra and Temora, and it is nearly all level country from Temora to the Lachlan.

501. And you think the rainfall is as great at Hillston as it is at Cootamundra? Not quite. Half-way between Temora and Hillston the rainfall for the past year was 21 inches, the same as it was at Cootamundra.

502. In the meantime these new selectors to whom you refer are running sheep on the selections? Yes. Of course they have not improved their land yet to enable it to carry stock to the extent that it will do.

503. These selections will all be in the Central Division? Yes.

504. And are they taking up large areas—2,560 acres? Yes.

505. Then I suppose you are of opinion that if the line were extended from Temora to Hillston it would give accommodation to a large number of selectors? Yes, equally as great a number, if not greater, than between Cootamundra and Temora.

506. And you think that all the available land in that direction is taken up already? Not all the land. There are still some blocks. There is a great deal of land to be alienated yet, but for a distance of 100 or 80 miles from Temora all the good country that is worth taking—that is the country on the resumed area—is gone, and in order to get land now they must go further back towards Hillston.

507. Do you agree with your brother that all the people beyond Yeo Yeo, and out towards Stockinbingal and Temora, would prefer a line to Cootamundra to a line to Wallendbeen? Yes, a line to Wallendbeen would inconvenience them considerably.

508. As a stock and station agent, are you in the habit of visiting the stations in the neighbourhood? Yes. I have visited nearly all the stations between Cootamundra and the Lachlan.

509. How long have you been in business? Four years.

510. Can you say whether the wool clip is increasing or decreasing? It is decreasing on the stations.

511. What is that owing to—selections? Yes; to the resumed area being taken up by selection.

512. But if the selectors are running sheep on the selections, ought not the quantity of wool to increase? It will in time, but at the present they are not fully stocked. Instead of putting capital into sheep they are applying it to improving their lands. A great many of the new selectors are not stocked, although their land is capable of being stocked.

513. Is the land between Cootamundra and Yeo Yeo good land? Yes; it is all good agricultural and grazing land.

514. And all fully occupied? Yes. There are a few reserves which are being cut up into special areas and thrown open, but nothing to speak of; nothing in comparison with what there is beyond Temora.

515. Do you understand farming? Yes.

516. Is the land between Cootamundra and Yeo Yeo suitable for cultivation? Yes. There are patches which are not, but the soil is all good where it is not stony.

517. Where it is not stony the soil is good for cultivation, and where it is stony I suppose it is good for grazing? Yes.

518. And beyond Yeo Yeo, about Stockinbingal? For 6 miles beyond Yeo Yeo it is all good agricultural land, and then there is a belt of iron bark and scrub which runs right through from the Murrumbidgee to the Lachlan River. This belt of country is about 6 or 8 miles wide. It is all barren country, good for nothing except for grazing.

519. Is it a mining country? Yes, it is all auriferous.

520. Has there been any gold found between Cootamundra and Temora? Yes; there are two diggings.

521. What are they called? There is Woodstown and what is called the Possom Power Reef. They are in this barren belt.

522. What has been done at Woodstown? Both those places are worked out pretty well. There are only a few miners there now.

523. Where they quartz or alluvial? Both. Possom Power was quartz; Woodstown was alluvial and quartz.

524. Where are they located;—are they near the railway line? The railway line runs within a few hundred yards of Possom Power, and within $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of Woodstown.

525. There are very few men employed at both those places? Very few at present.

526. There are no gold-fields at work between Cootamundra and Temora besides those two? Not that I know of.

527. Were they any good when they were at work? Yes; good payable gold was found there while it lasted. In fact, throughout the whole of that country gold has been found in patches.

528. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you think it would be necessary to fence the railway line the whole way between Stockinbingal and Temora? Yes.

529. Even through that part of the country which you speak of as being rough? It is always safe to fence, so as to prevent stock getting on the line.

530. You say that 6 or 8 miles of the country is unfit for any purpose? Unfit for agriculture or grazing.

531. Would it therefore be necessary to incur the expense of fencing the line on both sides? I think it would be necessary.

532. *Chairman.*] I suppose there are stock running there? It is on a run. Even on this country they run stock, but it is merely an auxiliary to better country.

533. *Mr. Humphery.*] You think then that the fencing could not be dispensed with and the cost of construction lessened in that way? It would be much safer to fence the line.

534. Would there be any difficulty in procuring the necessary timber? No, this belt of country is valuable for timber. There have been thousands of railway sleepers got there already, and it is not half worked out yet.

535. I suppose there is an abundance of ballast? Yes.

536.

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536. Do you know the country between Yeo Yeo and Wallendbeen? Yes.
537. Can you say whether there is much settlement there? The other side of the proposed route is all purchased property. Berthong has 40,000 acres of purchased property, and the line runs through part of that.
538. How many farms or conditional purchases do you think there are on the northern side? I do not know of any.
539. They are all on the southern side? Yes—there are about ten, I should think.
540. Would the farmers within 3 miles of the junction of Yeo Yeo be equally served by either of the proposed lines? I should certainly think that the farmers within 4 miles of the Wallendbeen side of the junction would never go to Wallendbeen;—they would sooner drive to Cootamundra.
541. Assuming that the Wallendbeen line were constructed would it be more convenient than a line from Cootamundra to Yeo Yeo? No, it would not.
542. *Chairman.*] Why not? In the first instance their produce is purchased by the Cootamundra people, and their wheat would come to Cootamundra. Their business is all done with Cootamundra.
543. But Cootamundra does not retain the wheat, but sends it on to Sydney or Goulburn? When the flour-mill was at work at Cootamundra a very large quantity of the wheat was bought here. It happens now, through some financial difficulty, that the mill is closed, but if it were open again all the wheat would be bought and ground into flour at Cootamundra.
544. *Mr. Humphery.*] Would not the farmers within 3 miles of the Wallendbeen side of Yeo Yeo save a considerable haulage in sending their wheat to Goulburn or Sydney if it went by the Wallendbeen line? Yes, if they wanted to send to Sydney.
545. But irrespective of the haulage, it would be equally convenient for them to send their produce to Cootamundra? Yes.
546. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Where does the wool from the Hillston district go at the present time? It goes to Carrathool by team, and is taken down the river to Echuca, from whence it goes to Melbourne.
547. If this line were taken on from Temora to Hillston do you think it would tap the wool trade of the Lachlan River? Yes. The wool there has to be carted 100 miles to the river, and railway communication would be preferable, because waggon cartage is a very heavy item.
548. Is the Lachlan River navigable up to Hillston? No, they have to take the wool up the Murrumbidgee.
549. How far is the Lachlan navigable? I do not know.
550. None of the wool comes down the Lachlan at present, but it has to be carted from Hillston to Carrathool? Yes.
551. But do they not strike the Murrumbidgee near Hay? Carrathool is near Hay.
552. And they ship the wool by the Murrumbidgee on to Echuca? Yes.
553. They ship it at Carrathool to be sent down by water to Echuca? Yes.
554. How far have they to travel from Hillston to Carrathool? 100 odd miles.
555. At least 100 miles? Yes; I should think so.
556. And if the line were taken on to Hillston or anywhere near it there is a probability that it would tap the wool trade of the Lachlan River Valley, and bring it to Sydney instead of allowing it to go to Melbourne? Yes.
557. At present none of the wool is sent on the railway at all? It has to be carted 150 miles.
558. Do you know how many teams ply between here and Temora? I could not say. I think about five regularly. In the wool season there are a tremendous number.
559. *Chairman.*] Squatters have their own teams? A lot of them have.
560. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Are there not regular teamsters who make it a practice to come here during the wool season, carrying the produce to the nearest railway station? Yes.
561. Do any of these professional teamsters trade between Cootamundra and Temora and Hillston? Not between Cootamundra and Hillston, but between Cootamundra and Temora. The Hillston goods go from Hay.
562. Then at the present time the trade of Hillston is principally done with Melbourne? Yes.
563. Do they get their stores up from Victoria? Not all of them, but a very large proportion.
564. I suppose the teams that take the wool down from Hillston to Carrathool get station supplies as return freight? Yes.
565. And if a railway were constructed is it likely that that trade would also be done by the Sydney side? Yes.
566. Is there much settlement beyond Barmedman? Not immediately beyond Barmedman. There is a tract of bad country there—an iron bank and malee belt. When you get beyond that, and about 30 miles from Temora, the good country commences again, and goes on to the river. That is a new settlement.
567. Is the Lachlan Valley getting settled by farmers and selectors? Yes.
568. Is it good agricultural soil? Yes.
569. Does the river overflow its banks there to any extent? Not to any extent. The river is not a valley; it merely runs through the level country and does not overflow its banks. There is no alluvial soil on the river.
570. Are there no floods on the Lachlan? The water runs into billabongs.
571. Does it not at times flood the whole country? No.
572. Have you never read telegraphic descriptions of floods on the Lachlan River? Yes, but the water goes off by degrees into billabongs.
573. It is good arable soil, is it not, on either side of the Lachlan River? Yes, particularly on this side.
574. Soil that is likely to grow fodder to a large extent? Yes, to a very large extent. There is an enormous tract that could be put under wheat and oats.
575. I suppose that if it were properly settled, and if a railway were carried to Hillston on the bank of the Lachlan there would very likely be a large trade done in fodder as well as in wool? I consider it one of the most important centres in the Colony. There would also be a very large traffic between the Lachlan River and the southern line. It is a new country and it has never been touched. The beauty of it, is that it is all Crown land, and the Government would derive a large revenue from the sale of country capable of carrying some hundreds of thousand of people, and of developing into a very large agricultural district.
576. *Mr. Humphery.*] What is the mileage between Barmedman and Hillston? I should think about 150 miles.
577. And between Barmedman and Temora? 22 miles.
578. That would be 172 miles from Temora? I am not quite certain.

Mr. Edward Prior Barnes, late storekeeper, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. E. P. Barnes.
1 Feb., 1890.
579. *Chairman.*] You are a resident of Cootamundra? Yes, I was formerly a storekeeper here.
580. What information can you give the Committee with reference to the goods and passenger traffic between Cootamundra and Temora? I am collecting some information as to the quantity of goods sent out by the carriers during the past twelve months. That total is 450 tons.
581. Is that merely an estimate or have you reliable information? I have reliable information as to that.
582. What do those goods chiefly consist of? Goods and wire, and iron and principally lighter goods. The wire and iron cannot be sent from Cootamundra on account of the differential railway rates. A large quantity does of course go from here, but not so much as would be the case if the differential railway rates were not in existence.
583. Have these goods been carried by public teamsters? Principally by public teams.
584. Can you say to what distance the goods have been sent beyond Temora? To Temora and Barmedman, but principally to the town of Temora.
585. Can you say how many tons come this way from there? I did hear that there were 2,000 tons of wool but I could not say for certain.
586. I suppose the people of Temora and Barmedman are in the habit of getting their stores at Cootamundra? Yes, the selectors are in the habit of dealing principally with Cootamundra.
587. But there are large stores in Temora? Yes.
588. I suppose they get their goods direct from Sydney? They get them from Sydney, round by Old Junee. The goods are sent from Sydney to Wagga Wagga, and are returned from there to Old Junee, and are sent on by teams to Temora.
589. That is on account of the differential railway rates? Yes.
590. Have you any knowledge with regard to the passenger traffic? No.
591. Do you know how many public teams run between Cootamundra and Temora? About four or five regularly.
592. Are they horse teams? Eight-horse teams.
593. Are there any bullock teams? Very few.
594. I suppose in the wool season the squatters mostly send the wool in by their own teams? No. Generally speaking, teamsters who reside in the locality contract with the squatters to bring in their wool. The squatters as a rule do not now keep teams of their own; they find it better to engage professional teamsters.
595. Do coaches ply between Cootamundra and Temora regularly? A coach plies regularly every day.
596. One coach a day? Yes; backwards and forwards.
597. Can you tell us who would be able to give us information with reference to coaching traffic? I think Mr. Findlay, the contractor, would be the best man.
598. Does he represent Cobb & Co.? No. He and his partner were with Cobb & Co.
599. I suppose they carry the mails? Yes.
600. And there is one coach a day? Yes.
601. Seven times a week? Yes.
602. I understand that you have been out of business now for about a year? Yes.
603. So that you cannot say anything about an increase in the business being done? No.
604. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How far out from Cootamundra in the direction of Temora do the shopkeepers of this town do business? I think they do business nearly as far as Barmedman, but principally on this side of Temora. The principal business is done about 25 miles out from Cootamundra.
605. All the people out that way must regard Cootamundra as their business centre? Yes, they do.
606. Do you know if any produce is sent to Junee or to Old Junee? Not from this side of Temora.
607. From the farmers on the Temora side? Yes. I think some wheat goes from the Mimosa side. Some goes to Coolamon and some goes to Junee.
608. Why does it go to those places? Because that is the nearest railway communication.
609. Would this proposed railway be likely to tap that trade? It would most undoubtedly do so.
610. They would then be much nearer to the Temora line than to Junee? Yes.

Mr. William Hall Matthews, general storekeeper, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. W. H. Matthews.
1 Feb., 1890.
611. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? In Cootamundra.
612. Are you in business? Yes, as a general storekeeper.
613. Have you been long a resident of Cootamundra? For sixteen years.
614. For how many years have you been in business? During the whole of that period.
615. Do you find the trade with people lying west of Cootamundra increasing or decreasing? Very materially increasing.
616. I suppose you account for that by the increase of population in that direction? Yes. Until some nine years ago there was very little population there. Since then it has increased very considerably, is still increasing, and will continue to increase.
617. Can you say how many tons of goods you send out to the westward in the direction of the proposed railway during the year? I cannot say exactly, but I should roughly estimate the quantity at 100 tons.
618. How many storekeepers are there in Cootamundra besides yourselves? There are two doing nearly as much business as ourselves, and a good many smaller ones. There must be three large firms, and about five or six smaller ones.
619. Three firms doing as much business as yourself? Not as much business—we do the largest business.
620. I suppose we can reckon that there would be 300 or 350 tons of goods sent from Cootamundra in a year? I should scarcely think so, because the other two stores do not go in for the farmers' trade as largely as we do.
621. Do you think the farmers are tolerably prosperous? Yes, particularly prosperous.
622. Have you any difficulty in getting your payments? None, with those who are careful and industrious. There are the usual exceptions, but those who are careful and industrious have all done well.
623. You find them generally having payable crops? Excepting last year, when the season was exceptional. This year they are about 20 per cent. above the average.
- 624.

624. You think they will be able to save money this year? Well, they had a bad year last year to pull up. This year, on the whole, will more than recover the liabilities of the district for the last two years. Mr. W. H. Matthews.
625. I suppose you reckon that in general terms the farmers of the district are reasonably prosperous? Yes. 1 Feb., 1890.
626. Able to pay their way and do a little more? Yes.
627. Have you any knowledge with reference to the reserves in the district? Yes, I can give you some particulars concerning them. In the first place, there is a large reserve at the railway station for railway purposes. Lying west from the town about a few miles there is a large reserve which had been recently subdivided, but which has been withdrawn from sale waiting for the railway.
628. Is that reserve No. 1,798? It is a timber reserve, and is still intact.
629. What is the number of that reserve? It is part of the suburban boundary within the population area, and is about 3 miles out.
630. How many acres does it comprise? About 1,000 acres.
631. What other reserves are there? The next reserve is at Stockingbinal—it is a travelling stock reserve, No. 1,157.
632. Does that remain intact? Yes. Water reserve No. 187 has been alienated. Then there is water reserve No. 1,017, and reserve No. 15, and reserve No. 55.—These three have not been surveyed, and have still been retained as reserves.
633. Are they required as water reserves in the interests of the public? No, they are not required.
634. Are they not on the travelling-stock route? You have a travelling-stock route to the south-east.
635. But is there any water on travelling-stock reserve 1,157? I do not think there is.
636. Then they would not require the water that is on these reserves? There is a reserve lower down. There is a reserve on the Dinga Dingi? That is adjoining the proposed village of Stockingbinal.
637. And do you advise that those reserves should be cancelled and thrown open for settlement? That reserve I would, or a portion of it.
638. Those are known as the Yeo Yeo water reserves, I suppose? Yes.
639. Could you say how many acres they contain? The reserve is approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles square. There is, in addition, a reserve at the village of Stockingbinal about 600 acres. There are only two half-acres sold.
640. Are there any other reserves? There is a water reserve No. 1,017 near Stockingbinal.
641. Can you say whether that is good land? Yes, it is splendid land.
642. And the other reserves to which you have referred—are they all good lands? Really good land.
643. Land that could be taken up for settlement? Yes, if it were thrown open.
644. With reference to water reserve No. 1,017—is that required for water purposes? I do not think so.
645. Suppose a town were formed at Stockingbinal, would there be a water supply for it? There is a deep creek which runs for about four or five months in the year. It is the head of the Bland Creek.
646. Are there any other reserves? There is the leasehold area which will be thrown open in July.
647. Will the travelling-stock reserves all be required? They may be, but there is a lot of country that has not been selected.
648. Although the lands were measured, they have been locked up from selection by being included in the leasehold area? Yes.
649. And you think the whole of these will be taken up as soon as they are thrown open? Yes, every one of them will be taken up on the first land office day.
650. Are there any others? Out at Gundabingal there is a large amount of land which has not been selected. This is principally a travelling-stock route.
651. But these travelling-stock routes must be preserved to enable people to get stock to and fro? Still adjoining these there is a large area of Government land. There are some large forest reserves in connection with these which could be thrown open. The timber is of no use at all. In some cases it is, but in other cases it has only been an excuse to have the land reserved. Then at Combaning there is an immense timber reserve.
652. Is that good land also? It is nearly all good land. There is a ridge of ironbark on which some valuable timber for sleepers could be obtained. The estimate given for sleepers I consider too high because they cost 3s. 6d. delivered here according to Government contract. But as these would be largely on the ground, and at no very great distance the estimate for sleepers could be very much reduced.
653. Do you not think it would be desirable to keep the forests where the ironbark grows, reserved? Most decidedly.
654. You would not have them destroyed? No, I would reserve the ironbark, but I would throw open the good agricultural land because when you get away from the ironbark you come into the box country, where the timber is not of much use.
655. Are there any others? Lying north of Gundabingal is Dinga-Dinga, where is situated the Narraburra reserve comprising from 20,000 to 30,000 acres, the bulk of which is the finest land in the district. At present it is embraced within the leasehold area, but immediately it is thrown open there will be a tremendous number of applicants for it. In fact the other day a private coach was taken to convey eight persons from Victoria to go out and inspect, so as to be ready to select.
656. Are there any more? That is in the parish of Narraburra. There is a further portion of timber reserve 437. Again, there are reserves shown in the parish of Trigalong. All this land which is numbered has not been thrown open for selection. It has been measured recently, and is to be thrown open immediately.
657. I suppose you have not gone into any calculation as to how many thousand acres will be available in the district? Approximately, I am given to understand, about 35,000 acres, fit for settlement; that is, within a radius of say 15 miles of Temora.
658. And the whole of this is on the route to Temora? Yes, and adjacent to Temora.
659. It would all be benefited by the railway? Yes. In the parish of Temora again there are many large reserves which are at the present locked up. A large proportion of these are to be thrown open. In Thanowring there are very large areas of reserves.
660. But these are within the Temora gold-fields reserves? Still they can be thrown open and taken up under the 15th section. In the parish of Culingeria there is a considerable quantity of land in reserves. The larger portion of the parish is reserved. If this land were thrown open it would be almost immediately selected.

- Mr. W. H. Matthews.
1 Feb., 1890.
661. And you think there would be no difficulty in finding the people as soon as the land is made available? Not the slightest difficulty. Finding land for the people is the difficulty at the present time.
662. It is hardly any use asking you whether you are in favour of the line being made from Cootamundra—you are, I suppose, very much in favour of it? Yes, I am. Personally I am of course interested in the line being brought to Cootamundra, but I am influenced in my opinion by a broader view in the interests of the whole district. As the centre of trade Cootamundra has superior claims. The land office is here, the mails go to and from here, the principal business of the back country is centred in Cootamundra, and although there would be a saving in haulage to Sydney if the line were taken to Wallendbeen, this advantage would be more than counter-balanced by the inconvenience which would be experienced by the people of the surrounding districts having access to Temora being obliged to come to Cootamundra *via* Wallendbeen.
663. But as far as the mails are concerned you know of course that if the line were constructed to Wallendbeen they would go by train? At the same time those on the present mail route would be inconvenienced. I would point out that it is the intention to establish large flour mills at Cootamundra, so that instead of sending the wheat away we would grind it ourselves. Therefore it is not to be expected that the wheat will always be sent to Sydney. A farmer growing 200 acres of wheat would produce approximately 100 tons. The saving he would effect by sending it *via* Wallendbeen instead of *via* Cootamundra, the haulage being 9 miles less, would be about £5. He does not grow wheat all the year. But against this saving there is this view of the case—he does his business in Cootamundra, and if he got 10 tons of goods in a year, he would receive them, *via* Wallendbeen, and they would have to travel a distance of 14 miles more than would be the case, if they went, *via* Cootamundra. This in itself would mean a cost of £3. Then, take it for granted that he comes into town once a fortnight, the railway would lose his fare, as he would ride into Cootamundra, in preference to incurring the extra cost of going by Wallendbeen.
664. *Mr. Humphery.*] Are you aware of the cost of construction of this proposed line? I am informed by the surveyors that the cost would be very slight, because there are no earth-works on the line.
665. The cost of the line is estimated at £138,000. Interest upon that sum would be nearly £5,000 a year, and the working expenses of the railway would be £7,500 a year. These two sums would make a total of £12,500. Is there any prospect of the earnings of the line paying the working expenses within a reasonable time of its opening, and eventually the interest on the cost of construction? I am certain it would be one of the best paying lines in the Colony from five to seven years after it was opened. I base my remarks on this fact, that the country is taken up by *bona fide* selectors—men who have gone upon the land with the sole object of making a home for themselves as the selectors have done around Cootamundra, and the very fact of having a railway will assist them to do this. If they do not get a railway, it may be only a question of time for the land to revert into the pastoral holdings. To a very large extent, the run-owners will buy out the selectors and the population on the soil will be limited. The greater the population, the greater will be the chance of a railway paying, and it is on that fact that I base my opinion that the Temora line if constructed will pay handsomely as years go on, because you do not end at Temora. When you get to Temora, you find many miles of good country beyond. At the present time I am sending goods a distance of 60 miles beyond Temora to *bona fide* selectors. Many of them have gone out, and are going out, on the prospect of the Temora line being constructed, and of their being thus placed in closer connection with civilization than they are at present.
666. So that you believe that this will be within a very short period, a reproductive work? I feel certain it will be as reproductive as any other railway of its character in the Colony.
667. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You are the Secretary of the Railway League—have you had anything to do with preparing the statistics and data that have been furnished to the Committee? No.
668. Can you guarantee that they are correct? I fully believe they are; I accept them as correct myself, knowing the parties who collected them.
669. You are prepared to swear that to the best of your belief they are correct? Most decidedly. There is one remark I wish to make. You cannot take the goods traffic from the Cootamundra railway station as any criterion of the quantity of goods that go to Temora, because in consequence of the differential railway rates, I do not think that more than a quarter of the goods that are taken to Temora go *via* Cootamundra. The differential railway rates have acted very prejudicially to the interests of Cootamundra. Goods can be taken to Wagga Wagga, and taken by teams to Temora cheaper than they can be conveyed *via* Cootamundra.

Herbert Stafford, Esq., Manager of the Commercial Bank, Cootamundra, sworn, and examined:—

- H. Stafford Esq.
1 Feb., 1890.
670. *Chairman.*] Are you a resident of Cootamundra? Yes.
671. What is your occupation? I am Manager of the Commercial Bank.
672. *Mr. Humphery.*] How long have been in Cootamundra? About five years and a half.
673. Can you say if the number of your depositors has appreciably increased during that period? The number has wonderfully increased.
674. Quadrupled? Yes, fully; I may mention that during the last six months, two banks have opened here, making five in all in the town. This fact affords some proof of the stability of the district.
675. Have your operations extended to Temora? They have extended even further than Temora.
676. Are branches of any of the Sydney banks established at Temora? Yes, two; the Bank of New South Wales and the Joint Stock Bank.
677. Have you any customers between here and Temora? Yes; several.
678. What are they—conditional purchasers? Farmers growing wheat, and combining wheat with sheep.
679. Can you speak as to the general prosperity of the district? Yes; knowing most men in the district, I can say that those who have tried to get on have succeeded. If a man is industrious and attends to his business, he is certain to get on.
680. You regard the district as financially sound? Very sound indeed.
681. You have made no bad debts during the time you have been here? No. Of course I might lose a few small unsecured debts, such as a loan of £5, but no secured accounts.
682. Can you say if there are mortgages over many of the holdings? I should say that nearly every holding was mortgaged. There are exceptions. It is a young district, being only about thirteen years old. Farmers from all parts of the Colony came here. They saw the country, and knowing that it would
not

not remain long unsold, they secured as much as they possibly could of it. They had to mortgage their holdings in order to take up other lands, and now they are in such a position that they could all clear out and go away with a fair independence.

H. Stafford,
Esq.
1 Feb., 1890.

683. And pay off all incumbrances on their holdings? Yes; they could easily do it.

684. Have you formed any opinion as to whether the proposed railway from Cootamundra to Temora would, within a reasonable period after its opening, pay working expenses, and, in the course of time, interest on the cost of construction? At first I do not think it would pay, but if it were carried on past Temora to Barmedman, and eventually further west, it would be a very paying line.

685. Do you think it will pay if it stops at Temora? Well, I would not like to say that. I think the further it goes out the better it will pay. It will open up more traffic and increase the value of the Government land, which will fetch a higher price.

686. And you think that the proceeds of the Crown lands would help to pay for the cost of construction? I am certain of it.

Mr. Albert Henry Davies, postmaster, sworn, and examined :—

687. *Chairman.*] You are a resident of Cootamundra, and occupy the position of Postmaster? Yes.

688. How long have you been in that position? Two years.

689. Can you give the Committee any information as to whether the postal business in the direction of Temora is increasing? The local business has vastly increased since I came here.

690. I suppose you do not make up the mails for Temora; they are made up in Sydney? We make up a local mail for Temora; that has not increased very much.

691. Has it not rather decreased since the gold rush? I was not here at the time of the gold-fields.

692. Then what is the case as regards the postal business between Cootamundra, Stockinbingal, and Temora, and around in that neighbourhood? I should think it has slightly increased.

693. Not to any material extent? No.

694. Could you form any decisive opinion, from the amount of correspondence, as to whether or not the population between Cootamundra and Temora is increasing very much? I should not think so.

695. You make up a return every quarter? Yes.

696. What increase does that return show? It does not show the correspondence between here and Temora, but only the total number of letters actually posted in the office.

697. That would apply rather to the Cootamundra business? Yes, simply to Cootamundra.

698. Is there any appreciable increase in the business of your office? That has increased since I have been here to the extent of about thirty or forty letters in the quarter.

699. Have you also to do with the telegraph office? Yes.

700. Is there any increase in the telegraph business? There has been a slight increase during the last twelve months. The telegraph receipts in 1889 increased about £12 beyond the revenue for 1888.

701. That applies to the whole of the district? Yes.

702. You could not separate any portion of the district, and say what increase applies between Cootamundra and Temora? No; there is nothing to show that.

703. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How many mails a day do you send out from the Cootamundra office—general mails? Twelve or thirteen.

704. How many of your mails go to Temora and to the west and east of Temora? We make up direct for Temora and the intermediate stations—three, I think.

705. There would be no mails going away to the east and west? No; we have nothing beyond Temora. We make up direct for Temora, and they branch off and make up from that office.

Mr. William Hall Matthews, general storekeeper, sworn, and further examined :—

706. *Mr. Humphery.*] Are you aware that the Railway Commissioners recommend that the land necessary for the construction of the line should be conveyed to the Department by the owners free of cost? I saw such a suggestion in the report of the Commissioners.

707. Do you know whether the owners of the land that would be traversed by the line from Cootamundra to Temora would be willing to convey their land free of cost? I think some of them would. I am instructed, on behalf of one gentleman, to say that it will be done as far as he is concerned. His land is on the other side of Stockinbingal. It could hardly be expected that for some distance outside of the town owners would give their land free of cost, because they would gain no benefit whatever. The owner to whom I refer is Mr. Joseph Stokes. The line will probably run for about a mile through some property of my own, and I shall be quite willing to give that land. There is only a question of getting a water supply, which might be a matter of compensation, but as far as the land itself is concerned I am willing to convey it to the Government.

Mr. W. H.
Matthews.
1 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Joseph Stokes, land-owner, sworn, and examined :—

708. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Stockinbingal.

709. You are the owner of some land in that neighbourhood? Yes; about 623 acres.

710. And the proposed railway would traverse that land for about a mile? For about 35 chains.

711. As far as the surveyed line traverses that land are you willing to convey the land to the railway authorities free of cost if the line is constructed through your property? Yes.

712. I suppose you are not in a position to say whether any of your neighbours would be willing to do the same? I could not say.

713. What is the land worth in your neighbourhood? About £3 an acre.

714. That is if the instalments were paid up? No; as it stands now.

715. With how much paid? About 7s.

716. And you estimate that it is now worth about £3? Yes.

717. Does that include improvements, such as fencing? That would be the price if you were selling out a selection with improved and unimproved land together. Of course there would be improvements on it—fencing and dams.

718. And you would estimate the general value of the land in the district at about £3 an acre? Yes; that would be the value of the selections. I do not mean unimproved land.

719. Farms? Yes.

Mr. J. Stokes.
1 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. J. Stokes. 720. Are you carrying on farming? Yes.
- 1 Feb., 1890. 721. What is the general average yield of your crops? From about eighteen to twenty bushels of wheat to the acre. That was the yield this year. I cultivated 130 acres.
722. Do you grow anything else besides wheat? Yes; corn, potatoes, and vegetables of all sorts.
723. Is the wheat free from rust? The early wheat was.
724. The later wheat is suffering from rust? Yes. All the late wheat out there had the rust.
725. What is about the general yield of potatoes—how many tons per acre? It depends on the season.
726. How many tons do you generally get? This year was a good one, and I suppose the yield would be between 4 and 5 tons to the acre.
727. Do you find wheat or potatoes more profitable? Wheat is the surest crop.
728. Wheat is the main stay? Yes.
729. Is there any fruit grown in the district? There will be after a few years. It is only a new place about where I am.
730. I suppose there is very little dairying carried on? With some of them there is.
731. Any big farms? All the farms have a few pigs.
732. But none of them have gone into the business extensively? No; they have not gone into dairying alone.
733. Only keeping pigs to eat up their potatoes? Yes. Every farmer has a few pigs of his own.
734. Do they find growing wheat or running sheep the more profitable? Most of them grow wheat and run sheep too.
735. They combine agriculture with grazing? Yes.
736. And from your experience do you think the farmers generally are in a really prosperous state? Well, I do not know. I can only speak for myself.
737. You have nothing to complain of? No.
738. So long as you get good crops and good prices I suppose you will be able to do reasonably well? Yes; if we could get our crops to market cheaper.
739. Mr. O'Sullivan.] How long does it take a selector to get upon his feet in a district like this? That depends upon what sort of a man he is.
740. An ordinary industrious man? It would also depend upon what sort of a start he had.
741. Suppose he starts, as many do, with little or nothing? It would take him a good while now.
742. Four years? Yes, twice that.
743. Chairman.] Can you give the Committee a fair idea as to the average profits per acre derivable from wheat culture; that is to say, the net profits after taking into account the cost of ploughing and sowing, as well as the cost of seed-wheat and of reaping and stripping and getting your wheat to market;—about how much per acre do you reckon to make, clear net profit? I could not tell you. I never reckoned it up that way. I know there is not much in it if you have to pay for a lot of labour, and pay 1s. 6d. per bag for the carriage of the wheat to the railway station.
744. You think the construction of this railway would be a material benefit to the farmers? Yes.
745. Mr. O'Sullivan.] Do you know of any persons who are likely to take up selections in this district? Yes; I know any number of people who would do so if there was land available.
746. You are aware that there will be land thrown open in July in the shape of leasehold areas? Yes; but a lot of that land is poorish land—grazing land—say half; and half will be second-class land.
747. Did not the squatters take the best half of their runs into the leasehold areas in 1884? That I could not say.
748. It would be very natural for them to do so? Yes; but perhaps they could not do so, because it may have been all taken up before.
749. You know they all fixed their own dividing-line? Yes.
750. And they would very naturally select the better portion for the leasehold? Yes.
751. These lands are now falling in, and therefore the chances are that they are better land than that on the resumed areas. That being so, do you think that these lands are likely to be taken up rapidly? Yes, if they are thrown open.
752. Would an ordinary industrious selector in about four years get on his feet with land like this? Yes, with fair seasons.
753. We may therefore look for a thriving agricultural settlement on these areas within four years? Yes. There is a lot of reserves embracing the best land about there locked up.
754. But do you think that we can look for the successful settlement, or the industrious settlement, of the leasehold areas within four years time from this? Yes.
755. And those who get on the reserves of which you speak will have an advantage, and be more likely to be prosperous than the others? Yes.
756. Mr. Humphery.] In estimating the value of land at £3 an acre, would you include the cultivated land? I include the whole selection right through. If you had a selection with unimproved and improved land you would let it go together.

Mr. Thomas M'Beath, builder and contractor, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. T. M'Beath. 757. Chairman. Where do you reside? At Cootamundra.
- 1 Feb., 1890. 758. What is your business? I am a builder and contractor, and have lately added a saw-mill to my business.
759. Where is the saw-mill? In the town.
760. Where do you obtain the timber? During the last six or nine months I have obtained it principally from between Cootamundra and Temora—about half-way; but on account of the scarcity of teams during the wheat and wool seasons we have had to bring a good portion of the timber from near Narrandera. As soon as the teams are available we shall commence to bring the timber again from the same place.
761. What kind of timber have you been sawing? Both pine and hardwood.
762. What kind of hardwood? Ironbark and white box principally, and stringybark occasionally.
763. What size do you cut the logs? A size that will give marketable timber.
764. About what diameter and what length? The diameter will be from 12 to 18 inches, or an average, I suppose, of about 16 inches; and as regards length, the timber we have been getting in lately will, I suppose, average 20 feet.
765. This will apply to both pine and hardwood? Yes.

765½. And is there a good supply of pine? From inquiries I have made, I am given to understand that there is a good supply of timber. Several of the reserves referred to by Mr. Matthews contain marketable timber.

Mr. T. M'Beath.

1 Feb., 1890.

766. The whole of the best timber is reserved? Yes, and a good deal of it is on leasehold land held by the stations. Of course it is available for timber-getting under a license.

767. Still it is included within the timber reserves? Just so.

768. Which you consider is a desirable thing? The leasehold land would not be reserved, but most of the timber we have been getting has been on Crown land.

769. But the leasehold area would also include timber reserves? Yes. We have not yet touched what is strictly known as the timber reserves. They are rather far out. The leasehold and other Crown lands are more convenient.

770. Did you say ironbark or redgum? Ironbark.

771. I suppose there is a reasonable amount of timber that would do for railway sleepers.—Is there a reasonable supply of ironbark with a diameter of from 12 to 14 inches and about 30 feet in length? That is rather long. The timber out there does not run so long as the timber you find growing on the coast. It is very good, and about the best quality of timber that could be had for sleepers, because it is very dense, hard, and sound. Sleepers have been procured from there continuously since the commencement, and even before the commencement of railway construction in the district. I can recollect that before the line ran to Cootamundra many thousands of sleepers were procured from that direction and used on the railway.

772. You think there would be plenty of timber there now for sleepers? There are several contracts there now being executed, and there does not seem to be any scarcity of timber.

773. And timber for bridges—(say) 30 feet in length? Yes. I am certain that a fair quantity of timber could be procured of that size. It would have to be picked as most of the timber is shorter.

774. Timber that would square 12 inches and 12 by 14? Yes. We have been paying at the rate of over £300 a year for carting timber by teams from these forests.

775. I suppose you would expect to get it in cheaper if the railway were built? We should get it in cheaper, but only if the line came direct to Cootamundra; because if we had to take it to Wallendbeen and bring it back this way again we should be in the same position that we are now, and we might just as well cart by teams.

776. You think you would not be able to shift your mill to Wallendbeen? Well, the local consumption here is considerable, amounting to between 250,000 feet and 300,000 feet a year, and there is a big market for timber from Gundagai to Tumut and in that direction. But on account of the heavy freight from Narrandera, where most of the timber comes from, they use local timber, although they prefer the pine.

777. Are you in the habit of sending timber to the neighbourhood of Tumut by train? We have sent some, but a good deal of timber goes in that direction from the Narrandera line. I know, however, that the timber off that line for a distance of 15 or 20 miles from the back of the railway is pretty well cut out, and in the course of two or three years the marketable pine will have disappeared altogether. The best forests that are now within reach of this centre are towards Barmedman.

778. What timber grows there? What they call the Lachlan pine. It is very valuable timber. I am credibly informed that there are splendid forests out in that direction.

779. Good-sized trees? Yes.

780. If the railway were constructed I suppose you would anticipate a large business in timber? Yes. A large proportion of the up-traffic from Narrandera to Junee consists of timber. There is a very large consumption of timber in the district round Cootamundra. Therefore, I feel sure that if facilities were afforded for bringing the timber from the Barmedman country a very large trade would be done, because the length of carriage would be shorter, and the timber is of a better quality; besides which the timber forests on the south-western line are being quickly worked out.

781. Your mill is at present occupied cutting timber at Narrandera? No; we are drawing timber from about half-way to Temora by teams.

782. What do you pay? We are paying in freight from that direction about £300 a year.

783. How many teams are employed? We can keep four employed, but sometimes we can only get two.

784. Can you get a ready sale for the timber you cut? Yes. We have no difficulty. We have no stock at all. Everything is sold as fast as it is cut.

785. Do you send it to Goulburn? No.

786. And your business all consists of local trade? Yes, and within a radius of 50 miles.

787. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do I understand you to say that this hardwood timber exists along the railway route? Yes, for a distance of 5 or 6 miles. The reserves referred to by a previous witness contain timber.

788. This timber could therefore be utilized for railway purposes? Yes.

789. Have you noticed travelling that way if there is a supply of ballast which might also be utilized? I have not taken particular notice, but the ranges are so stony that I do not think there can be any doubt about it.

Mr. Thomas Parker, senior-sergeant of police, sworn, and further examined:—

790. *Chairman.*] Can you give the Committee any further information with regard to the yield of wheat in the Cootamundra district? The number of acres of wheat grown last year was 19,713, and the aggregate yield amounted to 394,891 bushels. In 1885 the number of acres of wheat grown was 12,121, yielding 149,904 bushels.

Mr. T. Parker.

1 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Haines Thomas Giddy, railway station-master, sworn, and examined:—

791. *Chairman.*] You are railway station-master at Cootamundra? Yes.

792. How long have you occupied that position? A little over eight and a half years.

793. Can you give the Committee any information with reference to the traffic between Cootamundra and Temora? I have no record of the passengers, but I can give you an outline of the parcel traffic. For the last two years the parcel traffic has averaged about £6 10s. a month; that is the traffic going by coach to Temora.

Mr. H. T. Giddy.

1 Feb., 1890.

794. Booked through from Sydney? Yes—passing through our office for Temora and going by coach.

795.

- Mr. H. T. Giddy.
1 Feb., 1890.
795. Do you think there has been any increase during the last six or twelve months? At the beginning of 1888 the traffic was from about £3 10s. upwards, and at the end of last year it went up as high as £10.
796. Then that shows clear evidence of an increase? It shows an increase for the latter end of last year.
797. You have no means of telling what has been sent away from the Temora district? No.
798. And the same with the wool? With regard to the wool, I could give the tonnage that has gone through the station. I daresay the Committee would be able to deduct the local wool from that, and the result would give a fair outline of what the wool traffic from the Temora district would be. For 1889 the wool traffic was a little over 800 tons. That was the total passing through Cootamundra. Last year there were 4,375 bales of wool.
799. Do you know whether the stations round Temora, and out in the direction of Hillston, send their wool this way or to Victoria? I have no idea.
800. Wright, Heaton, & Co., have an agent here? Yes, they have an agent of their own, but Mr. Robert Perry has done the greatest part of the wool trade during the last season. I might say that as a rough estimate, the goods traffic from Cootamundra to the Temora district would be equal to about 37 or 38 tons per month. I refer to the goods passing through the railway office. But as far as I can understand that only represents a small proportion of what really belongs to the Temora district. I understand that three or four teams draw from Junee, and that there are teams drawing also from Wagga Wagga to Temora. I believe also that teams draw to Temora from Old Junee and from Coolaman. I am told that there are at least seven or eight teams engaged drawing goods from Wagga Wagga, Old Junee, and Coolaman, to the Temora district.
801. If the proposed railway were constructed, the whole of that traffic would go through Cootamundra? Yes. A line to Temora would take the whole of that traffic, and would land the goods at the township direct.
802. The earnings of the railway would only be between Temora and Cootamundra? The earnings, of course, as far as the railway is concerned, would be on the traffic between Cootamundra and Temora. The goods go from Wagga Wagga and Old Junee to Temora instead of from Cootamundra, owing to the differential rates.
803. There would be no increase in the earnings of the railway from Cootamundra to Sydney? Under the differential rate system it is cheaper to send goods from Sydney to Wagga Wagga than it is from Sydney to Cootamundra. If the goods could be taken to Temora by railway direct it would be an advantage to the district, although of course as far as the receipts of the Railway Department are concerned, there would be very little difference.
804. Mr. Humphery.] Will you give the Committee some idea of the operation of the differential rate system as it affects Cootamundra? I think the following figures will give you some idea of how the system works: 6 tons of goods from Sydney to Wagga Wagga would cost £25, and the cost of conveyance back to Junee would be £4. The cost of road carriage from Junee to Temora would be £9, making a total of £39, which the carriage of the 6 tons would cost from Sydney to Temora. Six tons of the same class of goods from Sydney to Cootamundra would cost £38 0s. 6d. Add to this the £9 for road carriage to Temora, and you have a total of £47 as against £39, the freight to Temora *via* Wagga Wagga and Junee. There is also to be considered the haulage from Cootamundra to Wagga Wagga. The freight of 6 tons of goods from Sydney to Junee at the mileage rate is £41 11s. 6d., which, with the charge of £9 for road carriage to Temora, makes a total freight of over £50. I estimate that the freight by railway from Sydney to Temora direct would be about the same as the freight on the goods landed at Junee.
805. Mr. O'Sullivan.] Have you ever been manager of a terminal station? No.
806. Do you know from what distance a terminus would draw traffic to a railway station? I have no idea. It would depend upon the circumstances of the locality, particularly as regards population.
807. From how far out in the direction of Temora does the Cootamundra railway station draw wool? From somewhere about Barmedman—about from 60 to 80 or 90 miles.
808. Then if the line were pushed on to Temora, and that were the terminus, it would probably draw traffic from a distance of from 60 to 80 miles? It would all depend of course upon the amount of settlement.
809. If there was a station at Temora it would very likely draw the wool traffic from the Lachlan River and the neighbourhood of Hillston? There is no doubt it would draw from a greater distance in proportion as the line was extended. I could not say in what direction the stations lie from which the wool is sent. Possibly they might send their wool *via* Young or away out to the western line.
810. At present they may do that, but if the railway were pushed out to Temora, would they not be very likely to utilize the station there instead of going to Young or Coolaman? There is no doubt that if it were nearer to them and more advantageous, they would use it.
811. Then if the line went to Temora it would be likely to tap a portion of the wool trade that now goes to Victoria? I cannot say what districts may be sending wool to Victoria.
812. At all events we should draw some of the wool from the southern portion of the Hillston district? There is no doubt a railway would draw wool which during last year went to the south-west line towards Narrandera and that way.
813. In your evidence just now you gave the number of parcels, and the tonnage of goods that went through your station to Temora; I presume that would not represent anything like the trade that is going on between Cootamundra and Temora? No; I do not suppose it would. That is simply what passes through Cootamundra.

Mr. Richard Corbett, coach proprietor, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. R. Corbett.
1 Feb., 1890.
814. Chairman.] You are a resident of Temora? Yes.
815. Are you the proprietor of the line of coaches running between Cootamundra and Temora? I am one of the proprietors.
816. Is yours the only line of coaches that runs? Other coaches go occasionally.
817. You run every day I suppose? Yes, Sunday included.
818. Have you the mail contract for the year? Yes.
819. How often do the other coaches run? I could not say exactly; probably about once a month. Whenever any sports are held, or on any other holiday occasion three or four coaches run; but our coaches are the only ones running regularly.

820. How many horses do you drive? Four.

821. How many passengers do you take? On an average about five a day both ways—about two in and three out.

822. So that the total passenger traffic would amount to (say) two to Temora, and three back? Yes.

823. You are not including in your coach traffic the passengers that you pick up and drop on the road, but only those going right through? Exactly.

824. As a matter of fact I suppose you do take up other passengers on the road? Yes, every day almost.

825. Can you say what parcel traffic you have? We have a very large parcel traffic—as much as we can take. In fact we cannot take it all as a rule. This includes goods obtained from the goods' shed.

826. And you carry the mails both ways? Yes.

827. What is the amount of your contract for carrying the mail? We get £155 a year.

828. *Mr. Humphery.*] How many passengers do you think are carried by private vehicles between Temora and Cootamundra? I think there are more than travel by coach. I think on an average at least three or four a day travel by private traps in addition to those who are carried on special occasions by other coaches.

829. So that you think the total traffic would be about 10 daily? I think it would be more than that all the year round.

830. Have you any objections to say what your receipts per month are for passenger and parcel traffic? Somewhere near about £140 a month.

831. Is that inclusive of what you get for carrying the mail? No, exclusive. I could not tell you the amount exactly, but it is somewhere near the sum I have mentioned. A considerable amount would have to be deducted for trainage.

832. Can you say approximately what you have to deduct for trainage? From £40 to £50 a month.

833. Then you think your earnings are £90 a month, exclusive of £12 a month for the mail? Yes, about that.

834. You think the whole of that traffic would go by rail if the line were constructed to Temora? Yes.

835. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do the farmers of the district and the people of Temora drive in to Cootamundra in their own buggies? The majority of them do.

836. Therefore, the passenger traffic you have is what may be called the casual traffic? Yes.

837. Do you run coaches out in any direction from Temora? No.

838. Are there any lines of coaches running out into the other districts? There is a line of coaches running from Temora to Junee, another from Temora to Barmedman, and one from Temora to Young.

839. Is there a line of coaches to Wagga Wagga? No; a line runs from Wagga Wagga back, about 16 miles from Temora.

840. Are there any lines running off into districts, *via* Young, Wagga Wagga, Junee, and Barmedman—I mean to the little country districts? There is a line that goes from Wagga Wagga past the back of Temora, about 12 miles from the township, and which runs right down to Wollongough.

841. Do passengers come to Temora from a long distance away—from the west or from the north? Those passengers all go from Wollongough to Wagga Wagga. They would come *via* Temora, but there is no line of coaches.

842. If station managers, or persons employed out that way, or visitors going to stations this side of Hillston and away towards north, east, and west, desire to reach the southern line, which point on the line would they make for? Many of them go from Temora by coach. Mr. Dalton, and all in his direction, come into Temora and take the coach.

843. They come into Temora, leave their traps there, and take the coach into Cootamundra? Yes.

844. I suppose the railway would be likely to get all that traffic? Yes.

845. *Chairman.*] Is there not a line of coaches running from the railway-station at Junee to Temora? Yes, it runs twice a week.

846. Have you any idea of the amount of traffic they have? They average two passengers a trip, as nearly as I can tell you.

847. Do you think if the railway were constructed to Temora it would obtain that traffic? Yes, I am sure it would.

848. Do these passengers come up from the south—is that the reason why they leave the railway at Junee, because they come from Victoria or Albury? The majority of them are commercial travellers.

849. Why do they prefer going that way instead of going through Cootamundra? They generally go across that way and come back this way.

850. In any case they would require to do the same journey. Even if the railway were to go to Temora they would want to do the journey between Junee and Temora? There are no business places on the road and only one hotel.

851. I think you said there was not a coach between Temora and Wagga Wagga? There is not. There is a coach that leaves Wagga Wagga, and passes within 12 miles of Temora, and goes on in the direction of Hillston, but it only runs once a week.

852. Does it carry many passengers? Yes, I believe it does.

853. If a railway were taken to Temora I suppose those people would be likely to travel by it? Yes, I think they would all go by the railway to Temora if there was a line of coaches running from that place. It would be nearer for them to come *via* Cootamundra than *via* Wagga Wagga.

854. Is there any coach running through to Hillston from anywhere? Not that I am aware of.

Mr. William Hall Matthews, sworn, and further examined:—

855. *Chairman.*] I believe you wish to supplement the evidence you gave this afternoon with reference to railway rates? Yes.

856. What is the rate for third class goods from Sydney to Wagga Wagga by truck load? £4 6s. 8d. per ton.

857. That is if you send a full truck load? Yes.

858. And if you do not send a full truck load? A charge of 7s. 6d. per ton is made by the agents for taking the goods and making the truck load up to 6 tons themselves.

25 (a)—D

859.

Mr.
R. Corbett.
1 Feb., 1890.

Mr. W. H.
Matthews.
1 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. W. H. Matthews:
1 Feb., 1890.
859. That would bring the freight up to £4 14s. 2d. per ton to Wagga Wagga? Yes.
860. Then what would be the freight by the road from Wagga Wagga to Temora? An average of £2 per ton.
861. What is the distance? About 62 miles.
862. And do they carry goods all that distance for £2 a ton? Yes.
863. That would make a total freight from Sydney to Temora, *via* Wagga Wagga, of £6 14s. 2d. per ton? Yes.
864. Do you know what the freight would be from Sydney to Temora, if the line were constructed to the latter place? According to the present scale and the rate sheets it would be about £6 15s. per ton.
865. So that the Temora people would be able to obtain their goods right through by train for £6 15s. per ton, as against £6 14s. 2d., which they have to pay at the present time, sending the goods by Wagga Wagga and then by road? Yes.
866. And the railway department would be receiving the difference in freight between £4 6s. 8d. per ton and £6 15s. per ton? Yes.
867. That would be £2 8s. 4d. the railway authorities would receive additional freight if a line were constructed to Temora? Yes; and they would save the haulage of the goods between Cootamundra to Wagga Wagga.
868. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] I believe you wish to give, as an illustration, the actual returns received by a selector from 100 acres of land, growing wheat? Yes. The facts are as follows:—A man cultivated 100 acres of land. He paid for ploughing and sowing 10s. per acre, and for stripping 10s. per acre; the seed cost £25, and he paid £36 15s. for the cartage of 490 bags of wheat to the Cootamundra railway station. These different payments make a total of £161 15s. From the sale of the 490 bags of wheat he obtained £305, showing a profit of £143 5s. above the cost of labour.
869. Would that man do his own ploughing and stripping? Yes.
870. Can that be taken to the best of your belief as anything like a fair average? Yes. It can be taken as a fair average in this way, that although the yield of wheat from the 100 acres was above the general average, the price received for the wheat was considerably below the general average. It was the lowest price that we had for some years.
871. What is about the average price of wheat in a fair season? The average price for some years past has been about 3s. 10d., extending over the last four years.
872. *Chairman.*] What did you say was the cost of the seed wheat referred to? £25.
873. How much per bushel? I have calculated it at 4s. per bushel.
874. Is that the usual price of seed-wheat? No, but last year the price was high.
875. I suppose it is sometimes higher than 4s., and sometimes lower than 4s.? Yes.
876. If the price of the seed-wheat was lower in another year, that, of course, would alter your calculations? Yes.
877. What was the yield of wheat in that particular instance? Nineteen bushels.
878. Does everybody get 19 bushels to the acre in this district? The average for some years has been 16½.
879. Then if you only got an average yield of 16½ bushels, that also would vary your calculation? Unless the price was higher.
880. But as a matter of fact the people do not get 19 bushels to the acre. I suppose that, occasionally, some get more than 19 bushels? There are some parts of the district that will average considerably over that.
881. And there are other parts that will average less? Yes.
882. I suppose the yield varies according to the season? Yes.
883. And according to the quality of the land? Yes.
884. Your calculation is based on a selling price of how much per bushel? Three shillings.
885. I suppose sometimes the wheat fetches more than 3s.? Yes, it fetches up to 5s.
886. Then if it fetched up to 5s. or 4s. the calculation would work out differently? Yes.
887. Could a man plough and strip 100 acres of land at the same price as he could plough and strip 500 acres? There is very little difference, proportionately, in the cost of 100 and 500 acres? A fair estimate of the quantity of land that one man could farm himself, with the assistance of a couple of men just at the harvest time, would be about 120 acres.
888. You think that would be about a medium thing? Yes.
889. If a man was only cultivating 20 acres, could he cultivate it at the same price as a man cultivating 120 acres? No; because he would have to have the same plant for stripping, and everything else, and the wear and tear would be the same.
890. Therefore, your calculation would only apply to a man who had 100 or 120 acres, and would not apply to a man who had only 20 or 30 acres? Exactly. The latter would be about a third-class man.
891. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] If this man got a fourth less in yield but received a fourth more in price, it would come to as much as the amount you gave in your illustration? Yes, just the same.
892. *Chairman.*] Do you think a man cultivating 500 acres would not be able to do so at proportionately a cheaper rate than a man cultivating 120 acres? No, because he would have to increase his plant. He would have to get two strippers and two ploughs, and keep a double set of horses. 120 acres is about a fair quantity of land for one man to farm, having one stripper, one plough, and an ordinary set of four or five horses.

MONDAY, 3 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the "Stockinbingal Hotel," Stockinbingal, at 11:30 a.m.]

Present:—

HENRY COPELAND, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY. † EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Cootamundra to Temora.

Mr. John Vaughan, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

893. *Chairman.*] You are a farmer residing at Stockinbingal? Yes.
894. How many acres of land do you possess? 2,300.
895. How many acres had you under cultivation this year? 340.
896. I suppose it is all under wheat? There was some barley, some corn, and some hay.
897. How many acres were under lease? I should say about 320. There were about 15 acres under hay and the rest was under barley and corn.
898. What did the harvest yield you in wheat? The average yield of wheat was something over 14 bushels all round.
899. Do you find that the general average? I could not say exactly, but I think it would be pretty near the general average. Mine was a bit late and the late crops were affected by rust.
900. Have you been many years farming in this district? I have been here altogether for sixteen years.
901. And what do you consider to be a fair average yield of wheat from this neighbourhood per acre? I should consider that if it were carefully got in, and sown a little earlier than we usually do, the yield would be from 15 to 20 bushels—it might go up to 25.
902. How many bushels of wheat did you have this year? I had about 1,400 bags.
903. And how many tons of hay? It went over 2 tons to the acre.
904. Was it wheaten or oaten hay? It was a mixture.
905. What do you pay for carriage from here? I pay a shilling a bag to Cootamundra from my place.
906. How many miles is your place from the railway station? 12 miles.
907. So that it costs at the rate of 1d. per mile per bag? Yes.
908. How much do you pay for the hay? I could not say exactly.
909. Have you any intention of increasing your area under cultivation? Yes, I have.
910. Is most of your land fit for cultivation? It is pretty well all fit for cultivation. I think it is all equal to what I have under cultivation.
911. Do you find growing wheat profitable? It has not been exactly profitable for the last two or three years. We have made it pay fairly well this year, but during the last two years we came out none too well.
912. Still I suppose on the whole you manage to live and keep on increasing your area under cultivation? Yes, and the land is improving.
913. So that you find it sufficiently profitable to warrant you in increasing your area? Yes, we all find that.
914. And I suppose if the railway were constructed you would be very glad to avail yourself of it by sending your produce to market? I may say it is our determination.
915. To what market do you send your produce? Some years ago I sent some to Sydney, but it goes principally to Goulburn.
916. Do you send any south, to Wagga Wagga, Albury, or Victoria? No; we do not send any that way.
917. Goulburn and Sydney are your two principal markets? Yes.
918. In your opinion would it be better to take the railway to Temora from Cootamundra, or from Wallendbeen? I am strongly of opinion that it would be better to take it from Cootamundra.
919. Why? Well, Cootamundra is an important place. It is not only a very good market for grain, but it is also a great stock market, and it seems to be pretty well and widely known. We all seem to do pretty well out of our stock at Cootamundra; we never make any failures there. That is one great object.
920. I suppose you know that if the railway were taken to Wallendbeen there would be $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles less haulage to pay? I am aware of that.
921. Do you think it would be preferable for you to go to Cootamundra and pay that extra haulage of $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles? Yes.
922. You would rather go to Cootamundra, and pay the $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles extra haulage, than go to Wallendbeen? Certainly.
923. For the sake of getting communication, I suppose, with a large town? Yes, and on account of the stock. In dry seasons it would be convenient to send stock through Cootamundra to the mountain country.
924. Have you any stock? Yes. I have about 3,000 sheep, about 100 head of cattle, and about 40 head of horses.
925. And you carry the whole of these on 2,000 acres? Not exactly. I do not carry them all the year round. I generally run perhaps from 1,000 to 1,500 sheep.
926. Are the people in the habit, in times of drought, of sending their stock from here to Tumut and the mountain country? They have done so when necessary; but lately they have been more careful, and have not stocked so much, and they have been better provided with water. They find it is unsafe to overstock.
927. In the event of the people sending their stock to the mountains, do you think they would be likely to use the railway for the purpose? I think it would be a great consideration.
928. Have they ever made use of the railway from Cootamundra to Gundagai? I could not say with certainty; but I have seen them driving stock over from our own district.
929. The distance they could travel by rail would be so short as to be scarcely worth while sending them by train? They would be knocked about a good deal; but I think the railway would be an accommodation to the people in the back country.
- 930-1. Are there good travelling stock routes available between here and Tumut? I could not say much with regard to the country between Gundagai and Tumut.

Mr.
J. Vaughan.
3 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. J. Vaughan.
3 Feb., 1890.
932. Between here and Gundagai? I believe they are fairly good.
933. There is a travelling stock reserve all the way from here to Gundagai? Yes.
934. Is there water on the route? Yes.
935. And you are in favour of the railway being taken to Cootamundra, as against Wallendbeen? By all means.
936. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Is there much agricultural settlement to the east and north of Stockinbingal? There is not much agricultural settlement due north.
937. Are there any stretches of well-settled country in the neighbourhood like that through which the Committee passed this morning? No.
938. Do you consider the settlement out here of a permanent character? By all means. It is increasing every year. There was very little settlement here a few years ago.
939. Do you know of any persons who intend to settle out here if the leasehold areas are thrown open for selection? Yes; any number of them.
940. Have you had many people up looking out for land? Yes, there have been a good many looking for land.
941. You think it is likely that there will be a rush of agricultural settlement here? There is no doubt about it.
942. And I suppose if they are fairly industrious men they can do well on the land here as wheat-growers? Yes. They can see how other people are situated, and will have the advantage of our experience.
943. Are any selectors selling out to graziers or to each other? They are not too anxious to sell at present. I believe they would sell if they got a good price, but I do not think there are any who are very anxious to sell.
944. What is about the value of the agricultural land out here? From £3 to £4. £3 17s. was paid for some land.
945. Do you know of your own knowledge of any purchases at £4? I know of a purchase at £3 17s. 6d.
946. Are the men who bought at £3 17s. 6d. doing well? Yes; they are doing very well.
947. The £3 17s. 6d. was given for the land with the unpaid balances attaching to it? Just so.
948. And the men who bought at that price are doing well? Yes; they are cultivating nearly the whole of it.
949. What is about the area that is generally cultivated up here? The cultivations are getting larger in extent every year. At one time 20 or 30 acres was considered a large cultivation, but now farmers cultivate from 200 to 300 and up to 500 acres.
950. And I suppose that experience has taught them that this is a successful calling? Yes; we think we can do very well, and we make some very fair cheques out of wheat-growing; but we have come to the conclusion that we would like to run some stock as well to make it a certainty.
951. But the selectors, as a rule, out this way do not run very many stock? They do. They have all more or less sheep and cattle and horses.
952. What sort of cattle? Dairy cattle.
953. They do not raise fat cattle for slaughtering purposes? Oh, yes they do.
954. And where is their market for the cattle? Sometimes they send to Sydney, and sometimes send to Cootamundra.
955. Do they send any cattle to Wodonga? No; they might send some store cattle in an exceptional case, but not very often.
956. Have you noticed which part of the line the wool teams from this part of the country make for? They make here. I saw a great lot of wool going through here and on to Cootamundra.
957. Cootamundra appears to be the natural market for this part of the country? By all means.
958. Are any of the people out this way related to the Cootamundra people by family ties? Not that I am aware of.
959. They just go in to Cootamundra as their natural market? Yes.
960. *Mr. Humphery.*] Does the railway pass through your land or any portion of it? No.
961. Do you know the route of the proposed railway? Yes; I know the route from Stockinbingal to Cootamundra, but I have never been over it.
962. Could you suggest any alteration or deviation that you think would be an improvement? I could not.
963. You think the line laid out would best serve the people of this district? I think it is well laid out. I do not think any of our local people could improve upon it.
964. Are there many settlers between Stockinbingal and Cootamundra? There are a good few.
965. How many are there between this township and Cootamundra, within 4 or 5 miles of the surveyed route, who would be served by the railway? I suppose there are about forty or fifty holdings.
966. Are they freehold holdings or tenant farms? There are very few tenant farmers out here. It is selected land.
967. Are you a selector? Yes.
968. Have you any objection to state whether your means were large or small when you came to the district? They were very small.
969. All you possess now you have accumulated since you have been here? Yes; I was almost a working man when I came here.
970. And are these other settlers in a similar prosperous condition? Yes; they are all doing fairly well.
971. All wheat-growers? Yes; with one or two exceptions, they all grow wheat.

Mr. Thomas Walter Manning, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. T. W. Manning.
3 Feb., 1890.
972. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Stockinbingal—within 2 miles of this spot.
973. Have you resided here for long? For three years. I have got leased land here. I do not hold any land of my own.
974. What part of the country do you come from? I was in the Gundagai district for about ten years.
975. How many acres of land have you leased? 1,700.
976. How many acres do you cultivate? 580.
977. I suppose your crops this year consisted mostly of wheat? Yes. I had some corn and hay as well.

Mr. T. W.
Manning.
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978. How many acres of wheat? 580, out of which I got about 14 acres of hay.
979. How many acres of corn? 25.
980. How many bushels of wheat did your crop yield? 12,650 bushels.
981. That would give an average of how many bushels to the acre? A little over 22.
982. How much hay did you get to the acre? $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons.
983. What do you pay to have your wheat taken to Cootamundra? 3d. a bushel, or 1s. a bag.
984. Can you say what are the profits per acre, generally, from the cultivation of wheat in this district? About £2.
985. Do you net £2 an acre clear profit? Yes, in a good season.
986. Is that £2 per acre clear of all expenses, including ploughing, stripping, seed-wheat, &c.? Yes.
987. You make a clear profit of £2 an acre in a good season? Yes; when once you get the land cleared.
988. What is the proportion of good and bad seasons? As a general rule we have one bad season out of three.
989. What would be the yield in a bad season? I had a yield of 8 bushels in a bad season. That was the worst we ever had.
990. You heard the evidence given by Mr. Vaughan; I suppose you generally endorse that evidence? Yes; I think it is quite correct.
991. Have you any intention of increasing your area under cultivation? Yes; I have a decided intention of doing so.
992. You find it profitable to do so? Yes. The reason we do not go in for growing so much hay is, because the cartage is too high.
993. What do you pay? We have not made it a rule to team it, simply because it does not pay.
994. If a railway were constructed to this place, I suppose you would send hay by train? Certainly, and a good few other articles that I would go in for that would pay.
995. Have you tried any other crops? I tried corn this year, and had a very good crop.
996. I suppose you cannot say how many bushels it will go? It will go about 20 bushels to the acre.
997. Do you find oats thrive? Yes; oats thrive very well. That is a thing we would go in for if we had a market.
998. Oaten hay? Yes, and chaff and so forth.
999. Do you find the oats ripen? Oh, yes; they grow splendidly.
1000. Have you tried fruit? No, but I believe it would do well here.
1001. Do you think the people generally are in a reasonably prosperous state? Yes, very fair.
1002. They are wheat growing mostly? Yes.
1003. And if the railway were open they would make use of it to send their produce to Cootamundra? Most decidedly they would.
1004. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is your holding 2 miles to the east or 2 miles to the west of the line? It would be to the south.
1005. You said that the net profit of wheat growing is £2 an acre? Yes.
1006. Have you deducted the labour? Yes, everything. That is the profit from the land when it is fit for cultivation.
1007. *Chairman.*] I think you said the railway does not go through your land? No, it does not.
1008. Do you think the people through whose land the line would run would be willing to give the Government, free of cost, the land that would be required for the railway? I could not say.
1009. You know that in many districts the people do that? I know it would pay them to do it at a distance in order to get their produce away. Those living close to a large town, and having an easy means of getting their produce in would not, perhaps, care to give the land.
1010. In any case your land is leasehold, and you could not do it? That is so.
1011. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You say you did not select up this way? I could not get the chance. The land has been shut up. I am only waiting for the opportunity.
1012. Then you would be likely to select when the leaseholds are thrown open? There is no doubt about that.
1013. Are there many men of your stamp likely to select? Yes, there are three or four where I am now.
1014. Neighbours? There are a couple of men working for me, and one is living there.
1015. Are there any leases about the district like yours? Not that I am aware of.
1016. And are you able to pay your rent and clear £2 an acre—that is £1,000 a year on your cultivated land. Have you any objection to say what rent you pay? Three shillings an acre.
1017. And notwithstanding that you pay 3s. an acre rent, besides all the expenses of cultivation, you can clear £2 an acre? Yes.
1018. What size are the wheat paddocks up here? I think the smallest are 50 acres in extent. I have paddocks up to 235 acres.
1019. And have your neighbours any larger? About the same as myself. I think Mr. Vaughan has one 300 acres in extent.
1020. *Mr. Humphery.*] You know the route of the railway? Yes.
1021. Have you any suggestion to make as to any alteration or deviation? No.
1022. And you are clearly of opinion that it is better for the railway to go to Cootamundra than to Wallendbeen? Most certainly.
1023. And any advantage you might derive by shorter haulage *via* Wallendbeen, you think would be neutralized by the inconvenience of having to go to Wallendbeen instead of to Cootamundra? Quite so.
1024. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do the farmers sell in Cootamundra to buyers there? They buy and sell in Cootamundra.
1025. Do they sell their produce in Cootamundra to buyers who go to Cootamundra? They sell it there. Some send it to Sydney and other places.
1026. At their own risk? Some of them, but very few. As a rule, most of them sell to buyers in Cootamundra.
1027. And to those who sell to buyers in Cootamundra the 9 miles haulage does not matter? No.

Mr. ,

Mr. David White, farmer and grazier, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. D. White. 1028. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Stockinbingal.
 1029. Of how many acres of land are you possessed? About 1,900 acres.
 3 Feb., 1890. 1030. Is the whole of that selected land? Yes; selected and purchased property.
 1031. You do not lease any? No.
 1032. How many acres have you under cultivation? About 300.
 1033. And what do you grow? Wheat.
 1034. All wheat? All wheat this season.
 1035. How many bushels per acre have you had from your crop? Some did very well, but the late crop was not very large.
 1036. What did the late crop give you? About two bags, or 8 bushels to the acre.
 1037. And what did the early crop give you? 32 bushels.
 1038. You have heard the evidence given by Mr. Vaughan and Mr. Manning; I suppose you generally endorse all they said? Yes; they are both neighbours of mine.
 1039. Have you any evidence to tender of a different character to that given by them? No.
 1040. You quite endorse the proposal to take the railway to Cootamundra? Yes.
 1041. You have no suggestion of any kind to make? No.
 1042. Do you intend to increase your area under cultivation? Yes.
 1043. *Mr. Humphery.*] Where is your holding situated? It joins this travelling stock reserve.
 1044. Does the line pass through it? No. It does not interfere with it.
 1045. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Did you buy your land from other selectors? I bought 106 acres from a selector named John Noonan. The great portion of it I bought from the Stockinbingal Estate when it was sold.
 1046. At auction? It was put up to auction, but it was bought privately afterwards.
 1047. Do you know of anyone likely to come up here to select? I have seen plenty of people looking round through the district lately, but I do not know them personally.
 1048. Do you think that the land in the leasehold area is as good as the land already under cultivation? Yes. There is any amount of land between here and Dinga Dinga. If it were thrown open it would not remain long unselected. With regard to the necessity of a railway, I may say that I have had 60 tons of hay here for two years without being able to get it away, and then I had to pay £1 a ton for its carriage to Cootamundra.
 1049. If the railway had been constructed you would have sent it by train? Yes.
 1050. Can you say what is the charge for the carriage of hay now? I question whether it could now be taken in for less than from 15s. to £1 a ton.
 1051. It will be less than that, I suppose, after the harvest has been carted? I do not think so.
 1052. Then that is the rate of carriage at all times? Yes.
 1053. *Chairman.*] Comparing the running of sheep on the land with the growing of wheat, which do you find the most profitable? Wheat. I could not live without wheat.
 1054. As a general thing, what is the net result from sheep—how much from the wool and the natural increase? I had 25 bales of wool off 1,900 sheep.
 1055. What do the fleeces generally weigh? They averaged this year about 6 lb.
 1056. What do you get for the wool in the grease? I sold it in the grease this year at 9½d.
 1057. That would be 4s. 7½d. per fleece? Yes.
 1058. What per centage of lambs did you have? They were all young ewes—over 300.
 1059. Out of how many ewes? About 500.
 1060. Then, I suppose, the lambing would be about 70 per cent.? Something like that.
 1061. Upon how many acres of grass did your sheep run? About 1,400 or 1,500 acres.
 1062. How many sheep? There are now about 2,100.
 1063. Then 1 acre would more than feed a sheep? That has been the case this year; this is a good season.
 1064. I suppose about 3 acres would feed four sheep? Yes.
 1065. What was the acreage required, taking the average of seasons;—would the land feed a sheep to the acre? Yes, well.
 1066. I suppose it is better adapted for sheep than for cattle? Well, the Yeo Yeo district is very good country for cattle.
 1067. Speaking for the whole year, how many acres would it take to feed a beast? I do not know exactly. I have about 100 head of cattle and horses running on 300 acres and they are all in good condition, there being plenty of grass, still.
 1068. Running on 2,000 acres in addition to the sheep? Yes.
 1069. In addition to how many sheep? 2,100.
 1070. And what is the total area of the land? There are about 1,900 acres of my own.
 1071. Do you lease any? No; only I have the privilege of running over the biggest part of a paddock of 500 acres which still belongs to the station.
 1072. But we might reckon at any rate that this country would feed, on the average, at least one sheep to the acre? Yes, well.
 1073. So that taking the wool and the natural increase even for sheep it would pay you about 7s. or 8s. per acre profit? Yes.
 1074. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is yours a very superior farm or an average farm? My land is very good. There is not one acre that is not as good as that which I have cultivated.
 1075. Is it regarded as the best farm in the district? Well, I don't know; there might be some as good as it.
 1076. You do not know of any better? No.
 1077. *Chairman.*] Have they tried in the district to cultivate English grasses? Yes, I have seen English grasses growing about 2 miles from here.
 1078. What kind of grass? Prairie grass.
 1079. Did it succeed? There was a beautiful crop.
 1080. Do you think it is profitable? Yes.
 1081. More profitable than the natural grass? Yes.
 1082. Did sheep thrive on it? They had it more for cattle.

1083. And they found it good? Very good.

1084. How is it then that other people have not followed that example? That is more than I can tell you. I expect it was tried as an experiment. Mr. Davidson, of the Geraldra station, has tried all sorts of grasses.

Mr.
D. White.
3 Feb., 1890.

1085. And is the prairie grass still giving good results? I have not been there for the last couple of years; it is three years ago since I saw it. I should like to say with regard to travelling stock, that about half a million of sheep went up the summer country the year before last.

1086. By which route? Through Cootamundra. There have been from 28,000 to 30,000 sheep on the road between here and Mr. Davidson's, of Geraldra, with nothing visible but a cloud of dust—there not being the slightest sign of grass.

1087. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] And would the stock owners be likely to use the railway in preference to travelling their stock? Yes. On the occasion to which I refer they could not travel; there was no grass—nothing but a cloud of dust.

1088. *Chairman.*] Did the sheep pass through Mr. Davidson's run? Yes.

1089. And you think it would be more profitable for the stock owners to send them by rail? Certainly.

1090. You think that although there would only be a short distance of railway still they would be sent that distance by train, and be driven afterwards? Yes.

1091. Where did the sheep to which you refer come from? A very long way down this way.

1092. From the Bland? Yes.

1093. Do any sheep come this way from Hillston? I believe so.

1094. Suppose stock owners were sending sheep from Willandry or Hillston, do you think that when they got the sheep to Temora they would make a break and take the sheep whatever distance the railway ran—say from Temora to Gundagai—and then travel them the remainder of the journey? Yes, I certainly think they would.

1095. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] There appears to be a travelling-stock route on the Bland? Yes.

1096. Is that the route usually followed by sheep going to the mountains? Yes.

1097. Therefore they would have to go through Cootamundra? Yes. In fact I have known them to go miles and miles round to get on this route.

Mr. John Vaughan, sworn, and further examined:—

1098. *Chairman.*] Do you grow any fruit? Yes.

1099. What kind of fruit? Apricots, plums, peaches, apples, and cherries.

1100. Do you find the climate and the soil suitable for growing those fruit? Yes. They will grow very well if they are attended to, and if the ground is dug and the weeds kept out so that the ground will hold the moisture through the summer months.

Mr. J.
Vaughan.
3 Feb., 1890.

1101. Do you get satisfactory crops? Wonderful crops.

1102. Why do you not cultivate more fruit-trees? I have ordered a lot. I ordered £7 worth of American fruit-trees from an agent who was round here taking orders. I think he has taken a great many orders from this neighbourhood.

1103. I suppose you know that fruit-growing is more profitable than wheat-growing? From what I have seen here I believe that no farmer should be without fruit.

1104. The fruit you cultivated I suppose you used on the farm? We have not sold any.

1105. I suppose you would be able to sell a good quantity in Cootamundra? I believe so.

1106. Have you tried grapes? Yes, but not in large quantities. There is a vineyard close to Stockinbingal.

1107. Were the grapes you tried a success? They were fairly successful. I grew them more for shade round the house.

1108. I suppose no one has tried wine-making in the district? No.

1109. Has any one got sufficient grapes to enable them to make wine? One selector close to Stockinbingal has 500 cuttings.

1110. Can you say what kind of crop they yielded? A very fair crop. The fruit was of excellent quality.

1111. Do the grapes grow to a large size? Yes, they are very good indeed.

1112. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Did you say that an American agent came here to take orders for fruit-trees? Yes.

1113. What kind of trees? All varieties.

1114. All the English fruits? Yes. When we expressed some doubt about giving orders, the agent said he would refer us to Tumut, in which district, he said, his fruit-trees had been very successful.

1115. *Chairman.*] And he is going to send you fruit-trees from America? Yes, they will be here in July next.

1116. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] And the farmers around here intend to go in for horticulture? Yes. I think the agent to whom I have referred got some very heavy orders from the Temora district.

Mr. William Koenig, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

1117. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? About half a mile up the road.

1118. How much land have you? 225 acres.

1119. Is it your own land? Yes.

1120. Did you select it from the Government? Yes.

1121. At £1 an acre? Yes.

1122. How many acres of it have you under cultivation? About 80.

1123. What do you grow? Principally wheat.

1124. In addition to the wheat you also have a vineyard? I have cultivated a small patch to see whether or not the ground would produce any fruit.

1125. Do you grow anything besides grapes? Nothing but grapes as yet.

1126. How do you find the grapes answer? They answer very well.

1127. Do they yield a good large crop? It all depends upon the kind of grape.

Mr.
W. Koenig.
3 Feb., 1890.

1128.

- Mr. W. Koenig.
3 Feb., 1890.
1128. What kinds do you grow? Principally table-fruit. I have the Black Prince, the Red Muscat, and the Sweet Water.
1129. The different kinds you have grown are table-grapes? Yes.
1130. Were you accustomed to wine-growing in the old country? No; only since I came out to the colonies.
1131. Have you made wine at Albury? No, round about Mudgee.
1132. Then you are competent to say whether this district would be likely to produce a wine-grape? This district produces as good fruit as any part of New South Wales.
1133. You think you could make wine in this district successfully? Yes.
1134. But, up to the present, you have not grown any wine-grapes? No, not yet.
1135. Do you reckon that your vines have been a success—have they been profitable? They are very profitable, provided they are looked after.
1136. What you have grown you have found to be successful and you have been able to sell them at a profitable price? There is no trouble selling them anywhere at a profitable price.
1137. Do you intend to enlarge your vineyard? Yes, as soon as I am able to do so.
1138. You are so satisfied with the cultivation of grapes that you intend to grow more when you can? Yes, because I believe fruit pays 100 per cent. better than wheat.
1139. You do not grow any other kind of fruit? No.
1140. Have you any intention of cultivating grapes for the purpose of making wine? I have.
1141. Can you say what kind of grape you intend to cultivate? I should cultivate the Hermitage for one.
1142. You think it would be successful here? Yes, it grows well. I have one or two stocks.
1143. Do you know the Albury district? No, I have not been in Albury.
1144. You only know Mudgee? Yes, I was there for a few years.
1145. And from your previous knowledge you think that [this would be a successful district for wine-making? Yes. I think it is as suitable for wine-growing as either Albury, or Mudgee, or any other part of New South Wales.
1146. You say you had no experience in the the old country in wine-making? No. My experience has been more confined to the tillage of the soil in regard to cropping.

Mr. Edmund Hamilton Woodhouse, publican, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. E. H. Woodhouse.
3 Feb., 1890.
1147. *Chairman.*] You are the proprietor of this hotel? Yes.
1148. How many years have you been here? Getting on for three years.
1149. Where did you come from? Cootamundra.
1150. Do you know the district well? Yes.
1151. Can you tell the Committee how many teams there are travelling on the road generally? This year I have kept a sort of record of the wool that has passed here. A great deal more would pass if the railway were constructed, because it would be much closer for the people in the Bland country who now send their wool to Young. Over 2,000 bales of wool have passed here this year from different places.
1152. This is the main road between Cootamundra and Temora? Yes. This is on the Bland road, but it is on the direct road for teams to Temora.
1153. It is the road that teams generally take to Temora? Yes; more especially bullock teams.
1154. Do you think other teams have gone between Cootamundra and Temora besides those that have passed your place? Yes, I am sure of it.
1155. Do you think there are many? Yes, a great many.
1156. What proportion do you think? More have gone that way than this way.
1157. More from Temora to Cootamundra? Yes.
1158. I suppose the Hillston wool does not come this way? No; wool comes in from some of the Humberg country and the Meroo country.
1159. Does any wool come from the Barmedman district? Yes.
1160. Does that come this way? Some of it came this way this year, and some of it went the other way—the other Temora way.
1161. You say that if the railway were constructed to Stockinbingal, wool that now goes to the railway at Young would come this way? Yes, I am sure of that, because it would bring them so many miles nearer.
1162. I suppose there are public teamsters generally travelling on the road? Yes.
1163. How many teams are there? About twelve just round about here, besides teams that were drawing last year and that belong further back.
1164. Are they horse teams? No, principally bullock teams.
1165. How many bullocks to the team? Some twelve, some fourteen, and some sixteen.
1166. There are not many horse teams then? No; I have only seen about seven horse teams here this year.
1167. Can you say what the freight is from Temora to Cootamundra by bullock team? I think about 35s. a ton.
1168. That is for wool and other things? Yes.
1169. Do the stations in the neighbourhood keep their own teams or do they employ teams? Nearly all of them employ teams.
1170. Are the teams generally employed all the year round, or only in the wool season? All the year round, when they can keep their cattle.
1171. I suppose after the wool season there is the wheat season? Yes; and the goods that the stations and the farmers require are, as a general rule, brought out by the teamsters.
1172. Is any timber sent away from this neighbourhood? A great many logs have been sent away this year.
1173. Of what kind? Principally pine, and there has been some ironbark and gum.
1174. Is there much of that timber left? There is a good stretch of country beyond, on which there is plenty of ironbark and pine. There is not much gum.
1175. I suppose there are no public schools here? No; not here. There are public schools round about within about 5 miles from here.
1176. Is the population, in your opinion, increasing very much in the district? Yes; it is increasing.

1177. Do you find any visible difference during the few years that you have been here? A great deal of difference in my business.
1178. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Stockinbingal stands near the roads leading to Wallendbeen and Cootamundra, does it not? Yes.
1179. Do you notice that any of the wheat or wool teams make for Wallendbeen? No; I never saw any of them going that way. They all make their market in Cootamundra.
1180. Do you know if any of the wool or produce goes by any of the by-roads to the railway (say) to Bethungra, or Junee, or any other point on the railway? Not from around this part.
1181. Further back, near Temora? There may be. I believe Mr. Hefferman's wool goes to Junee.
1182. I notice that Stockinbingal is near the Gundabingal gold-field;—is any mining carried on here? There is a little. There are two reefs working at the present time.
1183. How far from here? One is about 10 miles and the other about 12 miles.
1184. There are no alluvial diggings? No.
1185. Are these reefs paying? Yes; they are paying very well. One man is putting up a plant on his own ground.
1186. Do you keep the post-office? Yes.
1187. Can you state if there is any increase in the number of letters? Yes; there is a great increase.
1188. Have you noticed whether many persons have been up this way looking for land to select;—if there were any such persons you would be likely to see them? Yes; I have seen a good few. I know of some who are now waiting for the reserves to be thrown open in order that they may get a piece of them.
1189. Where are these reserves? There are several in this district. There is a large reserve between here and Geraldra.
1190. I suppose there will be plenty of land thrown open, apart from the reserves, when the leaseholds fall in? Yes. The people want either the leaseholds or the reserves thrown open.
1191. And you think, from what you have observed in regard to strangers coming to look for land, that there is likely to be a rush for settlement when the leases fall in? I am sure of it.
1192. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you know the district between Stockinbingal and Temora? Yes.
1193. Is there any settlement there? There is a fair amount of settlement.
1194. About how many settlers are there between here and Temora? There must be fifty.
1195. Fifty farms? Yes.
1196. Can you say whether they are within an easy distance of the proposed line of railway? The selector who lives the furthest away out of the fifty I have mentioned is about 8 miles from the line. Most of them are within that distance of Stockinbingal.
1197. The settlement you speak of is within a radius of 8 miles of Stockinbingal? The greater part of it.
1198. Do you know whether the land between Temora and Stockinbingal is good land? Yes; it is very good.
1199. Is all the land fit for settlement? Yes; with the exception of one stretch of ironbark.
1200. With the exception of that stretch of ironbark is the whole of that land fit for cultivation? Yes.
1201. What is the width of the strip you speak of? I suppose it is a little over 2 miles.
1202. Is there any good timber on it besides ironbark? There is some box, some gum, and some pine.
1203. Could railway sleepers be obtained there? Yes. A good few are got there now.
1204. Could you get any ironbark 30 feet clear? Yes; I daresay we could.
1205. And 12 inches diameter? I think so. The trees are big enough.
1206. There is good timber suitable for railway purposes—for bridges and sleepers? Yes; and for fencing.
1207. *Chairman.*] Are there any rabbits in the district? I have not seen any. I have heard of two or three being caught.
1208. There are plenty of hares? Yes. I may state that, if the line went from here to Wallendbeen, I do not think that I should use it—at any rate, not for a good while to come.
1209. *Mr. Humphery.*] You confirm the evidence of the previous witnesses as to the route between Stockinbingal and Cootamundra being preferable to the route between Stockinbingal and Wallendbeen? Yes; because I know that for what produce I buy I have a market in Cootamundra, and I should take it there, as I do now, if the railway were constructed to Wallendbeen.
1210. *Chairman.*] Suppose a township were to spring up at Wallendbeen, similar to Cootamundra, would you not then prefer to go to Wallendbeen? I do not know. I think it would take a good while before the township grew, and I should have to make a fresh market for all the produce I bought.
1211. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is there much travelling stock passing here? Yes. There were a great many sheep last year.
1212. Where did they come from? From the Bland district, the Humbug district, out Hillston way, and all out in the back country.
1213. Where were they going? To the mountain country.
1214. Do you think it at all probable that the railway would be used for the removal of stock in dry seasons? I daresay that if the sheep were not strong enough, people moving stock would use the railway to a great extent.
1215. But I suppose they would be scarcely likely to use it, unless the railway were extended a considerable distance beyond Temora, towards Barmedman and Hillston? There were several last year who would have used it if it had even been here.
1216. For the short distance of 40 miles between Temora and Cootamundra, and then on to Gundagai? Yes.
1217. What distance do the stock travel before reaching here? I have known some of them to travel 300 miles before reaching here, on their way to the mountains. I know a lot of them would have taken the railway if it had been here last year. I know some of them took the railway from Cootamundra.

Mr. E. H.
Woodhouse.
3 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Alfred J. J. Elliott, grazier, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. A. J. J. Elliott.
3 Feb., 1890.
1218. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Rogan.
1219. Where is that? About half-way between Temora and Young, on the Bland Creek.
1220. What occupation do you follow? Grazing, chiefly.
1221. I suppose you have a pastoral lease from the Government? No, it is conditional purchased land.
1222. And conditional lease, I suppose? Yes.
1223. How many acres have you? 1,000.
1224. What do you run? Sheep.
1225. How many sheep do you run on the 1,000 acres? My father and brother and myself are running together. We have nearly 4,000 acres together.
1226. You are working the 4,000 acres in one block? Yes.
1227. How many sheep do you run on the 4,000 acres? About 4,000 on an average. We have had over 5,000, but that was too many.
1228. What is the average year by year? Between 3,000 and 4,000.
1229. On an average the land would carry about a sheep an acre? Not quite. When it is well improved I have no doubt it will, but it is not sufficiently improved to carry that number yet.
1230. By improvements I suppose you mean ringbarking and scrubbing? Yes, ringbarking, and plenty of water.
1231. About what do the fleeces cut out there generally? My sheep average about 6, 6½, and 7 lb.
1232. Ewes with lamb do not cut so much? No, about 5 lb. is the average.
1233. Have you sold any wool this year? Yes.
1234. What did you get in the grease? 10½d.
1235. What is the distance from your place to Cootamundra? About 37 or 38 miles.
1236. Would the proposed railway benefit you in any way? Yes. If the railway were here I should go in more for cultivation.
1237. About where would you strike the railway? At Stockinbingal.
1238. What distance would you be from Stockinbingal? About 25 miles.
1239. Then if the railway were open to Stockinbingal you would cultivate land, and bring it to the Stockinbingal railway station? Yes. At present I have to pay 2s. a bag for carting wheat to Cootamundra.
1240. Do you cultivate any land now? Not much. It does not pay.
1241. You pay about 6d. a bushel to take it to Cootamundra? Yes.
1242. And do you think that if the railway were brought to Stockinbingal wheat-growing would pay you better than sheep? It would be better to combine both, unless you went in for wheat extensively. I have no doubt it would pay then.
1243. Is your land fit for wheat-growing? Yes. I have grown as much as 30 bushels to the acre.
1244. Is it red soil? Yes.
1245. Is the land in your neighbourhood mostly red soil? Light red soil. There is some clay land there too.
1246. Do you find the clay land good for wheat? Yes. It is rather hard to work, that is the only thing.
1247. Is there any other cultivated land in your neighbourhood? Yes; on the Narraburra Creek, about 5 or 6 miles from my place, there is a good deal of cultivation going on.
1248. Do they grow wheat? Yes, chiefly.
1249. Where do they send their wheat to? Cootamundra.
1250. Are there many selectors in your neighbourhood? There are not many close to us. Further down there are more.
1251. Is there any land open for selection in your vicinity? Not at present—it is all locked up under leasehold.
1252. Do you think it will be selected when the leaseholds are thrown open in July? There will not be a bit of it left. I believe it will all be taken.
1253. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you know the whole of the district between Temora and Stockinbingal? Yes.
1254. Can you say whether the land is suitable for wheat culture? Yes, the whole of it is, with the exception of the ironbark land.
1255. Where do you send your wool now? To Cootamundra. I do all my business with Cootamundra.
1256. Within what radius from Temora do you think there is land suitable for wheat cultivation? I could not say, but I believe that right out through the Meroo and all out that side it is good agricultural land.
1257. Do you know it yourself? I know part of it.
1258. Is the land round Temora suitable for wheat culture? Yes, it is very suitable.
1259. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Is your land a fair specimen of the agricultural and pastoral country round that way? Yes.

Michael Joseph Noonan, Esq., auctioneer, &c., sworn and examined :—

- Mr. M. J. Noonan.
3 Feb., 1890.
1260. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? About a mile from here.
1261. What occupation do you follow? I am an auctioneer and a stock and station agent.
1262. Is the number of sheep and cattle in the district increasing? Yes; the number has increased very much during the last few years.
1263. How many years have you been in the district? I was born here; I have been here over twenty years.
1264. And you know the stations very well? I know every acre of land in the district.
1265. Do you think that all the land that is available has been selected or purchased? Yes; I do not know of any Crown lands now available.
1266. And is it your opinion that when the leasehold areas are thrown open the whole of that land will be selected? I hear many persons inquiring for land, and I think it will all be selected.
1267. Do you think there are a sufficient number of people in the district without land who will be willing and ready to take up the land when it is thrown open? There will not be enough to take it all up, but I know of several people from a distance who have been inquiring for land. 1268.

1268. Can you say from what districts they will come? Some from Murrumburrah and Wallendbeen.
1269. As a stock and station agent and auctioneer, do you do any business with Wallendbeen? No; I have done no business with Wallendbeen.
1270. Do you know the road from here to Wallendbeen? Yes, well.
1271. Do you think there is a large amount of settlement between here and Wallendbeen? There is on the southern side of the proposed line, towards Cootamundra.
1272. Do you know the route that has been suggested for a railway between Stockinbingal and Wallendbeen? Yes; I travelled with the engineer when he went over the line.
1273. Is there much cultivation on that route—on the Wallendbeen side? No, there is not a great deal. It goes through two or three big stations—Nubba, Berthong, and Clifton.
1274. Does it go through Berthong? Yes; it touches Berthong.
1275. About how many selectors do you think there are on the railway route between Stockinbingal and Wallendbeen? I do not think there are more than thirty-five or forty at the very outside.
1276. How many of these are on the southern side, and how many on the northern side of the line? I know of very few on the northern side, except just at Wallendbeen;—in fact I do not know any except the stations.
1277. You say there are thirty-five or forty selections between Stockinbingal and Wallendbeen? A good many of them are about the Congo.
1278. And are the selections taken up in the interests of the station? Not that I am aware of.
1279. They are in the hands of *bona fide* selectors? Yes.
1280. Do these selectors cultivate much land? Yes, they cultivate a good deal.
1281. Where do they take their wheat—to Wallendbeen? A good many go to Wallendbeen, and others to Cootamundra.
1282. Would not the railway, if taken to Wallendbeen, be a great advantage to those settlers? There is no doubt it would be an advantage to them. About 3 miles from Wallendbeen on this side there are a good few selectors, and then there are not many more until you come to Congo and Morrison's Hill.
1283. What is about the average of the cultivated areas on that line? I could not exactly say.
1284. Are there any large cultivated blocks? No, there are no large blocks. They run in extent from 50 acres to 100 acres.
1285. Are there many cultivated to that extent? Yes.
1286. And they have to cart their wheat to the Wallendbeen station? Yes.
1287. About how far does the cultivation extend from Wallendbeen in this direction? For about 2½ miles, and then the line goes through the station.
1288. That is as far as the range? Yes.
1289. Is there any cultivated land on this side of the range and on the Wallendbeen railway route? Yes, there are a good many selections on Morrison's Hill.
1290. And are there many this side of Morrison's Hill? Yes, on towards Congo there are a good many selectors.
1291. And are there many this side of Congo? Yes, I think there are ten or twelve about Congo.
1292. Do they cultivate largely? Yes, pretty largely. Some of them cultivate up to nearly 300 acres.
1293. About what distance would they be from the proposed Wallendbeen railway line? They would be within 2 miles of it or closer.
1294. How many miles do you think they would be from the Wallendbeen railway station? From 14 to 16 miles.
1295. How many miles do you reckon it is from Stockinbingal to Wallendbeen by the surveyed railway route? About 21 or 22 miles.
1296. *Mr. Humphery.*] How many of the thirty-five or forty selections you mentioned are between Congo Creek and Yeo Yeo? I think about twenty.
1297. Would those twenty settlers be fairly well served by the line from Cootamundra to Yeo Yeo? Yes; and the most distant of them would not be more than 5 miles away from the line.
1298. How many other settlers are there between Congo Creek and Wallendbeen? About twelve or fifteen.
1299. How would they be served? They would certainly be best served by the line to Wallendbeen.
1300. They would have to send their produce to Wallendbeen? Yes.
1301. They would not be served by the line from Cootamundra to Yeo Yeo? No.
1302. I suppose you cannot say approximately how much land they have under cultivation? I think some of them about Morrison's Hill have up to 200 acres.
1303. How far are they from the proposed line between Cootamundra and Yeo Yeo? About 10 miles.
1304. And how far from Wallendbeen? About 8 miles.
1305. So that it would be more convenient for them to send their produce to Wallendbeen than to use the line from Cootamundra to Yeo Yeo? Yes.
1306. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you hold any stock sales at Stockinbingal? Yes.
1307. Do you get any stock from the Congo and Tumbleton sides? No. They come principally from Temora and about this neighbourhood.
1308. I suppose you are pretty well acquainted with the land out towards the Bland? Yes, I know it all.
1309. In your opinion is it well suited for agriculture? Yes, with the exception of some small patches or ridges of ironbark.
1310. Then the country out on the Bland will be served by a railway going from Stockinbingal to Temora? Yes. The railway would serve all the Bland country.

Mr. Joseph Johnson, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

1311. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? About 6 miles from here, on the Gundabingal Station.
1312. What occupation do you follow? A bit of carrying and a bit of farming.
1313. How many acres of land have you? 380.
1314. Is it a selection? Yes.
1315. What do you do with the land? I cultivate 35 acres.
1316. What do you grow? Wheat.

1317.

Mr.
M. J. Noonan,
3 Feb., 1890.

Mr. J.
Johnson.
3 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. J. Johnson.
3 Feb., 1890.
1317. How many bushels to the acre did you get this year? About $3\frac{1}{2}$ bags.
1318. About 14 bushels? Yes. It might be more.
1319. You do carrying on the road? Yes.
1320. What teams have you? A bullock team.
1321. How many bullocks do you generally use in a team? From ten to sixteen.
1322. How many tons are you able to carry on this road? It depends on the time of the year.
1323. Speaking in general terms, how many tons can you manage to take this time of the year? 6 or 7 tons.
1324. I suppose you have very little carting to do in the winter time? Not much.
1325. What do you generally carry? Generally wool; anything that is going.
1326. What do you charge for carrying wool to Cootamundra? £1 a ton from the Gundabingal station, and £1 4s. from Gundabingal North.
1327. Do you carry any from Temora? No.
1328. I suppose there is a large amount of stores carried backwards and forwards to Temora? Yes, but they generally go the other road.
1329. Do you carry anything from Stockinbingal? No.
1330. Do you carry anything to Stockinbingal? Not often.
1331. Is there no wheat or wool to be carried? There is plenty of wheat.
1332. What do you charge for carrying wheat? They give 1s. 6d. and 1s. a bag—1s. 6d. for 20 miles, and 1s. from here, which is about 12 or 14 miles.
1333. Can you say how many teams there are on the road? Sometimes there are more than at others.
1334. How many do you think there are carrying at the present time, during the wheat season? There might be fifteen or twenty that I know of. I am not on the road now, and I cannot say exactly. There may be more. I believe there are twenty.
1335. I suppose the majority of the teamsters are also selectors, and have land of their own? Yes; a good many of them.
1336. At other times of the year I suppose they are clearing their land and cultivating it? Some are, and some come from other parts to cart wheat.
1337. In which direction from here is your selection? It is about north-west from here, on the Gundabingal Station.
1338. I suppose you are also of opinion that the railway would be better taken to Cootamundra than to Wallendbeen? Yes.
1339. You think it would be more beneficial to the district generally? Yes, a great deal more.
1340. Do you bring any wool from the westward? Yes, sometimes. I do not go back for wool now, but only cart for the sheds about here.
1341. What sheds do you take wool from? From Gundabingal, 6 miles, from here, and from Gundabingal north.
1342. And they send their wool to Cootamundra station? Yes.
1343. Is there any difficulty in winter time in getting stores taken to Temora on these roads? Sometimes there is a little difficulty.
1344. What does cartage go up to in the winter time from Cootamundra to Temora? From 25s. up to £2.
1345. Do you find farming pay you better than carting? No.
1346. You think the carting pays you better? Yes, because I have very little land under cultivation.
1347. Do you find bullocks more profitable than horses? I have not had much to do with horses. I think bullocks are more profitable.
1348. *Mr. Humphery.*] After the wool and wheat have been sent away from the district during the summer, is there much other traffic? I do not think there is a lot then—not during the winter.
1349. Is there no traffic carting stores up to the different stations? There is a good deal of traffic sometimes in timber and sleepers.
1350. Where does the timber come from? From the belt of ironbark about 6 miles from here, on the way to Temora.
1351. What quantity of timber do you think would be sent? It is only taken to Cootamundra for repairs to the railway.
1352. Is there any saw-mill up there? Not now. There were two during the construction of the Gundagai line, but they were closed after that contract was finished.
1353. Is there abundance of timber suitable for railway purposes still available? Yes.
1354. Do you know the size of timber required for sleepers and the construction of bridges? Yes.
1355. Is there any timber of that sort? There is plenty of bridge timber.
1356. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How far out in the back country do the teams go that bring wool to Cootamundra? As far as Bygaloree.
1357. What distance is that from Cootamundra? Over 100 miles.
1358. And do you think that if the railway went on to Temora they would draw wool from a distance of 100 miles from Temora in the same way? I am pretty well sure of it. Wool that now goes to Junee would come this way, and wool that now goes to Young would come this way—if there was a railway to Temora.
1359. Do you know if there is any wool that goes down towards Hay that might come this way? Yes, there is a good deal of wool within a pretty easy distance of Temora.
1360. Which goes towards Hay to be shipped on to Victoria? Yes.
1361. Do you think that would be drawn this way if the railway were taken to Temora? That would depend on the railway freight, but I think a good deal of it would.

Mr. David White, sworn, and further examined:—

- Mr. D. White.
3 Feb., 1890.
1362. *Mr. Humphery.*] Have you had any experience as a railway contractor? Yes.
1363. In this colony? In Queensland, Victoria, and New South Wales.
1364. Can you say what is the cost of wire fencing—seven wires, posts, 6 ft. 6 in. long, 6 in. x 3 in., and 8 ft. 3 in. apart, No. 6 wire; what would that cost per mile? £55 a mile they gave at Wallendbeen.
1365.

* NOTE (on revision):—The fence I referred to had a top rail. However, the money suggested would put up a first-class fence. This fence was two wires, equal to the top rail.

1365. That is what the railway contractors paid for getting the fencing done? Yes.
 1366. Was that first-class railway fencing? Yes.
 1367. Who were the contractors? Amos Brothers.
 1368. Who erected the fencing? A man called Williams; he had a mate with him.
 1369. Where does he live? He lives out Gundagai way, now.
 1370. Was that for the whole length of the line? No, only a part of it. I think a mile on each side of the line.
 1371. Could you say what would be the value of railway fencing of a similar description between Temora and Cootamundra? I reckon that if the wire were delivered on the ground the posts could be cut and put up, and everything else done for £25 per mile.
 1372. Do you think the fencing of this line could be done for less than £55 per mile, which was the cost of the fencing at Wallendbeen? The fencing could be done for less, because the stuff is alongside, and there is no cartage.
 1373. Have you any doubt that the fencing could be done for £55 per mile? None at all.
 1374. Would you be prepared to take a contract to do the whole of the fencing between Temora and Cootamundra for £25 a mile—you finding all the material with the exception of the wire? Yes.
 1375. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Would your posts have the holes bored for the wires? Yes, the posts would be bored and the wires put in.
 1376. *Chairman.*] A similar fence to that at Wallendbeen and on the Government railways? Yes.

Mr.
D. White.
3 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Thomas Walter Manning, sworn, and further examined:—

1377. *Mr. Humphery.*] You have heard the evidence of Mr. White? Yes.
 1378. Do you know if the fencing referred to was done for £55 per mile? I could not say anything about that.
 1379. Could you say at what price fencing similar to that described to Mr. White could be erected between Temora and Cootamundra? I am certain it could be done for the sum Mr. White mentioned.
 1380. Have you had any experience in fencing? Yes, a good deal.
 1381. Have you had any fencing done yourself? Yes.
 1382. What has your fencing cost you? £17 10s. per mile.
 1383. Is that the highest? Yes.
 1384. What is the number of your wire? No. 10.
 1385. Are you quite sure that £25 per mile would cover the cost of all materials except the wire and also pay for the labour? Yes, I am certain of it.
 1386. Would you be prepared to take a contract for the erection of railway fencing similar to that described to Mr. White? Yes, I should be quite prepared to take a contract for the fencing at £25 per mile, and the wire found.

Mr. T. W.
Manning.
3 Feb., 1890.

TUESDAY, 4 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met in the Court-house, Temora, at 10:30 a.m.]

Present:—

HENRY COPELAND, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY. | EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Cootamundra to Temora.

Francis Hickey, Esq., auctioneer, &c., sworn, and examined:—

1387. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Temora.
 1388. How long have you resided here? Over ten years.
 1389. What is your occupation? I am an auctioneer and commission agent.
 1390. Have you any experience as a farmer? No.
 1391. Have you had any experience as a miner? Yes; I have been mining for many years.
 1392. Does your business lie in the direction of selling stations or selections? I sell selections, merchandise, landed property, and houses.
 1393. Can you tell the Committee what is the value generally of the selected land in the neighbourhood? I sold some selected land at £2 5s. an acre. I offered some property for sale some few months ago, the upset price of which was £5 an acre.
 1394. Was that a selection? Yes.
 1395. Were there many improvements on the land? Yes.
 1396. Did you get a buyer for it? No.
 1397. What was the highest bid? I think the highest offer for the land at that time was £4 14s.
 1398. How many acres were there? 640.
 1399. Is there much demand for land in the neighbourhood? There is for original selections.
 1400. Do you think that if any land were thrown open it would be readily selected? Yes; there are in fact some Victorian farmers here now looking for land.
 1401. How many? I think there is one gentleman in Court now.
 1402. I suppose you mean there are one or two cases of that kind? I have known as many as twenty in a week inquiring for land.
 1403. Do you know of very much good land held in reserves or within the leasehold areas on the squatters' runs? Not within the leasehold areas—it is all in the resumed area.
 1404. The resumed area, I presume, is all selected? No. There are about 23,000 acres of the resumed area held in reserves at the present time.
 1405. What kind of reserves? There is one called the Narraburra Reserve, which extends from near the boundary of the leasehold area up to Combaning.
 1406. Whose leasehold area? The Temora station.
 1407. How many acres does it contain? There are about 13,000 acres in that reserve alone.

F. Hickey,
Esq.
4 Feb., 1890.

- F. Hickey,
Esq.
4 Feb., 1890.
1408. What proportion of that 13,000 acres do you think is suitable for agriculture? The whole of it.
1409. It is a reserve for water? Yes.
1410. Is there any water on it? Yes.
1411. Of what nature, a creek? There is a creek and there is a very large dam on the creek.
1412. I suppose the dam belongs to the station? No; I think it belongs to the Crown.
1413. Who constructed it? I do not know.
1414. I suppose it would be desirable to retain that dam, so that the water may be available for the use of the public? Yes. The dam is set apart for the public. I think a mile on either side of it is reserved.
1415. Then there is a reserve within a reserve? Yes.
1416. And all the land outside the inner reserve, I suppose, could be dispensed with in the interests of the public? Yes; in fact it is all cut up into special areas.
1417. Do you think that land will be selected? Yes, if it is thrown open, every inch of it will be selected.
1418. Have you any information with respect to the number of selections within a radius (say) of 10 miles of Temora, or any other reasonable radius—have you any statistics? Yes. We collected statistics eighteen months ago, which embrace a radius of 18 miles from Temora, and we left those statistics with the Minister for Works. There were 196 selections in that list; about thirty did not send their statistics in.
1419. How far did you go from Temora? We took a radius of 18 miles round Temora.
1420. You have not taken any statistics since then? No. The railway league sent a man round to collect information, and each farmer gave the quantity of land he held.
1421. Have you any reliable information with reference to the number of acres that were cultivated this season, and the yield? No; we had not time to prepare that information.
1422. Do you think the land in the district is increasing or decreasing in value? Increasing.
1423. Do you mean agricultural land? Both town land and agricultural land.
1424. What is there to make the land increase in value at the present time? All the Crown lands in the neighbourhood are occupied, with the exception of the reserves.
1425. Is there no land available for selection? No; unless the people go a long way back.
1426. Is the value of the town land increasing or decreasing? Increasing.
1427. Is the land worth as much now as it was when gold-mining was brisk? A long way more—four times the amount.
1428. And I suppose, in your opinion, it obtained its value on account of agriculture? Yes.
1429. Does the town present the appearance of being permanent? Yes; it is a permanent town, and it is increasing.
1430. With regard to the proposed railway, do you think it is the opinion of the majority of the people that it would be better to take it to Cootamundra or to Wallendbeen? I do not think the sense of the people has been taken on that subject.
1431. You have not endeavoured to obtain the sense of the people? No.
1432. I suppose you know that the route *via* Wallendbeen would be 9 miles shorter? I have heard so.
1433. Well, if you wanted to go from here to Sydney or Goulburn you would have to travel 9½ miles more by Cootamundra than by Wallendbeen. That additional journey would take you, I suppose, half an hour. The question is whether you think it would be in the best interests of the people to construct the railway to Cootamundra, and have to travel 9½ miles additional, rather than have the railway constructed to Wallendbeen, and have a journey 9½ miles shorter? While recognizing the argument you bring forward, I unhesitatingly go for Cootamundra, for this reason: we, at Temora, are so situated that we are on the natural highway from Queensland, and from all the back country down as far as the Lachlan, and from thence on to the river Darling. There are immense quantities of cattle coming through here, and immense quantities of sheep travelling to summer country, and Cootamundra is in a direct route for that traffic. In my opinion it would be better to construct a line to Cootamundra, for present convenience, and allow the line to Wallendbeen to remain to be constructed in the near future, when the surrounding country will be more densely populated, and when the expense of a second line from Yeo Yeo to Wallendbeen would not matter such a great deal, and then there would be two lines which would suit all parties. The construction of the line would, in a great measure intercept the traffic from the back country to Victoria. That is the way I look at it.
1434. Can you say where the principal business is transacted—in the direction of Goulburn and Sydney, or in the direction of Wagga Wagga and Albury? I think the principal business is transacted with Goulburn and Sydney.
1435. Are there any business connections with Albury, Wagga Wagga, or Victoria? There are; but not so many as in the other direction.
1436. Where are the fat stock sent to? The fat stock is nearly all sent to Victoria. During the last half-year about 8,000 head of cattle passed through here, and about 130,000 sheep. The sheep chiefly come from the mountains, or what they call the summer country.
1437. They came out here to go west? Yes, to go down to the back country. In time of drought a great many of these sheep would be trucked to the summer country.
1438. I was asking you more particularly what market you sent your fat stock to—Sydney or Melbourne? Some go to Sydney, but the greater portion, both fat and store, go to Victoria.
1439. That applies to both sheep and cattle? Yes.
1440. Where is the wool sent to? Some of the wool goes to Victoria, but the greater portion goes to Sydney.
1441. Can you particularize any of the stations and say where they send their wool to? I cannot.
1442. You have no business transactions in that direction? No.
1443. Where is the wheat sent to generally? The wheat, as a rule, goes down the country—Goulburn and Sydney; some of it goes to Wagga Wagga.
1444. And to Albury, I suppose? I do not know that there are any buyers from Albury here.
1445. Can you say whether the majority of it goes to Goulburn and Sydney? Yes, the greater part goes to Goulburn and Sydney.
1446. You have no information with reference to the average yield of wheat for this year? Only from hearsay.
1447. *Mr. Humphery.*] I think you said there were 196 selections, and the number not sent about thirty? Yes.
- 1448.

1448. In what direction are the majority of them—Stockinbingal or towards Barmedman? There are none out Stockinbingal way within the radius mentioned, on account of the reserves. F. Hickey, Esq.
1449. The selections you referred to are west and north? They are all round Narraburra, which is north-east; on the Trungley station, which is north; and at Mimosa, which is nearly due west from here. 4 Feb., 1890.
1450. And very few of the selections you refer to are east of Temora? Very few, only those on Narraburra.
1451. How far is the most distant of the 230 selections from Temora? About 18 miles.
1452. Do you know the country between Temora and Barmedman? I have been over it.
1453. Can you speak as to the character of the soil? I think it is somewhat similar to that at Temora; if anything, a little better.
1454. When you spoke of 230 selections, did you mean that there were 230 families settled on various selections, or that there were 230 selections taken in different interests? All taken by families themselves. I think out of the number there were some forty-three single men, and the remainder were married people.
1455. Is there any timber between Barmedman and Temora suitable for railway construction? I think there is one belt of iron-bark.
1456. How far is it from Temora? A little more than half-way, perhaps 13 miles.
1457. Do know anything of the industries that are carried on at Temora? Yes.
1458. Is there more than one saw-mill in the town? No, there is only one.
1459. How many vineyards are there? There are three in the immediate neighbourhood.
1460. Can you say whether there are other cereals grown besides wheat? Yes; oats and barley.
1461. In any quantity? No, not largely.
1462. Any maize? There may be a little maize, but I am not aware.
1463. Is the soil suitable for the cultivation of the olive? Yes; in fact I think the soil is eminently suited for the cultivation of all fruits.
1464. What is the average rainfall? From 14 to 18 inches.
1465. Would there be any traffic for a railway between Temora and Cootamundra after the wool and wheat had been sent to market? Oh, yes. There would be all the goods from the town—storekeepers' goods. There would be a good deal of merchandise, as well as the passenger traffic.
1466. I am speaking of products? No; I do not think there would be anything else at present.
1467. What passenger traffic is there at the present time between here and Cootamundra? An average of perhaps six a day backwards and forwards.
1468. How many stores are there here? I could not say.
1469. Do you know how many public houses there are? I think there are seventeen.
1470. All doing business? Apparently so; they all take out licenses.
1471. What is supporting the town at the present time? I think it is supported by the agricultural interests. Mining at the present time is very poor.
1472. Do you know whether there has been much wheat grown beyond Temora? A great quantity. The people are holding their wheat because the price is very low, and they have to pay from Temora 2s. a bag, and 3s. between Cootamundra and June. At these rates it would not pay them, and they are holding for better prices.
1473. How will their wheat be sent? By way of Cootamundra and June; the principal part by Cootamundra.
1474. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Is the population of the town of Temora increasing or decreasing. I think it is pretty well at a standstill.
1475. Does it fluctuate at all? Very little; the people seem to be settled.
1476. How do you account for the discrepancies in the figures supplied to the Minister for Works, which show that in September, 1887, the population was 1,700; in April, 1889, it was 1,146, and in June, 1889, only 508? The last figures must only represent the population within the town boundary.
1477. Would 1,700 include the population surrounding the town? Yes; within a reasonable distance, not the farmers altogether.
1478. This town was depressed for a considerable period, was it not? Yes.
1479. And is it suffering a recovery now? Yes; it is increasing every year.
1480. There is evidence then that the agricultural interest has now taken the place of the mining interest, and is likely to make Temora a prosperous town? Yes.
1481. With regard to the mining interest, can you say whether that is likely to recover itself? Yes.
1482. You have a reef here called the Mother Shipton Reef, have you not? Yes.
1483. Have they resumed operations there? Yes.
1484. Can you give the Committee any idea of the imports and exports of the town during the year? No.
1485. Do you think this is a correct statement—that the passengers in the coach in one year numbered 1,700; that the imports were 20,000 tons, and the exports 4,000 tons? Yes. Those figures are from the statistics, taken eighteen months ago.
1486. Were those statistics taken in a reliable manner? They were.
1487. Were any steps taken to verify them? The storekeepers supplied their railway returns, and gave the information.
1488. You think, then, that every reasonable precaution was taken to place a true statement of the case before the Minister for Works? Yes.
1489. Are those figures likely to be increased? I think so. In fact I am almost sure of it.
1490. You spoke just now of some selected land that was sold at £2 5s. an acre;—was that sold subject to the unpaid balances? Yes.
1491. And the offer of £4 1s. for another block, was that with the same provision? Yes.
1492. Have you noticed whether pastoralists are in the habit of driving their starving stock this way to the summer country? Yes, they always go by Temora.
1493. And whence do they proceed then? They proceed to Cootamundra.
1494. Is this along the stock route? Yes, the stock route runs just outside the town.
1495. To what do you attribute the fact that the land between here and Stockinbingal is not settled? To the fact that it has been reserved. We could not get it thrown open. We have tried time after time without success.

- F. Hickey, Esq.
4 Feb., 1890.
1496. Is the Narraburra water reserve on that land? Yes. That has been cancelled. The water was analysed, and found to be unfit for human use; consequently, the Government gave the reserve up.
1497. Who holds it now? It is Government land. I saw a little time ago that the lessees of the run had a lease of it, or were paying rent for some portions of the land.
1498. Then why is this land not taken up? It is still reserved.
1499. Is there not also a large gold-field reserve out there? Yes.
1500. What is the name of it? Temora gold-field reserve.
1501. Is there not a Gundabingal reserve? That is a separate reserve.
1502. So that you have three reserves between Temora and Stockinbingal? Yes.
1503. Not one of which should be reserved? I consider they should all be thrown open for selection.
1504. Is the iron-bark country reserved? Yes, that is in the Narraburra reserve.
1505. Have you any good orchards or vineyards around the town? Yes, very fair.
1506. Do you know if any of the horticulturists cultivate the olive and the vine to any extent? Mr. Deitz imported 240 olive-trees from Adelaide last year, and planted them, and I understand they are growing well.
1507. Are the owners of the land between Temora and Cootamundra likely to give to the Government, free of cost, the land required for the railway? I could not say.
1508. Have they not made that offer to the Minister for Works? Not that I am aware of.
1509. It is in print in one of the documents supplied to the Minister. Do you think the land owners would be likely to hold to that offer if it were made? I daresay the selectors would give the land.
1510. But not holders of town lots? I should hardly think the holders of town lots would be likely to give up the land after improving it.
1511. Have you heard of any selectors in this neighbourhood selling out? Yes.
1512. To whom do they sell? I have several selections in hand now for sale.
1513. Why are they selling out? One man is selling because his sons have left him, and he is rather old to look after such a big holding, and he would like to get into some other pursuit.
1514. Any other reasons assigned? Another has sold because he has a better property elsewhere, and another man sold out a short time ago for the very same reason—because he had an hotel property with a large selection attached, on which he could do better.
1515. Then in each case a reasonable excuse has been offered for the sale of these lands? Yes.
1516. Are the lands being bought by pastoralists, or by other selectors? By neighbouring selectors.
1517. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is the site of the proposed station, as marked on the map, a suitable one? The land is rather low at that particular spot. I think it would be better if it were taken higher up the hill.
1518. How far from the proposed site? 100 or 200 yards.
1519. What inconvenience do you apprehend from the present site being a little lower than the one you suggest? The land there is rather boggy in wet weather, it being a natural water-course.
1520. That is the only objection? Yes.

Mr. Henry Morris, miner, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. H. Morris.
4 Feb., 1890.
1521. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Temora.
1522. How long have you been here? Since August, 1880.
1523. What is your occupation? A miner—what they call a puddler.
1524. Have you been working in alluvial mines since 1880? No. I have been puddling dirt for the public.
1525. You have not done any mining on your own account? Not on Temora.
1526. I suppose you have been mining in other parts? Yes. At Gulgong, New Zealand, and other places.
1527. What is your opinion with reference to the prospects of this place with regard to alluvial mining. Do you think the alluvial mining is worked out? I believe there is a possible chance of new gold being struck, provided people would prospect. There are, very likely, places within a few miles of the town.
1528. Is there much prospecting being done? Very little outside the old lead.
1529. Has the district been prospected? It has not.
1530. About how far from the town do you reckon it has been thoroughly prospected? Not above 4 miles.
1531. You think, then, that within 4 miles of the town it may safely be concluded that there is nothing likely to be discovered? There are one or two places within the 4 miles that have not been tested.
1532. Have not those places been sufficiently prospected to decide whether or not there is payable gold there? There are one or two places that have not.
1533. What is the depth of sinking there? About 70 or 80 feet.
1534. All soft sinking? Yes; fair sinking.
1535. I suppose the general run of the depth is about from 60 to 80 feet? In some instances the depth is 170 feet.
1536. Does it form into a lead where the ground is deep? It is more like a lode in places—it does not continue into the lead.
1537. What was the nature of the wash-dirt—was there much gravel? Some places it was very gravelly, but in others there was very little gravel.
1538. Was the gravel much water-worn? Yes, a lot of it. But down this part of the lead there was very little gravel.
1539. Do you think there is any probability of a deep permanent lead being discovered in the neighbourhood? In the present lead there are several large holes that have never been bottomed, and there is splendid wash all the way down, but the gold appears to get poorer as they get deeper. The ground, therefore, cost too much to work, and the men left it.
1540. Did it make any water, and become wet? No; it was very dry. There are several water-shafts getting water at a depth of about 210 feet. There is very little variation in the depth of the water.
1541. Can you say how much gold has been got from the field up to the present time? No.
1542. Are you fully employed with your puddling-machines? Not at present; work is a little dull at present.
1543. How many machines have you? Three.

1544.

1544. Horse-power, I suppose? Yes.
1545. I suppose, as a matter of fact, there is very little payable dirt now to work? Very little. The average for last year was very poor.
1546. We may consider that, for all practical purposes, the field is worked out as far as is known? Yes, at present. It is only just fossicking in the old lead. It is worked out if there is nothing new.
1547. So that there is nothing in the shape of alluvial mining to look forward to to give traffic to the railway or prosperity to the town? Not at present.
1548. Are you the only puddler here? No; there are two others—Fee and Brown.
1549. How many machines have they? Brown has two, and Fee has four.
1550. Are they employed? I think they are employed pretty much about the same as myself. We get about three days a week at present—about half our time. The quantity of dirt I puddled during the last twelve months was 3,250 loads.
1551. What was the yield? About $2\frac{1}{2}$ dwt. to the load.
1552. Is the gold pretty good? Very good gold.
1553. What do you charge for puddling? 3s. per load.
1554. What does it cost to cart it to the machine? I cart it and puddle it for 3s.
1555. So that the miners have about 7s. a load for getting it? Yes.
1556. What depth of dirt is there? There are various depths, from 30 feet to 3 and 4. In some places they do not know the depth of it. There is any amount of dirt giving from 1 to 2 dwt. to the load.
1557. What do you mean by "any amount"? Thousands of loads. But it is so deep that it will not pay to raise it.
1558. I suppose the ground requires timbering? Yes; you want a lot of very heavy timber, and it is so deep that it takes them very long to raise it.
1559. In what form is it;—is it a flat horizontal layer of clay and gravel? Gravel. It is also gravelly about the Golden Gate, towards the top of the town.
1560. Does it take the form of headings? It is down on the bottom, underneath the original workings.
1561. Were the original workings on a false bottom? Partly, and in other parts there is a very high reef on each side, and these are full of holes containing wash-dirt, and none of them have been bottomed.
1562. What do you reckon is the lowest yield that would pay to get this dirt out? With the present state of working, and without good appliances, 3 dwt. is the lowest yield that would pay in the case of rich gravel; that is, working as they do now with a whip to raise the dirt.
1563. Then the work that is being done at the present time is really not payable? No.
1564. About what wages do the miners make after paying you for puddling? Sometimes they make very little. They might make £2. I believe that if the wash-dirt would yield 3 dwt. they would make £2 10s.
1565. It will not yield more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ dwt.? No, it will not; and they only make about £1 or £1 5s. a week.
1566. Where do you get your water from? The dam. We have to depend upon race water.
1567. Are there any gold-fields being worked between Temora and Stockinbingal? Yes; at the Scrub Yards and Woodstown, about 17 miles from here.
1568. Is payable mining being carried on there now? No. There is nothing doing there as regards mining.
1569. It is abandoned? Yes. There might be two parties working out there, but that is about all.
1570. Is there anything being done in mining between Temora and Barmedman? Nothing. In fact I think it has been very little prospected.
1571. Do you know how many men are employed here in alluvial mining at the present time? I should say not more than 200.
1572. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Have you any knowledge of the Temora and Gundabingal Gold-fields reserves? No.
1573. Did you ever hear of any gold-fields being discovered on them? No.
1574. Do you think those lands ought to be locked up in reserves? No. I think they ought to be thrown open.

Rev. John Brown Gribble, Church of England Clergyman, sworn, and examined:—

1575. *Chairman.*] Do you reside in Temora? Yes.
1576. What is your occupation? I am a clergyman of the Church of England.
1577. Do you travel much in the district? A great deal.
1578. Do you think from your experience that the district is progressing? I do.
1579. That the population is increasing? Yes.
1580. I suppose you are in the habit of visiting the selections and the stations? Yes.
1581. Can you tell whether the selectors in the district are reasonably prosperous? That is my opinion.
1582. You think that they are not only making a living but also putting a little by for a rainy day? Their prospects are very good. They had a very dry season, but during the last season they were more successful, and their prospects are very good.
1583. Speaking in general terms, do you think they are mostly free from debt, or are they heavily in debt? I do not think they are heavily in debt. The extent of their indebtedness, of course, I cannot tell.
1584. I am only asking you to say in general terms? My opinion is that they are a very industrious and very prosperous body of men.
1585. You think that as a class they are permanently settled in the neighbourhood? I do.
1586. That they have no intention of selling their holdings and going further afield? I do not think they have any idea of doing so. I have formed the opinion that they are *bona fide* settlers on the soil.
1587. Can you say whether they are increasing the area of their holdings? They are endeavouring to do so, but they are prevented in a great measure by the fact of the land being locked up. They would increase their holdings if they had facilities for doing so.
1588. How many churches are there in the town? Four.
1589. Of what denominations? Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, and Wesleyan.
1590. Are there any churches in the neighbourhood outside the town? Yes, at Barmedman, Bagdad, and Marandula. I visit different stations and settlers' houses, and altogether work thirteen places in the parish.

Rev.
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Rev.
J. B. Gribble.
4 Feb., 1890.

1591. What is your opinion with reference to the proposed railway—do you think it would be desirable to take it from Cootamundra or from Wallendbeen? Knowing the whole district very well, my feeling is that the connection should be at Cootamundra. One reason assigned by Mr. Hickey I thoroughly endorse. I can say that this is the direct stock route from all the back country. Indeed, during the past twelve months I have travelled right through to the Queensland border, and I find that stock travel from Hungerford right down through Temora. I have a son engaged in that work, and he brings cattle right down to the Darling. Some are sent on by way of Cootamundra to Victoria. Apart from marketable stock, this is also the direct route to the summer country. I travel to the hills regularly at given periods in connection with my work among the aborigines, and I know that the Tumut country is supplied from the back country during the summer. A greater portion of the starving stock passes through this district to Gundagai, and on to Tumut and Tumberumba, and places beyond.

1592. How long have you resided here? I have been here just about a year.

1593. Can you give any instance where stockowners have made use of the railway from Cootamundra to Gundagai to take their stock to the mountains, instead of travelling them by road? I cannot give an instance, but I have frequently met flocks travelling to and from the summer country.

1594. Travelling by roads? Yes; I do not doubt but that if railway communication were secured they would travel by rail.

1595. What makes you think they would travel by rail if the railway were constructed to Temora, when they have not used the railway from Cootamundra to Gundagai? In the first place—and perhaps this would be the principal reason—the stock would be kept on their holdings as long as possible, and then they would be glad to send them by the most expeditious way of travelling. They would keep their stock as long as possible, hoping for rain, and then they would remove them to the mountain country.

1596. Do you think they would be likely to pay the railway rates—even the low starving stock rates—so long as they were able to travel the sheep by the road? Yes, I believe they would. They would keep the stock as long as possible on their own holdings, and in the last extremity they would send them through by rail as quickly as possible to the summer country. It is my opinion that they would use the railway. I might give another reason for the junction at Cootamundra, and I think it is a very tangible one, viz.: That there is a general junction there at the present time, while at Wallendbeen a new junction would have to be created, which of course would involve great inconvenience to the public, and also great expense.

1597. Do you think the people at Stockinbingal and Wallendbeen would be satisfied with the railway going to Cootamundra and leaving them out in the cold? Mr. Davidson, a very large squatter on the Bland, told me very plainly, and in fact wrote to the same effect to the Committee at Wallendbeen, that he would certainly prefer the junction being at Cootamundra. Selectors on this side of Yeo Yeo, just on the border of Dinga-Dingi, also told me that they would prefer Cootamundra. Beyond that over the small piece of country lying between Yeo Yeo and Wallendbeen I found that the feeling was in favour of Wallendbeen. I found, however, that the number of people who would be best served by that route, was small, in comparison with those who would be served by the other route.

1598. Are you well acquainted with the country between Yeo Yeo and Wallendbeen? No; I am not.

1599. I suppose you frequently visit Barmedman? Very frequently.

1600. Is there much cultivation going on between here and Barmedman? There is a considerable amount of settlement between Temora and Barmedman. This has not taken place since my arrival, but beyond Barmedman a good deal of settlement has taken place since I came here.

1601. Do you think all the available land is occupied? Yes.

1602. Do you think more land would be occupied if it were available? I am sure of that. I have heard of numbers of cases during the past six months in which, from Victoria and South Australia, inquiries have been made for land in this district.

1603. *Mr. Humphery.*] Can you speak as to the character of the soil within a radius of 15 miles of Temora to the north, south, and west, omitting the east towards Stockinbingal? Yes. In my opinion it is first-class agricultural soil.

1604. Suitable for the production of wheat? Yes, very suitable indeed. I have witnessed some of the best crops I have ever seen in my life in this district, and especially at Mimosa and Barmedman.

1605. And is it good fruit-growing land? Yes, first-class.

1606. What description of fruit? Grapes, peaches, plums, figs, apples, oranges—those are the principal fruits that I have noticed.

1607. Did you hear Mr. Hickey say that there were 230 selections in the district? Yes.

1608. Do you think that is a correct estimate of the number? Approximately.

1609. Within 18 miles? Yes, I think that is correct. I have not counted them myself, but they are nearly all in my parish, and I think that estimate is not at all an exaggeration.

1610. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How far do your ministrations take you from Temora to the north and to the west? 35 miles to the north.

1611. And how far to the west? About 18 miles.

1612. Do you think that the produce within that area would be likely to come to Temora? Yes. It is the only centre.

1613. Do you go far out in the direction of Hillston towards Lake Cudgellico? I go about 16 miles.

1614. Do you know if any of the pastoralists or farmers are in the habit of sending their produce down towards the Hay line? No, I do not. Further down in the Merool and Humbug country they send to Whitton.

1615. Have you heard of any pastoralists who send their wool to Carrathool to be shipped by steamers on the Murrumbidgee and taken down to Melbourne. I lived on the Murrumbidgee for eight years, and when I commenced my work there that was the case, but it is not so now. All the steamer trade is done away with in consequence of the railway.

1616. You think that the opening of a line to Temora would tap a portion of the trade of that back country? It would tap a great portion of the Humbug country. There is a main road from here right through to the Humbug towards Lake Cudgellico. For 20 or 30 and perhaps 40 miles it would serve that country.

Mr.

Mr. Eugene Perrot, fruitgrower, sworn, and examined :—

1617. *Chairman.*] Do you reside at Temora? Yes.
1618. What is your occupation? I am a fruit-grower.
1619. How much land do you own? Four acres.
1620. How much of that have you under cultivation? Two acres.
1621. What do you grow? I will show you samples of my fruit. [*Fruit produced.*] This basket of fruit contains grapes, peaches, apples, apricots, figs, plums, &c. In fact I can grow any kind of fruit.
1622. Do you find that the apples do well here? They could not do better. The climate and the soil could not be better adapted than it is for fruit-growing. I have tried twenty different kinds of grapes, and I find the soil suitable for all kinds of table-grapes. I have not as yet tried wine-grapes.
1623. Do you think it would be desirable to try wine-grapes? Not if the railway comes here.
1624. Have you had any experience in grape culture in the old country? No.
1625. How many years have you been gardening? It is six years since I started the orchard in Temora.
1626. Your experience has been confined to this neighbourhood? Yes.
1627. You are not able to say whether the climate and the soil is suitable for wine-making? I would not be afraid to try it, but I think it would pay better to grow fruit for the market than to make wine if we had the railway here. Speaking as one private individual, I would say that instead of having only 2 acres devoted to the cultivation of fruit for the supply of the Temora market, if there was a railway here I should grow fruit for the Sydney market. It is impossible for us at present to send fruit to the Sydney market, because the expense would be too great, and the fruit would be in a bad condition.
1628. Do you find a ready sale in Temora for the fruit you grow? Yes; but it is as much as I can do to sell all I grow.
1629. So that if you cultivated more you would not be able to get rid of it locally? I could not cultivate more profitably unless the railway came.
1630. Do you think it would pay you to send fruit from here to Sydney by rail? Yes, decidedly.
1631. And you find that you get prolific crops? As an instance, I will give you the yield of the apricots. From five trees I sold 1,000 dozen. I get about £2 10s. from every tree.
1632. I suppose you find that very much better than growing wheat? Most decidedly.
1633. Your actual income from each tree is £2 10s.? Yes, this year. I plant a little of my orchard at a time. There are only a certain number of trees in full bearing at present; the others are quite young, some of them having only been planted this year. Every year I plant about half an acre.
1634. How much ground have you in full bearing? Only about half an acre.
1635. Have you any objection to tell the Committee what income you derive from the half acre? About £70 this year.
1636. Do you find that any disease attacks the fruit? No.
1637. Is there anything special about the soil you cultivate, or is there any quantity of soil in the neighbourhood equally as good as yours? I think it is nearly all alike. I do not see any difference in it.
1638. So that if the people chose to cultivate fruit there would be no difficulty in growing a very large quantity? Not as long as there was a market to send it to. One thing that is very favourable for fruit-growing in this district is that we are about a month or more ahead of Young and Goulburn in our seasons, so that we could send fruit to those places about a month before they had any themselves. For instance we could get 6d. a lb. for grapes at Young or Goulburn, for ours would be ripe when theirs would be quite green.
1639. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Have you made any attempt to grow the orange? No.
1640. Have you heard of any one who has attempted it? Yes. I believe some evidence will be given with reference to that.
1641. Do you know of any successful attempt? Yes.
1642. Do you think the climate and soil are suitable for the growth of the orange? I could not say. I have seen oranges growing here successfully.
1643. Who is it that grows the orange and the olive? Mr. Deitz.
1644. Has he made a success of orange culture? I have never been to his place.
1645. Do you think that fruit-growing would be a success here if you depend on the local market, or even the Goulburn market? Without a railway the fruit industry will not prosper in Temora, but with the means of reaching a market it is bound to go ahead.
1646. Do you think you could compete in the Sydney market from this distance? Yes.
1647. You have never heard of anyone who has cultivated the grape for wine purposes? Yes, Mr. Hensler has done so.
1648. I suppose the 4 acres of land you possess have enabled you to make a comfortable living? I have only half an acre fruit-bearing now, but with the whole of the 4 acres I should make £500 or £600 a year.
1649. Net profit? Yes.
1650. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is Mr. Hensler building a wine cellar? Yes, he is building a large one.

Mr.
E. Perrot.

4 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Alexander Deutscher, farmer, sworn, and examined :—

1651. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? Three miles to the north of Temora.
1652. What is your occupation? I am a farmer.
1653. How much land do you hold? 530 acres.
1654. Is it conditionally purchased land? Yes.
1655. How long have you held it? For five years and three months.
1656. How many acres have you under cultivation? Seventy.
1657. What did you grow this year? All wheat.
1658. You do not cultivate any other crop? I have not done so yet.
1659. What was your yield this year? Twenty-six bushels to the acre.
1660. How many years have you been growing wheat? I was brought up on a farm. My father has been growing wheat ever since I can remember. I have been growing wheat on my own account for two years.

Mr.
A. Deutscher.

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- Mr. A. Deutscher. 1661. I suppose 26 bushels to the acre is an exceptionally high yield? Yes. The average, I should think, is about 20 bushels.
- 4 Feb, 1890. 1662. And do you find that a yield like that gives you a good profit on the cultivation? It does when we can get rid of it.
1663. Have you any difficulty in getting rid of the wheat at any time? We have this year.
1664. Can you not find purchasers for it? We can, but at a very low figure.
1665. What is offering for wheat now? I have sold 250 bags at Temora for 2s. 8d. per bushel.
1666. Delivered where? In Temora.
1667. Then you have to cart it into Temora, and sell it at 2s. 8d. per bushel? Yes.
1668. Do you know where it is going to? It was bought by Mr. Gardiner, who has a mill here.
1669. Then I suppose that wheat would be ground into flour for local consumption? Yes.
1670. Can you say what is the reason you can only obtain 2s. 8d. per bushel—is more wheat grown in the neighbourhood than can be consumed? Yes, I believe so.
1671. What would you have to pay for carting that wheat to Cootamundra? 2s. 3d. a bag, or from 6d. to 7d. a bushel.
1672. How much would it cost to have it taken to Wallendbeen? I could not say.
1673. I suppose there are no teams going to Wallendbeen? No.
1674. I presume you are very much in favour of the railway being constructed to Temora? Yes.
1675. And you would be very glad to send your wheat by the railway if it were open? Yes.
1676. If the line were constructed to Temora do you think there would be a large increase in the area of land cultivated? I am sure there would. If there was a railway here I should cultivate more.
1677. Is the farm your own, or is it your father's? It is my own.
1678. Do your parents reside in the neighbourhood? Yes.
1679. Have you calculated the value of the wheat taken off per acre? I have not.
1680. It yields 26 bushels, which was sold at 2s. 8d.; that would be about £3 9s. per acre. Do you find that a profitable occupation, taking into consideration the cost of the seed wheat, the ploughing and stripping, and all the other labour? It was, perhaps, profitable this year, but it is seldom that you get such a good crop.
1681. You are making more by that occupation than you could make by mining, splitting, fencing, or any occupation of the kind? That I am not sure of.
1682. At any rate if the railway were here you would be likely to increase your area under cultivation? Yes.
1683. Is there very much land as good as yours in the neighbourhood? I think so. All the land in the neighbourhood is good.
1684. Is there much good land between Temora and Barmedman? I think it is all equally as good as mine.
1685. Are there no barren ridges of ironbark? There is one ironbark ridge.
1686. How wide is that? A mile or a mile and a half.
1687. And, with the exception of that ridge, is the whole country suitable for agriculture? Yes.
1688. Do you know the country beyond Barmedman? Yes, for some distance beyond Barmedman.
1689. How many miles? About 12 or 13 miles.
1690. What is the land like out there? It is very good land.
1691. Is it equally as good as the land between Temora and Barmedman? In my opinion it is.
1692. Do you consider your land as good as the land about Yeo Yeo? I am not acquainted with the land about Yeo Yeo.
1693. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How far out do you say your farm is? 3 miles.
1694. Are there many wheat-growers further out than you? There are a good many, but they do not grow a large quantity of wheat, because it is too far to draw it to market. This year, I believe, if we offered 3s. a bag we could not get it drawn, because there are no carriers here to draw it. Later on in the winter we may get it carted.
1695. You consider, then, that wheat culture is very much hampered for want of speedy transit to market? I do.
1696. Where do the farmers outside of you send their wheat? To Cootamundra.
1697. How do they get it in? Whenever they can get a chance by a carrier. Sometimes a carrier comes up loaded from Cootamundra, and they send their wheat back.
1698. Would it pay them to give 7d. a bushel for conveyance to Cootamundra? It does not pay them.
1699. They must either send it to Cootamundra, and pay that high freight, or allow the wheat to rot? Yes.
1700. How far do you think the farming population—that is, farmers who cultivate a little now, and who are likely to be farmers—how far does that population extend around this town, drawing a circle round east, north, and west? To the north for about 40 miles I believe the farmers will all grow wheat if the railway is constructed, and they can get it to market.
1701. Would it pay these men to grow wheat if they had to cart it 40 miles to Temora if there was a railway here? It would pay them better than at present. It does not pay them at all now. No doubt they would grow some wheat if there was a railway as far as Temora.
1702. How does your answer just given agree with what you said previously;—you say that if the railway came to Temora farmers 40 miles out would send their wheat in, and yet you said that it did not pay the farmers in your neighbourhood to send their wheat to Cootamundra, a distance of 35 miles? I say that the farmers 40 miles out would grow some wheat. I do not say they would cultivate to any great extent. They would do the same as we have to do at present—grow a little wheat and send it to market.
1703. But a little wheat would not pay the expenses of the farm for the year? It would not pay them, but still they would always grow a little.
1704. What else would they do;—run sheep and cattle? Yes.
1705. Many sheep? Yes; it is a good grazing country.
1706. Do they do their own shearing out there? I believe so.
1707. Which way do they send their wool in? Through Temora, to Cootamundra, and from there to Sydney.
1708. Have you been far out to the north, towards Hillston? No, not further than Barmedman.

1709. And you cannot speak then with any authority as to the country beyond—40 miles from Temora? No.
1710. *Chairman.*] Have you any sheep or cattle? Yes.
1711. How many sheep? 1,000.
1712. Do you keep those on your selection? The sheep are not all mine. They have been running in one of my paddocks for the last four months, until my father has water on a piece of land further back; but I have about 500 sheep all the year round on my land.
1713. How many acres? 400.
1714. So that the land would carry more than a sheep to the acre? Yes.
1715. Have you any land under conditional lease? No.
1716. About what do the fleeces cut generally? Our average has been about from 3lb. to 4lb.
1717. And what do you get a lb. for it in grease? 7d.
1718. Is that not rather a light fleece for this neighbourhood? They were mixed sheep; most of them breeding ewes.
1719. And you think growing wheat will pay better than sheep? I am sure it would if there was a railway here.
1720. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Where do the farmers living some distance from Temora get their stores from? A great many of them get them from Cootamundra.
1721. Do they deal with the storekeepers in Temora? To a certain extent they do.
1722. And if not, where do they get stores? They send to Cootamundra.
1723. Then all their business appears to lie between Cootamundra and Temora? Yes.
1724. Are many of the people out here related to the Cootamundra farmers? Not that I am aware of.
1725. They regard Cootamundra, then, as their local trade centre? Yes.

Mr.
A. Deutscher.
4 Feb., 1880.

Richard Webber Burstal, Esq., Manager of the Bank of New South Wales, Temora, sworn, and examined:—

1726. *Chairman.*] You reside in Temora? I do.
1727. What is your occupation? I am Manager of the Bank of New South Wales.
1728. How long have you resided in Temora? About a year and nine months.
1729. During which time you have occupied the same position? Yes.
1730. *Mr. Humphery.*] Can you say if the deposits in the bank have been increasing or decreasing during the past five years, since Temora ceased to be a payable gold-field? The deposits have been decreasing within the last five years. That, of course, is partly owing to the exodus of the miners to other fields.
1731. Can you speak as to the general prosperity or otherwise of the existing population living round Temora? The population has largely increased, and the money that has been brought to Temora has been sunk in the land and in improving it. The general prosperity of a district can hardly be gauged by the deposits in the bank. In a young district more especially you would have to gauge the prosperity of the farmers by visiting their homesteads and seeing what they have. Instead of leaving money in the bank at 4 and 5 per cent. it would pay them better to apply it to the improvement of their farms.
1732. Then you explain the decrease in the amount of the bank deposits in that way; that is to say, that the money is invested in conditional purchases? The money has been invested in land, stock, farming implements, and in improving their holdings.
1733. Can you say that your bank has advanced largely for that purpose? Yes. I have advanced pretty largely since I have been here. The advances have increased very much in the last five years.
1734. For the purchase of land and stock? Yes; the whole of it has gone into the land. As to the purchase of stock there is always a floating advance, but the majority of the advances have gone into permanent improvements on the land.
1735. Do you advance against the wheat crop? I am making temporary advances this year pending a higher price for sale.
1736. Against the wheat crop? Yes; we temporarily advance pending the price of wheat rising, but we do not make permanent advances against anything of that sort. We advance against certificated selections and against sheep and cattle.
1737. Can you say if the area under wheat is increasing? It has nearly doubled in the last twelve months as far as my constituents are concerned.
1738. Can you say from the repayments you have had for advances made whether the settlers round here who cultivate are in a prosperous condition or otherwise? It is rather early in the season to speak as to this year's wheat. I can only judge by the stocks on hand, and as far as my returns have come in the average yield to the acre has been about 22½ bushels. I am not speaking of the district generally but of men who are in my books and who send their returns into me. This yield, estimating its return at 3s. a bushel, has, in the majority of cases, reduced the individual debts to the bank about half.
1739. And are you prepared to say that the operations in which you have been engaged are of a perfectly healthy character? I do not believe there are any sounder operations in any financial institution in the Colony.
1740. Do you know anything of the proposed railway between Cootamundra and Temora—do you know the route? I have travelled over the route once.
1741. Have you travelled over the route from Yeo Yeo to Wallendbeen? No, I know nothing of that.
1742. Can you say whether it is desirable that there should be any alteration or deviation of the proposed route? Most decidedly not, as far as the convenience of the people in and round Temora is concerned.
1743. And you think that if the line were constructed as proposed it would best serve the whole of the settlers in and around Stockinbingal as well as Temora? I cannot speak as to Stockinbingal because I am not sufficiently acquainted with it, but I can speak most decidedly about Temora.
1744. Do you think that the proposed site of the railway station in Temora is a suitable one? The site is central but is situated rather in a hollow, and the ground is at times somewhat swampy about there.
1745. Do you think the site is the most convenient having regard to the possible extension of the railway to Barmedman? I think it is as suitable as any other site.
1746. You have spoken as to the financial condition of the farmers;—can you say whether the business in the town is in a healthy state? As far as I am able to judge it is.
1747. Can you say how many storekeepers there are in Temora? Ten or twelve.

R. W. Burstal,
Esq.
4 Feb., 1880.

1748.

- R. W. Burstal, 1748. And how many banks? Two—the A.J.S. Bank and the Bank of N.S.W.
 Esq. 1749. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Have you made many bad debts since you have been here? I have made one.
 4 Feb., 1890. 1750. In how long a period? About nineteen months.
 1751. Have you had to foreclose on any land or stock mortgaged? No, not yet.

Mr. Thomas Gelling, hay and corn dealer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. 1752. *Chairman.*] I believe you are in business in Temora where you carry on a hay and corn store?
 T. Gelling. Yes.
 4 Feb., 1890. 1753. How long have you been in business there? About nine or ten years.
 1754. How many other persons are there in the same business? There are one or two more.
 1755. Judging by what you purchase do you think agriculture is increasing in the neighbourhood? Yes.
 1756. I suppose the general crop is wheat? Wheat principally.
 1757. Is there much hay grown? A good bit.
 1758. Any lucerne hay? Not that I am aware of.
 1759. What do they make into hay? Wheat and oats.
 1760. Do you find your business increasing? It keeps something about the same—there is not much difference.
 1761. Do you purchase for local distribution or send to Cootamundra? To send to Cootamundra and Junee—Junee principally, and also to Albury and Wagga Wagga.
 1762. Can you state what quantity you purchase? About 40 tons in seven weeks.
 1763. Can you say how many tons you sent away this year or last year? I could not say exactly. About 6 or 8 tons of wheat come up to Temora, and very often 3 or 4 tons go down—some weeks not so much.
 1764. Can you tell the Committee what was the extent of your business last year? Two or three teams were kept going. I have one of my own. They are always on the road.
 1765. You could not say how many tons? I could not say exactly without looking over the books. You can see by the railway receipts. There were about 40 tons in seven weeks.
 1766. Was that all sent to Junee? It all came from Junee.
 1767. Of what did the goods consist? Principally beer, corn, potatoes, oats, and chaff.
 1768. But you do not deal in beer? No; I draw for two beer firms in Wagga Wagga.
 1769. Then you are bringing agricultural produce from Junee to Temora? Yes. I bring a good deal of produce here when the district has not sufficient itself, and when it is cheaper to import it. There is very little corn grown about here, and only a small quantity of potatoes.
 1770. Do you think the land is not suitable for the growth of these things? I think it is. I have seen some very good potatoes here, and some very good corn, but, as a rule, it is not a good line. It is principally wheat and oats that pay.
 1771. You do not bring any wheat and flour from Junee? Yes; I bring flour.
 1772. You bring flour from Junee to Temora? Yes.
 1773. And what does it cost to bring from Junee? The freight on flour is about from 30s. to 35s., and the freight of a general load is about £2.
 1774. How do you account for the fact that, though there is so much good land in the neighbourhood, and so many people cultivating wheat, you have to bring flour from Junee to supply the local requirements? I could not say. Flour is a good deal dearer about here.
 1775. Have you brought flour from Junee during the last few months? No. I have brought none for five or six months.
 1776. And what you send away from Temora do you send away to Junee? Yes.
 1777. And to Albury? Very little to Albury—mostly Sydney.
 1778. What do you send to Junee—wheat or flour? A good deal of wheat, and palings and rails.
 1779. Are these things for local consumption at Junee? Yes.
 1780. Then you do not do any business with Albury or Victoria? No.
 1781. Do you do any business with Goulburn or Sydney? Yes. We get potatoes from Goulburn, corn, oats, and potatoes from Sydney, and cheese, bacon, and general stuff.
 1782. You bring potatoes up from Sydney to Temora? Yes.
 1783. Do you know whether they have ever attempted to grow potatoes here? Yes. I have seen some very good potatoes, but nothing extra.
 1784. Can you give any idea of the number of tons of potatoes you brought up last year from Goulburn and Sydney? At the rate of about a couple of tons a week all through the year.
 1785. What else did you bring up in the nature of agricultural produce? Corn and oats.
 1786. Taking the whole year do you know what your traffic was on the railway between Sydney and Cootamundra? I can only go by the railway ticket. I have tickets for seven weeks which represent 40 tons.
 1787. Is that a fair average for the year? Yes.
 1788. You generally keep up at that rate? Yes; there are two teams going, and very often three. Some of the goods go to Barmedman and on that way.
 1789. I suppose we may reckon that you have over 250 tons of goods brought up by the railway during the year? Yes, quite that.
 1790. Can you say whether the other business people do anything like the same amount of business? Not in my line.
 1791. There are other people in the same district, but you think they do not do as much business as yourself? I am sure they do not.
 1792. Is that the traffic one way—from Goulburn and Sydney to Temora? Yes.
 1793. All imports brought here? Yes.
 1794. Have you any record of what you send away from Temora? I could not say without reference to my books.
 1795. Do you think that cultivation of the soil is increasing in the neighbourhood? Yes. We are clearing a good bit of land ourselves and going in for cultivation.
 1796. Do you think there is a large demand for land in the neighbourhood? Yes; there are a great many inquiring for land. I was asked by two or three yesterday about land.
 1797.

1797. You think then that if the Government throw open the leasehold areas of the reserves they would be eagerly taken up? Yes; I would take one up myself.
1798. From your knowledge of the farmers in your district do you consider them a fairly prosperous people? I do.
1799. So that on the whole we may consider that in this district agriculture pays reasonably well? Yes.
1800. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] In time of drought there is a very large trade in fodder with the back stations, is there not? Yes.
1801. Where do the stations at the back of Temora get their fodder from? It is all brought by teams from the railway. They get it in the cheapest market.
1802. Do they get any from the Corowa or Tumut districts? Yes; I get some myself from Wangaratta very often in dry seasons.
1803. You seem to think that Temora could not supply the fodder required by these stations? Yes; it could supply chaff.
1804. Then in dry seasons there might be a considerable trade in fodder along the railway? Yes.
1805. Will this fodder come as far as Junee and be brought from there by teams, as at present, in opposition to the railway? No. The produce sent from Wangaratta and Albury all comes to the railway at Junee.
1806. Then in time of drought a railway to Temora would be of material assistance to the pastoralists and small graziers in the back country by bringing them fodder cheaply? Yes.
1807. *Mr. Humphery.*] Why do you obtain your supplies from Junee instead of from Cootamundra? The team is always in the habit of going there. It has regular traffic on the road, and the beer and the Albury stuff draw us that way. We go to Cootamundra too, but mostly to Junee.
1808. Is not the railway carriage by Junee 35 miles greater than that by Cootamundra? About that.
1809. What is the distance between Temora and Junee? 35 miles.
1810. A shorter distance than from Temora to Cootamundra? No; I think the distance to Cootamundra is a little shorter.
1811. Are you quite sure about the distance? It is about 32 miles to Cootamundra.
1812. Does not Temora lie north-west of Cootamundra? Yes.
1813. Is not Cootamundra much nearer to Temora than Junee? It is about a mile or two nearer.
1814. Does it not cost you more to get your goods from Junee than it would from Cootamundra if there is a distance of 35 miles of railway in addition to the loading by team? We allow a little more for the railway. I think it makes a difference of 1d. a bushel. But we make up for that by the fact that the beer and other things from Wagga Wagga make up the loading.
1815. Then it suits you better to trade *via* Junee than *via* Cootamundra? Yes, on account of the differential rates to Wagga Wagga, in consequence of which a lot of traffic goes to Wagga Wagga and comes back to Junee, so that we make up our loading that way.
1816. Explain how it is that you get an advantage with the differential rates? Through the stuff going to Wagga Wagga. Sometimes a man might have half a ton or 5 tons. The principal stores get a lot of loading that way. They make up the loading.
1817. As a matter of fact, although Junee is 35 miles further than Cootamundra, the railway rates are less? Yes.

Mr.
T. Gelling.
4 Feb., 1890.

Mr. John Peter Clements, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

1818. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? About 4 miles to the west of Barmedman.
1819. What is your occupation? A farmer.
1820. How much land do you possess? 2,560 acres.
1821. Are you in the Central division? Yes.
1822. And you selected 2,560 acres? Yes. Conditional purchase and conditional lease.
1823. How many acres have you under cultivation? About 80.
1824. How many acres had you last year? About 60.
1825. Then you are increasing the area under cultivation? Yes.
1826. What was the yield this year? I got 22 bushels to the acre, and I only just harrowed the surface.
1827. Was it a self-sown crop? No. I sowed the seed and I only just harrowed the ground.
1828. You ploughed the year before? Yes.
1829. Do you consider that a satisfactory method of farming? It was for last year.
1830. What was your reason for not ploughing? I was frightened it would come rather too wet in the winter. Some of the people at Temora were too late.
1831. And you say you had an average of 22 bushels to the acre? Yes, for 30 acres.
1832. And what did you have off the remainder? 24 acres were under Indian corn.
1833. You cannot say anything about that as yet? No.
1834. Does the crop look healthy? Yes.
1835. About how many bushels do you anticipate getting from it per acre? If rain were to come now I reckon I would get about 40 or 50. I had also 26 acres growing wheaten hay and oats.
1836. Did you sow the wheat and oats together or separately? I had about 10 acres of oats and the rest under wheat.
1837. Which do you find most profitable for hay—oats or wheat? Generally wheat, but last year the oats were best.
1838. How much hay per acre did you get? About 3 tons.
1839. Where did you dispose of it? In Barmedman.
1840. Is there a demand for all the hay that is grown there? There has been a full demand since I have been there.
1841. Do you send anything to Temora? No, not yet.
1842. You do not send anything to the railway? Only wool.
1843. How many sheep have you? I have now about 800.
1844. What is the average weight of the fleece? About 4 lb. Most of them are ewes.
1845. How many acres does it take to keep a sheep. About one. I think I could carry one sheep to the acre if I had the land all cleared. What land I have cleared has carried a sheep to the acre.
1846. Have you ringbarked? I have ringbarked some of the land, but not all.

Mr.
J.P. Clements.
4 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. J. P. Clements.
4 Feb., 1890.
1847. Do you find that ringbarking improves the carrying capacity of the land? Yes. Land is no good where I am unless it is scrubbed.
1848. What scrub have you? Oak and wattle.
1849. If the railway were constructed to Temora, do you think the farmers in your neighbourhood would be induced to cultivate more land? Yes; I should cultivate all the land I could plough.
1850. You think it would be a profitable occupation? Yes; more profitable than sheep. I have been growing wheat now for the last twenty years, and it has paid me better than sheep.
1851. What do you think is the average yield of wheat per acre in your neighbourhood? I have had an average of 17 bushels in four crops.
1852. I suppose those have been the average seasons? Yes, the last four years.
1853. So that you could reckon that for the future, taking good and bad seasons together, you might depend upon getting an average yield of about 17 bushels? Yes.
1854. Is your land about the average quality, or is it better or poorer than other land? I have got good land, but there is as good land as mine.
1855. Yours is about the average? Yes.
1856. Are there many farmers out west of Barmedman? There are a good few.
1857. Is agriculture extending westward from Barmedman? Yes, I believe it is.
1858. If the railway were taken to Temora without being extended to Barmedman do you think that Barmedman farmers would avail themselves of it? I think so.
1859. What is your opinion of the land generally between here and Barmedman—is it all good or is a very large proportion of it poor land? It is good land, but it is patchy-like in parts.
1860. I suppose there are ironbark ridges? Yes.
1861. Is there any gravelly country—any quartz ranges? Yes, I believe there are.
1862. What proportion of the land between Temora and Barmedman is good land—half of it? Yes; more than that. You may say that it is all good, with the exception of the ironbark range.
1863. Then I suppose that all the land that was open for selection has been selected? Every bit of it, and if there was more land thrown open it would be taken up, and if the railway is constructed there would be a still greater demand.
1864. Do you know the country for some distance to the west of Barmedman? Only for about 8 or 9 miles.
1865. You do not know the Hillston country? No, but I have heard many who have gone there say it is all good country.
1866. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You say you have grown wheat for twenty years? Yes.
1867. In this district? No—in the Burrowa district. I have been here about five years.
1868. During those five years have you ever been prevented from getting a crop by a dry season? Yes; it was dry last year.
1869. What was your average last year? I had about 1½ tons of hay to the acre and 8 bushels of wheat to the acre.
1870. Are dry seasons likely to materially affect the agricultural interests out in your direction? In all parts of the Colony you are likely to get a dry season now and then.
1871. There are some portions of the Colony more affected by drought than other portions; do you think that this district is likely to be materially affected by the drought? I don't think so.
1872. You have heard a previous witness say that he was in the habit of getting fodder from Wangaratta; would it pay the farmers round this district to cultivate fodder? I think so.
1873. I presume you understand ensilage? Yes.
1874. Do you practise it? No.
1875. Have any of the farmers up here any silos? I do not know.
1876. Would it not pay the farmers to grow fodder crops and keep the fodder for dry seasons? I am stacking up a lot for that now.
1877. I suppose you know there is a great demand for fodder in times of drought? Yes.
1878. Would it not be in the interests of the farmers to practice ensilage in order to have fodder ready? People hardly know what that is yet; they have never tried it. Perhaps, like me, they do not believe it is any good—that is, not to keep any length of time. It might do to keep for 12 months or so, but I do not think it would do to keep 12 years.
1879. If kept for 12 months it might be exceedingly valuable? Well, in a year like this it would not be of much use. It would have done very well last year.
1880. You are in the Central division are you not? Yes.
1881. You said that a railway would be likely to induce fresh settlement out that way? I am sure it would.
1882. How can that be the case when the leases of the runs are to be extended for five years? The leases ought not to be extended for five years.
1883. You know that under the last Land Act the pastoralists in the Central division can obtain an extension of their leasehold area for five years. That being so where could the people obtain the land. Is there much of the resumed area fit for cultivation? Yes, further out.
1884. Is the settlement of that land likely to be promoted by the construction of this railway? I think so.
1885. How far out do you think? I am told there is land to be got right through to Hillston, and good land. Of course it is scrubby, and people get a little frightened of it.
1886. But are not most of the resumed areas pretty well selected? Just about Barmedman they are—but not farther out. They are being taken up every week, and if a railway goes out there there will be more land taken up still.
1887. Do you prefer the Cootamundra to the Wallendbeen route? I do.
1888. Do you obtain your stores from Temora and Cootamundra? I get mine at Barmedman. Wire and iron I get from Temora or from Sydney.
1889. Most of these stores I presume come by way of Cootamundra and Temora? Yes.
1890. Therefore that would be your natural route for the market? Yes.

Mr. James Gibson, farmer and selector, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
J. Gibson.
4 Feb., 1890.

1891. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? 8 miles west of Barmedman.
1892. Are you a landed proprietor? I am a selector.
1893. How many acres have you? 2,560.
1894. How long have you held the land? A little over four years.
1895. How many acres did you have under crop this year? I have only farmed to the extent of my own wants. During the first two years I was there I simply grew a little hay for my own use, and I experimented on a small scale to see if the land would produce crops of sorghum, corn, potatoes, and wheat.
1896. How much did you put in of each kind? Merely a few square yards on the side of a hill as an experiment.
1897. What was the result with regard to sorghum? The sorghum and corn grew about 8 feet high.
1898. I suppose you considered that very satisfactory? Yes.
1899. And the potatoes? The potatoes gave a very good yield. It was the American potato—the early rose.
1900. Were they a good potato? A very good potato. That was four years ago.
1901. You have not followed up that experiment? No, I have not done any farming since except that in the following year I had 6 acres of hay for my own use.
1902. What use do you make of the land;—do you run sheep? Yes.
1903. You find the sheep pay you better than agriculture? Well, I have never done any farming, and do not pretend to have any knowledge of it. I have worked amongst sheep since I was a boy.
1904. What do you estimate sheep to give you as a net return—wool and natural increase? About 3s. per sheep. Of course it depends on the season. It would average from 2s. 6d. to 3s. per sheep for the wool, and the average price of lambs 8 or 9 months old is from 5s. to 6s.
1905. About what percentage of lambs did you have? Sixty-five on an average during the last few years. Last year we had one of the worst years that we have had for some time, and it reduced the average considerably.
1906. What was the average weight of the fleece? About 5 lb.
1907. And the price of the wool? Last year it was 10½d., and it was from 7d. to 8d. for the three years previously.
1908. What proportion of sheep do you carry to the acreage? Last year I had 2,300 ewes, with a percentage of lambs. That is the greatest number I have carried, but as it was the worst season of the four I consider that the land, as it is improved now, would carry a sheep to the acre.
1909. Have you got it all ringbarked? Nearly all ringbarked.
1910. Is it your intention to cultivate, or do you think it better to keep on with sheep? I am better acquainted with sheep, and I think I will stick to sheep. I have no knowledge of farming.
1911. Where do you send your wool to? Sydney.
1912. By Temora? Yes; through Temora and Cootamundra.
1913. Do you think it would pay better to take the railway to Cootamundra or to Wallendbeen? I myself would prefer that it should start from Cootamundra. In the first place, our Land Office is at Cootamundra, and all our business in connection with the land is done there. A great many of the settlers are doing banking business there, and it is a good centre for stock sales and for carriage. There are more teams on the road continually, and therefore the rate of cartage is lower. So many carriers have settled along the route that they have got into the habit of travelling, and being near their homes they would probably carry for a lower rate.
1914. Do you not think that similar results would follow if the railway were constructed to Wallendbeen—would not banks be established there, and stores for the accommodation of the settlers? No doubt there would; but I do not think the country is so good. It is not so favourable for settlement as the country round Cootamundra.
1915. Do you know the country between Yeo Yeo and Wallendbeen? Yes. It is some years since I passed through it, but I can remember the character of the country.
1916. What do you remember about it? Some of it is good, but it is very hilly as a rule, and there is a greater proportion of what we call rough country, or ironbark country, than there is along the other route.
1917. So that you would prefer to send your wool a greater distance of 9½ miles for the sake of having the accommodation already established at Cootamundra? Yes; together with other advantages we should have, such, for instance, as being able to send our sheep away in time of drought—to Tumut and the mountain country.
1918. Have you ever sent sheep to the mountain country? No, but I have taken them for other people.
1919. By what route did you take them? Sometimes I have taken them down through Yass to the Monaro country, and sometimes across by Gundagai, and up that way.
1920. When you took them to Yass did you make use of the railway? No, we travelled them through Queanbeyan and up that way.
1921. If you took them to Gundagai would you travel them? Yes.
1922. If the railway were open to Temora do you think any of the western people would be likely to make use of the railway from Temora to Gundagai for travelling sheep? I think so; in fact I am positive, for I know that a great many of them are anxious for an extension of the railway because every mile it goes further west it brings them nearer to the country were we might expect a large stock traffic in dry seasons.
1923. Do you think it would be cheaper to pay the starving stock railway rates than to travel the sheep by road, and run the risk of losing a few? Yes, I think it would. People as a rule keep their sheep on their runs as long as they can, in the hope that rain may come, and so avoid the expense of travelling. They leave it so late before removing sheep that they would only be too glad to truck them to save their lives.
1924. I suppose you never find such a thing as a blade of grass on a travelling stock reserve at a time like that? Very seldom.
1925. Do you ever find any water? There is water occasionally.
1926. Sufficient? Not as much as the sheep would drink, but sufficient to carry on.
1927. Is it a permanent supply? In some cases it is a natural supply, and in other cases the water is made.

- Mr. J. Gibson.
4 Feb., 1890.
1928. Then your opinion is that the graziers would make use of the railway to take their stock to the mountain country in times of drought? Certainly.
1929. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How far out is your selection? Eight miles from Barmedman.
1930. That would be 30 miles from Temora? Thirty miles the way we come in at present. We could reach Temora in 23 miles, but there is no road.
1931. Do you know where your neighbours who are pastoralists send their wool? Some of them, who live 20 or 30 miles down on the Bland, send it to Young, and some send it to Cootamundra. I think most of them round Barmedman send to Cootamundra.
1932. Do you know any pastoralists about here who send their wool to Carrathool or Hay? No.
1933. Do they sell their wool to the Victorian wool brokers? Some of them do. I know some who prefer the Melbourne market and send their wool to Wagga Wagga.
1934. Their teams take it in to Wagga Wagga? Yes.
1935. Do you think it likely that the opening of this line to Temora would tap any of that trade that goes to Melbourne? Yes, because it is 34 miles nearer, which would be an inducement to send it here.
1936. Have you many selectors round you? There are about 100. But we do not go more than 6 miles towards Temora when we reach the boundary of the Central Division. We go 6 miles towards Temora, about 10 miles east, and about 20 miles west, and north. Within that radius there are about 100 settlers.
1937. Would they be likely to trade with Temora? Certainly.
1938. Is there any more land out there to select? Yes.
1939. On the resumed area? Yes.
1940. And when the leasehold area is thrown open in July next do you think there will be a rush of settlement out there? Yes, there is a great inquiry for land at the present time. People are beginning to go out further, as the land round here is already occupied.
1941. Would these new selectors trade with Temora? Yes, there is no other market. I might say that the 100 farmers to whom I have referred settled on the land within the last four years, after the passing of the Land Act of 1884.

Mr. Patrick Heffernan, grazier, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. P. Heffernan.
4 Feb., 1890.
1942. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? About 16 miles south from here.
1943. On a station property? Yes.
1944. What is the name of the station? Clear Hills. It is known officially as Hooligan's Creek.
1945. Do you lease land from the Crown? Yes—some.
1946. How much land is there within your leasehold area? About 14,000 acres.
1947. And in your resumed area? About the same.
1948. Are you in the Central or the Eastern division? The Central.
1949. Do you know if any land on the resumed area has been selected recently? I do not think there is any available, unless it is very inferior land. A good deal of the land in the resumed area is reserved for gold-field purposes, and the rest is inferior country, consisting of ironbark.
1950. What reserve is there on the resumed area? A gold-field reserve of 4,000 or 5,000 acres.
1951. Are there any timber reserves? No.
1952. What is the nature of the soil on the gold-field reserve? The reserved country is good agricultural land.
1953. Do you think any harm would arise if that land were thrown open to selection, as long as a right to mine upon it was given? Some of it would be suitable, but the balance consists of quartz country.
1954. Are there any miners working there at the present time? In close proximity, but not at that particular spot.
1955. Has there ever been any working on that reserve? Yes, some prospecting has been done.
1956. Alluvial or quartz? Quartz. There have been a few shafts for alluvial sinking.
1957. Did they obtain anything of a payable character? They got a little gold, but it was not payable.
1958. There is no likelihood, I suppose, of anyone commencing to mine on that land at the present time? I could hardly say; there would not be as regards parts of it.
1959. Have there been any miners settled in the district? There were fourteen or fifteen years ago, but there have been none since.
1960. What was the name of the rush? Sebastopol.
1961. Was there not a shaft sunk there to a considerable depth? Yes, about 300 feet.
1962. Do you remember what results they got? The shaft was misplaced and it did not develop the mine any further than had already been done, although it cost £3,000 or £4,000.
1963. But they did have some stone which they crushed some fifteen or sixteen years ago? Yes, at that time it yielded very well. They crushed for three or four years, and the stuff went $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz., but it afterwards went down to 9 dwt.
1964. Is Sebastopol on your resumed area? Yes, it is on part of it.
1965. In that case it is better to maintain it as a gold-field reserve? Yes. There have been applications from the owners of the reef for a diamond-drill, to test the reef at a depth of 500 or 600 feet, and I think it will be tested.
1966. What is the character of the land under leasehold area? About half is inferior country, and the other half good agricultural land.
1967. What is the inferior country—ironbark ranges? Some of it is ironbark and scrub.
1968. Pine? Very little pine.
1969. How many sheep do you carry? About 40,000 or 50,000.
1970. What is about the average yield? From 5s. to 6s. per sheep.
1971. Does that cover everything—the natural increase and the wool? No; that is for wool alone.
1972. And that is according to the present price of wool? Last year it would be a little more; the prices were much better.
1973. I suppose, on the whole, the country is very good sheep country? Yes. I do not think it can be surpassed in the Colony, and I have a very fair knowledge of the country generally.
1974. What will the country carry a sheep to the acre? I think that two years after it has been ring-barked the better class of country will carry on an average a sheep to the acre.
1975. Putting it altogether—the better and the poorer country? Well, there is some ironbark country, which you could hardly classify—it is too inferior.
- 1976.

1976. How many sheep do you carry on your leasehold area? It is not fenced off. The conditional purchase land, the resumed area, and the freehold land are all fenced into paddocks.
1977. How many acres of conditional purchase land have you? Including freehold, conditional purchase, and conditional lease, I have about 23,000 or 24,000 acres.
1978. That will leave how many thousand acres to be thrown open when the lease expires? About 20,000 acres, I suppose.
1979. Of that 20,000 acres, what proportion do you think will be suitable land for agriculture? About one-half.
1980. You say that your land is to the south of Temora? Yes; almost due south.
1981. Where do you send your wool to? I send it to Sydney, by Junee.
1982. If the railway were constructed to Temora, would that be any advantage to you? It would depend a great deal upon where the nearest station would be between here and Cootamundra. It would not be any advantage for me to come here. Of the two places, Old Junee would be the nearer.
1983. Suppose there was a station at Stockinbingal, would that be an advantage to you? No. The country would be too rough between my place and there.
1984. Would a station at Gundabingal be of any service? For passenger traffic it would. It would be nearer, but the features of the country are a little rough.
1985. Then, I suppose, that, in estimating the traffic returns from this place, we could not reckon upon your wool—it would still go to Junee? Well, no. If the road were made between Gundabingal, and if there was a station at Gundabingal, it would be a few miles shorter.
1986. But in any case it would be no advantage to the Government whether you brought your wool here or to Junee so long as you sent it on to Sydney and not to Victoria. I suppose you do not send it to Victoria? No, I have sent it to Sydney.
1987. I suppose you do not cultivate? I have cultivated this year about 100 acres of wheat.
1988. Where did you send it? To Junee.
1989. Is there any local consumption at Junee? No. I think it is brought there to be sent on to Sydney—there are buyers of wheat there.
1990. You do not know whether it goes north or south? I could not say. I think the most of the wheat is bought for Sydney. I do not think that Victorian buyers come as far as Junee.
1991. Of course you anticipate getting a rental of your pastoral lease? I do.
1992. What rent are you paying at the present time? About 2½d.
1993. Are you of opinion that it would be better for the railway to go to Cootamundra, rather than to Wallendbeen? My own private opinion is, and I have a considerable knowledge of the geography of the country, that it would be better to construct a line to Bethungra or Junee. But, as between Cootamundra and Wallendbeen, I should say Cootamundra would be preferable.
1994. Why do you think either Bethungra or Junee would be preferable? Owing to the nature of the country, and the line would be easy of construction.
1995. Would it be shorter? Some 3 or 4 miles, I think.
1996. Suppose the people wanted to trade with Sydney—do you think it would be more advantageous for them to go all down the line to Junee? There would certainly be the question of haulage between Junee and Cootamundra.
1997. Taking that view into consideration do you think it would be advantageous to the people to have to pay additional haulage? I do not suppose it would be an advantage to those in the immediate vicinity of Temora, but as regards my own locality and the surroundings I should say it would be an advantage to that part of the district.
1998. In other words I suppose the people in your locality would like to have a railway to connect them with Junee? Yes, a railway from Junee to Temora.
1999. What is the nature of the country between Junee and Temora from an agricultural point of view? It is all first-class land, as good as any in New South Wales.
2000. How many miles is it from Temora to Junee? About 35 miles, and I think every acre of it is suitable for agriculture.
2001. Would it be open to selection? No; a great deal of the land along the road is taken.
2002. You mean that it is suitable for agriculture, but not all available? Exactly. Every landed proprietor in the district would, I think, be only too glad to let his land or dispose of it. The land in my district will produce from £2 to £3 per acre under cultivation, as against 5s. or 6s. per acre for grazing sheep. If there is a demand for wheat, and we could send it away at a profitable price, I think every landed proprietor in the district would have his land cut up, the profits from wheat-growing being so very large as compared with grazing.
2003. Do you think the country is improving in its grazing capabilities? Wonderfully. I have had about nineteen years' experience in the district, and have a fair knowledge of the country for 30 or 40 miles round, and where virgin country has been improved its carrying capacity has increased 100 per cent. or more. In fact, I should say 1 acre ringbarked is worth 3 acres in its natural state.
2004. Do you keep a rain gauge on your station? No. The nearest rain gauge is at Combaning.
2005. Do you know the rainfall? It is somewhere about 20 or 21 inches.
2006. *Mr. Humphery.*] How far did you say you were from Junee? About 14 or 15 miles from Old Junee railway-station.
2007. If it pays the farmers well to cultivate wheat at Stockinbingal, which is about 18 miles from Cootamundra, do you not think it would pay equally well to cultivate the land you hold when you are only 14 miles from the railway? Yes; and the land is going into cultivation every day. There is a want of population to cultivate it.
2008. Have you made any offer to sell the land? A portion originally held by a partner of mine (Sebastopol) was sold recently, and it fetched from £2 10s. to £3. I gave £3 myself for a portion of it.
2009. *Chairman.*] Cash? Yes. With the unpaid balances this would make the price equal to £3 10s.
2010. *Mr. Humphery.*] How many people are there settled between Temora and Junee? I could hardly say. From Sebastopol out the holdings are a bit large, but from here to Sebastopol they are smaller.
2011. How many selections do you think there are between here and Junee? From here to Sebastopol the land is all held under conditional purchases by small holders. That would be about 10 miles. The remainder of the country is in rather large holdings.

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P. Hefferman
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2012. Would a line from here to Cootamundra serve a larger settled population than a line from here to Junee? I do not think there would be much difference. I think, from my knowledge of the country, that if the land were cut up into small areas, and rented or sold, the country would carry more.

2013. But the proprietors, apparently, at the present time have shown no disposition to throw open their land? Yes, one large estate—the Junee estate—has been offered at auction, and is being sold in portions.

2014. They would be very well served by the existing line of railway? Yes, they are quite close enough to the railway. Their property is between 5 or 6 miles from the line.

2015. Have you had any experience in mining? I have.

2016. Can you say anything concerning the Barmedman gold-field? No, I could not venture to express an opinion on that. I have been there once or twice, but my observation of the field was not sufficiently close to justify me in venturing an opinion.

2017. Were you a holder in the Morning Star Mine at Sebastopol? Yes, I have been interested in that for a great number of years. In fact, I was the discoverer of that nine years ago.

2018. Did you have good results? Very good. For two or three years there was a township there, with a population of 300 or 400 people. But the field got poor. It is a very large reef about 8 or 9 feet wide and about half a mile long, and it got poor. The yield went down to 9 dwt., which at that time, when crushing was so expensive, did not pay. Other gold-fields broke out about that time, and it was left, and has remained untouched ever since. I have worked it off and on ever since that time, but I have not succeeded in doing very much with it.

2019. Is there any working going on there now? Not just at present. I have applied for a diamond drill, to test the ground at a great depth.

2020. *Chairman.*] Do you think the stone will yield 9 dwt. to the ton now? I do.

2021. Nine feet wide? It runs from 9 feet to about 3 feet 6 inches. I suppose the whole of the reef—taking three leases of about 5 acres each, which is the principal part—would average about 9 dwt. right through.

2022. And is it on Crown land? Yes.

2023. Of course, you know that 9 dwt. would pay remarkably well in a reef of that size? Yes, but large machinery and appliances would be required. It would cost £3,000 or £4,000 to test the mine at a lower depth. I have a knowledge of the surrounding country, and know the whole district personally, having lived here for eighteen or nineteen years, and with regard to the character of the land, I can say that though the good land is intersected here and there with ironbark, yet taking the whole of the country for 20 or 30 miles around, you can reckon that 80 per cent. of the land is suitable for agriculture.

2024. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Where do you get your stores from? From Temora principally.

2025. You send your wool to Sydney via Junee? Yes.

2026. You are equi-distant between Junee and Temora, are you not? I am about 2 miles nearer to Junee.

2027. But if there was a railway station at Gundabingal you would be nearer to Gundabingal than to Junee? It would be about the same.

2028. How far would you have to travel from your station into Junee? 14 miles.

2029. Then you would have to go 30 odd miles into Cootamundra? Yes. The journey to Sydney would certainly be shorter for Gundabingal.

2030. You would have to travel about 14 miles into Gundabingal, and about 15 miles from there to Cootamundra, which would be in all about 30 miles? Yes.

2031. So that you would save 15 miles trainage by using the Temora line? Yes.

2032. Would it not be to your interest to send your wool by Temora if the railway were constructed, instead of sending it by Junee? Yes, if a road were made to the new line. The road at present is very rugged.

2033. Is the road not passable for teams? No; it could be made so.

2034. I suppose in course of time there will be a road and you will very likely be one who will utilize the Temora line to send your wool to Sydney? Yes, certainly, if the road is improved a bit. I think it would meet the views of a great number of people if there was a slight deviation in the proposed line, so that instead of coming from Gundabingal to Temora it could be turned off at Stockinbingal on to the Temora Road. There has been an agitation in this direction from the Salt Lake Creek people who live out there. This deviation would meet their views and also the views of the people in my district. It would be a very slight deviation.

2035. Would it not come by Combaning? Yes.

2036. You think that if the line were diverted from Stockinbingal to Combaning it would serve the Sebastopol people and the Salt Lake Creek people? Yes, and I think it would meet the views of all.

2037. And would they be likely to use that line instead of taking their produce by teams to the main southern line? Yes. I question if the deviation would make the line any longer, but it would give great satisfaction.

2038. *Mr. Humphery.*] Was there an effort made to obtain a survey from Salt Lake Creek? Yes.

2039. Did not the Minister refuse to grant a survey? I am not sure; I do not know any of the particulars. I know that there were some parties who moved in the matter.

2040. The report says that the survey was refused on the ground that the route presented engineering difficulties which would involve increased expense and more than counterbalance the saving in distance. Is that correct? I think so. What I am suggesting would meet the views of the people to whom I have referred;—it would bring the railway sufficiently close to them. They have great difficulty in bringing their produce over the ranges, and they tell me that the station at Stockinbingal would not be of the slightest benefit to them. From my personal knowledge of the district I think the suggested deviation is worthy of an inspection and report.

2041. What you suggest is, that the line should be diverted from Stockinbingal towards the south, past the Combaning Station, and into Temora? Yes.

Mr. John Buckley, sergeant of police, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
J. Buckley.
4 Feb., 1890.

2042. *Chairman.*] You are a sergeant of police stationed at Temora? Yes.

2043. How long have you been here? About five and a half years.

2044. Do you collect the statistics for the Government? Yes.

2045. Do you take the population? Yes.

2046.

2046. Can you say whether or not the population is increasing in this district? Since I came here the population has increased in the district, but has decreased in the town.
2047. When did you take the statistics last? Last month. The population of the town was then 1,021.
2048. That is within the town boundary? Yes.
2049. And what was the population of the district? The population of the portion of the district for which I collected the statistics was a little over 2,000. That was for the district altogether, including the town.
2050. Then there is as large a population in the town as there is in the district out of town? Yes; but I may mention that to the west I only collected statistics for about 10 miles from Temora.
2051. You did not take the whole of the police district? Not nearly the whole of the police district, because that is identical with the electoral district which includes Young.
2052. Then we cannot look upon the figures you give us now as in any way representing the population of the whole district? Not at all. The population of the district of Temora would be greater than what I have stated. Taking (say) 20 miles from Temora it would be considerably more.
2053. Take (say) 10 miles in a circuit round Temora? The population, including the town of Temora, in this area would be about 1,600 or 1,700.
2054. You think that is an increase? Yes.
2055. Can you say what percentage of increase? I did not keep the statistics last year, but at a rough calculation I should say the increase would be 8 or 10 per cent.
2056. Do you take the statistics for the electoral roll? Yes.
2057. Can you say what the increase on the electoral roll has been? I have not prepared the figures, but I can say that there has been a decrease in the town and an increase in the country over last year.
2058. You cannot say what the actual increase is? No, but there has been an increase. For instance, this year there were 100 additional names.
2059. Was that in this district? Yes.
2060. What do you suppose the decrease in the population of the town is owing to? To the miners having left. A great many have gone to Peak Hill and other rushes, and have not returned.
2061. And do you assume that the increase in the population outside the town is owing to the extension of agriculture? Yes.
2062. From your experience of the district do you think the agricultural population are fairly prosperous? Yes; I am certain of it.
2063. Do you think there are many people who would be glad to take up land if it were available? Yes, there are many looking for land. In fact, I do not think there is any land available in the immediate neighbourhood, except what is included in reserves, and there is a considerable increase this year in the agricultural area. I should think that the yield of wheat this year would average fully 20 bushels to the acre.
2064. Do you collect the agricultural statistics? Yes.
2065. And you think that the yield would average 20 bushels to the acre throughout the whole district? The yield for the extra district of Young is about 18·52 bushels to the acre. I am of opinion that the yield of the Temora portion would be 20 bushels to the acre.
2066. What is the general average? Last year would be no criterion, because some of the farmers did not get any wheat at all; they turned stock in, and let them eat it down. I may mention, with regard to statistics, that they are sent on to the department, and I do not keep a record of them. I am, therefore, only speaking now from memory.
2067. Speaking from memory, what do you think would be the average yield of the district, one year with another? Taking the drought with the good seasons, I should think that the average yield of wheat per acre would be 15 or 16 bushels. The year before last it averaged within a fraction of 19 bushels.
2068. I suppose you have a lock-up at Temora? Yes.
2069. Any gaol? No.
2070. Are you troubled with very many prisoners as a rule? I think we had over 100 during the year.
2071. I suppose the majority were not serious cases? No. It is very seldom that there is much crime in a gold-mining township or an agricultural district. There is more crime where coal-mining or railway works are going on, and among seafaring men.
2072. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you know how many acres are under cultivation in the district? I could not tell you. I know there is a very large increase over last year. I suppose the increase this year, as compared with last year, must be fully 25 per cent.
2073. Can you say if the land within 15 miles of Temora is suitable for the cultivation of wheat? Yes, it is.
2074. It is nearly all good land? It is all splendid land with the exception of the ironbark ridges. There is scarcely any bad land in the district. You might ride 50 miles in any direction and see nothing but good land. I have been up the Humbug and to Wollongough, and it is all splendid land even up in that direction.
2075. And capable of sustaining a large population? Yes, magnificent land.
2076. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You say that the population has decreased since you came here? Yes, in the town.
2077. When did you arrive here? On the 7th June, 1884.
2078. The gold diggings were in full swing at that time? They were just on the wane.
2079. What was the population of Temora when it was at its highest? The population of Temora town at its highest, that is when the gold rush first broke out in 1879-80, was about from 6,000 to 7,000. Of course this was a floating population. The population of the town at present, 1,021, is a settled one.
- 2080-1. This town has a population now of a little over 1,000? Yes, 1,021.
2082. How do these 1,000 people sustain seventeen hotels? That is a mystery. There are sixteen hotels. A great many of the hotel-owners occupy their own properties and pay no rent.
2083. But does it not strike you as an extraordinary number for a town of 1,000 inhabitants? Yes, it does. There is no doubt that there are more hotels in Temora than there is any need for.

Mr.
J. Buckley.
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Mr. John Morris Foley, postmaster, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
J. M. Foley.
4 Feb., 1890.

2084. *Chairman.*] You are postmaster at Temora? Yes.
2085. How long have you held that position? A little over four years and seven months. I have been a resident of Temora ever since December, 1880. I came here as assistant postmaster, and the appointment of postmaster was given to me in 1885.
2086. Can you say whether there is an increase in the number of letters received and posted? There has been an increase during the last three years; but previous to my appointment there was a much larger population—that was before the mining population dispersed. During the last three years I believe there would be an increase of letters amongst the selectors, and settlement has taken place all round Temora.
2087. Can you say about what percentage the letters have increased during the last three years? I should think they have increased to the extent of about 500 or 600 a year. According to the returns in the Blue Book the number of letters posted in 1888 was 61,806.
2088. Can you say anything with reference to the telegrams? They have also increased during the last two years. In 1888 the number of telegrams transmitted through this office was 4,823, and the figures for this year may show a small increase on that. The revenue derived from the transmission of those messages was £304.
2089. I suppose three or four years ago the revenue was very much below that? Four years ago it was.
2090. So that from 1880 to 1886 there was a gradual decrease? Yes. Since then it has gradually increased. A great number of selectors have been added to the population, but the number of the miners has decreased.
2091. Then you would judge by the postal and telegraph business that the population is steadily increasing? Yes.
2092. Have you anything to do with the money order office? Yes.
2093. Do you find that the business of that office is increasing? Yes, fairly well. The number of money orders issued for 1888 was 1,012, representing an amount of £3,072. The deposits for 1888 were 259 in number, representing in amount £1,250. The postage stamps sold amounted to £705. The figures for 1889 will show an increase, but I could not obtain them without reference to the Blue Book of 1889.

Mr. William Stuart Quail, auctioneer and commission agent, sworn, and examined:—

Mr. W. S.
Quail.
4 Feb., 1890.

2094. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? Just outside Temora.
2095. How long have you resided in this neighbourhood? About ten years. I have been in the district for about twenty-seven years.
2096. What is your occupation? I am an auctioneer and commission agent.
2097. Have you followed the profession of a mining surveyor at any time? I have; I have followed that occupation in Queensland, and in the early days of the gold-fields here.
2098. Were you under the Government? I was not.
2099. You were following the profession privately? Yes.
2100. Do you desire to give the Committee any information of a particular character in connection with this railway project? It would be a very good thing for this field if we had a railway. From what I know of the country I should say Cootamundra should be our starting point. My reason for saying so is that Cootamundra beyond any doubt is our principal market, our principal depot for produce, agricultural and otherwise.
2101. I suppose what business you do you transact at Cootamundra? No; Temora and Cootamundra.
2102. You have heard a good deal of the evidence given this afternoon? Yes.
2103. I suppose you agree with it in the main? I do. I am sorry that the mining industry was not placed more conspicuously before the Committee. It is very desirable that we should have means of systematically working this country, particularly to the north, and that we should have easy transit for machinery. We have lots of undeveloped country here and great mineral wealth. I have been through the country to the north and in the Barmedman district, and there are reefs out there showing gold-bearing quartz on the surface.
2104. *Mr. Humphery.*] Did you hear the evidence of Mr. Heffernan? Yes.
2105. Do you agree with him as to the desirability of the line being taken to Salt Lake Creek? Certainly not. It may suit Mr. Heffernan very well and that part of the country, but in making this suggestion I think Mr. Heffernan lost sight of the east side of the country which is at present locked up, though it is fine agricultural country. I suppose about 13,000 acres of land are locked up to the east of Temora.
2106. Then with that portion of the evidence given this afternoon you do not agree? No.
2107. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You say you have had some acquaintance with the Barmedman country? Yes.
2108. Can you give the Committee any idea of the mining carried on there now and its present prospects? I think everything is almost at a standstill, but those who are working seem satisfied with their prospects. When I say things are at a standstill, I mean they are not what they were when Hardie and Gorman bought the place out. Barmedman was then working with very large results, but since then things have gone down. There are a few mines paying very well. I think the Hard-to-Find is working, and also some reefs in the immediate neighbourhood of the Barmedman Company's Mine.
2109. What is about the population of Barmedman? I cannot say.
2110. Can you explain how it is that gold has only been found in one lead in Temora? I cannot tell you about that; I know it is very disseminated. I think there is gold here still. I believe there is a basin of gold here somewhere.
2111. The gold found here has been in gaps, has it not? Yes; there has been no continuous lead in Temora.
2112. Still you believe if the country were properly prospected there would be? I have not the slightest doubt about it; but not in the immediate neighbourhood of Temora.
2113. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you know the route of the proposed extension from Cootamundra to Temora? Fairly well.
2114. You know where the line will enter the town? Yes; near Talbot's hotel.
2115. Do you know the proposed site of the railway station? I do.

2116. Do you think it the best site that could be obtained and the most convenient to the people? It is certainly the most convenient to the people, but with my knowledge as a surveyor, I can hardly hold with the position of it. I would be far more pleased to see it near the police paddock.
2117. How far would that be from the site at present proposed? About 4 or 5 chains.
2118. Would it be necessary on the site you propose to resume any private land? No; the police paddock would be large enough.

Mr.
W. S. Quail
4 Feb., 1890

Mr. James Neilson, mining manager, sworn, and examined:—

2119. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Temora.
2120. What occupation do you follow? I am a mining manager.
2121. What company do you manage? The Mother Shipton.
2122. Where is that situated? In Upper Temora.
2123. What is the nature of the mining—quartz or alluvial? Quartz.
2124. At what depth are you? 105 feet, and we are still sinking.
2125. That is the greatest depth you have attained? Up to the present.
2126. And have you done much stopping at the higher levels? No, I have not; the original party stoped the higher levels.
2127. Can you state to what extent north and south? About 150 feet north and south, and I suppose we stoped to about 30 feet.
2128. What is the width of the reef? It would average about 10 inches.
2129. Are there anything like defined walls—does it look permanent? Yes, the walls are defined, only it is in decomposed diorite.
2130. Both walls? Yes.
2131. What has the stone that has been got averaged? I could not give you the average, because I have not got the returns. There has been a great quantity of gold taken out, but I do not know whether any accurate estimate of the average has been made.
2132. Where was it crushed? At Lower Temora.
2133. The company never had a battery of their own? No.
2134. How long have you been manager? I have only been up here five weeks—acting for this company. I was up here seven months previously.
2135. Is the face in the shaft? I passed through it in the shaft.
2136. Are you sinking a vertical shaft? Yes.
2137. Has it much underlay? About 3 in 10.
2138. Do you find the gold occur in shoots? No, it lays in patches, not shoots. I have had no patch since I have been here because I have been doing dead work, but according to the nature of the ground where they have taken the patches from I think it has got an underlay of about 30 degrees to the south-east from the point where she starts on the surface out of the east and west lines.
2139. Still nothing like a defined run? The run is defined only you get the gold in the same stone, and you get it in patches and not regularly.
2140. Where it is, there it is, I suppose? Yes.
2141. What was the quality of the stone where you passed through it? Still decomposed diorite, and the stone is very heavily charged with galena and copper.
2142. Do you think it will improve? I have a great opinion of the Shipton Mine.
2143. You think it got better than it was at the higher level? No, it was similar to the other levels.
2144. How much per ton do you estimate the quartz to be worth? I could not strike an average per ton, because if you do not get the large deposits of gold you get nothing.
2145. Did the stone you sunk through in the shaft give good prospects? As far as the prospects are concerned I do not believe it would go more than 2 dwt.—not the stone I went through. But that is nothing, because you might go only 4 or 5 feet and get 400 or 500 ounces.
2146. Is that the only make of stone you have in the mine? No, we have a large make of stone away to the westward.
2147. Has that been prospected? Not to any extent.
2148. How deep has it been sunk? The deepest, I suppose, is only 12 feet.
2149. Of what description is the quartz? A sort of free quartz—just surface quartz—no mineral because they have not gone the depth. There has been no trial crushing and nothing more than prospecting with the dish.
2150. I saw some ironstone outcrops about the town;—do you know if any of these have been prospected? No, not in the hill where I am. That ironstone crop goes right through. I can trace it for a good many miles.
2151. Do you know if it has been tested in any way? Not that I am aware of.
2152. How many are there employed in the Mother Shipton Mine? Eight.
2153. Working three shifts? Two shifts.
2154. How many hours? Eight hours.
2155. What wages do you pay the men? £2 10s. a week; eight-hours shifts.
2156. Is this the only quartz-mine that is worked in Temora? No; there is the other mine that I was manager of before—Burke's reef.
2157. Where is that? Close to the Shipton.
2158. Is that working at present? No.
2159. Is there any other mine at work besides the Mother Shipton? No; not at present.
2160. So that you do not consider the quartz-mining much of a success? Well, I have a great opinion of quartz-mining in the Temora district. As far as the reefs are concerned I believe it will be a very rich district in time. It only wants a little capital brought in to develop it. There is no doubt, in my opinion, that Temora will yield some very rich quartz, and it has already yielded, as far as the Mother Shipton is concerned, some very rich patches of gold. The run is still there, but the parties who were working it after they took out the last rich deposit, lost the trace of the country, and I consider that I have picked it up. I hope before long to be in the same run of country again that the original party worked.
2161. Did you say that the walls were well defined? Yes.

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J. Neilson.
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Mr.
J. Neilson.
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2162. With reference to alluvial mining, I suppose we may consider that they are completely worked out? Yes. In regard to alluvial, what has been found is completely worked out. There are several parties always doing a little, and there are some claims which, if they could be worked on a more extensive scale, would, I think pay very well, but with the appliances we have the stuff is rather too poor to enable it to be raised and carted with profit. It is my opinion that there ought to be a great deal more of alluvial gold here. There does not seem to have been much prospecting.
2163. Is there any prospecting going on in the district now? No.
2164. Neither quartz nor alluvial? No.
2165. Is there any other mineral mining—copper, silver, or tin? No. There is a tin-mine out here, but I do not know anything about it.
2166. Where is it? Out Broken Dam way, to the left of Barmedman.
2167. How far from Barmedman? I could not say.
2168. Then there is no other company actually at work except your company? No.
2169. And yours is not what might be termed a pronounced success at the present time? At the present time—no.
2170. You are not paying dividends? No.
2171. Can you say whether there are many miners on the field now? Not that I know of. The only few that I know of are working up in the claim with me, and there are a few working about in the old ground.
2172. How many miners became selectors since the gold-fields were worked out? That I could not say.
2173. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] I suppose you are likely to keep on working the Mother Shipton mine? Yes.
2174. Did not your directors some time ago hold a meeting in Sydney with regard to it? Yes.
2175. And send up Mr. Garrard, one of their number, to report? That was before I came.
2176. I presume the report was favourable, or they would not have sent for you to work the mine? Their report was favourable.
2177. You think this is likely to be an industry in Temora for some time? Decidedly.
2178. Was there not a very rich piece of quartz sent home to the Exhibition some time ago from this mine? Yes.
2179. Is there much more of that stuff? There was a lot of that got. Altogether, as nearly as I can recollect, there were about five of those patches got. When the last rich deposit was taken I am given to understand it yielded £2,600. This is only hearsay, but I know it was a very rich patch.
2180. Are those the finds they have been breaking into occasionally? Yes.

Mr. Robert Cassin, storekeeper, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
R. Cassin.
4 Feb., 1890.

2181. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? In Barmedman.
2182. What is your occupation? I am a storekeeper.
2183. Have you been there many years? About seven years.
2184. Is any mining being carried on at Barmedman at the present time? Yes, to a limited extent—not anything approaching what there was four or five years ago.
2185. Is there any alluvial mining being done? No. It has all been quartz-mining.
2186. Can you tell the Committee the names of the different reefs that are being worked at the present time? The Fiery Cross is the principal one.
2187. Are there any others? Yes, there is an amount of work being done on a lease of Messrs. Hardy & Co., of Wagga Wagga. They call it No. 1, or Hard-to-Find.
2188. Take the Fiery Cross; can you give the Committee something like an estimate of what that mine has done? Three or four miners in an adjoining claim found it, pegged out the ground, shepherded the claim for a month or two, sold some interest in it, and by accident dropped on to the gold.
2189. How long since? Five and a half years.
2190. What was it called then? The Fiery Cross.
2191. Has it been in continuous working ever since? There has not been a day's suspension of work that I am aware of.
2192. Was there not some large company at work at Barmedman about two years ago? Yes.
2193. What was the name of that? The Barmedman United Gold-mining Company.
2194. What has become of it? It was wound up.
2195. It is not at work now? No; nor has the ground been fully worked. That company came into existence at the same time as several other companies. They expended a large amount of money on the surface. Evidence has been given in the Court that plant was erected to the amount of £16,000. They expended a large amount of money on the service and got a good deal of free gold out of the shallow workings, until they encountered the water at what we term the 80-foot level; their funds then became exhausted, and they finally wound up. They only broke into the reef and did not prospect by cross-drives.
2196. Since then the ground has been lying idle? No, it has not been idle. The plant was afterwards sold, and the battery is now used crushing for the whole district.
2197. But nothing more has been done to the mine? Various parties have attempted to make a living by fossicking, but there has not been any legitimate mining.
2198. Just working at the shallow level? Yes. Unless they get a main shaft down to drain the water—and that will cost a lot of money—no one can get down.
2199. Then at the present time the only two companies in existence are the Hard-to-Find and the Fiery Cross? There are other parties working. Jackson's No. 1, adjoining the Hard-to-Find, had four men fully employed and two occasional men. The next claim to that, in which Jackson also has an interest in conjunction with myself, had ten men on last month.
2200. Are they getting payable gold at the Fiery Cross? We never had a crushing that did not pay over £3 a week. We are crushing 300 tons at present, and I expect it will pay wages and leave a profit.
2201. When did you crush before? Three or four months since.
2202. And it has taken three or four months to get the 300 tons? Yes. They could have got more by putting on wages men.
2203. How many men are employed altogether? We have had eight and ten working here, but that was occasionally, when we tried to work it on a larger scale. The working shareholders do not care to employ labour in the mine, and there are seldom more than four or five men working.
2204. What width is the reef generally? It is a dyke of stone, more than a reef.

2205.

2205. What depth is the dyke? We have had 16 feet of stone. When we had the engine going and were paying 15s. a ton for crushing, we only used to take about 3, 4, or 6 feet of it, which went generally from 1 up to 3 and 4 oz. Mr. R. Cassin.
4 Feb., 1890.
2206. How many tons did you crush last time? About 300 or 400.
2207. How many oz. of gold did you get? I could not say from memory, but I know it was payable. I think it went more than 7 dwt. Originally, when we used to pay 15s. per ton for crushing, we used to take only the choice stone, leaving the wall stone standing on each side. Afterwards, when the water came and the company ceased working in the lower level, we had to take the stone that was left previously.
2208. What is the depth of the reef in the Hard-to-Find, and the quality of the stone? The last crushing went $3\frac{1}{2}$ oz.
2209. When was that? More than twelve months ago.
2210. What have they been doing in the meantime? Sinking a water-shaft.
2211. What depth is it now? About 179 feet.
2212. Is the water-shaft away from the reef? Yes.
2213. When do they expect to cut the reef again? They intend to drive to the reef as soon as the contract is finished for sinking the 194 feet.
2214. Have they ever seen the reef at anything like a depth of 194 feet? No. Nobody has ever been down that depth before.
2215. I suppose they have sunk blind shafts? We followed the reef down about 113 feet into the water.
2216. And at 113 feet what is the stone worth? $3\frac{3}{4}$ oz.
2217. That was the last crushing? Yes.
2218. What width is the reef? From 8 inches down to 4 inches.
2219. Then you anticipate that the Hard-to-Find will be a payable mine? I think so. I am expending my own and other people's money upon it.
2220. You anticipate that the Fiery Cross and the Hard-to-Find will both be profitable? Yes.
2221. Jackson and party;—what are they doing? They are dependent on the drainage of the shaft I have referred to. When that shaft cuts the stone it will drain their stone.
2222. They are getting no gold at present? They brought in 40 oz. of gold yesterday from 8 tons of stone.
2223. I suppose they obtained that above the water-level? No. When the engine was going, and before the fresh water gave out, they followed the reef into the water, and took the drainage off by means of a horse-whip.
2224. How many men are there employed on the ground? They had four at one time and six during the last few days.
2225. And how many are employed by Jackson and Cassin's party? I had eight or ten, but I had to knock them off. The water beat us. A few days after the engines stopped we were flooded out.
2226. Are the whole of these four companies on the one line of reef? Yes.
2227. And is this a different line of reef to that which the Barmedman United was working some time ago? There is no proof as to that. They are a mile and a half apart.
2228. They may or may not be the same reef? We do not know.
2229. Is there anyone at work now on the line of reef that the Barmedman United was on? The Barmedman United were on the same line of reef as the Fiery Cross.
2230. You think it is the same line? Undoubtedly.
2231. Can you say anything in connection with the discovery of tin near Barmedman? I do not know anything about it.
2232. Is it not reported that tin has been found in the neighbourhood? I heard there was tin, but I did not think the matter of sufficient importance to take any notice of it.
2233. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is the population of Barmedman? About 150 all told.
2234. About how many people are living round Barmedman within a radius of 10 miles? I could not say, but the land is all taken up for farms.
2235. There is good agricultural land there? Yes.
2236. Do not the people in the Barmedman district do their trade with Temora? Yes.
2237. If the line were extended to Temora you would be within 22 miles of the railway terminus? Yes. We do all our business through Temora, which is the natural centre for our district.

James Baker, Esq., Police Magistrate and Gold-fields' Warden, sworn, and examined:—

2238. *Chairman.*] You are Police Magistrate and Gold-fields Warden at Temora? Yes.
2239. How long have you held those positions? A little over seven years.
2240. From your position as warden do you think the prospects of the gold-field are in any way encouraging at the present time? They are not very encouraging just now, and they have been diminishing every year for a number of years. But I think the probabilities of the future are that the field will hold its own, and perhaps a little more than its own. The district has never had fair play. In saying that, I mean that I do not think the ground has ever been worked in a systematic manner and in such a way as to give the best results from the labour and money expended.
2241. You have had very many years experience of gold-fields have you not? Ever since 1852 or 1853.
2242. You have been continuously on gold-fields? Yes.
2243. Do you think this district has been sufficiently prospected? No, I do not.
2244. You think there is a reasonable chance of new discoveries? Yes, both of quartz and alluvial gold.
2245. Was the alluvial mining very profitable as a rule? It was profitable to some and not to others. It is a very patchy country. One man would get a lot of gold, and his neighbour would hardly be able to pay for his provisions.
2246. I suppose you do not issue miners' rights now? No; but I can give you some figures with regard to the yield of gold. The following are from the official return:—The yield of gold in 1881 was 21,652 oz.; in 1882, 33,348 oz.; in 1883, 17,347 oz.; in 1884, 14,381 oz.; in 1885, 7,865 oz.; in 1886, 7,161 oz.; in 1887, 3,406 oz.; in 1888, 2,353 oz.; in 1889, 1,169 oz. There is some discrepancy with regard to the year 1889, because the two Mining Registrars give the yield of gold for that year at 1,679 oz. The value of the gold is estimated at £3 17s. 6d., making a total for the year of £5,862. J. Baker,
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J. Baker,
Esq.
4 Feb., 1890.

2247. With reference to the proposal to take the railway from Cootamundra, which, in your opinion, is the better route? Unquestionably Cootamundra is better than Wallendbeen for a variety of reasons, some of which have already been given. Cootamundra is the natural route for stock and produce. There is already a junction there, and a great deal of business is done at Cootamundra. A good deal of business is done also at Junee, as well as with Gundagai and Tumut. For example, maize and produce of that kind come largely from Tumut, and if you take the railway to Wallendbeen you take it out of its natural course. Although there may be a saving of haulage in the journey to Sydney a great deal of the business of the district is done between Cootamundra and Albury.

2248-9. Still, there is, I suppose nothing like the proportion of business transacted to the south that there is to the north? I should think that very much the larger proportion of business is with Sydney, though I know there is a considerable amount of business done the other way.

2250. Do you think the proposed site of the railway station at Temora is suitable? The land is rather low, but the situation is central.

2251. You think on the whole it will be the most suitable position for the business people and the people generally in the town? I think so. I think the position is an excellent one, if care is taken that the ground is raised sufficiently high. But the police paddock, a little to the north of the proposed site, would, perhaps, be preferable.

2252. Do you know the country between Temora and Barmedman? Yes, very well.

2253. Assuming that the railway is brought to Temora, would the country beyond Temora, in the direction of Barmedman, be such as to warrant the taking of the railway to Barmedman? Unquestionably. If the land were mine and I had the money to make a railway, I would make it as quickly as I could, because I feel quite sure that the increase in the value of the land would pay for the construction of the railway. There is an ironbark range commencing about 10 miles from Temora on which the land is not very good for agricultural purposes, but which contains timber very valuable for railway construction.

2254. Is there much of that timber? A considerable quantity.

2255. Do you know the country westward of Barmedman towards Hillston? No. I have only been 6 or 7 miles beyond Barmedman. So far as I have gone the country is of the same character—very excellent land.

2256. Do you think the mining interest is in a healthy state at Barmedman? Not as healthy as it ought to be. I think Barmedman ought to be a much more prosperous mining district than it is. Mr. Cassin is about as good an authority as you could consult on this question, and I am quite sure that whatever information you get from him will be the truth, whether it is for or against the district. But there have been several causes which have prevented Barmedman from being as prosperous as it ought to have been. In the first place, the Barmedman United Company was completely muddled from beginning to end. It was badly managed. They fossicked about the surface and exhausted their funds, instead of sinking down below the water to get the gold, and they wasted the money. The manager told me if he wanted a box of candles they would have to send to Sydney for them, and they would send him a ton at a higher price than he could buy them from the local storekeepers. I am speaking now of what came under my notice officially, the statements having been made on oath in court. The result was that the plant was sold for £1,050—one engine alone being worth all the money. The plant cost nearly £20,000, and they sold everything for £1,050, and then went into the court to liquidate their debts.

2257. I suppose the shares were mostly held in Sydney? Mostly held in Sydney, and muddled in Sydney.

2258. Do you know anything with reference to a tin discovery that has been spoken of? No. There was a tin discovery reported to me, and some mineral leases were taken out, as nearly as I can guess, 35 miles from here, and about 25 miles from Barmedman.

2259. In about what direction would it lie from here by the compass? About north-west.

2260. How long is it since the discovery was first supposed to have been made? About twelve or fifteen months. They made a very good dam which the owner of the run is very proud of; he says it will come in very handy for him. They have given it up, and it is to be sold. I never saw the place. There is unquestionably tin there, but whether it will pay or not I cannot say.

2261. Can you say whether there is any silver, copper, or any other kind of mineral in the district? There is no evidence of the kind with regard to the ironstone which runs through the town. I sent a sample down to have it assayed, but somehow or other they sent me an assay of the wrong stuff.

2262. What was the result? There was silver, tin, and nickel, but Mr. David who came up said it was a mistake, and they had sent the wrong assay.

2263. *Mr. Humphery.*] The cost of constructing a railway to Temora will be about £138,000. The interest on that sum will be £5,000 a year, and the working expenses of the line will amount to £7,500 a year, making in all an annual expenditure of £12,500. Do you think the prospects of this district would justify the construction of the railway at such a cost? If you simply rely upon the traffic for the first year or so, I should say no, but if the Crown lands for 3 or 4 miles on either side of the railway were conserved, so that the State would have the real value of the land when the railway was opened, I believe that the amount that would be derived from the increased value of the land would more than construct a railway.

2264. Do you think there is a prospect of the working expenses being covered by the earnings of the railway within a year or so? Yes; within a year or two, I should think.

2265. Do you think that within five years the interest on the cost of construction as well as the working expenses would be paid by the earnings of the railway? I think so.

2266. And you think the country would be justified in incurring the cost? Not only do I think the country would be justified but I think it would be a very praiseworthy thing to do.

Mr. Owen Roberts, miner, sworn and examined:--

Mr
O. Roberts.
4 Feb., 1890;

2267. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At the lower township.

2268. What are you? A miner.

2269. Did you some time ago make a discovery of tin? Yes.

2270. In what locality? North-west from here.

2271. How many miles? About 27 miles.

2272. On whose station was it? Mandamar West—Mr. Davidson's station.

2273. What was the nature of the deposit—was it alluvial tin? Stream tin.

2274.

2274. You did not find any lode? We sunk a 4,000-yards tank, and we discovered six narrow veins carrying tin. One was from 4 to 5 inches thick, another, about 2 or 3 inches, and another about 1 inch.
2275. How far apart? About 15 feet apart altogether.
2276. These different veins were all comprised within 15 feet? Yes; running parallel east and west.
2277. Did you sink on those? The company did. They sunk away from the tank and sunk about 100 feet on the same vein that we struck when first going down for the tank.
2278. Did they carry the tin down with them? They drove into the vein. There was a sort of dyke of sandstone and limestone. There was a little tin discovered but nothing any good.
2279. Did they cross-cut and try to get the other veins that were running parallel to the one you got? They never tried them.
2280. So that out of the six veins they only proved one? Yes.
2281. That was at a depth of 100 feet? Yes.
2282. Did they drive along the cross-cut? No.
2283. You said it was stream tin? The alluvial was stream tin.
2284. What did you find in the alluvial? We found some very fair tin; as much as $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. and 1 lb. to the dish, and sometimes 3 and 4 oz., and so on.
2285. And less than that, I suppose? Yes.
2286. What do you think would be the average to the dish? The average on the whole would be about 4 oz.
2287. What thickness was the dirt? From 1 foot to 6 feet.
2288. Was it in granite country? Yes.
2289. Was it a defined wash? It was water-worn stone.
2290. Large stone? Yes.
2291. Granite boulders? It was more of a sandstone diorite and quartz.
2292. How much dirt did you take out altogether? The company sunk shafts, and took out about 150 or 200 loads.
2293. And what was the result? They never washed it.
2294. Is it lying there still? Yes.
2295. Has no one ever had the curiosity or the energy to wash this dirt; is there any sluicing near? We tried thirteen loads. I made a box myself.
2296. Is the stuff of a clayey nature? No; it could be sluiced. They tried it with the box I lent them, and we consider we lost 4 or 5 lb. to the load in trying it.
2297. What did you save to the load? We took the best of course, and we got $4\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of tin from seven loads, and we had to cart it $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 miles to try it.
2298. Did the tin ore assay well? Mr. Woods sent about 12 or 15 lb. away, and the return that came back was 68 per cent., and of course some washed less.
2299. The whole thing has been abandoned now, I suppose? It is not abandoned. I do not know what the company is going to do with it.
2300. Is it a Sydney company? Yes.
2301. Did they minerally conditionally purchase the land, or was it a mineral lease? It was a mineral lease.
2302. They have not purchased it; so that if they do not go to work the land will ultimately be thrown open for somebody else to work? Yes.
2303. From your experience do you think there is a fair probability of the ground turning out payable? I think myself that the manager who was sent up knew very little about tin, judging from the way he went to work.
2304. Is there a great extent of granite country in that neighbourhood? Yes; it continues a long way.
2305. Has the ground been prospected in other parts? No; only just what we did, and the manager to whom I have referred drove and sunk at the place where we found the tin.
2306. How did you make the tin discovery;—were you sinking for gold? No. We found indications on the surface, and there was a chain of conical hills, and I sunk in a gap between two of them, and that is where we found the tin.

James Davoren, Esq., Mining Registrar and Warden's Clerk, sworn, and examined:—

2307. *Chairman.*] I believe you occupy the position of Mining Registrar and Warden's Clerk? Yes.
2308. Can you tell the Committee how many miners' rights have been issued in the district (say) for last year? 242 miners' rights.
2309. Any mineral licenses? Eleven.
2310. How many miners' rights have been issued this year up to the present? Eighty-four or eighty-five.
2311. Any mineral licenses this year? None. There were eleven last year and twenty-seven the year before.
2312. I suppose you find from the numbers of miners' rights issued that the number of miners is diminishing? Yes.
2313. Are there many residence arcas taken up under miners' rights? There are a good many under business licenses. I issued sixteen business licenses last year more than I did the year before.
2314. How many did you issue last year? Sixty-nine.
2315. What was the total revenue you received last year as Mining Registrar? I could not say without reference to the book.
2316. Is there any land in the district held under mineral lease? Yes, 180 acres.
2317. For what mineral? Tin, as described by the last witness. There was one application for 80 acres, one for 60, and one for 40, making in all 180.
2318. Those are the only mineral leases held in the district? Yes.
2319. Are you Registrar of Births? I am.
2320. How many births were registered last year? About 120.
2321. Do you know the number of deaths? I do not. The deaths were very much less than the births—probably about half.

Mr.
O. Roberts.
4 Feb., 1890.

J. Davoren,
Esq.
4 Feb., 1890.

- J. Davoren, Esq.
4 Feb., 1890.
2322. Can you say whether the births were greater last year than the year before? They were very much greater last year.
2323. Do you gather from that that the population is increasing? Yes, it is becoming more settled.
2324. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Were any of those who took out miners' rights new men? I could not say. I think that generally speaking they were taken out by old miners who were here. I have no doubt a great many more miners' rights would have been taken out had not the land been occupied so much by leases which had not been cancelled. Another objection miners have to taking up land on which registration has been obtained is that, according to a decision of Judge Forbes, if gold is obtained the proprietor who originally registered can come in and claim the ground.
2325. Have any miners applied for the right to mine on private property under the new Act? None have applied to me. In one case they applied to mine under a reserve, and their application was granted.

Mr. William James Cartwright, farmer and grazier, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. W. J. Cartwright.
4 Feb., 1890.
2326. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Mimosa, about 13 miles south from here.
2327. How much land do you hold? 2,371 acres, consisting of 1,706 acres conditional purchase and the remainder under conditional lease.
2328. How many acres have you under cultivation? 460.
2329. And I suppose you run sheep on the remainder? Yes.
2330. Is the whole of the land which you have under cultivation growing wheat? Yes. I have got some hay also.
2331. How many tons of hay did you get per acre? About 2½.
2332. Wheaten hay? Yes.
2333. How many bushels of wheat to the acre did you get? About 25.
2334. For how many years have you been cultivating this land? About seven years.
2335. And does it still continue to give you 25 bushels to the acre? It will average about 18 or 20.
2336. You find the yield fall off by continuously growing the same crop? Yes.
2337. Where do you send your wheat to? Old Junee.
2338. I suppose if this railway were constructed you would still send it to Old Junee? No, I would send it to Temora. I have to cart it 22 or 23 miles at present.
2339. What do you pay per bag for carting it? I cart with my own team, but if I had to pay, the freight to Junee would run from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 9d. per bag.
2340. And when you got to Junee you would have to pay extra railway freight to take it back to Cootamundra? Yes.
2341. Does your wheat go to Goulburn chiefly? Yes.
2342. You do not send any of it to Albury? No.
2343. Do you consign the wheat yourself or send it to agents in Cootamundra? I generally sell it through an agent in Cootamundra.
2344. How many acres have you under crop? 460.
2345. How many years have you been living on the land? Seven.
2346. And during that seven years you have cleared 460 acres? Yes.
2347. Are you continuing to extend your cultivation? Yes. I did not clear any this last year. I consider I have sufficient unless I have more convenient means of getting it to market.
2348. Is it your intention to bring more land under the plough if a railway is constructed? Yes.
2349. Have you any more land as good as that which you are at present cultivating? Yes, it is all fit for agriculture.
2350. Is the land in the district round about generally good land for agriculture? Yes, excellent.
2351. Are there many other farmers in the same neighbourhood? Yes, a good many.
2352. All cultivating? Yes.
2353. And do they all send their wheat to Junee? Yes.
2354. And it would be an advantage to them as well as to you to have the railway constructed, as it would bring them nearer to the market? Yes.
2355. Do you think the railway ought to come from Cootamundra rather than from Wallendbeen? Yes, I believe Cootamundra is the best route.
2356. What about taking the railway to Junee from Temora? It would suit me nicely, but for the welfare of the country I believe Cootamundra is the proper starting point.
2357. *Mr. Humphery.*] How many sheep have you? 2,200.
2358. And cattle? About nine head.
2359. Have you any objections to say what your means were when you came to the district seven years ago? Very fair.
2360. You had money when you came here? Yes.
2361. Are you better off now than when you came? Yes.
2362. What you have you have made here? Yes; some of it.
2363. Are your neighbours as prosperous as yourself? Yes.
2364. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Is your selection near Clear Hills station? About 12 miles from it.
2365. What distance are you from Temora? About 13 miles.
2366. And how far from Junee? About 22 miles.
2367. You obtain your stores from Temora now? From Cootamundra.
2368. Do they come by way of Temora? I get them chiefly now from Junee.
2369. I suppose your neighbours would, like yourself, patronise the railway if it were opened to Temora? Yes.

Mr. Christian Hansler, landed proprietor, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. C. Hansler.
4 Feb., 1890.
2370. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? Just outside Temora.
2371. Are you a landed proprietor? Yes.
2372. How many acres do you possess? About 15½.
2373. How many acres do you cultivate? I have got 4 acres under grapes, and about one more under fruit-trees.
2374. Have you made wine in the old country? Yes, and here also.
2375. What is your native country? Germany, 2376.

2376. On the Rhine? Close to the Rhine.

2377. Do you think the soil and climate of this locality is well adapted for wine-making? Particularly well adapted. I believe we can grow as good wine about Temora as can be grown in any other part of New South Wales. I proved it last year. I made some wine though the vineyard was started only about four years ago.

2378. How many gallons of wine did you make last year? The first year I lost a lot on account of the very dry season which kept me back, and the vines are not in full bearing yet. It will be another two or three years before they are in full bearing.

2379. I suppose when they are in full bearing the wine will be of a better quality? The wine is of good quality now. When the vineyard is in full bearing I expect to make about 500 gallons to the acre or a total of 2,000 gallons for 4 acres.

2380. Do you think that would be about the average production of the land in the district? Yes.

2381. Is that red wine or white wine? Both.

2382. What are the names of the wines? Muscat, port, claret, white Reising, and other kinds.

2383. Do you grow many table-grapes? Yes.

2384. And what other fruits do you grow? Apples, pears, peaches, plums, oranges, and all sorts of fruit.

2385. And all those fruits grow well? Yes, especially apples and plums.

2386. And you find you can grow oranges and apples in the same garden? Yes. I got a prize for oranges at the last Temora show.

2387. Is it not rather unusual for apples and oranges to grow together? I am not aware. I am not so well acquainted with the orchard as with the vineyard.

2388. So far, your orchard is thriving? Yes, doing well.

2389. And what do you reckon you would make out of an acre of fruit, leaving the grapes out of consideration? I reckon that, in pretty full bearing, they would bring in about £1 a tree.

2390. How many trees to the acre? About 70.

2391. That would be about £70 per acre? Yes. The trees would not yield that yet—not until they mature.

2392. Do you not think there is a very large area of land in this district from which wine could be made of good quality? Yes. I sold all my vine-cuttings to other people for planting.

2393. So that it is evident that wine culture is making progress? Yes.

2394. And you think, from your past experience, that it will be a success? I think so.

2395. And that it will be more profitable than wheat-growing? Yes.

2396. *Mr. Humphery.*] You are building a wine-cellar, are you not? Yes.

2397. Have you a wine-press? Yes.

2398. Is the wine-press I saw at your vineyard this morning the only one you have been using? Yes, that is quite sufficient. I could press with that for the whole of Temora.

2399. What quantity of wine did you make last year? About 100 gallons, in addition to the grapes I sold.

2400. Did you sell the wine? Yes, I sold it all.

2401. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Have you been in the wine districts of Victoria, near Rutherglen? Yes.

2402. Do you think that the soil here is equally as good for vine culture as the soil there? It is just as good.

2403. What do you estimate your profits per acre at? I estimate that, when in full bearing, the land will bring me in about £400 a year.

2404. Do you think you will clear £25 an acre? I should say so.

2405. You know that in Victoria the small farmers do that? Yes.

2406. And therefore, the small vignerons could do the same here? Yes.

2407. But I suppose it would very much conduce to the promotion of the industry if a large wine cellar were established with wine-presses? Yes.

2408. You think, from the way the people are taking it up, that it is likely to be a successful industry here? Yes.

WEDNESDAY, 5 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[*The Sectional Committee met at the Wallendbeen Court-house, Wallendbeen, at 7 p.m.*]

Present:—

HENRY COPELAND, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY. | EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Cootamundra to Temora.

James Gibb, Esq., pastoralist, sworn, and examined:—

2409. *Chairman.*] You are the proprietor of the Berthong Station? Yes.

2410. Are there many acres of conditionally purchased land on the station? There are a good many.

2411. Can you say how many? There are 53,000 acres, purchased and conditionally purchased.

2412. That which has not been conditionally purchased, I suppose, has been purchased by auction? Yes, and improvement purchase.

2413. How many acres have you under lease from the Crown? I have 11,858, but I do not think there is that quantity.

2414. You are paying for 11,858 acres under pastoral lease, but you do not think there is that quantity? Exactly.

2415. Is there any land on the station in the resumed area available for conditional purchase? Not at present.

2416. Is it open to be selected? Not yet; it is in reserves, but it is cut up.

2417. It has been surveyed for selection? Yes.

2418. In special areas? I do not know the size.

2419. About what proportion of land is fit for agriculture of the land that will be available on the resumed area? About one-fourth.

J. Gibb, Esq.

5 Feb., 1890.

- J. Gibb, Esq. 2420. And the remainder, I suppose, is good grazing land? No, it consists of ironbark ranges and granite ridges.
- 5 Feb., 1890. 2421. How many acres have you in the leasehold area? I think there are 6,252 acres of Crown land.
2422. Then there is an equal division? Nearly so.
2423. Can you say how many acres there are in reserves in the leasehold area? About 2,204 acres.
2424. Approximately, how many acres do you think are in the reserves? 2,204 acres. There are 960 acres in the one you came up to-day.
2425. Is that a water reserve? Yes.
2426. Has the reservation not been revoked? Not in the papers, but they sent a surveyor to cut it up.
2427. They have measured it preparatory to throwing it open? Yes.
2428. What proportion of that 960 acres is agricultural land? About one-half.
2429. What other reserves are there on the resumed area? There is another water reserve at the home-stead known as the Berthong Springs, and the ironbark forest reserves we passed through to-day.
2430. How many acres? About 700 acres in Berthong Springs.
2431. Are those springs permanent? Yes.
2432. And I suppose it would be desirable to retain some portion of that reserve? I have not the least doubt of it.
2433. Retain it as a water reserve for all time? For all time.
2434. There is no necessity to retain any of the 960 acres? No.
2435. Is that permanent water? No.
2436. What other reserves have you on the leasehold area? Travelling stock reserves.
2437. Is the travelling stock reserve continuous, or merely a remnant of a travelling stock reserve? It is not continuous, and not a remnant.
2438. In what direction does it go? No particular direction.
2439. Do you ever make use of it in sending your stock through? No. My paddocks go right out on to the road.
2440. Do you ever send your stock to the mountains? Yes, but not in that direction. This stock reserve goes north from my run, and when I send my stock to the mountains I send to the south.
2441. Then as far as you are concerned this travelling stock reserve is not required? Not required.
2442. Are you in the habit of sending your stock away to the mountain country in times of drought? Yes.
2443. Where do you send them to? I have got two runs on the mountains near Kiandra above Tumut.
2444. What are the names of the runs? Yarrangobilly North and Pinbeyan West.
2445. How long do you keep the stock there? Sometimes a year—all the winter if I am hard pushed at Berthong.
2446. In sending your stock there do you ever make use of the railway to Gundagai? No, I have not done so.
2447. Do you think that if this railway were constructed to Temora the graziers to the west of that place would be likely to make use of the railway to send their stock to the mountains? That would depend upon three things. First, it would depend upon the price of the journey.
2448. You know, I suppose, that there is a specially low rate for travelling stock? I would expect so. In the second place, the trucks as they are at present are not fit to send even fat stock away in. There ought to be at least four compartments in each truck. And thirdly, the Government ought to take into their hands the town commonages, fence them in, subdivide them into paddocks, and make a charge for travelling stock, so that they could rest and have feed.
2449. What is your opinion as to where the proposed railway from Temora should join the main Southern Line? I think it should join at Wallendbeen.
2450. Will you state concisely the reasons why you think it should connect at Wallendbeen in preference to Cootamundra? It will save the consuming public about 3s. a ton for every ton they consume, and there will be an additional haulage of close upon 10 miles backwards and forwards.
2451. Any other reason? It will open up a large tract of country.
2452. Do you think it would open up a larger tract of country than by connecting with Cootamundra? I cannot speak as to that. I have never surveyed that line.
2453. You know there are a great many selectors on the proposed line between Cootamundra and Temora, and westward of Temora? There is no doubt of that.
2454. And that the land office and other Government offices are at Cootamundra? I am aware of all that also.
2455. Do you not think it would be greatly to the convenience of all these people to be taken straight to the land agent's office, even although they had to pay a little extra in the way of haulage? No. I think there ought to be a land office in Temora.
2456. Then the people would be able to choose the shorter route? Yes. I can save from £1 to £2 per ton on my goods by purchasing them in Sydney and landing them in Wallendbeen.
2457. From £1 to £2 per ton? Yes; instead of buying from the merchants.
2458. But surely it does not cost from £1 to £2 a ton to take the goods on to Cootamundra from Wallendbeen? I am not talking about taking them on to Cootamundra. I say, that if I buy direct in Sydney, and take the goods home to my own place, instead of going to Young or Cootamundra I will save from £1 to £2 per ton.
2459. But if the railway went to Cootamundra you would still have the Sydney market open to you, just the same as you have at present? Certainly; but I am talking of the Temora people. Instead of having to go to Cootamundra to buy, they could buy direct in the head city of the Colony.
2460. But could they not buy direct all the same if the railway were taken to Cootamundra? Yes; and have to pay 3s. a ton extra for haulage.
2461. Do you think that, if a railway were brought to Wallendbeen, stores and Government offices would spring up, giving the same amount of accommodation to the people that is now obtainable at Cootamundra? I do not think for a moment that Government offices would spring up—not for a considerable time, at any rate. There will be other branch railways made in the course of time.
2462. Do you not think it would be a great advantage to the people about Temora and to the westward if the railway were to connect at Cootamundra, and join on direct with the Gundagai line, so that they might be able to send their stock on direct to the mountain country? No doubt it would.
2463. Can you point out any recommendation in favour of the Wallendbeen line, besides the fact that 9½ miles

9½ miles of haulage is saved by adopting the more direct route? You go through a splendid ironbark country, where there is timber suitable for sleepers and posts and rails, and you go north through Government land all the way to Yeo Yeo. J. Gibb, Esq.
5 Feb., 1890.

2464. But is that land open for selection? The reserves are not.

2465. Is there any land open for selection at the present time on that route? I am not aware that there is, but there will be.

2466. Do you think that the railway, by the suggested route to Wallendbeen, would traverse as much settlement as if it went by way of Cootamundra? A great deal more. There is the very finest land on Berthong, on Davidson's station, and also on Milong. The Milong farmers are within 8 miles of the flat before you enter the rough country. Instead of having to go 15 miles to Young, they would be within 8 miles of a platform. There are a very large number of selectors on Milong, and part of Davidson's.

2467. Do these lie north of the suggested route? Yes.

2468. Can you say how many selections have been taken up within a radius of (say) 10 miles on the northern side of the line from Wallendbeen to Stockinbingal? That I could not say. There are a very large number on Milong and Geraldra.

2469. What distance is that from the railway? About 8 miles, or 9 at the outside. Nine miles would bring you right in amongst them. No doubt some of them would be 10 miles distant.

2470. Are there more selections on the northern side of the line between Wallendbeen and Stockinbingal than there are on the southern side of the line? I will not say that. I think that south of the proposed Wallendbeen line the land is nearly all occupied by selectors.

2471. I suppose to a great proportion of those on the southern side of the line it would make very little difference whether they made use of the line to Wallendbeen or that to Cootamundra? It would make a difference of 1½d. a bushel to a great many of them. They would have to pay 6d. a bag freight either to Wallendbeen or Cootamundra.

2472. But they would have to pay something per bag to have it taken to any station;—there would not be a station alongside every selector's barn, they would have to pay something in any case? Undoubtedly so.

2473. How many selectors are there (say) within 7 miles of Wallendbeen, between Wallendbeen and Yeo Yeo? There are a large number, but I could not say accurately.

2474. Have you any idea how many selectors there are on the land between here and Yeo Yeo? There might be sixty.

2475. *Chairman.*] Sixty selections or sixty persons? Sixty selections. On some of them there are eight or ten people.

2476. *Mr. Humphery.*] Sixty selections occupied? Yes, sixty homesteads.

2477. How many of those would be within 7 miles of Wallendbeen? A good few of them.

2478. Can you say about how many? I would not undertake to say how many.

2479. What I wish to know is this: How many are there within 7 miles of Wallendbeen, and how many are there within 7 miles of Yeo Yeo? I would not attempt to answer the question with accuracy.

2480. Can you say how many selectors there are between 5 and 10 miles of Wallendbeen? The land is all occupied by selectors, but how many there are I cannot say.

2481. I want to know how many would be served by the existing line, and how many would be served at Yeo Yeo, where the proposed line goes to Cootamundra, and the suggested line to Wallendbeen? There might be twenty-five who would put their goods on that line.

2482. At Yeo Yeo? Yes.

2483. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] To what railway station do you send your wool? To Wallendbeen.

2484. How far are you distant from Wallendbeen? The shed is 9 miles away.

2485. And I presume you obtain all your stores by way of Wallendbeen? Yes.

2486. How many graziers are there between Wallendbeen and Stockinbingal? Only Mr. Davidson, myself, and the owners of Nubba Station.

2487. Nubba station is near the southern line, is it not? The southern line goes through a portion of it.

2488. Is there a platform on Nubba station? I believe so.

2489. Where is Mr. Davidson's station? Geraldra.

2490. How far is that from the southern line? 20 or 25 miles.

2491. Does Mr. Davidson send his wool into Wallendbeen? To Cootamundra I think.

2492. Then he would very likely be served by a station at Stockinbingal if one were established there? I should think so.

2493. How far would his woolshed be from Stockinbingal? About 2½ miles.

2494. The land we passed through to-day, coming from Stockinbingal to Wallendbeen, was in some places of a very superior quality, was it not? Yes, very good.

2495. How much of that land do you think would be open for settlement if the line were taken from Wallendbeen to Temora? It is impossible for me to say.

2496. Can you not give the Committee an approximate idea as to how much would be likely to be opened? I cannot say.

2497. Can you not form an idea as to how much land would be available for settlement? No, I cannot; I never bothered with any place but my own.

2498. Would not the reserve through which we passed be available for settlement? Undoubtedly; but I do not know the size of it.

2499. Are there many leasehold areas out there? I cannot say.

2500. Does the Geraldra leasehold area come in out there? I do not know that Mr. Davidson has any.

2501. How much resumed area have you yet in hand? The Government say about 5,606 acres.

2502. How much of this would be on the line of railway if it were constructed from Wallendbeen to Temora? The railway would go through the 960 acre water reserve and the ironbark forest reserves.

2503. Then the whole of these 5,606 acres would be available for settlement? Yes, if thrown open for selection.

2504. Not all the resumed area? No, the water reserves would not go. I do not think the Government would ever part with the main spring.

2504½. It would be necessary to retain the reserves on that resumed area? It would be necessary to retain that one.

2505. Can we say that there would be about 10,000 acres available for settlement between Wallendbeen and Stockinbingal? No.

Mr. Peter Sinclair, station manager, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. P. Sinclair.
5 Feb., 1890.
2506. *Chairman.*] You are manager of the Nubba Station? Yes.
2507. I presume that the question of the proposed railway from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo does not affect the Nubba Station very much? Not in the least.
2508. Because you are near enough to the main southern line? Yes, it runs through the station for about 4 miles.
2509. You have heard the evidence given by Mr. Gibb? Yes.
2510. Do you generally endorse that evidence? Yes, to a certain extent.
2511. Is there anything you would like to state to the Committee with reference to the proposed railway which you think ought to be brought out in evidence? The only thing is that if the railway went from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo it would open up a lot of country, whereas the land on the Cootamundra route is already opened up. The railway from Wallendbeen would get all the outside traffic from Milong, and the leasehold area on Berthong, I suppose, will be available some of these days.
2512. But a great proportion of the land to which you refer is already within a reasonable distance of the main southern line, is it not? Yes. But there are only 48,000 acres within the triangle altogether, and the people are mostly large holders. I should not think there were more than eighty altogether.
2513. Is there any part of Mr. Gibb's leasehold area 10 miles away from the Wallendbeen Railway Station? I think not.
2514. Then the whole of them would be within 10 miles? Yes.
2515. Some of them much nearer than 10 miles? Yes.
2516. Is there any statement you would wish to make to the Committee? No, there is nothing in addition to what has already been said by Mr. Gibb.
2517. You endorse generally what has been said by Mr. Gibb? Yes.*

Mr. James Drummond, sworn, and further examined:—

- Mr. J. Drummond.
5 Feb., 1890.
2518. *Chairman.*] Do you produce some statistics with reference to the quantity of wheat sent from the Wallendbeen Railway Station during the whole of last year and the first month of the present year; also the passenger traffic and the whole of the traffic inwards and outwards? Yes. The information is embraced in the following tabulated statements:—

COACHING, 1889.

Passengers.	Amount.	Horses, Carriages, and Dogs.		Parcels, &c.		Total.	
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		
January	171	67 17 1	0 1 11	4 16 0	72 15 0		
February	181	57 13 7	12 10 1	3 16 5	74 0 1		
March	155	48 8 7	5 9 2	4 5 11	58 3 8		
April	134	56 4 11	0 2 8	4 9 7	60 17 2		
May	113	38 19 10		6 2 8	45 2 6		
June	108	31 3 11	11 4 0	4 0 6	46 8 5		
July	84	35 17 3	0 0 6	4 19 3	40 17 0		
August	138	31 11 1	0 2 5	2 16 1	42 9 7		
September	114	61 0 8	16 9 7	4 2 1	81 12 4		
October	125	35 4 1	9 3 11	4 18 8	49 6 8		
November	139	54 17 10	0 5 6	5 19 8	60 3 0		
December	133	42 12 8	0 1 6	7 10 0	50 4 2		
	1,595	569 11 6	55 11 3	56 16 10	681 19 7		
1890.							
January	202	77 17 6	9 8 8	4 17 0	92 3 2		

INWARDS AND OUTWARDS TRAFFIC.

	Inwards.			Outwards.			Wool.		Wheat.
	t. c. q.	£ s. d.	t. c. q.	£ s. d.	Bales.	Bags.	t. c. q.		
1889.									
February	26 16 3	41 11 1	87 18 2	59 10 6	.....	.....	.....		25 19 0
March	38 4 2	78 11 6	79 6 1	46 9 3	.....	233	.....		7 8 2
April .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	69	.....		3 18 0
May	42 14 1	61 0 2	16 8 2	21 3 10	.....	38	.....		11 4 1
June	40 16 0	62 12 10	11 18 0	15 10 10	17	101	.....		18 16 2
July	20 19 3	34 18 4	37 4 0	16 0 9	.....	171	.....		13 1 1
August	35 17 2	59 17 3	23 10 0	9 7 10	.....	120	.....		6 3 3
September	28 11 3	43 10 4	64 19 2	119 6 11	226	79	.....		23 17 2
October	56 10 0	108 8 9	147 6 2	312 19 2	580	209	.....		23 14 4
November	28 7 2	92 19 9	222 12 2	539 17 4	918	206	.....		141 14 1
December	47 15 1	86 19 4	148 2 3	70 15 3	9	1,256	.....	
	366 13 1	570 9 4	839 6 2	1,211 9 8	1,750	2,482	.....		275 18 0
1890.									
January	38 13 2	46 5 0	1,155 17 2	425 8 0	6	9,991	.....		1,150 10 0

* NOTE (on revision): I omitted to state that the north-western line traffic from Blayney, &c., should also be considered, and, further, I feel certain if a trial survey were made, that the Yeo Yeo would be a much easier line for rolling-stock than the present line from Wallendbeen to Cootamundra, and would save the extra 9½ miles' haulage on both routes, which would be a big item in a few years.

2519. What ground have you for believing that these figures are absolutely reliable? I obtained them from the station-master, and have every reason for believing that they are correct.
 2520. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do those figures refer to the land south of the main southern line as well as north? They refer to the whole of the Wallendbeen railway traffic. I also furnish the Committee with the following particulars of holdings on and near the proposed route of the Temora railway, starting from Wallendbeen as far as Yeo Yeo. I have not been able to fill up the particulars under some of the headings.

Mr. J. Drummond.
 5 Feb., 1890.

Name of Owner	Distance from proposed route	Distance from Wallendbeen Station	Area of Holding	Area under crop	Number of bushels.
—Price	On the route	Adjoining station	acres.	acres.	
John Izzard	do	1 mile	520	..	.....
William Wilkins	do	1½ mile	175	..	.....
Portion of Nubba Estate	do		40	..	.....
James Gibb and Son	6 miles	9 miles		388	5,820
H. E. Thorne	1½ mile	5 miles	640	260	5,200
G. Troy	2½ miles	5 miles	2,000	250	4,400
J. Marnane	1 mile	6 miles	960	200	4,500
J. Nettleton	2½ miles	4 miles	240	130	2,700
T. Johnstone	2½ miles	4 miles	200	70	1,400
J. J. Cartwright	2½ miles	3 miles	180	100	2,000
T. Máning	2 miles	6 miles		..	.....
S. Keith	3 miles	4 miles		..	.....
Mutch Bros.	2 miles	7 miles		130	.....
G. Strangway	1¾ mile	6 miles		..	.....
G. Ball	2 miles		320	100	.....
E. J. Forsyth	2½ miles			..	.....
M. K. Foisyth	2½ miles			..	.....
J. O. Dare	2½ miles			..	.....
James Mackay	½ mile			..	.....
Adam Mackay	1½ mile			..	.....
W. James	2 miles			..	.....
Thos. Mackay	½ mile			..	.....
— Maguire	2 miles			..	.....
— Sibras	¼ mile			..	.....
— Davidson	Geraldra Estate here running through it.				

Mr. Patrick Kilfoyle, Police Constable, sworn, and examined :—

2521. *Chairman.*] You are the resident constable at Wallendbeen? Yes.
 2522. How many years have you been here? Three.
 2523. I suppose you know the district very well? Yes.
 2524. You went over with Mr. Surveyor Hutchison to examine the proposed railway route from Wallend-
 been to Yeo Yeo? Yes.
 2525. Do you think Mr. Hutchison took a reasonable amount of trouble in ascertaining the best route obtainable? Yes, I think he did.
 2526. You think that the route selected is the best that could be obtained? Yes.
 2527. The shortest and the best from an engineering point of view? Yes.
 2528. We do not know of any better way of getting over the range? No.
 2529. Neither a shorter way nor a better way from a gradient point of view? No.
 2530. Have you collected any statistics with reference to Wallendbeen during the last year or the present year? Yes, I collected the stock and crop returns.
 2531. Within what radius of Wallendbeen? About 10 miles.
 2532. East, west, north, and south? No; 10 miles south, about 6 miles east, and 6 miles west, and about 9 miles north.
 2533. Within those distances of Wallendbeen, what returns can you give the Committee? Last year there were 6,481 acres under wheat.
 2534. How many holdings? Forty-five under wheat; other crops, nine holdings; total, fifty-four holdings.
 2535. Have they any other crops besides wheat? Yes About 3,241 acres would be under other crops.
 2536. Of what did the other crops consist? Corn and hay—oaten hay and wheaten hay.
 2537. Any root crops—carrots or turnips? Yes, and cabbages and potatoes.
 2538. Any large area of potatoes? No, not very large.
 2539. Then I suppose the whole of the cultivation is practically comprised in wheat crops and hay crops, consisting of wheaten and oaten hay? Yes, and corn.
 2540. Do you think the people to whom you have referred suffer any practical inconvenience from the want of a railway at the present time? The railway would not be convenient to the farmers out at Cullingar.
 2541. What distance is that from Wallendbeen? To the Dividing Range it is about 9 miles.
 2542. Then if a railway were constructed from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo, it would be an advantage to those selectors? No; it would only be an advantage to six of the Cullingar farmers who have selections at Stockinbingal.
 2543. How many of them are there at Cullingar? About forty.
 2544. But I thought you were only giving the statistics with reference to some forty-five? Well, I suppose there would be about forty at Cullingar, Biggan, Collingwood, and Two-mile Creek.
 2545. Do they lie south of the proposed railway from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo? Yes, all of them.
 2546. Would not those people be within a reasonable distance from the railway from Yeo Yeo to Cootamundra? They are within reasonable distance from Wallendbeen Railway Station and Nubba siding at the present time.
 2547. About how many miles distant? The most distant is about 9 miles away.
 2548. Then how far would they be away from the railway if it were constructed from Yeo Yeo to Cootamundra? About the same.

Mr. P. Kilfoyle.
 5 Feb., 1890.

Mr.
P Kilfoyle.
5 Feb., 1890

2549. Suppose the railway were constructed from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo, what distance would there be from that? It would make no difference; they are lying away back. The nearest point would be the main line.
2550. Then they would not be benefited in any way by the construction of a railway from Wallendbeen to Temora? No.
2551. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You gave the number of selectors within your district as fifty-four? Yes.
2552. Your district goes to the south, to the north, and to the east of Wallendbeen, as well as to the west? Yes.
2553. How many of these fifty-four selectors would lie upon the line of railway from Wallendbeen to Stockinbingal, if it were constructed? About thirteen; but they are not all in my district. They are within about a couple of miles of the proposed railway from Wallendbeen to Yeo Yeo.
2554. Then the majority of the fifty-four selectors to whom you refer do not reside on the line of route at all? No.
2555. But outside of your district there are a few other selectors who would be served by the line of railway? Yes.
2556. How many outside of your district? I should think from fifty to sixty.
2557. How far would they be away from the proposed line of railway? Some of them would be 7 miles away.
2558. In what locality are these selectors to be found? To the right of the route we passed this afternoon.
2559. That would be to the north of the proposed line of railway from Wallendbeen to Temora? No, to the west.
2560. Will you give the names of the localities? Morrison's Hill, Congo, and Stockinbingal.
2561. Those are the principal localities where these selectors reside? Yes.
2562. And how far away from Wallendbeen are the fifty or sixty selectors who reside outside your district? The nearest of them is about 4 miles away from the Wallendbeen station.
2563. Would the majority of the sixty outside of your district be within 10 miles of the Wallendbeen station? Yes.

Mr. William Hall Matthews, sworn, and further examined:—

Mr. W. H.
Matthews.
5 Feb., 1890.

2564. *Chairman.*] Do you wish to supplement your evidence by a statement showing the amount of agricultural machinery that has been purchased from South Australia and Victoria, and which has come via Albury by the railway to Cootamundra during the years 1887, 1888, and 1889? Yes. The amount of machinery that my firm has imported to Cootamundra represents 93 strippers, 45 winnowers, 28 ploughs, 6 wool-presses, 2 horse-powers, 5 chaff-cutters, and 1 travelling chaff-cutter, making a total of 128 tons.
2565. Where did you dispose of these? A large proportion of them were sent to Temora.
2566. About what proportion? About a third.
2567. And where have the other two-thirds been disposed of? In the surrounding districts between Temora, and in the Cootamundra district generally.
2568. Then if Temora were connected with the Southern Railway at Wallendbeen, it would be necessary for these goods to be forwarded on the main line as far as Wallendbeen, instead of only to Cootamundra, as at present? Yes.
2569. And you think it would be better, from that point of view, that the railway should run between Temora and Cootamundra? I do.
2570. Do you not get a number of machines from Sydney also? Not as large a proportion as that. The number is small in proportion.
2571. Still you do get some? Yes.
2572. On the other hand, they would have to pay an extra haulage by being sent to Cootamundra instead of to Wallendbeen? Yes.
2573. The figures you have given show the machinery imported from South Australia and Victoria by your firm alone, and I believe there are three other firms in Cootamundra in the same line of business? Yes.

1890.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

COOTAMUNDRA TO TEMORA RAILWAY BILL.
(MESSAGE No. 17.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 2 July, 1890.

By Deputation from the Governor,
ALFRED STEPHEN,
Lieutenant-Governor.

Message No. 17.

In accordance with the provisions contained in the 54th section of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends, for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly, the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses in connection with a Bill to sanction the construction of a line of railway from Cootamundra to Temora.

Government House,
Sydney, 25th June, 1890.

1890.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

SECOND REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDICES, AND PLANS,
TO WHICH IS ATTACHED THE FIRST REPORT, WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,
APPENDICES, AND PLANS,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

TO CONNECT THE

NORTH SHORE RAILWAY WITH PORT JACKSON
AT MILSON'S POINT.

Presented to Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act,
51 Vic. No. 37, section 8.

SYDNEY: CHARLES POTTER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable JOHN LACKEY, Vice-Chairman.
 The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN.
 The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
 The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
 The Honorable GEORGE HENRY COX.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esquire, Chairman.
 JACOB GARRARD, Esquire.
 HENRY COPELAND, Esquire.
 JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esquire.
 WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esquire.
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esquire.
 *JOHN HURLEY, Esquire.
 CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esquire.
 *WILLIAM M'COURT, Esquire.

[*Mr. John Hurley's seat as a Member of the Committee became vacant, by reason of his resignation from the Legislative Assembly, on July 3, and Mr. William M'Court was appointed to fill the vacancy on July 16, 1890.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY TO CONNECT THE NORTH SHORE RAILWAY WITH PORT JACKSON, AT MILSON'S POINT.

SECOND REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, and the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, to whom was remitted for further consideration and report "the expediency of constructing a line of railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson at Milson's Point," have, after further inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the railway should be constructed as suggested in an amended plan showing a maximum grade of 1 in 50; and, in accordance with the provision of sub-section IV, of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

1. The proposed railway, the construction of which the Committee, in their Report of 11 December, 1889, declared they did not consider to be expedient, was remitted to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, for further consideration and report, on the motion of Mr. Bruce Smith:—

Reason for the further inquiry into the proposed railway.

"That it is expedient that the Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works upon a proposed line of railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson at Milson's Point be remitted to the said Committee for its further consideration and report, for the following reason:—That, since the said report was made, fresh evidence concerning the commercial value of the said line of railway has been obtained, which was not before the said Committee when that report was completed."

2. A description of the railway, with copies of the departmental plans, will be found with the last Report of the Committee, attached to this Report. Shortly stated, the proposed line, as it was before the Committee in their first inquiry, represents an extension of 2 miles and 21 chains of the North Shore Railway from the present terminal point of that railway at Gore Hill, or Crow's Nest, to Milson's Point, the estimated cost of construction, including land and compensation, being £262,000. But in the present inquiry, Mr. Deane, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, has suggested a route which will make the extension longer by 30 chains than that originally proposed, and increase the cost of construction by £16,000, but with a reduction in the total estimated cost to £231,156, and will reduce the grade to 1 in 50, that in the original proposal being 1 in 40.

Description of the proposed railway.

3. A further suggestion has been made with a view to reducing the cost of the proposed railway by not taking the line as far as Milson's Point. This suggestion is that the passenger station at the harbour terminus of the line should be placed near the head of Lavender Bay, on the east side, the goods traffic (if any) to be dealt with either by means of goods sidings at the rear of the passenger station, or carried on to Neutral Bay or Cremorne.

Suggested modification of the proposal.

4. Two other suggestions of importance, involving an alteration in the original proposal as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, have been made during the course of the Committee's inquiry by two of the witnesses. The first is from Mr. Arthur Samuel Hamand, and it proposes that, instead of extending the railway to Milson's Point by the route recommended in either the original

Other suggestions before the Committee.

original proposal of the Government or the amended proposal put forward by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, the line should be taken round by Middle Harbour, passing close to the site of the suspension bridge in course of erection by the North Sydney Tramway and Investment Company, and to the locality of Willoughby Falls, and then running to Milson's Point, past the heads of Neutral Bay and Careening Cove, and along the east side of Lavender Bay. The other suggestion will be found in the evidence of Mr. Walter Liberty Vernon. This has not been before the Committee with the details necessary for its full consideration, and it has not therefore engaged their attention to the extent noticeable in connection with the suggestions from Mr. Deane and Mr. Hamand.

Method of the
Committee's
inquiry.

5. The Committee have examined in their second inquiry a large number of witnesses, principally on the subject of a goods traffic, that being the question upon which the proposal to connect the North Shore Railway with Milson's Point was remitted to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, and also, in view of the suggestions for improvement upon the original proposal, with respect to the question of route. In addition to this, some evidence has been taken as to ferry accommodation, and on the question generally. As in the first inquiry evidence was invited and sought from all sides, and several visits of inspection were made by the Committee to North Shore in order that they might acquaint themselves as far as possible, by personal observation, with the apparent advantages or disadvantages that might be expected from adopting one or other of the routes proposed. Furthermore, being of opinion that Mr. Hamand's suggestion was worth careful consideration, and in order that it might be thoroughly tested, they invited the Railway Commissioners to express an opinion upon it, and Mr. Foxlee, M. Inst. C.E., Deputy Engineer for Existing Lines, made a careful inspection of it and of the Government proposal, and gave evidence before the Committee respecting them.

General
nature of the
evidence.

6. The general nature of the evidence given before the Committee in the present inquiry, while differing from that of the evidence in the first inquiry, by reason of new matter being introduced, is not on some essential points dissimilar from that of the evidence previously given. Mr. Joseph Barling, Under Secretary for Public Works, who appeared as a witness to explain the circumstances under which the proposed railway was referred back to the Committee for further consideration and report, stated that towards the close of the last investigation it came to the knowledge of the Department that in all probability a considerable goods traffic would arise on the railway, and it was thought it could be shown that there was a promise of considerable traffic in wool, meat, timber, and other merchandise, which, it was anticipated, could be dealt with in Lavender Bay, or by a branch line along the frontage of the harbour, between Milson's Point and Admiralty House. It might also, he said, be reasonably anticipated that depôts would arise for sending station supplies to all the northern districts, a plan that would tend to relieve the present congested street traffic to Darling Harbour. A coal traffic, should such spring up from the districts lying between Newcastle and Sydney, could be provided for by a branch line to Cremorne; and to meet requirements connected with the construction in the future of a bridge across the harbour, another branch line could be taken from a point north of Lavender Bay to reach M'Mahon's or Blue's Point. The question of the construction of this bridge, however, the Department considered was entirely distinct from that of extending the North Shore Railway to the waters of the harbour. Mr. Deane, Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, explained how a goods traffic could be accommodated along the eastern side of Lavender Bay, from the head of the bay downwards for a certain distance, the length of frontage available for this traffic being 1,560 feet. The passenger traffic, in his opinion, should be brought down to Milson's Point, where there would be about 800 feet of frontage that could be used for it. By this plan the passenger line would be carried at the back of the goods line, and brought down between the goods sidings and the high ground to the wharf at the end of the goods sidings, where the platforms and station would be. Supposing Lavender Bay were found not to provide sufficient accommodation for a very large goods traffic and for coal traffic, the line could be extended round the western side of Lavender Bay, or towards Kirribilli Point, Neutral Bay, or Cremorne. Access to the proposed goods station at Lavender Bay could be obtained by a road with a gradient of 1 in 18, commencing

commencing at Willoughby-street, near the Congregational Church. Another plan which might be adopted, if thought desirable, was to have the passenger station near the head of Lavender Bay, on the eastern side, and carry the goods traffic behind the passenger traffic to Milson's Point, or the line for goods traffic could be pushed on from Lavender Bay to Neutral Bay or Cremorne. The most important matter was to provide for the passenger traffic, and by placing the passenger station at Lavender Bay the question of providing for a goods traffic might be determined apart from the question of passenger traffic. As to the extension of the railway from its present terminus he advocated his amended proposal, which would make the line somewhat longer than that referred by the Legislative Assembly to the Committee, and increase its cost, but would reduce its grade to the ruling gradient between Hornsby or Pearce's Corner and the present terminal station at Crow's Nest. Evidence was given by Mr. C. W. Darley, Engineer-in-Chief for Harbours and Rivers, with regard to the manner in which a steam-ferry service for passengers could be carried on in connection with the railway, and, to some extent, on other matters connected with the proposed line. Captain John Jackson, Manager of Public Wharves, was examined as to the space afforded by Lavender Bay for the accommodation of shipping, the advantages or otherwise of carrying on a shipping trade at wharves erected near Kirribilli Point, and as to wharfage accommodation and facilities for the shipment of goods in the harbour generally. Mr. John Henry Geddes, wool-broker, and Mr. William Frederick Buchanan, pastoralist, appeared before the Committee to explain what was being done by J. H. Geddes & Co., the Pastoralists' Association (Limited), in the erection of warehouses near Kirribilli Point for the carrying on of a business in the receipt and shipment of wool, frozen meat, and general pastoral and agricultural produce, and to advocate the extension of the railway to Kirribilli Point. Mr. John Duff, Chief Inspector of Forests, gave evidence respecting the timber in districts from which timber supplies might be sent along the North Shore Railway, and Mr. T. W. E. David, Geological Surveyor, Department of Mines, with reference to coal deposits between Gosford and Newcastle. Mr. Hugh M'Lachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, and Mr. David Kirkcaldie, Chief Traffic Manager, Railway Department, were examined on the subject of a goods traffic, and on the general proposal for the extension of the railway, care being taken in the examination of Mr. M'Lachlan, who appeared for the Railway Commissioners, to ascertain whether, since the first inquiry of the Committee, there had been any change in the opinions of the Commissioners on any important point in relation to the railway. Two witnesses—Mr. William Bethel Sharp, chairman, and Mr. Henry E. Stokes, member, of the Chamber of Commerce, Newcastle—came before the Committee in the interests of Newcastle, as against any diversion of trade from Newcastle to North Shore. Mr. Arthur Samuel Hamand and Mr. Walter Liberty Vernon submitted alternative routes for the proposed railway; and upon the question generally, or upon the schemes submitted by Mr. Hamand and Mr. Vernon, more particularly that by Mr. Hamand, there were examined by the Committee,—Mr. A. H. Collings, Manager of the Gore Hill Brickworks, St. Leonards; Captain Benjamin Jenkins, member of the Marine Board; Mr. George Pile, auctioneer; Mr. Charles Cyrus Bullock, surveyor; Mr. Dugald Thomson; Mr. Thomas Allright Dibbs, General Manager, Commercial Banking Company, Sydney; Mr. Charles Augustus Goodchap, M.P.; Mr. William Theodore Foxlee, M. Inst. C.E., Deputy Engineer for Existing Lines, Railway Department; and Mr. Charles Billyard. Mr. C. A. Goodchap gave evidence against the construction of the railway, on the grounds that it would be an unreasonable and extravagant policy to extend the line from its present terminus to Milson's Point, or to any other point at the present time; and that the extension of the tramway from its terminus to the railway station at St. Leonards, the present terminus of the North Shore Railway, would meet all the just requirements of the case. The connection of the existing tramway with the railway would be, in his opinion, sufficient for the probable traffic for "a great number of years"; and in expressing that opinion he did not lose sight of the favourable offer of the executors of the Berry Estate with regard to land required from that estate for the extension of the railway. He did not think the passenger traffic would be large, and as to the question of a goods traffic he considered it very improbable there would be a general traffic in either wool, coal, or other produce, while, in the case of goods for local consumption, they could be distributed much better from the present terminus than from Milson's Point, the present terminus being more central.

Question of
a goods traffic.

7. The question of a goods traffic on the proposed railway, being that upon which the proposal to construct the railway was remitted to the Committee, became the most important in the Committee's inquiry. Mr. Barling, Under Secretary for Public Works, gave no detailed evidence on the subject. Questioned as to the evidence he gave at the first inquiry he said that when he was examined on that occasion the subject of a goods traffic had not been sufficiently considered, and such traffic was not looked upon as at all likely. Details as to the probability of a goods traffic he left to other witnesses. Mr. Deane, when before the Committee in their first inquiry, expressed very decided opinions against a goods traffic on the railway, but in this inquiry was prepared to give evidence only on the engineering question of how provision could be made for dealing with goods. The principal witness in this inquiry, with respect to a goods traffic, was Mr. J. H. Geddes. Shortly after the adoption by the Committee of their First Report a letter was received from the Under Secretary for Public Works asking the Committee to delay reporting to Parliament in order that the Department of Public Works might be enabled to submit further evidence with reference to a goods traffic on the line; that further evidence being a statement from Mr. J. H. Geddes, that the company with which he was connected intended to erect wool stores near Kirribilli Point, and carry on a wool and general produce business, which should bring a considerable traffic to the proposed railway. The Committee did not feel justified in reopening the first inquiry to hear this evidence, and the desire that it should be heard formed the basis upon which the Minister for Works had the proposal to construct the railway remitted by the Legislative Assembly to the Committee for further consideration and report. Mr. Geddes was examined in the present inquiry immediately after the departmental witnesses, and he described the intentions of his company in detail. He stated that the Pastoralists' Association, which had been formed with a view to a combination among wool-growers for reducing the charges associated with the sales of wool, produce, &c., and for the storage and shipment of frozen meat, and which already numbered 118 pastoralists, representing 31,000 bales of wool, intended to erect a warehouse near Kirribilli Point for the carrying on of a large business. It was anticipated that their arrangements would result in the receipt of a constantly increasing quantity of wool and other produce, and as special provision would be made for the storage and shipment of frozen meat, and the northern pastures were amongst the best in the Colony for fattening purposes, it was considered that there would be a large frozen meat export. While this was expected at Kirribilli Point, it was considered, Mr. Geddes went on to say, that the natural effect of the construction of the proposed railway would be the gradual creation of an enormous goods depôt for the supply of all the northern districts, the diversion of sufficient of the wool traffic at present carried on at Darling Harbour to relieve the great congestion there, and an improvement in the city street traffic now greatly overcrowded by the conveyance of wool and produce to the city warehouses. To enable the Pastoralists' Association to carry on their business according to these intentions it would be necessary to extend the proposed railway to Kirribilli Point, but if extended only to Milson's Point the Association would use it. The warehouse to be erected by the Association would cost, Mr. Geddes stated, £60,000, but for the present only a section of it was to be built, the cost of this to be £20,000. Mr. W. F. Buchanan, a shareholder and director in the Association, was also examined, but his evidence, while generally supporting that of Mr. Geddes, did not give any new information of importance. Following these witnesses upon the subject of a goods traffic there were Mr. H. M'Lachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, and Mr. D. Kirkcaldie, Chief Traffic Manager, Railway Department; and both these gentlemen gave evidence showing that the Railway Department does not anticipate any appreciable goods traffic on the proposed line. In his evidence in the first inquiry Mr. M'Lachlan stated that the railway to Milson's Point would not answer for general goods traffic,—that was for Sydney goods traffic, and he had no reason in the present inquiry to alter that opinion. Nor had the Railway Commissioners changed their views materially from those expressed in the first inquiry. They had noticed, he said, that one or two wool companies, and one in particular—perhaps attracted by the prospect of getting cheaper land at North Shore—were building stores there, and, no doubt, they would in their own interest get their wool consigned to the local station; but the Commissioners did not think that the general bulk of the traffic would be affected, and they did not count upon there
being

being any great goods traffic on the line. If wool were carried to Milson's Point the carriage rate would be the same as that to Darling Harbour, but for produce there would be a difference of 6d. or 7d. a ton in favour of Milson's Point. The Commissioners desired, however, he went on to point out, to concentrate the traffic at Darling Harbour, as it was cheaper to work it that way, only one staff being required. As for coal traffic, it would not be possible to reduce to any appreciable extent the present rates for the carriage of coal, and the railway to Milson's Point need not be expected to earn anything by a coal traffic unless coal-mines were opened up about Gosford. There would probably be a traffic in agricultural produce from the north for the local market at North Shore, but it would not be very remunerative to the Department, and what was conveyed by the Milson's Point railway would be taken from the railway to Darling Harbour. The proposed line, if constructed, would have to depend for its earnings almost entirely upon the passenger traffic and the local goods traffic. Mr. McLachlan also expressed the opinion that, with regard to the practice of the Railway Department of delivering wool from the railway trucks at Darling Harbour to the warehouses free of charge, if the same practice were adopted with the Pastoralists' Association, at Kirribilli Point, it would be cheaper to lighter their wool from Darling Harbour than to cart it from Milson's Point or Lavender Bay. Mr. Kirkcaldie was generally of the same opinion as Mr. McLachlan with regard to a goods traffic. He did not think the extension of the railway to Milson's Point would in any way affect the working of the goods traffic from the far north, as when arrangements which were being carried out at Darling Harbour were completed there would be room there for all the waterside goods traffic, and in that case the Railway Department would rather not have another wharf on the north side of Port Jackson. According to present arrangements wool would not be delivered from the railway to the warehouse of the Pastoralists' Association at Kirribilli Point free of charge, and if it should be decided to give the North Shore warehouse this advantage, and the quantity of wool consigned to the warehouse were large, it might be cheaper to deliver it from Darling Harbour by punt than from Milson's Point by dray. It would not pay to extend the railway from Milson's Point merely to deliver produce to the store, unless there were a very large quantity. He did not anticipate any coal or timber traffic on the proposed railway, except for local purposes. People sending goods from the north would save 7 miles in distance by consigning them to Milson's Point instead of to Darling Harbour, but he did not think that advantage would be a sufficient inducement to those forwarding the goods to consign them to North Shore as it was not likely they would be carried at a cheaper rate. As for the shipment of produce received by the railway, up to the present, though wool and, to some extent, wheat, hay, chaff, maize, and timber had come to Sydney from places beyond Newcastle, only wool had been shipped; none of the other produce had been for export. The statement by the Under Secretary for Public Works as to the probability of a considerable goods traffic on the proposed railway in wool, meat, timber, and other merchandise he could not endorse. He also stated that the great source of revenue on the line would be the passenger traffic, that such traffic was not there at present, and that the passenger traffic alone on the line would not be sufficient to pay the ordinary expenses for a very long time to come, but that the line would pretty well develop as far as suburban traffic was concerned. Some other witnesses gave evidence with respect to a goods traffic, but, with the exception of a detailed statement from the manager of the Gore Hill Brickworks as to the probable revenue to the railway from the carriage of bricks, it did not differ materially from what was placed before the Committee in the first inquiry.

8. The amended proposal of the Acting Engineer-in-Chief, already mentioned, will be found represented by a dotted line on Plan I published with this Report. The route has not been surveyed, but cross levels have been taken for the purpose of testing it, and the line has been found practicable. By adopting it the level of the wharf at the head of Lavender Bay cannot be reached, as it could with a grade of 1 in 40, but the better grade is regarded as more generally advantageous, especially as it will keep the grade the same throughout the distance from Milson's Point to Hornsby. The cost of the amended proposal, for works alone, would be £143,000, as against £127,000, the estimated cost of construction, exclusive of land and compensation, in the original proposal. The total length of the amended line, as shown upon the plan, would be about 2 miles 51 chains, as compared with

The proposed line with a grade of 1 in 50.

2 miles 21 chains; but with regard to this Mr. Deane mentions that the extra length is not absolutely necessary to allow of the improvement in grade, for while looking into the matter he thought it desirable to make better provision for wayside stations at Bay-road, and possibly at Edwards-road. On the original line there is not very much allowed for better grades just where the train would have to stop, but in grading the amended line longer stretches of easy grades were provided in order that the trains might be able to start and stop properly.

The proposal
to stop at
Lavender
Bay.

9. In his first examination in the present inquiry the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways was questioned whether the terminus on the proposed extension could be made at the head of Lavender Bay, and the line carried on from there to Neutral Bay and Cremorne; and he did not see how it could be done. But on a subsequent occasion he explained that further consideration had shown him that the passenger station might be placed near the head of the bay, leaving Milson's Point for goods, or sending the goods on to Cremorne, where $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile of good water frontage was available. This plan would admit of the goods terminus being for the present left out of consideration, as it could be determined after the necessary provision had been made for passenger accommodation, and by adopting it a saving in cost would be effected to the extent of about £52,000—£10,000 in works, and £42,760 in the cost of land which, by extending the line to Milson's Point, would have to be resumed. Access to the passenger station at Lavender Bay could be obtained, Mr. Deane explained, by the construction of a branch tram-line about 1,000 feet in length, from Alfred-street, at a cost of about £5,000; or there could be a direct steam-ferry service between the site of the station at the head of the bay and the Circular Quay. The saving in cost of land by not making the passenger terminus at Milson's Point would be effected only if goods were sent on to Cremorne; if they were sent on to Milson's Point land in the vicinity of the Point would have to be resumed. According to an estimate made by the Land Valuer about £25,000 worth of land would have to be resumed if the line were taken on from Lavender Bay to Cremorne, but if after resumption it were found the Government did not require some portion of this land, it could, Mr. Deane considered, be sold for a sum which would cover the cost of the improvements that would be made in the levelling of ground and the erection of platforms and wharves. The additional length of line by going to Cremorne from Lavender Bay would be $1\frac{3}{4}$ mile, and the extra cost, exclusive of land resumption, £90,000. A comparison as to the cost between the Milson's Point and Lavender Bay-Cremorne proposals, Mr. Deane stated as follows:—"The cost of the works included in the estimate for a line to Milson's Point from the junction at the head of Lavender Bay would be £31,000, and the cost of resuming land along the eastern shore of Lavender Bay, as far as the Point, would be £67,760, making a total of £98,760. Then the cost of taking a line to Lavender Bay, with a passenger terminus there, and allowing the goods traffic to go on to the western side of Cremorne, would be: For the passenger station, £21,000; for the line to Cremorne, £90,000; for land in Lavender Bay, £25,000; and for land between Lavender Bay and Cremorne, according to the Land Valuer's estimate, £22,830; making a total of £158,830." Of the two proposals he favoured taking the passenger traffic to Milson's Point. To his mind it appeared desirable to resume the frontage at Milson's Point, although it appeared to be somewhat costly—it would be useful at some future time; while if the resumption of land stopped short at Lavender Bay, and an extension towards Kirribilli Point were afterwards required, it could not be carried out except at a large expenditure.

Mr. Hamand's
scheme.

10. The scheme suggested to the Committee by Mr. A. S. Hamand was recommended by him on the general grounds that it would provide better accommodation for the district; it would save 2 miles of the route to Cremorne; its maximum grade would be 1 in 70, and might, if wished, be made generally 1 in 80; it would permit of Middle Harbour being opened up by steamer in connection with the railway; and it might be made to form the first 2 miles of a railway to Manly. In an interesting statement supplied to the Committee, and which will be found published as an appendix, the line he recommends is described as follows:—Commencing at the Milson's Point end, near the steamer pier, which the platforms would adjoin, the railway by this route would pass for three furlongs from the Point over land now covered with water and necessary to reclaim in Lavender Bay, the frontage to that bay from Milson's

Milson's Point to where the line would leave the bay to pass into a tunnel under Alfred-street, to be resumed, and the surplus land so resumed to be available for re-sale. A length of 600 feet adjoining Milson's Point would be retained for railway wharf purposes and local traffic. From the tunnel under Alfred-street the line would come out into the valley at the head of Careening Cove, passing under M'Dougal-street and High-street. Between these two streets would be an embankment, on which would be placed a passenger station for the accommodation of the district between Walker-street and Neutral Bay. Thence the line would proceed by tunnel under the eastern end of Whaling-road, and then, emerging, would follow a rising contour round the western side of the head of Neutral Bay, crossing two or three minor roads, and then passing under William-street, and occupying the site of the lower half of Alfred-street until it turned at right angles to the east, which part of Alfred-street would be diverted. Bent-street would be slightly diverted, and passed by bridge over the line. From Bent-street the line would continue along the valley until it entered a tunnel through the ridge. Between Bent-street and the tunnel would be a goods and passenger station, which would serve, on the west side of the line, the district lying between Berry-street, Miller-street, and Falcon-street, and on the eastern side of the line between Military-road, Shell Cove, and Neutral Bay. On the north side of the ridge the line would emerge in the valley between Grasmere-road and Cammeray-road, with a station near Willoughby Falls, on the land now occupied by Chinese market-gardens. The station here would be for goods and passengers, accommodating the district between Falcon-street, Miller-street, and the south arm of Long Bay. It would also be available for pleasure traffic on Middle Harbour. Leaving this station the line would proceed by bridge under Cammeray-road; thence skirting the slopes overlooking the northern arm of Long Bay, and passing under the northern extremity of Miller-street by a bridge. Here there would be a station for goods and passengers. From Miller-street the line would proceed with easy work to the North Sydney-road, which the railway would pass under by a bridge, and here another station is proposed to accommodate the district around. Then from the North Sydney-road the line would proceed to join the completed railway, the total length of line to be constructed being a little over 4 miles. The sharpest curve in the scheme is 12 chains radius, and the steepest grade 1 in 70. The disadvantages from adopting this proposal would be that the extension would be something more than 1 mile longer than the Government proposal, and the cost would be greater, the estimate of cost, including land, being £350,000. Some compensation would, however, be gained by increased speed of trains up the easier grade. The reasons in support of the proposal, and the information obtained by the Committee in a personal inspection of the route, led them to think the scheme was worth careful consideration; but after the plans submitted by Mr. Hamand and the route of his proposed line had been critically examined by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways and the Deputy Engineer for Existing Lines, and those officers had given evidence on the subject, the Committee could not but come to the conclusion that beneficial as Mr. Hamand's scheme undoubtedly would be in some respects, it was not, bearing in mind all the circumstances necessary to be considered, desirable, in the public interest, that it should be adopted.

11. Mr. W. L. Vernon's proposed line is somewhat similar to that of Mr. A. S. Hamand. He objects to such a westerly route as that shown by the Government proposal being taken, because he does not think it will be sufficiently central to meet the requirements of the people of North Shore. He considers that the railway should be so constructed as to serve the large population to the north-east of the proposed Government line, and he suggested that the extension should branch off from the existing line at about 10 miles from Hornsby, pass below the Cottage Hospital at North Shore in order to keep down the levels, and round by the site of the suspension bridge over Middle Harbour, and thence to Miller-street, where it would run under the Military-road, at the eastern corner of the reserve, by a short tunnel, and come out into the Neutral Bay valley. This would bring the line to the head of Neutral Bay, where the Government, in conjunction with the East St. Leonards Council, Mr. Vernon pointed out, propose to reclaim $7\frac{1}{2}$ or 8 acres of land, so that there would be no expense in purchasing a frontage, and the property when the filling-in has been completed ought to be extremely valuable for wharfage purposes. Then a short tunnel would bring the line to the head of Careening Cove, where there are $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of

of land which the excavations from the tunnelling might be used to reclaim, and from that point it would be a short cut by a tunnel either to Milson's Point or to Kirribilli Point. The grade with which this line could be constructed was, as near as he could tell, 1 in 60. Details as to cost of construction and other important matters, Mr. Vernon, however, could not give, as he had not made the necessary calculations, and beyond the examination of himself the Committee did not proceed with his proposal.

Steam ferry service.

12. The question of a ferry service in connection with the railway appeared to the Committee to be important, and the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways and the Engineer-in-Chief for Harbours and Rivers were instructed by the Minister for Works to consider the matter and lay the result of their deliberations before the Committee. The information thus obtained will be found in the evidence given by Mr. H. Deane and Mr. C. W. Darley, and in two sketch plans published to illustrate this evidence. The idea of these two officers is that a special ferry service should be provided for the accommodation of passengers and their luggage. When the contemplated re-arrangement of the jetties at the Circular Quay has been carried out, berthing could be found for a proper steamer, and waiting-sheds and ticket-offices could be erected. The steamer would be one specially adapted for its work, lying in a kind of dock at the Circular Quay, and having its deck arrangements of a kind most likely to facilitate operations. The passengers would obtain their railway tickets at the ticket-office, or on the steamer, and their luggage would be taken in charge by railway porters, and run upon trollies on to the steamer. At the North Shore side of the Harbour there would be a floating stage, the two end portions of which would be fixed, and in the middle of which there would be two ramps which would articulate on the fixed portion at the top, and form a platform to enable passengers to embark upon or leave the steamers at all conditions of the tide. Porters in attendance at North Shore would see to the proper disposal of the luggage in the trains. The eastern side of Milson's Point, Mr. Darley explained, would be the most suitable from which to run the ferry-boats, as they would not then have to turn, and the landing point on the Sydney side would be at the head of the Circular Quay. The steamers would cost from £12,000 to £13,000 each, and it would be necessary to have three. The Commissioners for Railways, it should be mentioned, are of opinion that for the present the existing North Shore ferry service would be sufficient to meet requirements.

Resolution arrived at by the Committee.

13. After due consideration of the evidence in this second inquiry the Committee are of opinion that the proposed railway should be constructed from its present terminus to Milson's Point by the route with the 1 in 50 grade, as shown in the amended plan submitted by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways. The division upon the resolution which was adopted shows seven members in favour of the resolution and four against it. The two other members of the Committee, whose names do not appear in the division list, are Mr. Joseph Palmer Abbott, Chairman of the Committee, who was absent in accordance with a letter intimating his intention to retire from the Committee's deliberations until a decision had been arrived at with regard to Mr. Hamand's scheme, which if adopted would increase the value of his property, and Mr. George Henry Cox, who, in consequence of ill-health, had temporarily left the Colony. The resolution passed will be seen in the following extracts from the Committee's Minutes of Proceedings:—

On Thursday, 7 August, Mr. Dowel moved:—

"That in the opinion of the Committee it is expedient the proposed railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson at Milson's Point, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out."

Mr. Garrard seconded the motion.

Mr. O'Sullivan moved, as an amendment on the motion:—

"That all the words after the word 'Jackson' be omitted, with a view to the insertion of the following,—as suggested in a modified form, with a 1 in 50 grade, and a passenger station, near the head of Lavender Bay, being portion of a proposed line referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out."

On Tuesday, 12th August, with the concurrence of the Committee, Mr. Dowel's motion was amended as follows:—

"That in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point, in accordance with the amended Government plan, showing a maximum grade of 1 in 50, be carried out."

Mr.

Mr. O'Sullivan's amendment was negatived on the following division:—

Ayes 3.
Mr. Copeland.
Mr. O'Sullivan.
Mr. Lee.

Noes 7.
Dr. Garran.
Mr. Humphery.
Mr. Trickett.
Mr. Garrard.
Mr. Tonkin.
Mr. Dowel.
Mr. M'Court.

The motion was passed on the following division:—

Ayes, 7.
Dr. Garran.
Mr. Humphery.
Mr. Garrard.
Mr. Tonkin.
Mr. Dowel.
Mr. O'Sullivan.
Mr. M'Court.

Noes, 4.
Mr. Lackey.
Mr. Trickett.
Mr. Copeland.
Mr. Lee.

14. In arriving at the decision shown in their resolution the Committee did not lose sight of the fact that some of the principal grounds upon which they declared in their First Report that it was not expedient the proposed railway should be constructed were unaffected by the evidence given in the present inquiry, or that on the question of a goods traffic, the subject which formed the basis for remitting the proposal to construct the railway to the Committee for further consideration and report, the evidence is not of a character to lead the Committee to the conclusion that there will be any large goods traffic on the railway; but they saw some other reasons, based upon fresh evidence given, which led them to consider that it might be more in the public interest to bring the railway to the waters of the harbour than to leave the terminus where it is at present. It is apparent, from the evidence of the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, that since the Committee's first inquiry careful attention has been given to the desirableness of improving the grade of the proposed line, with the result so far that a 1 in 50 grade has been found to be practicable, a very important improvement upon the original proposal of a grade of 1 in 40. Then details of the earnings on the North Shore Railway between Hornsby and its present terminus, since the opening of the line, as given in the evidence of the Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, show that the railway under present circumstances is being worked at a serious loss. This evidence is to be found in the following questions and answers taken from the record of the examination of Mr. Hugh M'Lachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners:—

Reasons for
the Commit-
tee's decision.

1457. Can you tell us anything about the earnings of the North Shore line? So far they have been very poor.

1458. When was the line opened? I simply took out the earnings for several months. During the first four months of the present year the line earned £464.

1459. What was your expenditure for wages during the same period? £1,489.

1460. And for interest? £2,676.

1461. I suppose the Commissioners regard it as an impossibility to make the line fairly remunerative if it is left where it is? Yes.

1462. What were the earnings for the first month of the year? £122.

1463. And for the fourth? £144.

1464. Do the Commissioners regard it as hopeless to make the line pay interest while it is left where it is? Yes; they cannot see any prospect of its being a paying line under present circumstances.

1465. If the line were brought down to Milson's Point it would take some time for the population on it to increase so as to develop the traffic? Yes. But the Commissioners look upon the district as a splendid one for residential purposes, and they expect that a big population will settle there.

Mr. David Kirkcaldie, Chief Traffic Manager, Railway Department, who was not examined in the first inquiry, is of opinion that bringing the line to the deep waters of the harbour is the only way of making it yield any return. "It is very certain to me," he says, "that the line will never do any good while it terminates where it does. The traffic is not likely to increase under present circumstances, though it would increase if the line were brought down to the water's edge." This evidence, from an officer of extensive railway experience, must necessarily carry with it a certain weight. There has also been, in this second inquiry, an important feature bearing upon the question of the proposed railway, in the form of a letter from Mr. John Hay, one of the executors in the estate of the late Mr. David Berry. This letter, written to the Under Secretary for Public Works, and forwarded to the Committee for their information

information, states that, with the concurrence of his co-executor, he has agreed, in the general public interest, to give, free of cost to the Government, such land as may be required for the railway, on the understanding that the Pearce's Corner to Milson's Point route is decided upon, and that the area of land so required—in addition to that already occupied, which is about 10 acres—will be about 20 acres, and that the railway be constructed within two years. The offer thus made means a possible reduction in the cost of the railway. During the Committee's first inquiry a letter was received from Mr. Hay, informing the Committee that he was prepared to advise his co-executor to sell to the Government such land as might be required for the construction of the railway at £500 per acre, "conditionally upon certain provision being made for stations and overhead bridges, as may be mutually arranged, and on the distinct understanding that such line of railway will be constructed within the next two years." The offer to give the necessary land free of cost to the Government is an important reason, not previously apparent, in favour of the construction of the railway. Furthermore, the cost of the railway, as it is before the Committee in the present inquiry, is considerably less than it was represented to be in the first inquiry. At that time it was stated as £262,000, the amount being made up of £127,000 for the construction of the railway and £135,000 as the cost of land and compensation. The amended proposal of which the Committee approve shows a reduction of £31,000, the total estimated cost being £231,156, or £143,000 for construction and £88,156 for land and compensation, the increase in cost of construction being due to the deviations on the line with a grade of 1 in 50, and the reduction in the cost of land being brought about by the offer of Mr. Hay, and some other considerations.

15. Attached to this Report will be found the evidence taken in this inquiry, together with appendices and plans, and also, in order that every means to a full understanding of the reasons for and against the proposed railway may be easily available, the First Report of the Committee on the subject, with the evidence, appendices, and plans as they were laid before the Legislative Assembly.

J. P. ABBOTT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 21 August, 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY TO CONNECT NORTH SHORE RAILWAY WITH PORT JACKSON, AT MILSON'S POINT.

WEDNESDAY, 28 MAY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN.)	
The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JACOB GARRARD, Esq.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.
HENRY COPELAND, Esq.	CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Joseph Barling, Esq., Under Secretary for Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] Have you prepared a statement for the Committee about this proposal? Yes; it is as follows:— J. Barling,
Esq.

North Shore Railway.

"As this proposed railway has already been before the Committee I need not furnish particulars, but will briefly state the nature of the fresh evidence which it is proposed to adduce, and which the Minister for Works ventures to think would have tended to modify the Committee's report, had it been before them on the former occasion. It will be remembered that the evidence upon which the Department at first depended to support the construction of the line, contemplated passenger traffic as the primary object. It is right, however, that I should here draw attention to the fact that the Minister for Works, in introducing the proposal to the House, pointed out that should a cargo traffic spring up from points between Newcastle and Sydney, there would be a large wharfage frontage on the eastern side of Lavender Bay available for the purpose. This particular branch of the inquiry, however, as the Committee will know, was not followed up. Towards the close of the investigation it came under the cognizance of the Department that in all probability a considerable goods traffic would arise, and a request was made that the inquiry might be reopened. It was, however, too late for this, the Committee having already come to a decision. It is evidence on this point that the Department now desires to bring forward. The Department think it can be shown that there is a promise of considerable goods traffic in wool, meat, timber, and other merchandise, which it is anticipated can be dealt with in Lavender Bay or by a branch line along the frontage of the Harbour, between Milson's Point and the Admiralty House. It may also reasonably be anticipated that depôts will arise for the supply of all the northern districts (in the way of station supplies, &c.), and an advantageous feature of this is that it would tend to relieve the present congested street traffic to Darling Harbour. With regard to the question of coal traffic, should such spring up from the districts lying between Newcastle and Sydney; this, as the Acting Engineer-in-Chief will explain to you, can be provided for by a branch line, so as to utilise the commodious water frontages which the Government now possess at Cremorne; and, regarding the possible connection of Sydney and the North Shore by means of a bridge across the Harbour, Mr. Deane will also explain that a further branch can ultimately be constructed from a point north of Lavender Bay to reach M'Mahon's or Blue's Point.

The Minister for Works hopes that with this additional evidence which will be submitted, together with that already received in regard to passenger traffic, the Committee will see their way clear to recommend the construction of the line. With reference to the suggestion that has been made that, before settling the question of this line, that of the construction of the North Shore Bridge should be determined, I may, perhaps, be allowed to say that the Department are of opinion that the two subjects are entirely distinct; that, whether the bridge be constructed or not, the line should be continued to the waters of the Harbour, and that the one proposal does not in any way hinge on the other.

I have purposely refrained from going into details as these will be more properly brought out in the direct evidence which it is proposed to adduce. I have now to ask, on behalf of the Department, that the Acting Engineer-in-Chief may be first called to explain the methods proposed to deal with the goods traffic."

2. You have nothing to add to that? No. I thought it desirable to leave all the evidence to those who can give direct testimony on the points raised.

3. *Mr. Trickett.*] Do you know anything about the ownership of the land between Milson's Point and Admiralty House? I know that part of that land has been purchased by a private company.

4. Very recently? I think so.

5. Is it not a fact that the Colonial Government wanted to extend the Admiral's premises, and that they were prevented from doing so by a syndicate which had purchased the land adjoining it? I do not think so. There was some talk about extending the Admiral's grounds, but I do not think the idea was put aside on that ground.

6. Has the whole of that land been purchased? I do not think so. I suppose you refer to the Pastoralists' Company. I think they have something like 1,000 feet.

7. Is their land nearer to Milson's Point than to the Admiralty House? I think it is nearer to Admiralty House than to Milson's Point.

- J. Barling,
Esq.
28 May, 1890.
8. It is a recent purchase? I think it was purchased very recently.
 9. With the object of constructing wharves there? With the object of putting up large wool warehouses and so on.
 10. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Can you say whether the Government own the land on the point between Careening Cove and Neutral Bay? I cannot answer positively about that.
 11. Do they own any land about there? I do not think they do at the present time.
 12. They own the Cremorne land? Yes—there is the usual 100 feet reservation there. I daresay you are aware that there are proposals now before the Government with regard to the filling up of Neutral Bay and Careening Cove, and that surveys are being made with a view to that. I do not think that the Government own any land there at the present time, though I could not say positively.
 13. Do the Government intend to fill up Careening Cove? I do not know that the Government intend to do so. The Municipalities are more concerned in the matter. The Government will probably erect the retaining wall under certain conditions.
 14. I suppose the Government own the usual reservations around these bays? I am not sure, but I do not think so.
 15. You see by the map that one of these routes runs right down to the site of the proposed bridge—that does not agree with your statement that the two works are distinct? I did not say that the two works were distinct. I said that whether the bridge were constructed, or not, we considered the extension to Milson's Point must be carried out—that the one does not hinge upon the other. If North Shore were connected with Sydney by bridge, the line leading to the bridge would have to start about midway between the present terminus and Milson's Point. Mr. Deane will explain that fully.
 16. *Mr. Lee.*] Will you have any evidence to offer respecting the site of the proposed bridge? We have full information on the point, and it will be given by Mr. Deane.
 17. *Chairman.*] Have the Department taken into consideration the question of what is to become of the steam ferry service if Milson's Point is resumed? Mr. Deane will give all evidence on that point.
 18. Have the Department taken into consideration what is to become of the steam ferry service between Sydney and the North Shore if the whole of Milson's Point is resumed for the railway? I do not know that that has been definitely arranged, but there is no doubt that proper arrangements will be made.
 19. Has the matter been under the consideration of the Department? I am not able to answer that question at the present moment, but I will supply the fullest information about it later on.
 20. *Mr. Trickett.*] When you were examined before, you said, in answer to question 4, "If it were necessary to make wharves, Milson's Point would not be chosen, as there is no room there, and the narrowness of the harbour would cause obstruction to the navigation." Are you still of that opinion? When I gave evidence before, the question of the goods traffic was not sufficiently considered, and such traffic was not looked upon as at all likely. I think that it was chiefly in relation to the coal traffic that I spoke.
 21. You say later on, "In any case goods, and coal, and passenger traffic must be separated, so that the value of Milson's Point for coal traffic need not be considered"? Mr. Deane will be able to show you certain modifications which will allow the goods traffic to be dealt with as it springs up.
 22. You said that, "The narrowness of the harbour would cause obstruction to the navigation"? Our opinion is somewhat modified on that point.
 23. Why? Because the question of dealing with the possible goods traffic has been more carefully looked into, and some objections have been removed.
 24. The harbour is no wider now—are you of the same opinion as before? I do not know that we should attempt to concentrate all the goods traffic at Lavender Bay. If any coal traffic springs up we shall be able to deal with it at Cremorne.
 25. You are still of opinion that the harbour is too narrow there for goods traffic? If you refer to a heavy coal traffic, I think that we should have to make some other arrangements.
 26. But when large wharves were erected you could not confine their use to any particular kind of traffic? We should be able to deal very well with all wool traffic.
 27. Would ships like the "Oroya" and the "Orizaba," and those of the P. & O. Company, be able to swing there? By dredging we should be able to get any depth we liked.
 28. I am not talking about the depth. Would the swinging in of such ships at this narrow part of the harbour be an advantage or disadvantage to the general shipping? At the time I gave evidence before, we had not considered the probability of such traffic coming here, but our views have now been considerably modified. When you have Mr. Deane before you he will be able to give more direct evidence upon the point.
 29. Has your opinion changed—do you think that the circumstances are altered now? Of course, the natural features are not altered, but I think that we can make such arrangements as would separate the coal traffic from the other traffic, so that the objection of the narrowness of the harbour would not obtain. The objection which we had was to the crowding together of the large number of vessels which would be required to carry on a heavy coal traffic. There would not be the same objection in connection with the wool traffic, and it only occupies part of the year.
 30. Are you not aware that the wool traffic is carried on in larger ships? I am not referring to the size, but to the number of the vessels.
 31. The size would be a material feature when swinging in? It is not the swinging in, but the constant movement of vessels that I think would be an objection.
 32. A small vessel could go in and out with very little inconvenience, but when one of the large ships leaves a berth in the Circular Quay it takes an hour, or an hour and a half, to get her out, and she is lying across the harbour for that time? To that extent there may be some little inconvenience.
 33. That would exist now as much as before? Undoubtedly.
 34. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you inform the Committee whether the Government have taken into consideration the advantages of the proposed railway for defence purposes? I do not think that that reason for its construction has been brought forward.
 35. *Mr. Copeland.*] What is the proposed cost of the present undertaking? The estimates are not altered. We propose to carry out the scheme which has already been before the Committee, and Mr. Deane will point out how, with other extensions, we can deal with the goods traffic.
 36. Are these extensions supposed to be before the Committee? I think not.
 37. The Committee have to consider the same proposal as before? Yes, and we shall give additional reasons why the work should be carried out.

38. Does the proposal before the Committee now embrace the line round Lavender Bay, for instance? No, it does not. We should have had to make another reference to the Committee if further extensions were proposed. We intend, during this inquiry, to show how we can deal with the goods traffic.
39. You will afterwards make extensions? Yes. I do not think it will be necessary for them to come before the Committee, because they will be simply sidings—that is as far as Lavender Bay is concerned.
40. So that the Committee have now the same proposal before them, but the Department is prepared to give additional evidence? Yes.

J. Barling,
Esq.
28 May, 1890.

WEDNESDAY, 11 JUNE, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

41. *Mr. Lackey.*] You have given evidence before in reference to the proposed extension of the railway from the Crow's Nest to the shores of Port Jackson? Yes.
42. You are aware that the Government, through Parliament, have intimated their desire that the Committee should re-open their investigation, because they have further evidence to offer, which they think will probably induce the Committee to alter the determination already come to? Yes.
43. You know the nature of the proposal which the Government now desire to submit? I could give evidence to show how the goods traffic could be provided for. I am not prepared to give any evidence as to what that goods traffic will be, because it is out of my department.
44. You are aware that the Committee took evidence before on this matter, and came to the conclusion that it was not desirable to make the extension? Yes.
45. You recollect the circumstances under which the Committee was asked to re-open its investigation;—we take it that you now come as the representative of the Works Department to give further reasons why the line should be extended? I come prepared to give you the engineering part of the question—to show how the traffic could be further provided for. I know that during the previous inquiry the evidence rather went to show that the proposed extension was not adapted to the requirements of goods traffic at all, and that it was expected that there would be no, or very little, goods traffic along it. I have prepared a plan to show in what way the extension could be made so as to provide facilities for bringing the goods traffic down to the harbour.
46. Are you of opinion that the extension would be utilised for the purpose of goods traffic to any large extent? I am not prepared with any statistics or estimates of traffic.
47. The project upon which you now propose to give us evidence is to provide for a large amount of goods traffic? Yes.
48. To where? To Lavender Bay, Neutral Bay, or Cremorne Point.
49. Do you purposely exclude Milson's Point? I exclude the extreme end of Milson's Point, because I consider that the passenger traffic should be brought down there.
50. Not the goods traffic? Not the goods traffic. The eastern side of Lavender Bay, from the head of the bay downwards for a certain distance, would be used for the goods traffic. The length of frontage available for goods traffic is 1,560 feet. That leaves quite sufficient length from the end of Milson's Point for the accommodation of the passenger traffic.
51. *Chairman.*] How much would there be for the passenger traffic? About 800 feet.
52. *Mr. Lackey.*] Between the end of the 1,560 feet and Milson's Point? Yes.
53. Giving 2,360 feet of shore line? Yes, that is about it.
54. To what point do you now propose to extend the line? Other than Milson's Point?
55. Towards Milson's Point? Towards Milson's Point in the same way as it was proposed before, with the exception that the passenger line would be carried at the back of the goods line, and brought down to the wharf, at the end of the goods sidings, where the platforms and station would be. It would be kept inland, between the goods sidings and the high ground.
56. That would necessitate considerable cuttings? Yes.
57. Do you propose to make any reclamations or to do any filling up with the excess earth? Yes; it would all be utilized.
58. In giving you deeper frontage? Yes.
59. Are you of opinion that that scheme would give you sufficient accommodation for the passenger traffic? I think so, for a considerable time to come. I am not prepared to show you any definite plan of what would be done in the future, but I have a plan here giving a suggestion as to how a terminus might be arranged, chiefly with the object of showing the amount of space available, because I think it is imagined that there is so little room for a station here that it is scarcely worth while thinking of it.
60. That is at Milson's Point? Yes.
61. We want the exact project that the Railway Department is desirous of submitting to the Committee. I suppose the project is that the railway be extended to Milson's Point? Yes.
62. Partly for goods traffic, and partly for passenger traffic? Yes.
63. That is all for the present? Yes.
64. You think that there would be sufficient accommodation for both goods and passengers—for the goods traffic on the east side of Lavender Bay, and for the passenger traffic more towards Milson's Point? For the present. I said on a previous occasion that I did not consider that Lavender Bay provided sufficient

H. Deane,
Esq.
11 June, 1890.

H. Deane,
Esq.
11 June, 1890.

sufficient accommodation for a very large amount of goods traffic and for coal traffic; but I have shown on the plan which I have produced that, supposing that not to be the case, the line can be extended into other bays.

65. The project admits of expansion to provide for increased coal traffic or goods traffic? Yes.

66. Is that an extension towards the western side of Lavender Bay? Whether it would be desirable to bring the line round the western side of Lavender Bay, or towards Kirribilli Point, Neutral Bay, or Cremorne Point, is a question for the future.

67. The proposal now is to bring it to Milson's Point? Yes.

68. How do you propose to get to the goods station? By water or by road. I have marked on a plan here the position which a road approach would take, giving a gradient of 1 in 18, which, for the North Shore, is very good indeed. The gradient of part of the present road there is 1 in 13.

69. *Chairman.*] That is to come down to the goods shed? Yes.

70. *Mr. Lackey.*] Would that be by means of a cutting? Yes; wherever you have a road you must make a cutting. I show on the plan that it is possible to do that. The road will probably commence from where Willoughby-street runs in near the Congregational Church. The ground there is about 20 feet higher than it is further on, so there is really no difficulty about getting a better gradient, or as good a gradient, from that point as from a point further back because you take advantage of the depression.

71. And it is included in the original estimate? No; the original estimate was for the passenger line alone. The construction of wharfs, and filling in, and so on, would be included in it.

72. Have you formed any estimate of the approximate cost of the proposal now before us, to divide the two classes of traffic, and to provide access to the stations, together with making the necessary reclamation? No.

73. Do you know whether any such estimate has been made? No; but I could soon prepare an estimate.

74. Supposing the proposal, as submitted, were agreed to, do you think there is enough land at Milson's Point to accommodate the passenger traffic? Yes.

75. Do you think that there is room there for a large passenger traffic? Yes, for a very considerable passenger traffic. The plan which I have shown to you only offers a suggestion; the work would not be undertaken at the present time. It was proposed by the Railway Commissioners that we should just bring a couple of lines down as a commencement, and afterwards extend the accommodation.

76. Is the part marked red where the passenger traffic will be accommodated? The double platform is where the passenger traffic will be provided for at first, and when that traffic increases another dock can be made.

77. *Mr. Trickett.*] What area of Government land have you there? I do not recollect.

78. Could you let us know? Yes.*

79. *Mr. Lackey.*] From your knowledge of the present traffic from that part, and of its probable increase, do you think there would be anything like sufficient room to meet its requirements? In the future?

80. Yes? No; but the accommodation can be increased still further, if necessary.

81. Probably to the extent of taking the whole of the land right across the Point? Yes, and providing additional platforms.

82. I suppose that there is a great deal of rocky land about here—the cuttings would be through rock? Yes; but that would be all the better, because the rock would answer for filling-in purposes, whereas earth would be useless.

83. Do you know what the depth of the cuttings would be to obtain the level required for the passenger platform? They would vary from nothing to 40 feet.

84. You still adhere to the old proposed line from the Crow's Nest round by Berry's Bay? Yes.

85. Crossing the spot which you pointed out to us the other day? Well, that is the line which is being submitted to the Committee; but I mentioned to the Committee the other day, when they were at North Shore, that by winding a little more we could get a 1 in 50 grade, and I have drawn a dotted line on the map before you to mark the position of that line.

86. Would that add to or diminish the expense? It would add to the length of the line; it would make it about 30 chains longer.

87. Would it add to the expense as well? Yes; it would add to the expense by about £10,000. Of course that would be very much better, because the ruling gradient on the line between Hornsby and the present terminal station is 1 in 50.

88. *Mr. Trickett.*] What is the character of the goods which you expect to bring down here if you have a goods terminus? I might refer you to your former evidence, questions 124 and 125:—"What I want to get at is this: that the original design is changed in this respect, that when you were first called upon you had to provide a water terminus for goods only, but now you are called upon to provide a water terminus for passengers only? Yes. Therefore, instead of marking out the line to Ball's Head, which, in your judgment, would be the best place for the terminus of the goods traffic, you now intend to bring it from Milson's Point as the best place for the terminus of the passenger traffic? Yes." Do you still adhere to that opinion;—you there state that Ball's Head is the best place for the goods traffic, and Milson's Point for the passenger traffic? Yes; Ball's Head was considered the best place for the terminus of the goods traffic at the time.

89. What was the goods traffic contemplated—coal, I believe? Yes, entirely, I think.

90. Then we have question 126. "That is the explanation of the change of the water terminus from Ball's Head to Milson's Point? One reason why the Ball's Head branch-line was abolished was that it was considered that that would not be the best place to bring the coal traffic; there would be very little coal traffic from the north; and if coaling facilities were to be given in the harbour at all they should be given on the other side, so as to permit the Illawarra and southern coal to be brought in." You see that those are not my opinions. I merely state the departmental opinions. Those were the conclusions that were come to at the time.

91. But what reason do you see for changing them now—have you any reason for saying now that there will be a large coal traffic, whereas on the 9th of October, 1889, you said that there would be very little; if so, why have you changed your opinion? The opinion I hold now, with regard to the means of bringing coal traffic down to the harbour, is not that Ball's Head would be the best point, but that it would be better to carry the present line through from the head of Lavender Bay to one of the other bays; that it would

* NOTE (on revision):—I find it is 1½ acre.

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would be more suitable to do that than to go back on the present line a long way in order to get down to Ball's Head. You cannot get down to Ball's Head from the present station at St. Leonards. The distance is too short. You would want nearly 2 miles for a 1 in 40 grade, while the extreme end of Ball's Head is not anything like that distance from the present terminus, and you would want the level at the bottom for the wharfage. To bring the railway down to Ball's Head would necessitate a separate line.

92. When the line to Ball's Head was being considered, where was it to go from? From Chatswood, the station before the terminus, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles back.

93. In answer to question 133 you say, "I do not believe in bringing the coal down to the harbour";—Are you still of that opinion? I think I stated before that the evidence I have to offer is on the engineering question of the possibility of providing facilities for the traffic.

94. But you have expressed the opinions which I have read, and I wish to know if you have changed them since, because if they have been changed we ought to have the benefit of the change. We have your deliberate opinion expressed that it is not desirable to bring the coal down to the harbour? I have not made any careful inquiries about that point, because I did not consider that I was called upon to do so, but I understand it is likely that some coal may be brought down here, in spite of the opinion which was expressed at the time. The opinion at the time that the Milson's Point line was submitted to Parliament certainly was, that coal traffic would not be brought down to the harbour here.

95. Do you say that that opinion is changed—whose opinion was it—yours? I think it scarcely fair to press that question.

96. *Chairman.*] You gave direct evidence on the subject on a previous occasion. If you had then declined to do so, and had said that you were not qualified to give an opinion as to the nature of the traffic, I do not suppose the Committee would have insisted upon your giving an opinion. But you have expressed the opinion on oath that there would be a coal traffic. Now Mr. Trickett is asking you if you have changed that opinion.

97. *Mr. Trickett.*] Your answer to question 135 is as follows. "I suppose further reflection has satisfied everybody that no coal would be brought over the range between the Hawkesbury and Sydney at a rate which would compete with the water carriage? It is not likely." I know at that time we made some calculations and found that it would be too costly; but I have been informed since that it is most likely that the rail carriage could compete with the water carriage very well, from the southern part of the Newcastle coal-field.

98. Would you mind telling us by whom you were informed, or whether it is your own calculation? Although I answered these questions at that time, I did not on this occasion expect to be examined again on the same subject, and therefore I have not considered it. I should be very glad to consider it if I had instructions to do so, but I understood that my evidence was merely to have reference to the technical part of the work.

99. A great many questions were asked you of the same tenor? Yes, I see that.

100. This is your evidence in questions 142, 143, and 145. "There was an idea that the wharves on the North Shore would be coal shipping wharves? Yes. That idea you think is now generally abandoned? Yes. I understand that the Ball's Head terminus is recognized by the engineers as a good coal terminus, but not as a good passenger terminus, and that Milson's Point is looked upon as a good passenger terminus, but not as a good coal terminus? Yes." I want to know whether that is still your opinion? Yes. I do not consider that Milson's Point is a very good coal terminus now, because I consider that if coal is brought down in any quantity we ought to go through to one of the other bays. I certainly see that my evidence about the possibility or probability of bringing the coal traffic down at all will have to be modified, but I do not think that my answer to question 145 can be considered incorrect even now, because the Ball's Head terminus is still recognized as a good coal terminus, though I believe a better one has been found by utilising the proposed extension.

101. Branching off where? At the head of Lavender Bay.

102. And going underneath the point to Neutral Bay and Robertson's Point? Yes. If at the time I gave evidence before, this scheme had been worked out, I have not the slightest doubt that I should have answered that, however good the terminus at Ball's Head might be, it was not quite so good as one or two of the points which I have mentioned.

103. You also adhere to your former opinion that "we really have to consider this line now as a passenger line wanting a suitable water terminus?" I have still the same opinion with regard to the passenger traffic.

104. Could you not make the passenger terminus at the head of Lavender Bay, and then carry on the line below the surface, as you suggest, to Neutral Bay and Robertson's Point? I do not see how room is to be obtained there, and in my opinion it would not be so convenient for the ferry. When the re-arrangement of the wharves in the Circular Quay as contemplated by the Government is carried out, the distance across from there to Milson's Point would be a little more than half what it would be to the head of Lavender Bay.

105. But then the steamers go now from Milson's Point to the head of Lavender Bay? Yes.

106. And you have already stated that the present tram-line suits all the people who live along it? Yes.

107. And that the proposed extension would be chiefly for the benefit of a new traffic? Yes.

108. Therefore could not that traffic embark at the head of Lavender Bay, instead of being taken on to Milson's Point? That would not be so quick.

109. It would not make 3 minutes difference in the steamer journey to Sydney? Perhaps not more than 3 or 4 minutes difference; but that now-a-days is a consideration. But, apart from this, I do not see how room for a passenger terminus is to be found at the head of Lavender Bay.

110. Could you not fill in there as you proposed to do in the deep water on the western side of Milson's Point? Yes; but the distance is so short. At Milson's Point we have a length of about 800 feet, but that length in Lavender Bay would go right across the bay. It would be a costly thing. Then the proposed line only terminates round the corner on the eastern side; and supposing the dotted line were carried out it would also terminate at about that place, so that the grades would only begin to be suitable after you passed the head of the bay.

111. How far is the point where the grade ceases beyond the point at which you strike off to go through the hill to Neutral Bay? About 10 chains.

112. Could not that grade be worked in, in the tunnel through to Neutral Bay? Yes; we should have to drop down there, but it is not a suitable grade for a station to be placed upon.

113.

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113. You say that it would be a very expensive thing to make a passenger station at the head of Lavender Bay;—would it be more expensive than bringing the line on to Milson's Point, and resuming and filling-in for the purpose? Yes, I believe so, because the only part that would be really utilised for the passenger traffic would be at the end; you would have all the rest thrown in for the accommodation of the goods traffic.

114. I understand that you have no figures or data which you could supply the Committee to account for your change of opinion from the evidence you gave last time as to the increased goods traffic likely to come to Milson's Point? No.

115. I suppose the estimate you gave before of the cost of connecting the present terminus of the railway with the terminus of the tram-line is still the same—about £30,000? Yes.

116. You are still of opinion that that is the probable cost of connecting the railway with the tramway? Yes; that is about it. I notice that in the report of the Committee a point has been made of the inconvenience to passengers of the double change to the ferry-boat at Circular Quay from cab, tram, or omnibus, and from the ferry-boat at Milson's Point into the train. I see no reason why passengers should not be booked through from the Circular Quay. When the contemplated rearrangement of the jetties at the Circular Quay is made, berthing can be given for a proper ferry-steamer, and waiting-sheds and ticket-offices can be erected. The passengers to the North Shore line could take their tickets there, and would have no further bother, except that they would have to walk from the ferry-boat to the train.

117. *Mr. Cox.*] They would have to shift their luggage? That could be done by the porters. I should not use the present style of ferry-boats at all. I was discussing the matter with Mr. Darley the other day, and we came to the conclusion that a boat of this kind (*exhibiting sketch*) would be the thing to adopt. The boat would go up into the berth, and the passengers would enter it from the end, while there would be trollies to take the luggage. The passengers would have nothing to do with the luggage, because it would be taken charge of by the railway officials.

118. *Chairman.*] What is the distance from the ferry-boat to the train? As shown here it is about 40 feet I think.

119. *Mr. Cox.*] It is a pity that they do not undertake the duty of shifting the luggage at the Redfern Station? I think that an arrangement such as I suggest would be a great improvement, and would do away with a great deal of the inconvenience likely to be experienced otherwise.

120. *Chairman.*] Then you would have to establish a ferry service of your own? The present ferry system would not answer. I imagine that if the railway were made, the traffic would in a short time be sufficient to maintain a separate ferry service. The boats would simply run backwards and forwards from the Circular Quay to Milson's Point, as they do now at certain hours of the day.

121. Then the existing company would have to adapt their boats to suit the requirements of the railway, or the railway would have to maintain a service of its own? Yes.

122. The present boats are not suitable? No; they are not suitable. The plan which I have produced is not a design, but is simply a suggestion.

123. Then what is the object in putting it before the Committee? I think I explained that it was proposed, under the present estimate, to bring down only a couple of lines and to utilise the present service. The passengers would simply walk down from the train and embark on board the ferry-boats. The plan now submitted was made to show how an increase of the traffic could be provided for, if special boats and special wharves were built. That kind of wharf to which I refer is such as I believe is made use of in all rivers and estuaries where there is a considerable tide. Instead of having to walk a narrow plank you have a floating platform which comes down to the level of the deck of the steamer. There is the fixed stage, and a floating stage attached to it by hinges. Sometimes the platform is level, whilst at other times it is slightly inclined downwards.

124. *Mr. Trickett.*] Are you still of opinion that the railway, if constructed, would not compete with the present tramway? Yes.

125. Because the people who use the tram would not use the railway? Yes. I do not see how they could. I am still of the same opinion with regard to that point.

126. I suppose you are aware that some company or individuals have bought land and are erecting wharfs alongside Admiralty House? Yes; I am aware of that.

127. In the scheme now submitted to us by you do you propose to connect these wharfs with the railway? The plan shows how, if there were a series of wharfs along the shore towards Kirribilli Point, a line could branch off from the proposed line, pass under Alfred-street, and skirt the shore at the back of the wharfs.

128. Is that a new idea since you were here last, or had you it in contemplation then? None of these extensions were considered at that time, because they were not then considered necessary.

129. The idea of constructing wharfs along Kirribilli Point to Admiralty House is a new one since you were here last? Yes. The Department, I believe, were so satisfied with Milson's Point as a passenger terminus that they thought it would be sufficient to insure the favourable recommendation of the extension, and the goods traffic was left out.

130. These proposals are all theoretical? They are all practicable.

131. They are all practicable but problematical as to which shall be carried out? So far they are alternative.

132. Have you considered the cost of an extension of the railway from Milson's Point along the shore to Kirribilli Point? No; but I have made an estimate of the cost of some of these extensions. The line from the head of Lavender Bay to Cremorne Point, including the excavation at Cremorne Point, but not including any wharfage construction, would, I reckon, cost about £70,000.

133. *Mr. Humphery.*] What is its length? A little over $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

134. *Mr. Trickett.*] Have you estimated the cost of a line from Milson's Point round Kirribilli Point? I have the cost of the whole loop.

135. We will say as far as Admiralty House? The cost of a branch line from Milson's Point to Kirribilli Point would probably be about £18,000. The estimate is only approximate. It is to be understood that in all these cases the line has not been surveyed, although we have some levels to go upon.

136. Would the amount you name include everything—the reclamation of land? For this line there would be no reclamation. On the Cremorne line there would be reclamation.

137. In addition to the £70,000? No.

138. *Mr. Cox.*] And the other portion of the line from Lavender Bay to Kirribilli Point? That would be about £22,000.

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139. *Mr. Trickett.*] But there would have to be reclamation there, because the line goes all along the private properties? There would be resumption.
140. On both of these lines the cost of resuming land would have to be added? Except at the Admiralty House, I suppose.
141. *Mr. Tonkin.*] That would be in addition to the £70,000? Yes. The branch to M'Mahon's Point I have put down at about £20,000.
142. *Dr. Garran.*] What do you estimate to be the total cost of the line which you are putting before us from the head of Lavender Bay to Milson's Point? I have not got that separated here, but I can let you have it.
143. I want to see the relative cost of the plan you are now submitting to us and the plan suggested by Mr. Trickett of having a passenger station at the head of Lavender Bay, and then tunnelling on to Cremorne. I understood you to say that you could tunnel on to Cremorne from that point at a cost of £70,000, exclusive of resumption. When you get to Cremorne, how much Government frontage would you have? We have the whole length.
144. Both sides of the peninsula? Both sides.
145. Making how much altogether? Roughly, $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile.
146. Of available deep-water frontage? That is on both sides. There is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile on the western side and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile on the other side.
147. That is all available shipping frontage? Yes. The 100 feet reserve extends right up to the head of Shell Cove and Great Sirius Cove on the other side to the point.
148. If you once got to the head of Lavender Bay you could, by a railway expenditure of £70,000, utilize $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile of first-class shipping frontage? Yes. You get down, of course, on one side readily enough, but you would have to back on to the other.
149. To go direct you would have to make another tunnel? Yes.
150. Without a tunnel you could shunt back? Yes.
151. Still you could utilize $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile of frontage? Yes.
152. You would have it made accessible? Yes.
153. The Government would not have to buy an inch of that land? Yes.
154. They would only have to pay money to get to it? Yes. If they utilized the whole of the 100 feet reserve, the owners of the land at the back would, I suppose, have access given to them from behind.
155. By that same line you could, if necessary, utilize the east coast of Neutral Bay, and provide still more accommodation? Yes.
156. That would give something like half a mile of frontage? Nearly half a mile.
157. Is the water there fairly deep, too? I believe so.
158. The $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile frontage would be nearly 8,000 feet? Yes, it would.
159. You are now proposing to allow 1,500 feet for the goods traffic? Yes.
160. By a railway expenditure of £70,000 you could get, without resumption, nearly 8,000 feet? Yes.
161. Of quite as good water frontage? Yes.
162. In addition to that, you could, by resumption, get to the eastern side of Neutral Bay? Yes.
163. That is providing 2,600 feet more, if required? Yes.
164. So that the quantity of frontage available on this route is enormously in excess of the quantity available in Lavender Bay? Yes.
165. It is in excess of what you could get in Lavender Bay, even if you made a railway round the west side also? Yes.
166. Mr. Trickett asked you whether at the head of Lavender Bay you were at the water level, and you said "No";—how much above the wharf level would you be there? Twenty feet, roughly.
167. The passengers would have to ascend and descend steps to get from the railway platform to the ferry? Yes.
168. Would that be a serious inconvenience? I do not know about its being serious, but it would be very inconvenient.
169. It would be undesirable? It would be undesirable. The level of the station would be higher than that. It would be about 27 feet.
170. Supposing it were 30 feet;—that is not more than a station cutting in a city would be? No; I think not.
171. *Mr. Humphery.*] It would be higher than this room? Yes; this room would only be about 20 feet high.
172. *Dr. Garran.*] If you are 20 feet above the wharf at that point, how far have you to go along the goods station before you get to the level? By the time you get to the end of the goods station you are on the level. We do not waste any of the 1,500 feet.
173. You do not come on to your goods line to shunt back at all? Oh, no. The 1,560 feet of wharfage is only taken from here to the curve. (*Explaining on the map.*)
174. Would it be possible for you to get down to the wharf level at the head of Lavender Bay? We could with a grade of 1 in 40.
175. You have marked on the plan a 10-chain curve line a little more to the west than the line submitted to us? Yes.
176. Has that line been surveyed properly? No; but I have had cross-levels taken for the purpose of testing it.
177. I presume the object is to get a better grade? Yes.
178. Can you get 1 in 50 upon that line? Yes.
179. It will increase the length by how much? By about 30 chains.
180. And will avoid all tunnels? Oh, no.
181. There are no tunnels marked on the plan? No; because the route is shown by a dotted line—there would still be a tunnel under Blue's Point-road.
182. Looking at the diminished length of tunnel on the line, would it be a dearer line than the other? It would be dearer by 30 chains.
183. But would not much of the work be lighter? Without having a section taken over it I could not say.
184. You have had no proper estimates made? No.
185. By that route you would get a 1 in 50 grade? Yes.

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186. And with a short length of 1 in 40 you could come on to the wharf at the head of Lavender Bay? Yes.
187. If it is ever expedient to come down to the level there, you have the option of taking this route? Yes, with the 1 in 40 grade.
188. Do you not think that it would be very desirable to get to the level of the wharf at the head of the bay? Yes; but I think that I should prefer the better grade.
189. You mean you would have to determine upon a grade of 1 in 40 to do it? Yes.
190. But you have that grade now? Yes; but it has always been very objectionable, and when I took this work in hand after the line had been laid down, the first thing I did was to get some cross-levels, in order to see if a less grade was possible.
191. Between St. Leonards and Hornsby you have no 1 in 40 grade? No.
192. So that this will be the only 1 in 40 grade on the line? Yes. It will spoil the line as to grades.
193. Could you not manage with the more westerly line to come down to the head of Lavender Bay with a grade of 1 in 50. It is not possible. I am sure that there is not length enough.
194. You must decide to have a grade of 1 in 40 or make the line at the head of the bay 20 feet above wharf level? Yes.
195. We cannot avoid that? We cannot avoid it.
196. How high is the wharf level above the high water level? About 6 feet. The line at Walker-street as at present laid out would be about 20 feet above the wharf level, but supposing we put a station there it would have to be continued from the level at the end of the tunnel.
197. What length would you have to clear for a station from the exit of the tunnel to the cutting on the opposite side? Supposing you go straight across?
198. Yes? 18 chains.
199. 18 chains would be available and open for a station? Yes.
200. What is the length of the covered part of the station at Redfern? I do not know, but it was proposed to make the platforms at the terminus at Hyde Park 700 feet long.
201. Then you would have more room there than it was proposed to have in Hyde Park? Yes; there would be plenty of room.
202. The only objection would be the height above the wharf level? I do not know about the only objection; it would require a great deal of earthwork.
203. Unless you made a viaduct? That would probably be still more costly.
204. Still, you must get rid of the stuff from the tunnel? That would not anything like fill up the hole.
205. I should like to get an approximate idea of the relative expense of making a goods station where you propose to make it, and the Cremorne scheme. If you can give us approximate figures I shall be very glad. That is including all the cuttings and the filling in which will have to be made? It will be very difficult to do that with the information now available.
206. Do you know what the estimated cost of the resumption on the east side of Lavender Bay was? I have the details in the office; I do not remember at the moment.
207. *Chairman.*] The total cost you will see was put down by Mr. Thompson at £133,909? Yes, but he gave it all in detail.
208. *Dr. Garran.*] You see what I wish to get—the relative cost of adopting Mr. Trickett's idea, and of the scheme you are now submitting to us. We can then weigh the cost against the available frontages, and the relative advantages for shipping purposes? Yes. It would be necessary before giving this for me to get some levels taken over the line, so that I could give a closer estimate than is possible at present. I suppose an approximate estimate would be enough?
209. You have submitted a scheme to us in which you say that the east side of Lavender Bay will provide accommodation for the present passenger and goods traffic, but if that increased it would be necessary to make an extension of the line to Admiralty House or Cremorne. I want to get the relative cost of the plan you propose, and of not touching the east side of Lavender Bay, but of dealing only with the head of the bay for passenger purposes and going straight to Cremorne? Then I should have to provide a passenger terminus at the head of Lavender Bay instead of at Milson's Point.
210. *Chairman.*] And you have 1,180 feet to do it on at Lavender Bay as against 800 at Milson's Point? 1,180 feet is the length of the hole which we will have to fill up.
211. *Dr. Garran.*] You feel quite sure about not being able to get to the head of the bay at the wharf level? Unless with a 1 in 40 grade.
212. That is by the westerly line; you could not do so with a grade of 1 in 50? I will tell you what made me try to get that particular line. I found that the difference in length that was required to give a 1 in 50 grade was about 25 chains—that I wanted 25 chains more. Our starting point is fixed, and a break in the grade going up the hill is most desirable, in order to provide for future wayside stations, so I allowed 30 chains.
213. Could you not go further back? I have started right from the bridge; in fact, I am not sure that the 10 chains at the end of the existing work would not have to be slightly altered. We lead directly from the end of the present line.
214. Could you go behind that to advantage? No, we could not alter the station level. We start running down rapidly immediately after passing under the bridge, carrying the Lane Cove-road.
215. The choice is to have a grade of 1 in 40 or to come out at Lavender Bay, 27 feet above the level of the wharf? Yes?
216. Which is the best of these alternatives to adopt? My opinion is that Milson's Point is the proper terminus. I think it is a very serious objection to have a grade of 1 in 40. I always intended to see if we could not get rid of that, because it spoils the line—it makes the ruling grade for the whole section 1 in 40.
217. Between Hornsby and the Hawkesbury there are grades of 1 in 40? Yes.
218. Then any coal train coming from the north would have to pass over these grades? Yes.
219. You could deal with a descent of 1 in 40 if you could deal with that ascent? If you take the local traffic alone into consideration it would be desirable to keep the ruling grade the same throughout the section of 12 miles.
220. In that case would it not be better for you to adopt the 10-chain curve line, and to keep to the 1 in 50 grade instead of adopting the line put before us? Yes.

221. Although you have not surveyed that line and worked out the details of it you think it would be a preferable line? I think it would.
222. We really have before us the project which you think the best—you admit that it is desirable to have a grade of 1 in 50? I admit that it is possible to improve the proposed line. I hope with most of the lines submitted to Parliament and to the Committee as trial lines, that in the process of permanently staking considerable improvements will be made. The tendency always is towards improvement.
223. What particular surveyors have done this work? I really could not say. There have been several engaged upon it.
224. Is there any gentleman who knows the details of the ground better than you do yourself? No; I do not think that there is.
225. As far as you know, the line marked on the plan is a practicable one? Yes.
226. And not extravagant or expensive? No, I do not think that it would be more expensive than the other, except as regards the cost of the extra distance.
227. Are you doing anything to have it more minutely examined? No, I am doing nothing. The matter is still in abeyance.
228. You are awaiting the result of this inquiry? Yes. If the opinion of the Committee depended upon the knowledge of the practicability of the line I will have a section taken over it.
229. *Chairman.*] How long would it take you to get that done? We could get over that in a few days, just to take sufficient levels to test the line. Of course you understand that if we get 1 in 50 grades we have very much sharper curves.
230. *Dr. Garran.*] But they are only 10-chain curves, which are not so sharp as those on the Western line? Yes.
231. *Chairman.*] Which is it best to do—to reduce the grades, or to reduce the curves? There is a system of compensation. A grade of 1 in 50, with a 10-chain curve, is better than a grade of 1 in 40, with a 15-chain curve.
232. *Mr. Cox.*] Because when you near the station you slow down? Yes.
233. *Dr. Garran.*] It would not be desirable to bring a heavy load of coal down a 1 in 40 grade to terminate suddenly at the wharf? You would have to put the brakes on.
234. The wear and tear would be considerable? I do not think that it matters on the steel rails that we have.
235. Supposing we had a passenger station at the head of Lavender Bay, would there, in that 1,100 feet, be sufficient room for dealing with the light suburban goods traffic as well? I doubt whether you could get down to it; the ground at the head of Lavender Bay is so steep.
236. *Mr. Humphery.*] But you can make an approach from the steamer up to the station? The passenger approach would be by steps.
237. Then a suburban goods traffic there would be impossible? I dare say an approach could be made up on to Alfred-street.

H. Deane,
Esq.
11 June, 1890.

THURSDAY, 12 JUNE, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

238. *Mr. Lackey.*] Your project, so far, has been to construct a line from the Crow's Nest to the eastern side of Lavender Bay, at a certain distance from Milson's Point? Yes; stopping near Milson's Point—almost at the extremity of the point.
239. Using a portion of the line for goods traffic, and another portion for passenger traffic? Yes.
240. Since the matter was before the Committee on a previous occasion it has been stated that additional reasons are to be submitted by the Works Department why the proposed extension should be reconsidered—have you some other project to submit in reference to the proposed extension? Since I was here yesterday, I have been speaking to Mr. Eddy about the extension to Milson's Point, and it has been suggested that the passenger station might be placed higher up the bay.
241. Lavender Bay? Yes. If it were considered that the expense of carrying the line down to the point is too great, and the amount of room too limited. I was asked, yesterday, to make an estimate of the cost of constructing a station at the head of Lavender Bay near the baths, and I think I said then that it would be very expensive, because it is a regular hole that we should go into. Besides that, we should not be able to get low enough down to the water to make it convenient for passengers to land from the steamer. Putting in a grade to suit the circumstances there, we should have the level of the line about 40 feet above the bay, which, of course, would necessitate a flight of steps to give access to the station. When talking the matter over with Mr. Eddy this morning, he suggested that we might reverse the proposal with regard to Milson's Point, and put the passenger accommodation near the head of the bay, leaving the other end for goods. That proposal would admit of the goods terminus being left out altogether for the present, and we could put up the passenger station at the end of the piece coloured red.
242. You would only require to come to that point at present to provide for passenger traffic? Yes, and the goods traffic could be carried behind and beyond. On the plan before the Committee the passenger traffic is shown as being carried behind the goods traffic. If the goods traffic were carried behind the passenger traffic to the point, and the passenger station built in the position suggested, it would be less costly.

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243. Have you made an estimate of what would be saved by that alteration? Yes. Supposing the line were only carried so far as would be necessary to accommodate the passenger traffic, there would be a saving of about £10,000 of work and between £42,000 and £43,000, according to the Land Valuer's estimate. The Land Valuer's estimate would be reduced by £12,730.
244. That would be a total reduction of about £52,000? Yes.
245. In the general estimate of the cost of the proposed extension? Yes. I have a plan here (produced) to show you how the scheme could be carried out.
246. Does the part coloured pink represent the passenger station? Yes, and that might be constructed first. Then the goods sidings could be taken on at the back, or could be left out altogether, and the line for goods traffic be pushed on into Neutral Bay or Cremorne. The making of the line only as far as this point would save about £42,000 in land, and £10,000 in works.
247. How about the access to this passenger station; do you say that it would have to be supplied with steps? No, there would not be a flight of steps; but a branch tram line could be brought down to the station from Alfred-street—I mean if this were made the terminus of the North Shore Ferry traffic. Passengers going into St. Leonards, and not requiring to take the railway, would go up by the tram line, while those desiring to use the train would simply go into the station.
248. What length of tram line would that require? About 1,000 feet.
249. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What would be the cost of that 1,000 feet of tram line? About £5,000.
250. Allowing that as a set off, you would actually save about £47,000 by altering the site of the passenger station in the manner proposed? Yes, if the goods line is left out.
251. Do the Commissioners now favour the proposal to take the freight trains to Cremorne or Neutral Bay? I have not spoken to the Commissioners as a body, but I believe that Mr. Eddy has always rather looked forward to that as affording additional facilities for the traffic.
252. Do you know the distance from the present terminus of the line to Cremorne? Three and a half miles.
253. If the North Shore bridge were constructed, and the railway taken across it from the present terminus, you would have to adopt a different route from that which you would adopt to bring it into Lavender Bay and Cremorne? No, I should follow the same route.
254. You go through a tunnel to reach Lavender Bay. A line crossing the bridge could not be brought on to Lavender Bay or to Cremorne? There would be a junction on the proposed line.
255. There would be a deviation going through a tunnel into Lavender Bay? Yes; because that would be at a lower level. You will have to descend from there to get down to the bay. The cheapest way of doing it will be to descend before coming to Lavender Bay, passing through a tunnel, and then to go under Milson's Point near the level of the water, thus getting to the bays beyond.
256. Is the passenger station marked on the plan intended to be a permanent structure? Yes.
257. Will not the passengers come across the bridge when it is erected? I cannot say what may take place when the bridge is erected, but I think that even if the bridge is erected, there will always be plenty of traffic by this route.
258. But what passenger traffic could this station serve. If the passengers going to Sydney are taken across the bridge, the station will only serve a very small local traffic. Passengers coming to Sydney will undoubtedly prefer to come across the bridge to going down to the station on the shores of Lavender Bay? In the first instance, that need not be any objection to the construction of the line. The station would only be built in a small way, to be added to as the traffic increased. If the bridge is to be built within a year or two, there would be very little loss even if the station were not required. There would not be all the work that I have shown on the plan thrown away, because the plan allows for a very considerable development of the traffic.
259. But if the passengers were brought across the harbour by the bridge, and freight is to go to Cremorne, do you think there will be enough traffic left to justify the erection of a permanent station at the head of Lavender Bay? I do.
260. Would not the traffic be purely local, and could it not be easily taken on to the head of the bridge. Is it worth while to construct an expensive station at this place, when the probability is, that in a few years it will be rendered useless, except for local traffic, by the erection of a bridge over the harbour? I should not erect an expensive station there at first, I should make one to suit the requirements of the traffic, which at first would be small. Before very long it would be seen whether the bridge was to be constructed. If the bridge is to be constructed in the near future, I imagine that its construction will have to be decided upon almost immediately, while if it is to be left for coming generations, we had better have something like what I propose to answer present requirements.
261. I can see the importance of this station if the bridge is not to be constructed, but there is every indication that it is to be constructed. That being so, would it not be better to have a temporary station at the North Shore end of the bridge, than to have a station at a place where it must be abandoned in future? No; I do not think so, because the branch from the goods line would be a very small one, and would not be costly in the first instance. What we should put in at present would be very small.
262. The line in crossing to Cremorne must go through a tunnel at the head of Lavender Bay;—how much further than the western end of this tunnel will it be taken to accommodate the proposed station? About 20 chains.
263. And will it not have to pass through some very valuable property? Not very much I think. It is mostly unimproved. The most valuable property is that between this place and the point.
264. You say that the value of the property which would have to be resumed between the proposed station and Milson's Point would be £42,000? That is the Land Valuer's estimate.
265. Would not the 20 chains of property from the deviation from the Cremorne line to the end of the station be worth pretty well the same sum? According to the land valuer, taking a very liberal estimate, it would only be worth £25,000, and it must be remembered that if any portion of this land were resumed, and the Government in a few years time did not require it, it would fetch a very much larger sum than they would give for it now, and it would cover the cost of the improvements that would be made in the way of levelling ground and erecting platforms and wharves. It would be a very good investment.
266. Do you think the land could always be sold for more than was given for it? For very much more, covering the interest on the money and the cost of improvements.
267. Supposing the bridge is constructed, will not trains going to Newcastle and the north start from the city of Sydney itself? I suppose they will.

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268. I presume that the Newcastle trains will go by that route, and that it will be the chief passenger line to the north. If the northern train starts from Sydney, what would be the use of this little side track for mere local traffic? I do not know how the line may be worked, or what development in the traffic will take place.
269. You still think that this station will be useful for the mere local traffic running between that point and Hornsby at intervals during the day? Yes. The Commissioners might also find it desirable to start a train for the north to meet the mail train at Hornsby, but, of course, that is a matter for their consideration.
270. You mean a separate northern train? No; but they might run through carriages, which could be hooked on to the mail train at Hornsby. Branch lines are sometimes worked in that way, special carriages going through the whole journey.
271. *Mr. Dowel.*] In your official capacity, I presume, you have given very considerable attention to the alternative, or, I might say, rival routes, from the present terminus to Ball's Head, Blue's Point, Cremorne, and Lavender Bay, as well as to the proposal submitted to the Committee? Yes.
272. And are you still of opinion that the proposal now submitted by the department is the best that could be adopted? Yes; I am, decidedly.
273. You think that, in the interest of the country, it is the best line that could be constructed? Yes.
274. Starting from the present terminus, the line crosses the ridge dividing the Middle Harbour and Parramatta River watersheds at the lowest point;—at the Lane Cove-road? Yes.
275. Therefore, it is the natural route to the harbour? Yes.
276. So that the line follows the natural fall of the country, does it not? We contour down from that point.
277. You contour down to the deep waters of Lavender Bay? Yes; Lavender Bay being the nearest point at which we can touch the water.
278. The route being the easiest from an engineering point of view as well as the shortest—is not that so? Yes.
279. Now, you are aware that when this proposal was before the Committee on a recent occasion there was not very much said as to the goods traffic to be provided for, but that, after the close of the investigation, the Minister submitted reasons why he thought there would in all probability be a great development of goods traffic on the line? Yes.
280. Would the scheme suggested by Dr. Garran provide sufficient accommodation for this goods traffic? Do you mean the extension to Cremorne?
281. No. I am speaking now of the proposal to erect a station a short distance from the mouth of the tunnel at the head of Lavender Bay;—would not that very materially lessen the space allowed to the goods traffic? You would lose the frontage on the eastern side of Lavender Bay.
282. Instead of the department making more provision for the goods traffic it would be making less than is now proposed? Yes; that is, of course, not taking into consideration the extensions to the other bays.
283. The proposal before the Committee gives very much more goods accommodation than the scheme suggested by Dr. Garran? I think Dr. Garran's suggestion was to make the passenger station at the head of the bay, on the line of route to Cremorne. That would cut out the whole of the frontage on the eastern side of Lavender Bay.
284. What would be the additional length of construction if the Cremorne scheme were carried out? As compared with the Milson's Point scheme?
285. As compared with the Milson's Point scheme? About $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
286. And what would be the additional cost? That I estimate at £70,000. The difference in the distance between Milson's Point and Cremorne Point from the present terminus is $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles, but the additional length of line to be constructed from the junction at the head of Lavender Bay to Cremorne would be nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
287. Is not Cremorne Point the narrowest point in the harbour, and Milson's Point the widest point? Cremorne Point tapers very much towards the end.
288. Do you know what the width of it is? The Government reserve is 100 feet. There is not above 200 feet in width for some considerable distance. At the end it is 200 feet wide.
289. You would have very little room then for a terminus there? I suppose some resumption of land would be necessary. Of course we should reclaim a portion of the harbour.
290. Talking about resumption, is not a large quantity of that land already sold? I do not know—of course it is in the hands of private owners. I do not know whether there has been any sale recently.
291. You would require some considerable distance for shunting purposes? There is plenty of length there.
292. How would you be able to turn in that 200 feet;—would you have plenty of room? Do you mean for shunting back on the eastern side.
293. Is not the land too narrow to connect the water frontages by a curve? Yes.
294. What height above the water level would the terminus of a railway be here? You could make it anything you liked.
295. What height would the terminus be above the water at Milson's Point? The levels we have assumed are between 5 and 6 feet.
296. That would be 5 or 6 feet above the water for a distance of nearly 300 feet? I make it 2,360 feet—1,560 feet for the goods traffic, and 800 feet for the passenger traffic.
297. Could you get that 2,360 feet equally as well at Cremorne? There is a longer stretch at Cremorne.
298. *Mr. Trickett.*] A mile and a half? Yes; that is taking the two sides.
299. *Mr. Dowel.*] Would there be any great difficulty in increasing the wharfage accommodation by going round towards Blue's Point at Lavender Bay, supposing that were necessary? That could easily be done, if required.
300. Would not the shipping at Cremorne Point be more exposed to bad weather than it would be at Lavender Bay? I believe that on the eastern side of Cremorne Point it would be more exposed.
301. There is no population at present there that is likely to be served by the railway, if constructed? There is no population at Cremorne.
302. Is not nine-tenths of the population on the south side of the line. Therefore if you took the railway down to Cremorne it would not serve the population as it is situated at the present time? It would not do to make a passenger terminus at Cremorne.

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303. That was a proposal put forward by the Government? There was a proposal at one time; but I think that it would be a great mistake.
304. You are clearly of opinion, under all the circumstances, that Lavender Bay is unquestionably the best position for a terminus? For the passenger terminus.
305. For the passenger traffic,—and the goods traffic could be accommodated in the manner suggested, as well as by going round to Blue's Point? Yes; an extension is possible in that direction.
306. *Chairman.*] Will you say at what cost? Well, I think I mentioned yesterday that it was estimated that the work, exclusive of the cost of resumption, would cost £20,000.
307. *Mr. Dowel.*] Mr. Copeland asked you some questions in reference to bringing the railway down to Ball's Head;—is it practicable to bring the railway down to Ball's Head and to make a terminus there? Yes; a line was staked out to Ball's Head from Chatswood as a branch line to the present railway.
308. That would be about 2 miles back, I suppose? I think rather more—2½ miles.
309. Was that done to get a longer run and a practicable grade? A ruling gradient of 1 in 40.
310. You went back that 2 miles on purpose to get a practicable gradient? Yes.
311. Did not Mr. Whitton estimate the cost of the scheme at £300,000? I believe so. I must say that I think that estimate, taking present prices into consideration, is rather excessive.
312. Taking the various bays on the North Shore between Ball's Head and Bradley's Head, is it not a fact that every one of them except Lavender Bay is very narrow at its head, that not one of them is as wide as Lavender Bay? Yes, if you except Neutral Harbour.
313. Do you know the width of Lavender Bay at its head? I can scale it on the plan—9 chains.
314. Nearly 700 feet. Now the heads of all the other bays have mud flats with fresh water creeks running into them, have they not? Yes, I believe they have.
315. There is no mud flat at the head of Lavender Bay? It is sand there, I think.
316. Is not the water very deep where there is a width of 700 feet? You get 20 feet depth almost close in shore at the head of Lavender Bay.
317. In descending or ascending a steep grade it is necessary to have a good length of level track for the terminus? Yes.
318. Is it not an axiom in railway management that all lines of communication should connect with the railway for the purpose of supplying it with traffic? Yes.
319. Do you not think that that is a good reason why the line should be taken to Milson's Point so as to connect it with the tramway, the horse ferry, and the passenger ferry? That is the opinion of the department.
320. That is the opinion of the department and your own opinion, now, I presume? Yes.
321. Do you think you could get 3 chains in width on the straight run at Milson's Point by excavation? By excavation and filling in.
322. Would not that be ample for all the requirements of the traffic for many years to come? I think it would.
323. Even anticipating that there would be a large traffic? Yes; you could conduct a great deal of traffic on that width.
324. If the Commissioners chose to send the northern traffic over that portion of the line, would it represent one third of the passenger traffic? I suppose it would.
325. And you would have ample room for that traffic? I believe so—that is my opinion.
326. Three chains in width and half a mile in length would give you about 12 acres? Yes.
327. *Chairman.*] Would not that go over the road where the tramway is? No. I have no doubt that we could get 3 chains in width by reclamation, without abolishing the tramway.
328. You could fill up Lavender Bay by reclamation? Well, it would be rather a large work.
329. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you supply to the Committee the relative extent of accommodation at Darling Harbour now and as proposed at Milson's Point? I am not prepared with it at the present moment, but I can get it, from the Commissioners. I have no plan showing the Darling Harbour Yard.
330. It was laid out under your department? No. Without going very carefully into it, the average width in the present proposal would be about 120 feet. In some places, by cutting back and reclaiming, we should have 2½ chains.
331. On an average you would have about 2 chains, and I ask you if it was not practicable to obtain 3 chains? At the upper end of the bay we could get a width of 3 chains without difficulty, but we should not be able to get that width near the point without reclaiming the whole of it.
332. Do you think it desirable to locate the station near a steep grade, as suggested by Dr. Garran yesterday? No. I pointed out the objections to that idea, namely, that the station would be too high above the wharf-level.
333. But it is also objectionable to locate it near to a grade of 1 in 40? The grade would have to be levelled off. We should have to run a level between the tunnels, and put the station upon it.
334. Would it not be objectionable under any circumstances to have the station near to the mouth of the tunnel? I do not think that would be any objection.
335. A question was asked you a short time back about the connection of the bridge with the proposed railway, it does not follow that the bridge has anything to do with this proposal? Well, I think not.
336. No part of the railway would have to be removed or altered for the purpose of allowing a bridge to be constructed? No.
337. You are aware that it has been proposed to take the railway to the head of Neutral Bay. That that has been suggested to the Committee? I am not aware that it has been suggested to the Committee.
338. Do you remember what length of tunnel there was on the Cremorne line once proposed by the Government? I shall have a section of the line here in a few minutes. There were three tunnels on the Cremorne line, the total length of which was between 1,100 and 1,200 yards.
339. Can you give the Committee any information about the bridge? Of what nature?
340. As to the width of the harbour, say, between Dawes' and M. Mahon's Points? It is 1,800 feet.
341. Can you inform the Committee of the estimated cost of the Cremorne route—what was known as a high-level scheme? I can easily supply it.
342. The Minister stated it to be £285,000—would that be correct? If the Minister stated it, he, no doubt, got his information from me.
343. How much longer would that route be than the Milson's Point line? About 1½ miles, I think.

344. Having given the Committee all this information, you are still of opinion that the proposal before them is the best which could be offered? Yes.

345. *Mr. Tonkin.*] In placing the passenger station in the altered position, on the east side of Lavender Bay, do you propose to resume as much land as you originally intended to resume for the goods station? No.

346. What would be the difference? I should say, before it was worked out, that there would be only half the land taken, and that the least expensive half.

347. That would naturally be half the cost of the resumption on the part of the Government? Yes; it would be less than half. The saving in the resumption would be, according to the land valuer's estimate, £42,760.

348. *Chairman.*] What was his total valuation? £67,760.

349. That was for the Lavender Bay side? Yes.

350. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Is there not some Government land nearer Milson's Point than the proposed site for the erection of a passenger station? I am not aware of the Government having any land there.

351. You think there would hardly be sufficient room on the east side of Lavender Bay for any great development of the goods traffic? Yes, and certainly not for coal.

352. I understood you just now to say the new proposal was to have the passenger station on the east side of the Bay, and to carry the goods traffic to Milson's Point? As a substitution, yes; leaving it optional to provide for the goods traffic. I have always looked upon it, and I believe that it has been recognized by the department, that this line, without the passenger traffic, would scarcely have come under consideration, and that it is a most important thing to provide for the passenger traffic. Therefore, I suggest, as a substitution for the original proposal, that the passenger traffic should be put higher up than Lavender Bay, so that it can be constructed first. It then remains optional to determine that the goods traffic, which is expected to be considerable, shall be provided for by the extension to Milson's Point or by an extension to Neutral Bay and Cremorne.*

353. Do you think that if the passenger station were constructed as you propose there would be any necessity for carrying the line on to Milson's Point? For goods?

354. Yes? I do not think it would matter where it is carried, so long as it is carried somewhere.

355. Do you think there would be as much accommodation if it were carried to Milson's Point as if it were carried over the head of Careening Cove and Neutral Harbour to Cremorne? There is a longer frontage at Cremorne.

356. Which do you think would be preferable for the goods traffic alone? It is so difficult to make a comparison between the lines—it depends so much on the quantity of goods traffic for which you have to provide.

357. Could you accommodate a coal traffic at Milson's Point? I do not think that the accommodation of a large coal traffic at Milson's Point would be desirable.

358. Do you think that if the line were carried to Cremorne there would be sufficient accommodation? Yes. There is plenty of room there.

359. Supposing a large goods traffic—a traffic in coal, merchandise, cattle, and meat—is developed, which line should be carried out, the one to Cremorne or that to Milson's Point? That is assuming that the passenger station is placed according to the last suggestion?

360. Yes? I should like to make a more careful estimate before making a comparison—I should like to find out how much each would cost.

361. I am not entering into the cost at all, I merely ask you which would afford the greatest amount of accommodation for all kinds of goods traffic, coal included? There is no doubt which would give the most accommodation—of course, the longest line would.

362. Would not that line also give more accommodation to passengers? I dare say passengers would use it. I dare say some portion of it would come to be a passenger line as well as a goods line.

363. The construction of that line could not in any way diminish the amount of traffic by railway? No.

364. If in the construction of the passenger station where you now suggest we shall save £42,000, and the line to Cremorne will cost £70,000, are we to deduct the one amount from the other, leaving the difference only £28,000? The £70,000 does not include resumptions.

365. *Mr. Lee.*] I understood that it was £52,000 that would be saved—£10,000 in works and £42,000 in land? Yes. Against that is the cost of a branch tramway, if required.

366. *Mr. Humphery.*] There would not only be the expense of the tramway, but there would also be the extension from the tunnel at Milson's Point—the cost of the 20 chains? I have taken that.

367. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Could you give us the estimate of the total cost of the line as proposed by you, with the passenger station on the east side of Lavender Bay—the station and resumption included? Yes; the estimate for works can be taken as before.

368. *Mr. Lee.*] £212,000? I think it was shown that £23,000 had to be taken off the valuation of the land, because by the Lands for Public Purposes Acquisition Act, we shall not have to resume the land over the tunnel.

369. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Would the deviation shown by the dotted line increase the cost much? By the extra length;—it is 30 chains longer.

370. Would the cost be proportionately the same? Yes; I expect it would be. Are you including the land?

371. Yes? No, it would not be, then.

H. Deane,
Esq.
12 June, 1890.

WEDNESDAY,

*NOTE (on revision):—I should like to add that, in spite of this suggestion, I am still strongly of opinion that the proper terminus for the passenger traffic is at the Point.

WEDNESDAY, 25 JUNE, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.
 The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.
 The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
 The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
 JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
 JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
 WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
 JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

H. Deane,
 Esq.
 25 June, 1890.

372. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Have you prepared an estimate of the cost of the proposed line from the Crow's Nest to the passenger station at the head of Lavender Bay? What I understood was required was a comparative estimate showing the cost of the line with a passenger station at Lavender Bay, taking the goods traffic to Cremorne, and the cost of a line carried down to Milson's Point only.

373. I wanted the estimates separately, because I wanted to show the actual cost of construction of the proposed station in Lavender Bay, the cost of carrying the goods traffic from Lavender Bay to Cremorne, and the cost of a line to Milson's Point, as originally proposed? I have taken only from the junction at the head of Lavender Bay. In the estimate submitted originally as little as possible was included. That estimate did not cover a sufficient expenditure to accommodate a large amount of passenger traffic, and allowed very little for the goods traffic, except as regards the material used for constructing embankments and for filling in along the shores of the bay. The following is the estimate which I have prepared:—The cost of the works included in the estimate for a line to Milson's Point from the junction at the head of Lavender Bay would be £31,000; and the cost of resuming land along the eastern shore of Lavender Bay, as far as the point, would be £67,760, making a total of £98,760. Then the cost of taking a line to Lavender Bay, with a passenger terminus there, and allowing the goods traffic to go on to the western side of Cremorne, would be—for the passenger station, £21,000; for the line to Cremorne, £90,000; for land in Lavender Bay, £25,000; and for land between Lavender Bay and Cremorne, according to the Land Valuer's estimate, £22,830; making a total of £158,830. When I was before the Committee on a previous occasion I estimated that the cost of a line to Cremorne would be £70,000, but since then I have found that it will be necessary to carry the line so as to cross Neutral Bay higher up, constructing a short tunnel, and making an extra length of line, which accounts for the extra sum of £20,000.

374. By the construction of a passenger station in Lavender Bay we shall not require one at Milson's Point? If a passenger station were built at the head of Lavender Bay it would be a substitution for a similar station at Milson's Point, though it would not exactly answer the same purpose—it would be put instead of it, though it would not be so good. I consider it desirable to carry the line down to Milson's Point.

375. Under any circumstances? That is my opinion—that the line should be carried down to Milson's Point. The suggestion of placing a station at the head of Lavender Bay came, I think, from Dr. Garran.

376. But in the event of our having a passenger station either on the east side or at the head of Lavender Bay, would you still recommend carrying the line on to Milson's Point? To my mind it would be a great pity not to resume that frontage, although it appears to be somewhat costly. It would be useful at some future time, and I understand that it is possible that an extension towards Kirribilli Point may be required; but if the resumption stopped short in Lavender Bay, as has been suggested, it could not be carried out afterwards, except at a large expenditure. I saw by the newspapers that I was supposed to have originated this scheme, but I do not take any credit for it, and in fact I did not suggest it. In my evidence I state that Mr. Eddy suggested it. I think in itself it would be the best substitute if the proposal to carry a line to Milson's Point were absolutely rejected; but I understand that it is necessary to provide in Lavender Bay, not only for passenger traffic, but also for certain classes of goods traffic; and if that is so, I consider it absolutely necessary to bring the passenger traffic to Milson's Point, reserving the higher part of the bay, which is much more suitable for wharfage purposes, for the goods traffic. Besides, Milson's Point, being the nearest place to Sydney, is a better terminus for the passenger traffic than a spot halfway up Lavender Bay. On the 11th June I endeavoured to show that the difficulty of finding space for the passenger station was not so great as was supposed, because even now we have sufficient room to deal with all the passenger traffic which is likely to occur for some time to come, and it would be possible by altering the position of the present tramway and passenger ferry to make a station which would accommodate a very large traffic indeed. The traffic coming to Milson's Point would not require anything like the space which the traffic coming to Redfern requires, because there would be much fewer number of trains coming there, whereas at Redfern there are trains from the Northern, Western, Southern, and Illawarra districts, and the different classes of traffic are mixed. There is the slow suburban traffic and the quicker express trains. At Milson's Point there would be at most two classes of traffic—the suburban traffic from the North Shore and the Lane Cove-road, and the through trains from the Northern Line.

377. Then I understand that you prefer Milson's Point as a terminus for a passenger station to any site on Lavender Bay? Yes; I have always held to that.

378. The cost of land on the eastern side of Lavender Bay would be £67,760;—would it be necessary to resume all that land if you had a passenger station at the head of Lavender Bay and then went on to Cremorne? Part of that, to the amount of £25,000, would be required for the passenger train itself.

379. That is at Milson's Point? In Lavender Bay. The difference is the cost of resuming the land from the suggested passenger station down to the point.

380. Would you recommend that the goods traffic should be dealt with in Lavender Bay instead of being carried to Cremorne, or to any of the bays further on? I think I said before that in my opinion Lavender Bay is not suitable for coal traffic, but that there would be room for all other goods traffic for some time to come.

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381. What do you think would be the principal kind of traffic which you will have here—will it be coal, live stock, and meat? When I was asked that before I stated that I had not considered the question—that I had only been instructed to consider the engineering aspect, and to that I have given a good deal of consideration.

382. Supposing coal and heavy merchandise is to be the nature of the goods traffic, would you, as an engineer, recommend Lavender Bay for its terminus, or would you desire to see it carried on to Cremorne? If there were a large goods traffic I should propose to provide additional wharfage for it in some other bay—Cremorne, perhaps; but for such traffic as wool and produce there is a great deal of room in Lavender Bay; 1,560 feet is a pretty good frontage. I believe that you could get three ships in there, each of about the size of the large mail steamers. You could do a good deal of trade with such a frontage.

383. *Mr. Humphery.*] Have you estimated the cost of the amended line from St. Leonards to Milson's Point? With the 1 in 50 grade?

384. Yes; and with the deviations? It would be £16,000 more.

385. What would be the total? The original estimate was £127,000 for works, so that the amended line would cost £143,000.

386. In what way would the cost of that line be increased by resumptions? I have not got an estimate of that. It would be increased to some extent, but not very largely, because the line goes for some distance through the unimproved land belonging to the Berry Estate.

387. Can you give us an accurate estimate of the increase in cost which the land resumptions will cause? Yes, it is £5,700, as estimated by the Land Valuer.

388. What is the exact length of the line originally proposed from St. Leonards to Milson's Point? Two miles 21 chains.

389. What will be the length of the amended line? As it is shown upon the plan, about 2 miles 60 chains—that is about half a mile more. I should mention that the extra length is not absolutely necessary to allow of the improvement in grade, but that while looking into the matter I thought it desirable to make better provision for wayside stations at Bay-road, and possibly at Edwards'-road. On the original line there has not been very much allowed for better grades just where the train would have to stop, but on grading this new line I have provided longer stretches of easy grades, so that the trains may be able to start and stop properly.

390. You have provided better station accommodation than was originally allowed? Yes.

391. There will be two stations between Milson's Point and St. Leonards? Yes, probably. It will of course be necessary to have a station at Bay-road. There is no population about Edwards'-road at present, but I have not the slightest doubt that when that place comes to be built upon a station will be wanted there.

392. What distance would the Bay-road station be from Milson's Point? On the deviation?

393. Yes? Bay-road is eleven and three-quarter miles on the new line.

394. Will you give me the distance from Milson's Point? One mile 50 chains.

395. And would the next station be midway between St. Leonards and Bay-road? Yes, though rather nearer Bay-road.

396. In your estimate, do you include the cost of station buildings at those places? At Bay-road, but not at Edwards'-road, because there is no population at the latter place.

397. Do I understand that to carry out the original plan, including the whole of the resumptions, would cost about £143,000? Not including resumption.

398. What would it cost to bring the line to the head of Lavender Bay, providing for a passenger station by 800 feet of resumption, instead of by 2,300 feet? There would not be more than 800 feet of resumption. You would have to resume about half of it. In any case you would require room for the diverging lines as you approach the station for shunting purposes.

399. By how much would the £143,000 be reduced if you had a station at the head of Lavender Bay, providing for the passenger accommodation and for the light suburban goods traffic? The amount I should cut out is, as I have already said, £10,000.

400. You have not taken into consideration the resumptions which I think you said the £143,000 would include? No. £143,000 is for works alone.

401. Then the cost of constructing a line at the head of Lavender Bay and of building a passenger station there would be £133,000? Not to the head of the bay—half way down the bay.

402. I am speaking about where it is proposed to have a passenger station—how many feet frontage are there to the water? About 1,100.

403. Would the whole of that have to be resumed? Yes. A calculation has been made with regard to it.

404. Is that included in the £67,000? Yes.

405. What have you allowed for the 1,100 feet? £25,000.

406. You save on that then about £42,000 in resumption? Yes.

407. By stopping midway between the head of Lavender Bay and Milson's Point there would be a saving of £42,000? There would be £10,000 saving in construction.

408. And £42,000 in resumption? Yes.

409. Would it not be necessary to extend the tram to the railway station if this scheme were carried out? I think it would be desirable to extend the tram down to the station.

410. I think you said it would be necessary? No; I did not say that it would be necessary, but I think that it would be desirable to do so.

411. What would be the length of the tram line from the station to Willoughby-street? I think I said 1,200 feet.

412. And what would it cost? I put the cost down at £5,000.

413. Would any resumption be necessary? For the tram lines?

414. Yes? Yes.

415. Can you tell us about what the cost of resumption would be? No; I have no information. An approach would certainly be required.

416. Can you get a roadway of easy gradient from the head of Lavender Bay, or at least from where it is proposed that the passenger station shall be, to Willoughby-street? No; the gradient would be suitable for a tramway only. The road marked on the map would have a gradient of 1 in 14, but there are grades as

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as steep as that in Alfred-street, near Milson's Point. I see that I was asked on a previous occasion, "What length of tram line would that require?" and that I said, "About 1,000 feet." I estimated the cost at about £5,000.

417. Have you considered the possibility of getting a line with a better grade from St. Leonards to Milson's Point by a more easterly route than that marked on the map? No; I have not seriously considered it.

418. You know nothing of the suggestion made to the Committee by Mr. Hamand of a line of railway to come on the eastern side of the existing tram line, skirting along Long Cove, and passing by Willoughby Falls to the east of the reserves? I should not be surprised at anything Mr. Hamand suggested.

419. You have not considered that? No, I have not.

420. What will be the height of the proposed passenger station above high water at Lavender Bay, according to the amended plan? About 6 feet.

421. Would it be possible to save the resumption of the water frontage by the amended plan, if you were to stop at the head of Lavender Bay, instead of coming down midway between the head of Lavender Bay and Milson's Point? No; I do not think that you can make a station there.

422. Then the estimate you have given is the lowest cost at which proper passenger accommodation could be provided at Lavender Bay? Yes; though you require some room for shunting beyond the actual length of the station.

423. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you given any consideration to the idea of making Milson's Point an intermediate instead of a terminal station? No. In what way?

424. In view of the possibility of the railway being brought to Circular Quay, and being carried across the harbour upon pontoons such as are shown in the photograph before you? Something in the way of a steam ferry?

425. Yes? Yes, I have.

426. From reading, or from knowledge obtained in other ways, are you able to inform us whether the transportation service shown in the photograph is carried on satisfactorily? I do not know the place which is shown in the photograph.

427. The photograph shows the transportation of trains from Venetia to the San Francisco side of California, where the water is tidal? On the Sacramento River I believe that the service is carried on satisfactorily. The distance across the water is about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

428. It is a service that meets the demands of a very great traffic? Yes.

429. Do you not think that if the railway were brought down to the Circular Quay and taken over to North Shore by a similar service it would be satisfactory? I am not sure that it would be of much use to have a steam ferry to carry trains across here. I do not think that it would. I considered the matter not very long ago in conjunction with the Engineer-in-Chief for Harbours and Rivers, and our conclusion was that it would not be worth while to adopt such a system here, because the loss of time in transshipping would more than compensate for the shortening of the distance.

430. Your chief objection to this system was the loss of time that would be occasioned in taking a large punt across the harbour? In transshipping the trains—in putting a train on board at one side and running it off on the other, I know that the work can be done very rapidly with efficient arrangements, but as the distance saved would only be a few miles it would be no gain in time—the running of a train over a few extra miles would not take longer than the journey across the harbour.

431. I suppose you admit the necessity of bringing the railway to the Circular Quay, or nearer to the harbour than it is at the present time? Yes.

432. You know that several projects have been put before the Government for doing it? Yes.

433. If the transportation of trains on punts can be carried on in other parts of the world where there is an immense traffic, why can it not be carried on here? If it was necessary to carry the traffic in that way it could be satisfactorily done here.

434. Admitting that such a system would be satisfactory in its working, it would not be necessary to have a large area of land at Milson's Point or at any other point on North Shore for a station? In that case, no.

435. At Milson's Point there would only be an intermediate station between the metropolitan station and some place further north? Yes.

436. Therefore sidings and all the paraphernalia attending terminal stations would not be necessary? No.

437. So that a large expenditure of money in reclaiming and resuming land would be saved to the State? Yes.

438. Do you not think that the saving which would be made in that way would justify the Government in constructing pontoons such as I have suggested? I still do not think it desirable to adopt the method which you have suggested. I should like to call attention to a plan (*produced*) which I have brought, and which I had with me on the 11th of this month. My object in bringing it was to show what could be done in the erection of a station here. I do not intend to speak as an authority upon traffic management, but it is quite clear that very little space would be required to deal with the kind of traffic which we should have at Milson's Point. I take it that there would be suburban trains running, we will say, to Hornsby, or part of the way, and, perhaps, in the course of a few years, leaving every quarter of an hour, and there would be no branch lines. These trains would go regularly backwards and forwards, so that one dock with a couple of platforms would serve all requirements, and a third line in between the platforms would provide standing room for a few extra carriages. At the end of the platform points will be laid down so that the engines could change ends. Two platforms such as I suggest would serve all the traffic that there is likely to be for an indefinite period; and if a further dock was required it could be placed at one side of the platform, and would accommodate through traffic and anything else for which it was needed. So you see that a very narrow space is really all that is necessary for a passenger station.

439. What width of land would the construction of such a station necessitate? The width of the station as shown here is 140 feet. Then there is the tramway. On the plan I have shown the end of the tramway is diverted.

440. Did I understand you to say before that you proposed to make special provision for the landing of passengers and their luggage from the ferry boats? On the plan, a steamer is shown which is specially adapted for this work. There is a passage down the middle of it from the southern end, and a side passage outwards on the right-hand side. It was proposed that such a steamer should run into a dock at
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Circular Quay, and that the passengers should be enabled to take tickets there for the railway. There would be porters in attendance to look after the luggage and to run it on to the steamer, and at the North Shore end, when the steamer came alongside the wharf, they would run it off again. At North Shore there would be a floating stage, the two end portions of which are fixed, and in the middle there are two ramps, which would articulate on the fixed portion at the top, and form a platform to enable passengers to embark upon or leave the steamers at all conditions of the tide.

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441. Was this sort of steamer designed by the department? Yes; its design was the result of the conference which I mentioned that I had had with the Engineer-in-Chief for Harbours and Rivers.

442. Do you not think that the time consumed in getting off these ferry steamers and into the train would be much more than it would take to transport the train itself upon the pontoons? I do not think it would make much difference.

443. And would not the convenience in one case be much greater than the convenience in the other? The convenience to those going right through would by the pontoon system be very well suited, but then the expense would have to be taken into consideration, because to enable the system to be carried out you would have to provide specially-constructed docks and steamers.

444. But contrast the expense of such a service with the expense of an overhead bridge, which it has been proposed to make. Do you not think that if the pontoon system were adopted there would be no necessity for an overhead bridge? I do not believe in an overhead bridge myself. This place is scarcely comparable with the Sacramento River, because the conditions are different. The connection between Sydney and the north is already established by the Strathfield-Hornsby Railway, while at Sacramento there is no such connection.

445. Am I right in anticipating that the department has had under consideration the advisability of constructing a railway to Manly Beach? I believe that the matter has been before the department, and that it has been referred to me for report.

446. It has not been under your consideration in connection with this proposal? Not up to the present. I understand that it will come under my consideration.

447. If such a railway were constructed, the connection with the North Shore by way of Strathfield, which at present exists, would be of no use to it? No.

448. But the construction of a pontoon to carry the train across from the Circular Quay would be of great use in assisting the trade of Manly? Yes, it might serve that traffic, though it is questionable whether it would serve the northern traffic.

449. Can you tell us what instructions you have received about the Manly Beach line;—is it to be continued eventually to Broken Bay? I have not yet received any instructions, but I believe that they are on the way to me. Mr. Barling told me that a paper was coming to me about them.

450. In the event of Parliament deciding that a pontoon connection with North Shore would serve all requirements in the carrying on of the trade from the north, would the amount saved in land amount to some hundreds of thousands of pounds? Not so much as that.

451. But a considerable sum would be saved? I scarcely think so, because the cost of making proper docks for these vessels, and of constructing the vessels themselves, would have to be placed against the saving in station works and sidings.

452. I did not clearly understand you with regard to the scheme for providing for the coal traffic and general merchandise. Do you consider that a separate traffic, and will you have another set of stations or sidings besides those at Milson's Point? There would be a double line from St. Leonards to the head of Lavender Bay, and there it would diverge, the goods traffic coming to the water sooner than the passenger traffic.

453. Now, of all the points on North Shore, excluding Milson's Point, which do you consider as the most suitable for coal traffic, as well as for the traffic in wool and general merchandise? I doubt very much whether it is desirable to combine the two classes of traffic.

454. You would hold the two separate? I think they ought to be separated. To mix up coal and wool would be undesirable—coal is a dirty traffic.

455. Suppose we say a large coal traffic? I would not have the coal traffic in Lavender Bay.

456. Do you favour Robertson's Point, remembering that the Government is possessed of a large amount of frontage there, in preference to any other point as the terminus for the traffic? Yes; I favour Cremorne as the terminus for this traffic. The Government having frontage there is greatly in its favour.

457. The depth of water and everything is suitable? Yes.

458. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do you still adhere to the opinion that it would be better to have the passenger station at Milson's Point than midway between the head of the bay and that point? Yes.

459. You still recommend that it should be at Milson's Point? Yes, for two reasons: the ferry journey to Sydney would be shorter, and by placing the passenger station at Milson's Point you would leave room for the goods traffic higher up the bay.

460. Do you propose that the Government should run the special ferry of which you have been speaking? I do not make any proposal about it. It might be desirable for the Government to run it, or they might make some arrangement with the existing company—it is a matter of detail.

461. According to the plan you propose to make different wharfage accommodation for the ferry-boats from that which they have at the present time? By-and-bye, but not immediately.

462. Do you not propose to carry out the works shown on the plan? Not immediately. That is not included in the estimate. As I have endeavoured to show, this scheme provides for a very large amount of traffic, and it is not proposed to carry it out in the first instance. It is only proposed to have a double platform with three lines of rails in between.

463. Supposing a railway were projected from Milson's Point round to Shell Cove, Careening Cove, and Cremorne, if there were a large traffic a population would spring up along the route and would create a passenger traffic, while the line might ultimately be taken across the Spit to Manly, and perhaps to Pittwater;—supposing such a line were constructed, the station at Milson's Point would be the terminal station for two lines—one going to Hornsby, and the other to Pittwater? Yes.

464. Would there be room at Milson's Point for such a station? Yes.

465. You feel quite sure that the Railway Department would not be cramped up and unable to work the traffic satisfactorily, as they were at Redfern? Yes.

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466. You must bear in mind that the suburban trains might have to start away every few minutes, as they do from Flinders-street Station in Melbourne? If you have trains running at regular intervals, and all of the same class, you can always work the traffic with one platform. A train would come in, fill up, and run out again. It is the having to deal with a large number of trains of different kinds, and from different parts of the colony, that causes the difficulty at Redfern.
467. Would that not be the case at North Shore? I would have a separate dock for each line.
468. Would you have room for that? Yes; I could make room. There could be a still further extension of the station in width, so as to provide a dock for the Hornsby local traffic, another for the Manly traffic, and a third for the through traffic.
469. What about the tram? The tram comes down alongside of the station. There would have to be a re-arrangement of the traffic, that is all.
470. Still there would be room? Yes; I am sure that with a re-arrangement of the traffic there plenty of room could be found.
471. Would the levels allow you to get away from Milson's Point to Cremorne and Manly? Yes; it is nearly all one level.
472. You would be able to come down to Milson's Point, and then get away on the same level? Yes.
473. In that case you would use the northern portion of the eastern side of Lavender Bay for goods? Yes.
474. You think that would give sufficient accommodation for light goods traffic for years to come? For light and heavy traffic. I do not know what the goods traffic would be, because I have not gone into the question, but still 1,560 feet is a pretty good length for a goods' wharf.
475. Suppose the traffic were timber? Well, you could have three vessels lying alongside at the same time.
476. Do you know how many acres of land the Commissioners had at Redfern before the recent resumptions? No, I do not.
477. How many acres would you have at Milson's Point if your scheme were carried out—how many for the passenger traffic, and how many for the goods traffic. You would want a certain amount of space for shunting. What is the length of the passenger accommodation? About 500 feet. After the 800 feet line marked on the plan, the lines of railway diverge, and the shunting of trains going into the station will take place at some distance beyond that.
478. You would have 500 feet in length by what width? If you want to compare it with the area of any particular station, I should think it would be necessary to take more than that—about 1,000 feet, or 14 chains, I think. The average area taken up by passenger stations and road approaches is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres. The platform here is 400 feet long.
479. That would accommodate how many carriages? Ten forty-foot carriages.
480. There would be no insuperable difficulty in the way of your moving the tram line further over to get additional accommodation if required? No, none whatever.
481. *Dr. Garran.*] Will you give us, in a schedule, a clear statement of the various estimates of cost which you have supplied to us—first, the estimated cost of the line originally proposed; then, of the 1-in-50 grade line; then, of the branch line from the head of Lavender Bay to Milson's Point; and, lastly, of the line to Cremorne, distinguishing the cost of works from the cost of land resumption? Yes; I will append it to my evidence.
482. *Mr. Dowel.*] In your estimate of the cost of a railway to Cremorne, did you include anything except the bare line? Only the double line.
483. Only the bare line itself—just touching Cremorne? There would be a certain amount of reclamation.
484. Do you provide for that in your estimate? Yes, to some extent, but not for the total reclamation that would be required.
485. Do you provide for the particular class of goods traffic which you propose to bring there? There was no wharf provided for.
486. You were asked whether a road could be obtained from the head of Lavender Bay—could not a better grade be obtained at Milson's Point than at Lavender Bay, to provide access to the station? Do you mean the passenger station?
487. Yes? It would be about the same thing. The grade at the point is, I think, 1 in 14, and the gradient of the road down which the tramway would be brought would be about the same.
488. Have you ascertained the exact grade? Yes; it has been calculated.
489. I understood you to say last time that it was 1 in 18? I was speaking then of an approach for goods traffic.
490. You told the Committee the other day that by the reclamation of the shores of the east side of Lavender Bay you could get 2,300 feet on a straight run. That at 3 chains wide would give you an area of how much? About $10\frac{3}{4}$ acres.
491. Do you not think that that would be sufficient for many years to come for goods and passenger traffic? I think so. I think I stated that.
492. Are you aware that Mr. Eddy, in his examination before a Royal Commission, recently stated that he considered 10 acres sufficient for a city terminus? That was the area which it was proposed to take out of Hyde Park.

THURSDAY, 26 JUNE, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JACOB GARRARD, Esq.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.	

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Cecil West Darley, Esq., Engineer-in-Chief for Harbours and Rivers, sworn, and examined:—

493. Dr. *Garran*.] Is it your view that the transit of passengers across the harbour should be in the hands of the Government, or would you leave it to a private company? I think that if the transit of passengers across the harbour is to be in connection with the railway, it had better be put into the hands of the Railway Department. C. W. Darley,
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494. You think that it would be necessary for the Government to have charge of the passenger transit from the railway on one side to that on the other? I think so.

495. You are making your preparations with a view to that? That is how I thought it over, but I have made no preparations. When I was in America some years ago I looked into this matter, and I found that in all cases where a town was separated by water from the railway, the Railway Company provided transit boats for the passengers. Several of the railways leaving New York, such as the Pennsylvania, and the Baltimore and Ohio lines, start from the other side of the river, and each company provides its own transit boats to take the passengers across. The company take charge of your luggage at the quay, label it on board the boat, and allow you to buy your railway ticket on the way across.

496. Does the ferry at San Francisco belong to the Railway Company? It does—you mean the Oakland ferry?

497. You do not know of a case in America where a railway company leaves itself at the mercy of a private ferry company in respect to the matter of passenger transit? I do not remember coming across a case.

498. What railway ferries in America did you inspect? I inspected the ferry between San Francisco and Oakland, and another ferry—I forget what they term it—belonging to the Union Pacific Company, and some miles out of San Francisco, where the whole train is taken across the Sacramento River on a very large boat. There the passengers do not have to move out of their carriages. At New York I crossed on two or three different ferries to the Baltimore and Ohio line to Philadelphia, and to the Pennsylvania Company's line. I think the last-named Company have two ferries. I went to a ship-building yard near Washington—I cannot remember the name of the town—and there saw some of these boats building, and had a long conversation with the builders. They gave me a set of plans of the boats.

499. Some of these American ferries are close to the grand terminus of the railway, as at New York? Yes.

500. In such cases do they take the whole train across, or merely unship the passengers? They tranship the passengers.

501. In the case of Detroit, where the ferry occurs in the middle of the journey, they transport the whole train? Yes, as is similarly done on the Sacramento River.

502. If the northern train came down to the North Shore here we should have an example of the former class of ferries? North Shore would be the terminal station.

503. Would you consider it necessary, in a case like that, to transport the whole train? No.

504. Then you do not propose to have a train-ferry across the harbour? I should like to explain that I think there would be no necessity for taking the train across the harbour unless the railway was brought down to the water's edge on this side. I am not aware of what it is proposed to do on this side. At present there is no connection with the water on this side, so that there will be no necessity for taking the train across.

505. But altogether apart from that, the people coming down by rail to the North Shore, whether from short or long distances, would be coming to Sydney; their business would be in Sydney. You would not then consider it necessary here, where the ferry is at the terminus of the journey—and the distinction which I wish to make is between a ferry occurring at the end of a journey, and one occurring *en route*—to make any provision for carrying the whole train over? Certainly not.

506. In your plan you do not think of bringing the train across? No.

507. You are planning a ferry like that at Brooklyn, which is purely a passenger and vehicular ferry? I should provide only for passengers and their luggage. I did not think of making provision for vehicles. The plan which I found was usually adopted in America, and which I would recommend as the best, is to have a number of large luggage trollies, such as they have at the Redfern Railway Station. As the luggage is taken off the cab at the wharf it is put on to one of these trollies, and when a trolley is full it is run on board the steamer and carried across. On the arrival of the steamer at the other side the trollies are run on shore again alongside of the goods vans, and the luggage put into the train, so that it is only twice handled.

508. But supposing the railway were brought down to Fort Macquarie, which is one of the schemes of the Railway Commissioners, continuing the line from Hyde Park, so as to have the least distance across the water, would it not be almost necessary to have a punt with rails on it, so that trucks filled with luggage or special commodities could be taken across by it;—do you contemplate making the ferry-boat large enough to bring over trucks or brake vans whenever it may be desirable not to shift their contents? I do not see the necessity for it. You could run trucks round by Strathfield.

509. Supposing some bricks had to be sent from the brick-kilns on North Shore to some place along the suburban lines, would it not be convenient to have the trucks brought across in the ferry so as to prevent any extra handling? If the bricks were going to the city it would be better to put them on a dray and bring them across on the transit boat. Bricks are expensive things to handle, and it is very often cheaper to cart them direct to their destination than to send them by train. 510.

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510. Are you clear that it is a wise thing to have the ferry exclusively for passengers and their luggage, or are you going to make a ferry capable of carrying trucks? I should not recommend that a ferry capable of carrying trucks be used here.
511. Then the steamboats which you would require would not have to be much larger than those in use at present? No; not very much larger.
512. You would separate the vehicular traffic from the passenger traffic absolutely? Yes.
513. You would leave that to private enterprise? Yes; unless the Government thought fit to look after it.
514. As a Government officer you do not think that you are called upon to do more than provide for the railway traffic proper—you are not going to cut out the private company? The Government took the matter up. They would practically cut out the private ferry to Milson's Point, because the competition would be too keen if two sets of boats were running. It would be better for the Government to monopolise the passenger traffic.
515. You would leave the goods traffic to private enterprise? Yes; I would leave the transit of goods to private enterprise.
516. If this ferry is to be for passengers only, is it very important whether we start from Fort Macquarie and go to Milson's Point, or from the head of Circular Quay and go right into Lavender Bay;—would it make much difference which route were adopted? There is a limit, unless you went to the expense of a large number of boats. You would want to keep up a quarter of an hour service, so that the steamboat ought to be able to make the journey and load and unload during that time. If it could do so, you would require three boats, two of which would be running while the third was being repaired.
517. If it were your own private speculation, you would find out the difference between the cost of bringing the railway to the point and of the extra steamers which you would require if you did not bring it so far? Yes.
518. Would it not be very much cheaper to have an extra steamer than to make expensive lines to the points which I have mentioned, simply to shorten the water journey? You would have to keep that as short as possible. You can always run more quickly by train than you can by steamer, so that it would be better to bring the train as near to the point as possible. I recommend that the train be brought to the point. I do not think that it should be left at the head of the bay.
519. Would you advise us to incur the extra expense of taking the railway from Lavender Bay to Milson's Point on the north side, and from Princes Stairs to Fort Macquarie on the south side, in order to save the expense of two or more extra boats? I should start the ferry-boats from the head of Circular Quay and run them to Milson's Point, where I should bring the passengers by train.
520. You take the head of the bay on one side, and the point on the other? Yes.
521. Do you know what it would cost to take the railway from the head of Lavender Bay to Milson's Point? You must have a calling-place at Milson's Point to suit the convenience of passengers. A very large portion of the passenger traffic must at all times land at Milson's Point. There is a very large settlement in that neighbourhood.
522. A passenger station at the head of Lavender Bay will not suit the convenience of a large number of North Shore people? It will not suit a large number of them. I do not propose that the ferry-boat should call from wharf to wharf, but that it should carry out a special service between two wharves.
523. If the railway terminus were at the head of Lavender Bay, you think that the ferry-boat would have to call at Milson's Point to suit the convenience of the public? Undoubtedly.
524. Could you not leave that to private enterprise? Then there would be two boats running to practically the same place.
525. No; the private boat would run to Milson's Point, while the other boat would run straight to the railway station at Lavender Bay; the two would not compete? I think it is cutting it too fine to run two boats to almost the same place. I would strongly recommend that the railway be brought to the point, and that that be made the stopping-place for the boats.
526. It is half a mile between the point and Lavender Bay, and the railway service which we are contemplating is not for the benefit of the people living on the promontory near Milson's Point—they would benefit very little by it—but for the benefit of the people who live along the line of route? Apart from that I am not aware whether you could get sufficient wharf accommodation at the head of the bay to carry on any amount of traffic. It would pay to bring the railway down to the point, so as to make use of the water frontage along the bay for wharfage purposes.
527. You think it would pay the Government to extend the line to the point, because the property which would have to be reclaimed would become so valuable? I think it would be desirable to continue it to the point in order to get sufficient wharfage for supplies and goods.
528. Then your argument on behalf of the extension of the railway is that the Government might make a good land speculation by means of it? Yes, and to provide wharfage accommodation. You would get good wharfage accommodation all along that side of Lavender Bay.
529. You think it would be a good investment for the Government to reclaim the land along the shores of Lavender Bay as far as Milson's Point? Yes.
530. And you recommend the extension of the railway to the point on that ground? Yes.
531. And not because it would be necessary to bring the passenger traffic to Milson's Point? The extension would also be necessary for the better working of the passenger traffic.
532. Do you think it would be required if the railway were made? Yes, and the railway will make traffic for itself according as you allow facilities for it.
533. Do you think the whole of the extension would be wanted? I think so; but I do not know what the sections of the railway are. I do not know whether the line could be brought down to the water at the head of Lavender Bay, or whether it would be high up there.
534. We have been told by Mr. Deane that he can bring it down to within 7 feet of the wharf level at the head of the bay, and that at the new site it would be quite to the wharf level? Several things have to be taken into consideration in looking at the matter. The head of the bay is more or less shallow, so that you would have to reclaim the land for some distance out, and it would not be such a convenient place for running the steamers to as Milson's Point is, because at the latter place the steamer would lie parallel with the shore.
535. I admit the convenience of the Milson's Point project, but is it worth the expense which will have to be gone to to carry it out? I think so. I think that every convenience of that kind will pay for itself in time, and will enable the railway to make a trade for itself.

536. To come back to the question of the ferry service. I suppose that the reason why ferries have been adopted on the American railways is because bridges at those places would be practically impossible? Yes. C. W. Darley,
Esq.
537. Do you know of any case where a ferry has been superseded by a bridge? Of course to some extent the ferries have been superseded by bridges. You might say that the Brooklyn Bridge superseded the ferries. But as a matter of fact they are still running there. There is a very large traffic across the Brooklyn Bridge, but it has not been able to run off a single ferry-boat. 26 June, 1890.
538. Do you think that in looking at this connection between North Shore and Sydney we ought to go into the question of the expense of ferry-boats, and the cost of the extension of the railway to the points on each side which have been mentioned, on the assumption that a bridge is for the present impracticable, or are we justified in going to that expense in view of the probability of a bridge being constructed within a few years? My opinion is that the ferries would hardly lose a passenger if a bridge were made.
539. You think that it is worth while to establish this ferry system now, even if a bridge is to be made? Yes; I think that there will be as many passengers crossing by the ferry after the bridge is made as there are now, though the bridge may draw the traffic away for a short time.
540. You think that we may dismiss the idea of a bridge for a time as not interfering with the system about which we are talking? Yes.
541. We can go on with the ferry system whether there is a bridge or not? The bridge must start from high ground, and would land its passengers, say at Obelisk Hill, so that it would not serve a large number of the population. Passengers coming over by the ferry would be taken from the low ground, and would be landed near their offices, so that a bridge would not interfere much with the local traffic.
542. Suppose the bridge were built, do you think travellers making for Sydney by the North Shore line would prefer coming down to Milson's Point, and transshipping into the ferry, to keeping in their carriages and going across the bridge in the railway? The through passengers by railway would not prefer to come down to Milson's Point.
543. All passengers brought by the railway would go over the bridge? I have no doubt that if they were going to Sydney they would go over the bridge, if it were made.
544. Supposing the bridge were made, and the train ran across it into Sydney, would there be any railway traffic down to Milson's Point? There would for goods coming to the water.
545. Only for goods intended to be sent away in ships? Yes.
546. The line would not be superseded? Not altogether.
547. But its value would be somewhat diminished? No doubt its value would be somewhat diminished, but I think it is still worth while to make it down to the water's edge. Every time that you bring a railway to the water traffic follows it. It makes a connection at once.
548. Notwithstanding the expense of the line, you think it is wise to make it, although there is a possibility of a bridge being constructed some years hence? I do. I think that the line will pay for itself in time.
549. Do you mean to pay interest on its cost, or pay itself off? Pay the interest. That it will make a traffic, and pay for itself.
550. It would create a paying traffic, and would continue to have a paying traffic, after the bridge was built? I think so. I think there should be a good deal of traffic to and from the water there.
551. Now with regard to Lavender Bay—that is everywhere as fine a bay for shipping purposes as the Circular Quay? Yes; there is very good water there, except at the head, where it is shallow.
552. And plenty of room to move ships about? Yes.
553. The largest ships that come to the port could easily be dealt with there? Yes.
554. It is in every respect as good a mercantile cove as Sydney Cove? I think it is, very nearly. Just at this minute I do not know whether it is quite so wide.
555. Would it be as easy for ships to go in and out of it? Yes, quite as easy.
556. But is it as good a place for sending goods away inland. Is the shore line towards the interior as accessible as it is on the south side. Is Lavender Bay as good and convenient a harbour for access for commercial purposes from behind as the bays on the south side? No, because the railway does not come to the North Shore.
557. But if it did? I think that where the railway is situated now all the southern and western traffic must come to the Sydney side.
558. Do you think that the northern traffic would come to the North Shore? I think that a great deal of the northern traffic would gravitate to the North Shore.
559. Do you think that if the railway were brought down to the water's edge there that would become a commercial terminus? I do. I think there ought to be a good deal of trade coming there from the north.
560. If you were the chairman or the director of the Northern railway—if you were managing it as a private speculation, would you have any hesitation in extending the line to the deep waters? None whatever—it would give the command of a water frontage, which undoubtedly would be a great benefit.
561. I gather that the result of your evidence is that you look forward to having a ferry service exclusively for passengers, running from the head of Sydney Cove to Milson's Point, and that you think that the Northern railway should be brought right to the point, to do justice to the traffic? Yes.
562. *Chairman.*] Is it proposed to close Newcastle as a port? No, I think not.
563. Then, how do you come to the conclusion that goods will come from the north to Milson's Point. What class of goods will do that? We find that an immense quantity of goods now come from the north.
564. But what class of goods will come to Milson's Point from the north? The railway will make a trade for itself to a very large extent.
565. You say that you believe that goods will come to Milson's Point from the north. You have told us that you believe that this line will be a paying line if it is brought down to Milson's Point, because goods will come there from the north. What goods do you anticipate will come from the north, passing Newcastle? I understand now that we are to have a shipping place for wool, and that wool stores can be erected at North Shore shortly. That will bring wool down.
566. You think that the fact of those stores being erected at North Shore will bring wool there from the north? If the stores are erected there wool must be brought to them by the line.
567. Must? Whatever wool business they do will be in wool brought by that line.
568. Is that the principal class of goods which you anticipate will come to Milson's Point from the north, and

C. W. Darley, Esq. and which will help to make the line pay? I have not much to do with the goods traffic, but I see goods traffic passing down the Northern line every time I travel over it, which is very often, so that I know there is a good deal of traffic passing down that line.

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569. You have told the Committee that, in your opinion, if the line is brought down to Milson's Point, it will pay, and one of the reasons which you assign for that opinion is that goods will come from the north to Milson's Point. I ask you what goods will do so? It is a matter into which I have not gone very much.

570. You see that you have sworn that goods will come from the north to Milson's Point, and that that will be one of the elements of the profit made by the line. But now you cannot tell us what those goods will be. Take wool for example. Do you imagine that the carriage of wool from the north will be increased by the extension of the line into Milson's Point? I am speaking of the traffic generally. I find that wherever railways are made to the water's edge a traffic is created. I found the same thing in the old country, and I have had experience in South Wales, at Newport, Cardiff, Swansea, &c.

571. That is where you have a producing district at the back of the water. Have you a producing district between Milson's Point and Newcastle? We find the railway traffic passing Newcastle now. The railway has made its own traffic through Newcastle.

572. What class of goods is passing Newcastle? Produce of all kinds is coming through now, and did so even before the Hawkesbury Bridge was constructed.

573. Do you know that since the railway has been open to Newcastle less wool has come to Sydney than came previously—that there are more direct shipments of wool from Newcastle now than there were four or five years ago? No; on the contrary, I understand there has been a falling off.*

574. *Mr. Hurley.*] I understand you to say that you have visited Detroit and Sacramento? Sacramento, not Detroit.

575. During your visits you paid special attention to the pontoons used there for conveying trains across from one point to another? Yes.

576. Did you learn whether the system worked satisfactorily? I only visited one place where it is carried out.

577. Did you notice whether the system in use between Venetia and California was giving general satisfaction? It struck me that it was. It seemed to work very well indeed.

578. I suppose that in going from one point to another the question of time is of great importance? Yes.

579. Have you taken into consideration the time which it will take to tranship the passengers and their luggage with the system which you propose? I do not look upon the station at Milson's Point as an intermediate station. I look upon it as a terminal station.

580. If Milson's Point is made a terminal station there will be a very short distance between it and Redfern? I think the bulk of the passengers by the line will be coming into Sydney, and when they arrive at Circular Quay will take a cab to their destinations. They will not be passing through.

581. But the city is extending to the south-west, and a great number of those travelling from the north would live in those suburbs? I do not think that it would pay to transport the trains across the harbour simply for the convenience of a few passengers from the suburbs. It would be better to let them tranship into a ferry-boat.

582. Notwithstanding the service which you have seen between Sacramento and San Francisco you are emphatically opposed to anything in the shape of a pontoon bridge to connect Sydney with the North Shore? I think there is no necessity for a vessel such as they have to cross the Sacramento River. That ferry is a great many miles out of San Francisco. It is not near a terminal station. Near San Francisco itself the passenger traffic is stopped at Oakland. They do not take the train into San Francisco. That is a parallel case to this.

583. I suppose you admit that the saving of time is essential to all travellers? Yes.

584. But have you compared the time which would be occupied in getting into a steamer on this side, and then transshipping into a train on the other side with the time which would be occupied in transporting a train across? I think the time consumed in breaking up a train and putting it on board a transport would be greater than that consumed by the transshipment of passengers into a ferry-boat.

585. The time expended in transshipment with the pontoon system would be greater than that expended with your system? It would. At Sacramento they have to break the train up into three parts.

586. That is a photograph of the Sacramento service before you? Yes.

587. I suppose you have some idea of what the cost of a pontoon such as is shown there would be, and of the cost of building a large station at North Shore, as it is proposed to do by the department? I do not think that it would be necessary to have a large station at North Shore, and, even if you brought the train over to Sydney, you would want a station there.

588. Can you tell us what is the object of the boring operations now being carried on between the Circular Quay and North Shore? No, I could not.

589. Have they anything to do with your department? No. The boring punt belongs to our department, but we have lent it to the Railway Department. I have not seen the result of the work, nor do I know exactly what it is for.

590. During your inspection of the American transport system, did you ever hear anything antagonistic to it? No, I did not. It seemed to answer all purposes very well.

591. But you do not think that the system is suited to the short distance between Circular Quay and Milson's Point? No; because Milson's Point will be a terminal station.

592. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you think that if Milson's Point were made a shipping place for large vessels it would interfere with the fairway between Dawes' Point and Milson's Point. If the railway is extended as proposed, it will come almost to the point, and I presume that the shipping will be just inside the point? That will not interfere with the fairway.

593. Are you well acquainted with the shore round Cremorne and those other bays? Not very well.

594. From your knowledge of them do you think that they would make good shipping places for wool, coal, and produce? A very fine line of wharves could be constructed there.

595. Is not the water deep? There is very good water there.

596. If, when the bridge is constructed, a line of railway is run into the city and round Darling Harbour, do you think it likely that wool and heavy produce will be brought to Cremorne for shipment? I think that

*NOTE (on revision):—Upon inquiry, when revising evidence, I ascertain the shipments of wool from Newcastle for 1889 show a falling off, in comparison with 1888, of over 33 per cent.

- that wherever you make your wharf you will find the traffic growing year by year—of course, if you do not overdo it. You will find that the traffic will come to the wharves. C. W. Darley, Esq.
597. At the present time there is not enough wharfage accommodation for the shipping coming to Port Jackson? There is very nearly enough—it is increasing every day. 26 June, 1890.
598. There are plenty of private wharves, but there are not enough Government wharves? Some of the private wharves are not doing so well now, because large steamers are being substituted for small sailing vessels.
599. Do you think that we should do well if we spent money at Cremorne? If we made it a coal-shipping depôt—that would probably be wanted in Sydney before long.
600. You are not certain that there will be much wool sent from Newcastle? None will be sent from Newcastle.
601. Nor coal? No.
602. Do you think that coal will be sent from Teralba to Lake Macquarie? There are mines opened up there where they have proved the coal. It will depend upon the distance from Sydney. If the coal is nearer to Sydney than it is to Newcastle it will, with equal facilities for transit, gravitate to Sydney.
603. If we get wool or heavy produce brought down on the Southern or Western lines, and if wharves are carried out at, and a railway extended to, Cremorne, it will have to be taken across the harbour by the bridge to the shipping place? It is a question whether Cremorne is the best place, or whether the wharves should not be constructed higher up the harbour. I think that some of them might be constructed at Glebe Island, or in that neighbourhood.
604. Do you think that it is preliminary to construct wharves at Cremorne or Lavender Bay? I think Lavender Bay is a very good place. The water frontage would not be so extensive as at Cremorne; but I think that it would be sufficient for some time to come.
605. *Mr. Copeland.*] You were speaking about the ferries from New York to Brooklyn—do not those ferries belong to the railway companies, to private companies? To the railway companies.
606. Do you not think that the principle is different when private companies own the railways from what it is when the Government own them;—do you think that it is the duty of the Government to enter into competition with private companies in the same way as a private company would enter into competition with another private company? I think that in carrying passengers in this way it would be desirable for the ferry to be in the hands of the Railway Department.
607. Of the Government? Of the Government. My idea is that passengers should be able to drive to the wharf and get out of their cabs, leaving their luggage to be looked after by the porters. You will not find that the private ferry companies will put on porters. At the present time, if you have a portmanteau you must carry it on board yourself. I would have a ticket-office on board the steamer, so that passengers could buy their railway tickets there.
608. Supposing there were two passengers by the train, one getting out at Milson's Point, and the other going on to Sydney, you would provide at your own expense a steam-ferry for the convenience of one man, but would you provide cabs for the other man? No.
609. Where is the difference in principle? The Government have to take charge of the luggage, and they would label it on board the steamer.
610. I was speaking of passengers only? Through passengers would always have luggage. You must have somebody to take charge of your luggage.
611. Would not the other man want some one to take charge of his luggage, and ought you not to provide a parcel delivery van for him? No, no more than you would provide a parcel delivery van at this end.
612. Would you consider the station at Milson's Point a terminal station, or would you consider the Circular Quay the terminus of the line? The Circular Quay would practically be the terminal station, except that you would not come across in the train. I know that the system which I am advocating is the one found to work best in America. There you book right through.
613. That is with a private company? All the railways are managed by private companies there.
614. A railway company naturally desires to obtain the last farthing of profit from the passengers. Do you think it is the duty of the Government to follow out the same principle, and cut against existing private enterprise, such as the existing steam-ferry? To carry that to an extreme you would not make a railway at all.
615. I think you will see that there is a difference in principle between making a railway to open up settlement on Crown lands, and establishing a ferry service to North Shore? I think it would be very inconvenient to have the railway and ferry service in different hands. The Commissioners should be able to control the running of the steamers so as to make it fit in with the running of the trains.
616. When a passenger left the train at Milson's Point, would not the Government cease to have any control over him, just as at Redfern? The Government provide trams at Redfern.
617. That is not because of the railway, but because the traffic is there. If you make the railway to North Shore the case will be exactly similar? I do not exactly see it in that light myself.
618. Have you any reason to doubt that the North Shore Ferry Company will not be able to meet all requirements, judging from what they are doing at present? No doubt they could, but to carry out my idea of issuing tickets and booking the luggage on board of the steamers, I think the management of the ferry would have to be in the hands of the Railway Commissioners.
619. But is there any real necessity for issuing tickets on board the steamers. Would not the passengers be able to provide their own means of getting to their destination from the railway? I look upon it as a matter of public convenience: You would drive down to the steamer from your hotel, and when you arrived at the wharf your luggage would be taken from you and carried on board. At the present time you would have to carry it yourself.
620. Have you not to do that at Redfern? No. The porters there take your luggage from the cab to the train. You might wait at the North Shore ferry for a month before any one would do that.
621. If a train were brought to Milson's Point, would it not equally be possible for porters to take the luggage on to a private ferry steamer? Quite possible, but you would have to carry it off the steamer.
622. Have you not to move your own luggage when you take a cab to a hotel. I suppose that out of those who arrive at Redfern from a long journey nineteen out of twenty take cabs? Yes; but the porters put their luggage into the cabs.
623. Could not they do that with a steam-ferry? No doubt they could if there were any porters.
624. Then there would be no reason for the Government to interfere? When you arrived on this side you would have to carry your luggage some distance before you could get into a cab again. 625.

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625. When a ferry steamer arrives at Circular Quay would you provide a Government porter to carry your luggage home for you? No, but you would want to get your luggage from the steamer into a cab, and you would have to carry it 40 or 50 yards. A private company would not put anybody on to do that for you. At least they do not do it now.
626. Would not the cabman do it? He could not leave his cab to go on board a steamer—he would not be allowed to do that.
627. I think there are generally porters at most of the wharves. When a steamer arrives from Brisbane, Tasmania, or Melbourne, are there not a number of porters who for 6d. or 1s. are prepared to carry your luggage? Yes, but I do not think that passengers are fond of paying 6d. or 1s. a parcel.
628. But why should the Government compete with these men and provide porters at the public expense? It is done everywhere else; it is always part and parcel of railway travelling. I have travelled all over the continent, and through America, and I have found that porters are always provided.
629. You would have a number of porters on the steamboat to be ready to carry the luggage at this end to a cab? The porters would either travel with the luggage, or a few men would be kept on this side—that is the way the thing is worked in New York. The luggage would be put into a trolley on the other side; and the trolley run on board the steamer, and on this side run off on to the cab-stand, where the luggage would be issued.
630. Is any extra charge made for all that trouble? No; I never had to pay excess for luggage at any railway station.
631. Then the man who travels without luggage does not get as much for his fare as the man who travels with luggage? Well, that holds good at Redfern now, or anywhere else.
632. Have you any idea that the steam ferry company at the North Shore is not giving satisfaction at present;—is that your reason for trying to introduce a Government ferry? At the present time, I fancy that the service is giving satisfaction, but then there is no railway communication with it. I think it would be difficult to separate the management of the two services.
633. Would it not have been equally proper, when the railway terminus was at Newcastle, for the Government to have provided steamers from Sydney to Newcastle—that would only have been a little longer? No; passengers then were not booked through to Sydney, but only to Newcastle.
634. Would they not here book to Milson's Point? I think you would find that passengers would not be satisfied to take their luggage from Armidale to Milson's Point. The department would have to issue tickets for Sydney.
635. They would not charge to Sydney for those who wanted to stay at the North Shore—they would also have to issue tickets for the North Shore? It would only make a difference of one penny or so.
636. I gather from your evidence that you are in favour of the Government taking the ferry out of private hands, and expending public money in competing with the existing company? I think that it would be desirable to have a railway and a ferry all under one management.
637. Do you not think that the North Shore Ferry Company would be able to claim a considerable amount of compensation from the Government if the Government interfered with their trade? I do not think so. The Hunter River Companies have not been paid anything by the Government because of the interference with their trade from Newcastle to Sydney. There is nothing to stop me or any other member of the public from starting a ferry company to-morrow, if I get the necessary wharves.
638. Do you think that it is a proper thing for the Government to spend money in driving away private enterprise of that kind? I think it is. I think that it is necessary to have the two services controlled by one power. You get a sort of divided control if you co-operate with a private ferry company. The system of working the ferry in conjunction with the railway was so successful in New York, that I am satisfied that it would not be so satisfactory if the two services were controlled by different managements.
639. When the passengers by the railway arrive at the Circular Quay you would leave them there desolate—you would not provide them with cabs and parcel delivery vans? You would have brought them to Sydney, which would be their terminus.
640. With reference to the questions asked by Mr. Hurley about the coal traffic, do you not know the country between Lake Macquarie and Sydney pretty well? Yes.
641. Supposing a coal mine were opened at Wyong, which is 53 miles from Sydney, or at any place south of Lake Macquarie, do you not think that it would be better to send the coal to North Shore by railway than to Newcastle, and then to ship it from Newcastle to Sydney? If the coal was coming to Sydney it would undoubtedly be better to send it direct by train, but if it was for Melbourne, and half way between Sydney and Newcastle, I daresay that it would be just as cheap to send it to one place as it would be to send it to another.
642. I presume that the coal is one of the sources of traffic that you expect to have on the Northern line? Yes.
643. Supposing there were a good forest of timber between here and Newcastle, would you not expect the timber trade to develop? No doubt some of the timber would come this way.
644. Where do you think it would be better to deal with that traffic—at Neutral Bay, at Lavender Bay, or at Cremorne? I have not gone into it fully.
645. You have a good deal of knowledge about the timber trade which is carried on at Newcastle. Does it not require a considerable wharfage space there? I think there would be sufficient space in Lavender Bay.
646. Both for the timber trade and for the coal trade? Of course as the trade increased you could extend the railway. It seems a long way to carry the line to Careening Cove.
647. Do you not think that in the course of time it will be desirable to extend the railway, say to Middle Head, Manly Beach, and Newport, where the Government hold large areas of land? It would have to be looked into. I think it would be better to take a branch line from the heights—that is my first impression—going down to George's Head from the high level, not running down to Careening Cove, and climbing a hill again.
648. Supposing we commenced to export wheat, would it be sent to Sydney or to Newcastle? I daresay that each place would get its share. I daresay Newcastle would get some, but Sydney will command a large portion of the trade always, because of the vested interests here.
649. Is there any good land between here and Lake Macquarie which will be likely to send produce here instead of to Newcastle? There is some very good land just beyond Gosford, but it has not been much developed yet. There is not much coming from it.

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650. Are they not going in for orchards very extensively in that district? I believe so.
651. Supposing they were exporting fruit to Sydney, is it not likely that that would develop a large trade on the North Shore line? I did not know that I was going to be asked any questions about the goods traffic. It is not a thing to which I have given much attention. I am speaking of my experience generally in the construction of railways. I know that in Wales, where we opened up virgin districts at Newport, Swansea, and Cardiff, each line made its own traffic.
652. *Chairman.*] That is where there is a producing district at the back? I hope that all our coast district will be productive as the population increases, I know enough of it to be aware that a good deal of the country is capable of producing. At the Newcastle end the country is poor, but at Wyong it is very good indeed.
653. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you given fair consideration to the proposal now before the Committee. I presume that you have made yourself acquainted with the physical features of the country through which the railway will pass? I have not had the plans before me, and I have not looked into the matter. I am speaking generally of the passenger traffic as it is at present.
654. Do you know Lavender Bay personally? Yes.
655. You have gone into it? Yes.
656. You know the east side of it pretty well? Yes.
657. Do you think that it is a suitable place to bring the railway to? I think that good wharfage could be made along there. The water is very deep—30 or 40 feet all along.
658. Knowing the bay as you do, where do you consider the best site for a passenger station and for a goods station? The passenger station would be at the Milson's Point end of the wharf, and the goods traffic would be dealt with along the bay from that point to the head.
659. You would not approve of a proposal to have the passenger station at the head of the bay and the goods station at Milson's Point? I think it will be better to take the passengers on as far as possible by railway, and so shorten the ferry journey.
660. Can you give the Committee any information as to the area of Lavender Bay and the depth of the water there? I could not tell you the area of the bay off hand, but there is 30 or 40 feet of water all over it.
661. The bay is a large one? Yes.
662. And, in your opinion, suitable for shipping purposes? Yes; very suitable indeed.
663. What is the depth of the water on the west side of the bay round about M'Mahon's Point? It is very much about the same—30, 32, and 37 feet.
664. Running up to 40 feet? As you get towards the north-western portion of the bay the water becomes shallow.
665. What depth do you make it there? 10 or 11 feet.
666. What is the depth along the eastern shore from Milson's Point to the head of the bay? At Milson's Point it runs up to 40 feet, and continues as deep as 22 feet nearly to the head of the bay. Of course at the very head of the bay it is shallow, but within 100 feet of where the baths are there is a depth of 22 feet.
667. Which would you consider to be the most suitable point for starting the transit service from? From the eastern side, close to Milson's Point, so that the ferry-boats would not have to turn. At the present time the wharf faces the south, so that the ferry-boats have to turn round. My idea would be to keep the boats nearly in the same direction all the time.
668. Where would you propose to have your landing point at the Circular Quay? At the head of the Circular Quay.
669. What would be the cost of a steam transit service which you speak of as necessary? Do you mean the cost of working it?
670. No; the cost of the plant in the first instance—the working expenses would be another matter? The steamers would cost from £12,000 to £13,000 a piece.
671. What do you anticipate would be whole cost of the service? I have not gone very much into it.
672. You say that you would require three steamers? Yes. The steamers would cost nearly £40,000.
673. You told the Committee that you anticipated that there would be considerable goods traffic in Lavender Bay? Yes.
674. But you were only able to enumerate one class of goods when the Chairman asked you some questions? I am speaking of the general goods traffic. If you asked me I could not enumerate the goods traffic coming to Redfern, but I know in a general way that it is very large.
675. Do you not know as a matter of fact that large quantities of live stock, wool, wheat, hay, chaff, straw, timber, and coal pass Newcastle and come to Sydney? I do. I mentioned just now that I knew that a large quantity of goods came down that line, but I really could not enumerate the different classes of traffic.
676. Are you of opinion that that traffic could be provided for in Lavender Bay for the present—that there would be ample accommodation for it? A great deal of it I think is not suitable for Lavender Bay; it would be better to run cattle down to the yards at once.
677. Wood, hay, chaff, straw, timber—could you provide for these in Lavender Bay? Yes; we could easily make arrangements for them there.
678. Having considered the whole proposal now before the Committee, are you clearly of opinion that for present requirements it is the best from an engineering point of view? I think Lavender Bay would be the best place to bring that traffic. I produce a sketch plan to show the system on which the ferry traffic might be worked, as explained in my evidence.

WEDNESDAY, 2 JULY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.	JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Captain John Jackson, Manager of Public Wharfs, made a declaration, and was examined:—

Captain
J. Jackson.
2 July, 1890.

679. *Mr. Trickett.*] What are you? The Manager of Public Wharfs.
680. You are aware that the Committee are considering a proposal to connect the present terminus of the railway, at what is called the Crow's Nest, with Milson's Point? I have seen that stated in the papers.
681. You have not gone into the matter in detail? Not at all. I do not know anything at all about it.
682. Do you know anything about the wharfage which it is proposed to make? I have never seen anything about it.
683. You come to the Committee entirely uninformed? I know nothing at all about anything. I do not know where they want the wharf, or anything else about the matter.
684. What have you to do with the wharves? I have to do with the berthing and unberthing of ships.
685. Have you anything to do with the berthing of the large P. & O. and Orient steamers? I have to be down on the wharves to berth them.
686. What time does it take to get one of these ships alongside the wharf? It depends upon the wind—about three-quarters of an hour.
687. Would that be under favourable circumstances? Yes.
688. Do these vessels interfere at all with the traffic in the Cove? Not much.
689. Notwithstanding their great size? Sometimes they interfere slightly with the ferry steamers. The ferry steamers have sometimes to deviate a little from their usual course in order to get clear of them.
690. Is not the ferry traffic the principal traffic in the Cove? Yes.
691. You know the foreshore from Milson's Point round to the head of Lavender Bay? Yes.
692. What is your opinion with regard to the usefulness of that for wharfage purposes;—have you examined it sufficiently minutely to be able to form one? I know that the harbour is very narrow there, and I do not think that the place would be suitable for wharfage purposes.
693. I am speaking now of the shores in Lavender Bay? Yes, I understand you.
694. Between Milson's Point and the head of Lavender Bay? Yes. Some years ago the San Francisco mail steamers used to lie there, and there were continual complaints about their being in the way. The ship which I commanded—the "Gladstone"—was lying there once, and there were letters in the paper and complaints brought before the Marine Board about its blocking the place up.
695. From practical experience then, through one vessel lying there, it was found that Lavender Bay was inconvenient for shipping purposes on account of its smallness? Yes.
696. Suppose a large wool or coal shipping trade were done in that bay, do you think it would be desirable? I do not think that a coal shipping trade would be desirable. The bay might be more suitable for a wool trade.
697. Why? A vessel loading wool would lie at the wharf for a week or three weeks, whereas a vessel loading coal would only lie there for a few hours, so that with a coal trade the vessels would constantly be going in and coming out.
698. That would interfere with other traffic? I think so.
699. Do you know where they are proposing to build wharves now near to the Admiralty House? I have seen the place.
700. What do you think of that position for wharfage purposes? I think it might do for wool, but I do not think it would do for coal, for the reason before mentioned.
701. Is not that place at about the narrowest part of the harbour? Yes. The narrowest part is between Dawes' Point and Milson's Point, where the width is between 1,200 and 1,400 feet.
702. I suppose all the traffic in and out of the harbour passes Kirribilli Point? Yes, the whole of it.
703. Would it be advantageous or otherwise to the traffic along the harbour to have wharves doing a large amount of business between Admiralty House and Kirribilli Point? It would not.
704. On account of the narrowness of the water space? Yes.
705. I suppose large ships would lie alongside those wharves if there were a wool traffic? Yes; I do not think that large vessels lying there would interfere very much with the traffic of the harbour. A vessel with a 50 feet beam would not interfere very much with that traffic.
706. Would not the berthing and unberthing be an inconvenience? It would, in connection with a coal traffic; but I do not think that the inconvenience would be very great if a vessel only berthed and unberthed once in fourteen days.
707. You have not considered the amount of wharfage accommodation that could be obtained in Lavender Bay or between Milson's Point and Kirribilli Point? I have not; but I do not think that the place is suitable for a coal traffic.
708. You know a good deal about the incoming and outgoing of the vessels of the port;—what is the present state of wharfage accommodation; is there much crying out because of the want of accommodation? No. Within the last six months shipping business has been very slack, and at the present time there is ample wharfage accommodation.
709. For all the requirements of the port? Yes; and there has been so for the last six months. Of course the wool season is now approaching, and during the next six months there will be a rush.
710. But even during the wool season are ships kept out of their berths for an inconvenient length of time? No; there is ample wharfage accommodation.

711.

711. Will you tell us the chief wharves which are availed of for the wool traffic? The wharves at the Circular Quay. I think I may safely say that more than half the wool clip of New South Wales is shipped from the Circular Quay.

Captain
J. Jackson.
2 July, 1890.

712. Do you think that it is absolutely necessary that there should be increased wharfage accommodation for wool shipping? I do not. At the present time we have the whole of Woolloomooloo Bay, where we could get wharfage accommodation.

713. Supposing the shipment of wool increased by 25 per cent., would that inconvenience you much? No.

714. If it increased by 50 per cent? No.

715. There is wharfage accommodation enough to cope with the traffic if it increases by 50 per cent.? Yes. From Woolloomooloo Bay and Circular Quay, you could ship all the wool grown in the colony.

716. Are not the wharves beyond Dawes' Point private wharves? Yes.

717. Are they availed of much? Yes; two of them are—Lamb's and Parbury's.

718. Are they not very frequently empty? They are not very often empty.

719. They are very largely used? Yes.

720. Have you ever given any attention to what I may call the rival schemes for dealing with the coal traffic that have from time to time been suggested—that is, at Blue's Point, Ball's Head, and Cremorne Point? I have not.

721. You have not been called upon to do so? No.

722. Will you venture to offer an opinion as to whether it is necessary or desirable, at the present time, to extend the railway from the top of North Shore to the deep waters of Port Jackson, for the purpose of shipping wool? If I dared venture an opinion, I should say that it was not necessary.

723. Do you know anything of the wool shipping that goes on at Newcastle? Yes.

724. Is that carried on to a large extent? It was some years ago, before the railway was constructed from Newcastle to Sydney. I think that now a large portion of the wool comes by rail to Sydney. There were two firms of wool stevedores at Newcastle.

725. You think more wool comes to Sydney now than came before the railway was constructed? Yes.

726. Is not a good deal of wool shipped from Newcastle now? A considerable amount. I think that last year 60,000 bales were shipped from there.

727. Are there wool shipping and dumping firms at Newcastle now? Yes.

728. Could you give me the names of one or two of them? I think that Gibbs, Bright, and Dalgetty are the only two.

729. Do you know whether their business has fallen off much since the railway was constructed? I could not say.

730. You look upon Woolloomooloo Bay as a very desirable and very easily availed-of place for an extension of our wharfage system? Yes.

731. Is there good water there? Yes; there is plenty of water, 30 feet at low tide.

732. Is it not a fact that the wool traffic is chiefly located on the southern side of the harbour? Yes.

733. Have you heard any expressions of opinion or indications of the traffic being shifted over to North Shore if a railway were brought down there from Newcastle? No; and I do not think that it is very likely that it would be shifted. I am sure that it would not.

734. Will you give us your reasons for thinking so? All the vested interest is on this side of the water, and if the trade were taken to the other side it would ruin the interests here. If you look at the immense stores that have been built on this side of the water, you will see that it is not very likely that a change will be made.

735. I daresay that you have been very observant of our coal traffic;—if the railway under consideration were constructed, do you think that a large coal traffic would be done at North Shore? Where from?

736. Would they bring coal from Newcastle and ship it at the North Shore? No, they certainly would not, because the freight from Newcastle by train would undoubtedly be more than the freight by water. The water freight is only 3s. a ton, and I do not think the railway could take coal 100 miles for that.

737. Does your experience go to show that ships would be availed of rather than a railway? Yes; people would sooner bring it by water than by railway.

738. I suppose the great traffic in coal from Newcastle here is to feed the large ocean-going steamers? Yes.

739. If a railway were constructed to the deep waters of North Shore, would it be of any advantage to those large steamers in enabling them to get their coal supplies more easily? No; they would have to pay more for the coal.

740. Would they go alongside the wharves at North Shore for the purpose of coaling;—would they first go alongside the Circular Quay to discharge passengers and cargo, and then move over to North Shore in order to take in coal? I do not think so.

741. If they did not do that, and the coal came by railway to North Shore, it would have to be put into lighters and brought across to the steamers? Yes.

742. Would that be an advantage or disadvantage? A very great disadvantage.

743. Why? The steamboat companies would have to pay lighterage as well as railway freight, while the coal would be much more broken up because of the extra handling.

744. Of course the present railway from Newcastle comes round to Darling Harbour? Yes.

745. What, in your opinion, are the facilities or otherwise of dealing with the coal traffic and general traffic at Darling Harbour? There are none at the present time.

746. How do you mean? At the present time there are no facilities at Darling Harbour for shipping coal.

747. Could it be made available for shipping coal? Yes. There are two staiths there that have been erected fifteen or twenty years. They have never been used, and were intended for shipping coal.

748. Can you tell us why they have not been used? I do not think they were suitable.

749. Is there plenty of water there for large ships? Not for very large ships. Darling Harbour silts up very fast. Ships can load there up to 21 feet, but if they want to load deeper than that they go to the Pyrmont wharfs. They load a considerable amount of shale at Darling Harbour.

750. Can you tell us the average draught of the ships that go from Newcastle or here with coal? I suppose a vessel of 2,000 tons would draw about 22 feet.

751. Such a vessel could not go up to the present wharves at Darling Harbour? No.

752. Is that because of the rocky nature of the bottom? No; there is a mud bottom.

753.

- Captain
J. Jackson.
2 July, 1890.
753. Would there be a difficulty in dredging out the mud? A dredge is nearly always at work there, but a great many sewers and drains run into the harbour at that place.
754. Do many ships of the size which you mentioned take coal from this port? Not from here.
755. Would the bridge interfere with their going up to Darling Harbour? No; they could get through the bridge.
756. You know the large piece of ground which the Government lately purchased at Darling Harbour—Darling Island;—were you ever consulted with regard to that purchase? No.
757. Have you been consulted since as to the utilising of the land for wharfage purposes? No.
758. Have you formed any opinion as to its utility? I expect that it will be most suitable for shipping coal—undoubtedly it will.
759. Could an ordinary coal-ship get alongside that land without any difficulty? Yes; and so they can with the new wharves at Pymont. I believe that rails are going to be laid there, and that hydraulic cranes are to be erected for the purpose of shipping coal.
760. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Could the mail steamers go there? They could go alongside the Pymont wharf.
761. *Mr. Trickett.*] But, as a matter of fact, they would not do so, for the reason you explained a little while ago, that they would not want two moves? Yes.
762. It is a serious undertaking to move one of these large boats? Yes; and there is very considerable risk, especially in narrow water such as that at Darling Harbour and North Shore.
763. Even if coal were brought to these places it would have to be put into lighters or hulks and taken alongside the steamers? Yes.
764. Have you paid any attention to the necessity for providing wharfage accommodation at North Shore for local purposes? No; I have not.
765. You know Lavender Bay well? Yes.
766. If coal wharves were constructed there, do you think that the coal dust would blow over to Sydney and become a nuisance in any way? I do not think so.
767. You have given some evidence before about the size of Lavender Bay for shipping purposes;—supposing wharves were erected along the eastern shore of Lavender Bay, would the ships have to lie alongside them, or would they lie out in the stream? They would lie at the wharves, but those wharves would have to come out a considerable distance from the present shore line.
768. Ships could lie alongside the wharves? Yes.
769. Supposing vessels were alongside the wharves, would there also be room for other vessels to lie in the bay? No.
770. Therefore such vessels would have to lie out in the fairway if they wanted to avail themselves of the wharfage at Lavender Bay? Yes.
771. When the mail steamers used to lie in Lavender Bay did they not drift ashore once or twice? Yes; one of them did.
772. She must have been pretty close in? No. There was a buoy moored there for them to make fast to.
773. If Lavender Bay were utilised for wharfage purposes, would it not become very much the same as Circular Quay is now in extent and appearance? Towards the water it might.
774. It would be the same with regard to the shipping; no ships can lie in Sydney Cove now? No; and it would be just the same in Lavender Bay.
775. No ships could lie in Lavender Bay then? No.
776. Is there much ferry traffic in Lavender Bay? There is a considerable ferry traffic. The ferry steamers call at two or three places there.
777. From your knowledge of the foreshores of Lavender Bay, do you think that the land would have to be reclaimed for any distance out in order to enable wharves to be constructed? I think it would. I am not very sure of that, but I think there is shallow water for a considerable distance out.
778. There is very little level land at the water's edge? I think that there is none.
779. Then the necessary space for wharfage purposes would have to be artificially obtained? Yes.
780. You know Blue's Point and Milson's Point? Yes.
781. Can you tell us the distance between them? I can not; I should think about 1,600 or 1,800 feet.
782. Can you tell us the distance between Macquarie Point and Daves' Point? No; I should say that it was about 1,000 feet.
783. Can you tell us the area of Lavender Bay, as compared with that of Sydney Cove? I think that Lavender Bay, in its present state, is larger than Sydney Cove; I think that it is wider.
784. Could you tell us the relative depth of the water in Sydney Cove and in Lavender Bay? In Sydney Cove the average depth is about 35 feet. I could not say what it is in Lavender Bay, but I believe that it is much less than that.

John Henry Geddes, Esq., wool broker, sworn, and examined:—

- J. H. Geddes,
Esq.
2 July, 1890.
785. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a wool broker.
786. And you are a member of some company? I am a member of the Company of J. H. Geddes & Co., The Pastoralists' Association (Limited).
787. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you any knowledge of the proposal now before the Committee to extend the North Shore Railway down to Milson's Point? Yes.
788. Will you inform the Committee whether you think there is likely to be any goods traffic on that line from the north? I thought that perhaps it might facilitate the work of the Committee if I wrote out what I had to say, and, afterwards, if you thought proper you might ask me questions in detail bearing upon the traffic.
789. *Chairman.*] You understand that that statement will be taken on oath? Yes. It is as follows:—
J. H. Geddes & Co., The Pastoralists' Association (Limited). Reasons for the extension of the Northern Line to the waters of the Harbour at Kirribilli Point.

The Pastoralists' Association who have purchased "Theulda," on behalf of the Company, at Kirribilli Point, is the outcome of frequent discussion as to the advisability of woolgrowers combining with the object of generally lightening the charges associated with the sales of wool, produce, &c., and finance matters generally, and also for the storage and shipment of frozen meat. In furtherance of this view they purchase the business of J. H. Geddes and Co.; and, in order to give assurance to intending shareholders that their interests in the city would be under experienced and tried supervision, decided to retain the name and combine it as "J. H. Geddes & Co., The Pastoralists' Association (Limited)."

Although

Although the purposes of the Company have not been generally made known, the Association already numbers 118 J. H. Geddes, pastoralists, representing 21,000 bales of wool, or approximately about 8,000 bales from sources otherwise than the 23,000 bales offered by J. H. Geddes and Co. last season; and the Directors have already been waited upon by representatives of country meat freezing companies, who recognize the advantages of the situation for the storage and shipment of chilled meat. Esq.
2 July, 1880.

The necessity for greater storage, however, owing to the immediate requirements of the Association, enhanced by the anticipated increase in the business of "J. H. Geddes and Co.," in common with the general advance of the wool sales in Sydney, arising from the growing Continental and English direct representation, rendered imperative the careful inspection of all the most suitable sites available, and Kirribilli Point was chosen.

The congestion of the wool trade has created large wool warehouses in the city on valuable land, under the cost of which the woolbrokers are labouring, and are compelled to frame charges with which the pastoralists are discontented; and as a central position is an absolute necessity, for, with eleven (11) weekly sales held during the season, it is a physical impossibility for the buyers to inspect wool outside the city radius—as in Melbourne, where there are only half the number, no other site would so well forward the conditions which led to the formation of the Association, inasmuch as it combined the elements of moderate cost, which meant lower charges to the pastoralists, great facilities for shipping, and, above all, more expedition in the delivery of wools to the purchasers, a reasonable certainty of a satisfactory dividend to the shareholders, a great relief to the present overcrowded street traffic to the Corporation, a diversion of a part of the immense traffic which is centralising to an enormous extent at Darling Harbour, and the advantages of an almost perfect frozen meat dépôt, possessing unrivalled advantages in its close proximity to the great steam carriers of the ocean.

The detailed advantages of the position, from our own point of view, and those which we believe will accrue to all concerned by the extension of the railway to Kirribilli Point, I have now much pleasure in submitting:—

Wool.—The consignments of "J. H. Geddes & Co." from the northern districts, represented last year 7,823 bales; and as 150,000, approximately, bales of wool are grown in the districts north of Sydney, it may reasonably be supposed that this number will be considerably augmented this season, under the stimulating auspices of the Pastoralists' Association, and considerably increased during succeeding years.

Produce.—9,151 butchers' sheepskins, 91 tons 6 cwt. dry station skins, 117 casks tallow, 6,244 hides, 88 bags bark, 7 tons bones, 8,000 horns, 1,000 lb. hair, 11,253 marsupial skins, 12,612 opossum skins, 293 bags grain, and 70 bales hay were consigned to their firm this last season from the northern districts, and which could be received and dealt with at Kirribilli Point.

Machinery.—Although only the first year, 50 tons machinery, approximately, were forwarded by us on account of the Wolsley Sheep Shearing Company last season to the northern districts. This season a great increase is anticipated, in keeping with the superseding of the old hand shears by the machine shears.

Frozen Meat.—Special provision will be made for the storage and shipment of frozen meat in our warehouse; and as the northern pastures are amongst the most favoured in the colony for fattening purposes, representing say 20,000,000 sheep, a great tide of frozen meat export must naturally set in at Kirribilli Point, more especially as the great increase in the flocks necessitates an immediate outlook for facilities for shipment, evinced by the formation of pastoral companies throughout the different stock centres for the purpose of erecting establishments for the slaughtering and despatching of sheep in chilled cars. As an evidence of which, in last few weeks' news we have notices from Narrandera, Glen Innes, Tenterfield, Narrabri, and Brisbane, for the proposed formation of country meat freezing centres, whilst in the Paris letters of the *Sydney Morning Herald* it is said that huge stores are being erected for freezing food and other perishable articles. The increase in the frozen meat export in New Zealand may, in support of this, be taken into consideration, viz. :—In 1881 the value of frozen meat shipped represented £19,000, with a gradual advance to £750,000 last season, and an anticipated advance this season to £1,000,000. This result is obtained from 15,000,000 sheep, two-thirds of which are cross-breeds; therefore it is reasonable to suppose that as the New Zealand shipments have reached 2,000,000 sheep per annum from a total of 15,000,000, the outcome of 20,000,000 sheep depasturing in the northern districts will be at least 200,000 the first year, or exceed 500,000 within five years, or equal to 1,000,000 carcasses within seven years, all of which could be depended upon as shipments from North Shore, for although our present breeds are principally merino, the demand for frozen meat would cause their gradual superseding by the larger types, for which our grasses are admirably suited. The shipments of frozen meat last year from New South Wales may be computed at £150,000, and nothing will be more intimately associated with the great development of the future than the frozen meat trade, and no situation offers greater facilities than the water-line from the eastern side of Lavender Bay to Kirribilli Point.

As evidence of the inexhaustible markets for our frozen meat, it may be stated that England pays £140,000,000 per annum for food supply from outside sources, and her demand is rising between £4,000,000 and £5,000,000 per year. Her demand in animal food alone is—

Meat.....	£9,000,000
Frozen meat	£5,000,000
Bacon and Hams	£8,140,000

England supplies 1,195,000 tons meat per year.
 England requires 440,000 tons from outside sources.
 France produces 1,060,000 tons meat.
 France imports 150,000 tons meat.
 Germany produces 1,345,000 tons meat.
 Germany requires 60,000 tons meat.

Altogether, the European countries are short of their meat supply 600,000 tons annually.

Great Northern Goods Dépôt.—The natural effect of the construction of the railway will be the gradual creation of an enormous goods dépôt for the supply of all the Northern districts, as it is manifest that the discharging upon wharf and carting by waggon to warehouse in city, to be re-delivered to waggons and conveyed to Darling Harbour railway station, 11 miles longer, cannot possibly compete with a direct discharge to wharf, thence to rail, to be distributed throughout the Northern districts by a much shorter route; therefore warehouses will arise in accord with the natural flow of traffic, which in 1887 was estimated, including Newcastle, at 161,000 tons merchandise, 21,135 tons wool, and 11,580 tons live stock.

The enhanced value of Government resumptons will almost repay total cost of line.

Darling Harbour Wool Traffic.—This great congestion could be greatly relieved, and in the future the whole of the facilities associated with the position will be required by the Southern and Western traffic, even if the Government erected frozen meat dépôts, which is somewhat doubtful, as coming into direct competition with private companies, and perhaps beyond their province, and I believe that the goods and passenger traffic of the Southern and Western districts will, in future years, completely monopolise the lines now tending to Darling Harbour.

The enormous street traffic during the five months of the wool season, represented by the passing through the Sydney streets of 336,412 bales, and 5,225 butts wool, irrespective of produce, &c., and which will in a few years almost monopolise the streets of the city, more especially as it is yearly increasing.

As an evidence of the advantages which they deem the position to possess for their own requirements (which represent the greatest export branch of commerce in Australia), the Directors of the Association have accepted contracts for, and are proceeding with, the erection of their warehouse, which, when completed, will be the largest wool and frozen meat warehouse in Australasia.

And, finally, in support of my detailed statement of the probable amount of goods traffic, I respectfully beg to call your attention to the opinions of such high authorities as Mr. Eddy, Mr. Darley, and, more recently, Mr. Goodchap, who, in his evidence before the City Railway Commission, stated that he thought the future traffic to North Shore would be very heavy, and that the ultimate connection with that portion of the city should be a feature kept in view.

The position from Kirribilli Point to Milson's Point is not inferior to the Circular Quay for warehouses, and a site for a goods traffic station near Kirribilli Point could be obtained if the actual point itself could not be resumed for the purpose; and I may state that, as the Pastoralists' Association chose the position for convenience and economy, it may reasonably be supposed that other large firms will also avail themselves of the same.

790. *Mr. Dowell.*] Have you acquainted yourself with the proposal now before the Committee? Yes.

791. Do you think the proposal a good one? Yes, I think it is very good, indeed; but I would go further, and say that the railway should be extended to Kirribilli Point, because we represent a fact.

- J. H. Geddes, Esq.
2 July, 1890.
792. Before building your warehouse, did you take into consideration the probability of the railway being continued towards it? We hoped that it would be; but as a wool broker here, and one thoroughly conversant with the whole of the details of the wool business, I was, in the first instance, driven to purchase land which would be accessible to the buyers, and owing to the City Improvement Act, any building which I put up here would have had to be of a certain thickness—14-inch walls—so that I was forced to build on North Shore, because there I could put up a galvanized iron building. But after my business was merged into The Pastoralists' Association, the company saw the practicability of the project, and entered into an engagement for a larger building.
793. Suppose produce comes from the south, how will you get it to your warehouse from the proposed railway station? It is my idea to take it in barges.
794. The proposed railway would come to Milson's Point;—do you expect to use that railway? Yes.
795. I understood you to say that a large quantity of wool and produce would be consigned to you from the north on that railway? Yes; and I may state *à propos* of that, that the steamship companies carry wool for less than the railway does, but that pastoralists have a disinclination to take their wool from the trucks at Newcastle and ship it there to be re-delivered to stores here.
796. Do you consider that there would be any greater difficulty in the berthing of ships in Lavender Bay than there would be in berthing them in Sydney Cove? The frozen meat question being the greatest question which I had to take seriously into consideration, I interviewed Mr. Johnstone, of Johnstone and Balchin, who are the agents of the Kaiser line, in New Zealand. They have vessels fitted up for the frozen meat trade which will carry 40,000 carcasses. Before he would give me any opinion as to the probability of the Kaiser Company shipping the meat, he had first to inspect our property, after which he said that he saw no difficulty at all in having his ships hauled across to, and berthing alongside of, Kirribilli Point to take the frozen carcasses into their chambers. The Kaiser line is almost similar to the Orient line.
797. How do you propose to get the frozen meat to your warehouses? We are in hopes that the Government will extend the line to Kirribilli Point, in order that we may receive the meat from the cars into our receiving rooms. At the present time they send it to the chilled storehouses at Darling Harbour, and then carry it through the streets at night, and deliver it on board the receiving vessels.
798. In the meantime, would you use the railway to Milson's Point? Yes.
799. For the produce which you have enumerated? Yes.
800. Can you inform the Committee in round figures how much you propose to expend upon the buildings and wharfs? The building you see represented in the picture is to be built in accordance with the City Architect's plans, and will cost £60,000. It will be very much larger than a building on this side of the water which cost £179,500, and has not the same facilities for the business. I could tell you the name of that building, but I do not wish to make any comparisons here.
801. What was the cost of the land? The £60,000 includes the cost of the land, which has a depth of from 315 to 400 feet, and is worth £50 a foot, whereas land in Phillip-street would cost £250 a foot, and have only 90 feet depth.
802. You said that the increased value of resumptions would pay for the construction of the line—in what way can you prove that to the Committee? I have no idea of the price of land in Lavender Bay, but I imagine that it could be resumed for £50 a foot, and I am firmly convinced that any land so close to Circular Quay is worth £200 a foot. Putting the land down at £50 a foot, I believe the frontages down to Kirribilli Point would pay the cost of the line.
803. In the construction of a line to your proposed warehouse we should have to go down to the head of Careening Cove? I would suggest that the railway should be taken *via* Milson's Point and Kirribilli Point, and that a tunnel should be made through Careening Cove, where a general goods station could be arranged for, with the ultimate idea of extending the line on to Neutral Bay and Cremorne, if necessary.
804. You have referred to meat and wool as the produce which you are likely to receive by the railway;—do you anticipate any trade in wheat? Yes; but I am merely dealing with facts at the present time. The province of our Association will be to deal with wheat, hay, and all other produce, but I do not suppose that we shall ever be able to carry hay from the Hunter by rail as cheaply as we can by steamers.
805. Is it not a fact that a large quantity of hay comes down from that district at the present time by train? Yes; but we would save a penny if we possibly could. Last year was the first year that we touched hay or grain. I think we had 1,300 bags of grain, but that came from another district.
806. Have you any special knowledge of the northern districts? Yes.
807. An intimate personal knowledge of them? Yes; many of my constituents have properties there.
808. Do you know that it is a large producing district? Undoubtedly.
809. You anticipate that if the railway were continued to Milson's Point a very large proportion of the northern trade would come to the terminus? I think the whole of it would come there. Having a knowledge of the state of Darling Harbour during the height of the wool season, I feel sure that when there are smaller paddocks, and more care is given to the sheep, that, together with the extension of the railway, will make the accommodation at Darling Harbour insufficient for the southern and western traffic; and I believe that the whole of the northern traffic will centre elsewhere. At the present time we only get the wool from 25,000,000 to 30,000,000 sheep, although we have 50,000,000 in New South Wales. The wool from the rest goes towards Melbourne and Adelaide.
810. You are clearly of opinion that a large proportion of the northern traffic, instead of being arrested at Newcastle, will come on to Sydney? Yes. They made an attempt two or three years ago to hold wool sales in Newcastle, but the distance made it impossible for buyers to attend them, and consequently—although they made vigorous attempts last year to get the wool to Newcastle—the shipments from there were less than they were the year before, and no sales were held there.
811. Do you think that it would be wise to take the railway to Cremorne instead of to Milson's Point? No.
812. Not under existing circumstances? No.
813. You think that the wharfage which could be provided in Lavender Bay and at Kirribilli Point would be sufficient for years to come? Yes. I think Lavender Bay will give facilities for shipping equal to those afforded at the Circular Quay.
814. Do you know whether Lavender Bay is larger or smaller than Sydney Cove? I am not sure which it is, but I do not think that there is very much difference between the two.
815. You do not know which is the larger? No. Speaking as a business man, I am perfectly sure that Lavender Bay will give just as good facilities for shipping as the Circular Quay does, and that it will be quite large enough for the northern traffic for many years to come.

816. Do you know anything of the relative depths of the water in the two bays? Yes.
817. Is Lavender Bay sufficiently deep for all shipping purposes? I should say that in any reclamation which the Government would have to make in carrying the railway to Milson's Point there would be a greater depth of water than at Circular Quay. All of the water would be deep enough for the larger ships. I can speak definitely as to the depth of the water at Milson's Point and Kirribilli Point.
818. Have you any knowledge of berthing ships? Not necessarily, although I have been a very large shipper, and incidentally connected with ships for many years.
819. Can you see any more difficulty in berthing a large ship in Lavender Bay than in berthing ships in the Circular Quay? Certainly not.
820. You are clearly of opinion, having given considerable attention to the proposal before the Committee, that that would be the best point to bring a branch railway to in order to get at the deep waters of Port Jackson? Yes; because in bringing a railway to Milson's Point the Government enter immediately into an assured traffic.
821. Do you think that there would be any advantage in making Milson's Point a terminus for the Great Northern line, both for passengers and goods, in order to relieve the congested traffic at Redfern? My ideas as regards the future traffic are perhaps rather large. I think Milson's Point would do very well for a branch, but not for a main station. I should propose going to Careening Cove, where the Government own a great deal of land.
822. What area do the Government own there? I could not tell you the acreage.
823. That bay you think would be very suitable for goods? Yes. At Kirribilli Point at the present time, if required, the Government could take up 1,000 by 200 feet from Theulda and Beulah. I know that that would be quite large enough for our own wool and frozen meat trade, and our wool trade will probably amount to 10,000 bales for this year alone.
824. Are you of opinion, knowing the cost of the line—£150,000—that it would pay interest on the capital and working expenses? I think that the mere payment of interest should not be taken into consideration when a railway line to any given place is proposed, such as the line from Nyngan to Cobar. The development of the country has to be taken into consideration—
825. *Chairman.*] That is not evidence, Mr. Geddes. You are discussing the question of railway policy.
826. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you think the construction of the line would bring about sufficient traffic to pay interest on its capital and working expenses—if not at the present time, how soon? I should say at once.
827. Have you made any calculations as to the amount of money which you are likely to pay the railways for goods carried to your stores? No, we have not made a calculation of that, but I should say £10,000.
828. Per annum? Yes.
829. Under all the circumstances, you are clearly of opinion that other people will endeavour to follow in your footsteps, and erect stores and warehouses of the description of which you are erecting? I feel sure that they will.
830. Do you think that if the railway is constructed, a considerable local goods traffic will arise? Yes, because of the facilities which would be given there over those at Darling Harbour.
831. Can you inform the Committee what length of water frontage you have purchased at Kirribilli Point? Just over 908 feet.
832. How many wool ships could you berth there at one time? By berthing *echelon* instead of fore and aft, we could berth sufficient to take nearly all the wool that comes from the northern district. We could berth three Orient boats; but they take so much that there would be no necessity for berthing so many in front of the store.
833. How long does the wool season last? Five or six months.
834. Can you inform the Committee whether the wharfage accommodation in Sydney is sufficient at the present time? I think that the wharfage accommodation naturally extends to Darling Harbour, simply because there is not sufficient room at the Circular Quay.
835. The construction of wharves at Lavender Bay would to a large extent supply the demand for accommodation, would it not? Yes.
836. Is there any delay now in shipping wool by reason of there not being sufficient wharf room? At the present time, if one requires to ship wool through A. Lamb & Co., they take it and dump it round to Circular Quay very often, so that a vessel lying at Lavender Bay would be in the same position as a vessel lying at Lamb's Wharf—that is, as far as the buyers are concerned.
837. Do you know what the railway freight would be—you stated the amount of wool? No, except on the basis of the present freights to Darling Harbour.
838. What do you expect them to be? From Newcastle?
839. *Mr. Trickett.*] Yes? The railway freight at the present time is 22s. or 22s. 6d. a ton.
840. *Chairman.*] Is that for wool? Yes.
841. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you worked out the freight for wool? No. We paid £6,000 or £7,000 last year—that was J. H. Geddes & Co.; but this year we have many thousand bales coming to us which we did not have last year—I say £10,000 from the various districts generally. We are especially strong in the northern district, inasmuch as the Messrs. Dangar and the White's have joined our Association.
842. When you said that you thought that you would pay the railways £10,000 a year, is that for wool only? That was for the whole of the lines. I think you might divide that by three for the northern traffic.
843. Then the northern wool traffic would represent something over £3,000? Between £3,000 and £4,000.
844. *Mr. Trickett.*] Was that from Newcastle? No; a great deal of wool is brought direct to Darling Harbour from the north by rail now.
845. *Mr. Dowel.*] What advantage would a wharf at Kirribilli Point have over the wharves at Darling Harbour? The wharf at Kirribilli Point would be a private wharf, while that at Darling Harbour is a Government wharf. The Government could not build a wool store, neither could they build a frozen meat depôt. If they did do that at Darling Harbour the whole of the space would be taken up with the produce from the southern and western districts. We are in our infancy here as far as frozen meat is concerned. I have quoted the figures of what is done in New Zealand to show what we shall come to.
846. You think that there will be a large trade in meat and that consequently you will have to pay the Government a large amount for freight? Yes; but as I have nothing to base it upon; I have made no calculation as to what that would be. I think that we may estimate that more than 100,000 carcasses will be shipped after the first year.

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- J. H. Geddes, Esq.
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847. Can you give the Committee any information as regards the erection of depôts in the interior to provide accommodation for the frozen meat trade;—are you aware whether any have been established? Last week or the week before, six places were mentioned where depôts were being established, under the pressure of necessity. We have 50,000,000 of sheep here, while in New Zealand they have only 15,000,000, and I estimate that last year we sent away £150,000 worth of frozen meat. The Orient boats are not fitted for carrying the number of carcasses which the New Zealand boats will take—they take nearly 40,000 at a time.
848. What are the places to which you refer? Depôts are being established almost every day. At Narrandera they have floated a company and are erecting a depôt. At Tenterfield they are holding meetings, and at Brisbane, I think, they have floated a company. Mr. Buchanan will give you evidence about what they are doing in Narrabri.
849. Do you know of your own knowledge that there are five or six places where depôts are being or are about to be established? Yes.
850. In the northern districts? Well, at Narrabri or Tenterfield, in the northern districts; but where we count two at the present time we shall have twenty-two in twenty years time. The trade in frozen meat has never yet been properly followed up as a business, but it will be.
851. You think that the development of the frozen meat trade in the interior, and more especially in the north, will be very large? Yes.
852. Have you entered into a contract for the warehouse, the plan of which you exhibit? Yes; for the first section of it, representing a third of what is shown on the plan. We had hopes that it would have been finished by November, but as it will not be completed by then we have extended the contract to the 1st January.
853. You propose to go on continually erecting until the building is completed? Yes.
854. You told the Committee just now that £60,000 would be the cost of the whole building? Of the building and the land.
855. When completed? Yes.
856. *Mr. Humphery.*] As designed? Yes. At the present time the contract exceeds £20,000.
857. Is there any other information which you would like to convey to the Committee? Well, I might say that so strongly were my directors impressed with the advantage of erecting a warehouse at the place where I purposed erecting it, that having purchased Beulah, and having found that they could not erect a warehouse there for eighteen months, they purchased Theulda, and so little speculation entered into the concern, that I believe they are quite willing to give the land required for the railway for nothing.
858. That is, if the Government extend the line further? Yes, and although the directors have purchased the land and have accepted the tenders for, and taken the responsibility of the building, they have accepted no shares, and any pastoralist can take an interest in the business on exactly the same terms as those who have purchased the land and have taken the contract for the building.
859. *Mr. Hurley.*] In the event of a railway being constructed to Milson's Point, would the company continue the line on to their own premises at their own cost? The Government at the present time, although it is not generally known, actually pay for the delivery of wool to the stores from Darling Harbour. They had to pay, approximately, on 350,000 bales 3½d. a bale. We would ask the Government to deliver the wool free to our store as they deliver it from Darling Harbour, and consequently it would be no advantage to us to continue the railway, but it would be an advantage to the Government, because they could then deliver the wool by train, without having to pay for the cartage of it.
860. *Mr. Douel.*] Could they deliver it more cheaply by constructing a railway than by taking it on punts? We could not enter into the frozen meat trade properly without having a line of railway down to our warehouse. Mr. Buchanan is an authority on this point, because he owns land, and breeds sheep, and he states emphatically that he believes he will have 200,000 carcasses during the first year.
861. Have you caused any calculation to be made as to the cost of extending the railway from Milson's Point to Kirribilli Point? No; but as a private speculator, I would buy up every piece of land there, knowing that the railway would at least double its value, and if you put £50 a foot on to the land the whole of the cost of the railway would be paid by its increased value.
862. You have made no estimate of what the increased value of the land would be, or the cost of extending the line? No.
863. *Chairman.*] When did your firm buy Beulah? I first bought Beulah.
864. When did you buy it? Two days after the proposal to extend the railway to Milson's Point was decided against by the Committee.
865. Can you tell us about the date—I am not asking you out of curiosity, but I want to see what you paid for the land with a view to comparing that with what we are told the resumptions will cost? About the 1st December.
866. How much a foot did you pay for it? I paid £21,000 for Beulah, and it has a frontage of 570 feet, so that that would make it between £30 and £40 a foot—about £35 a foot.
867. What depth is it? The depth ranges from 300 to 350 feet.
868. It goes back to a street? To Campbell-street—the best street in North Shore.
869. The next property belongs to the late Surveyor-General, Mr. Adams? We paid £50 a foot for that.
870. You say that the Government deliver all the wool sent by railway to the various stores in the city and that the cost of that delivery is included in the railway charges? Yes, that is, the brokers have the wool delivered to their warehouses free; and even with that charge we could deliver our wool over the punt at Kirribilli Point for the same amount of money. We can give the same facilities there as are given on this side. There is one matter I would like to refer to with reference to the buyers. During the wool sales in December the buyers, represented by Germans and Frenchmen, as well as by Englishmen, are in a perfect fever, and we have to work all night, at times, for consecutive nights. When a buyer buys 1,000 bales of wool at a sale he gives an order for that to the dumpers. The dumpers, such is the competition, take delivery of it free, and send perhaps fifty waggons for it. The waggons are continually crying out for their wool, and we are in a perfect fever until it is delivered, while the buyers are in a fever to get the shipping receipts from the dumpers, and they cannot get them until we have delivered the wool, so that we have the whole of them irritated at the same time. But at Kirribilli Point we shall make special arrangements so that the dumpers instead of taking delivery of their wool in waggons will be able to send a barge to hold 250 bales, instead of twenty teams to take delivery of twenty bales at a time. That is recognized by the buyers as an immense advantage.

William Frederick Buchanan, Esq., pastoralist, sworn, and examined :—

871. *Mr. Copeland.*] What are you,—a pastoralist? Yes.

872. Owning squatting country? I am a pastoralist, or squatter.

873. Have you any interest in Geddes' new buildings? Yes; I am a shareholder and director in J. H. Geddes & Co., The Pastoralists' Association.

874. Do you anticipate a very rapid development in the meat export business? I think it must develop as soon as we have established a depôt and given proper facilities for it.

875. Have not several companies been formed at various times for the export of meat? I do not know of any company having been formed especially for that purpose. The Orange Meat Company was formed for the purpose of sending country killed meat to Sydney, as well as to carry on the exportation of meat; but it was established principally to supply Sydney with meat.

876. But they have attempted to export meat, have they not? The project fell through some years ago.

877. Is there any company in existence now which exports meat? The only company I know is the Riverstone Company—Richards' Company.

878. Is that still in existence? I think so. I think that they are the principal people who supply the carcass export trade. Some meat is prepared for export, I believe, at the Fresh Food and Ice Company's works.

879. Whom do they supply? The P. & O. and Orient boats, so I understand, and I think they take 600 or 700 carcasses, and sometimes more, on each trip, but I do not know that positively. They take all that they can prepare, and I heard from Mr. Richards and others that they are not able to prepare enough, but that additional machinery is coming out to meet the larger demand.

880. Is Geddes & Co. one and the same company as the Meat Exporting Company? No, if you alluded to Richards'?

881. Do Geddes & Co. contemplate exporting meat? It is contemplated to erect at North Shore a depôt to receive meat for the purpose of export.

882. That will be part of the business of the company? That is part of the scheme of the company. The left wing of the building is now being erected for the purpose of receiving wool and other produce, but it is proposed to erect premises to deal with the export of meat, and to provide refrigerating rooms.

883. If the Government did not extend their line beyond Milson's Point, would you still carry on the meat export business? We look upon the extension of the railway to Milson's Point as the chief auxiliary in the matter of a meat export trade.

884. But suppose the railway is not extended beyond Milson's Point? We are building close to Admiralty House, and Milson's Point is near that.

885. Suppose the Government did not extend the line beyond Milson's Point, and left the meat there, how would you get it to the new building which you contemplate erecting? We should have to cart it.

886. Would that be a great inconvenience to you? I think it would be a great obstacle in our way. The great idea is to have the meat landed directly into the building—to have it taken there direct by train.

887. When you commenced the undertaking had you any assurance that the railway would be brought round to your building? None whatever, further than that suggested by the natural features of the country and the possibility of the extension of trade and commerce, and the necessity which must eventually arise for meeting its requirements.

888. Do you think that the Government are likely to take the railway to every new warehouse that is erected? No; I do not think they are. I think that they are only likely to take the railway to places that offer inducements for the facilitating of trade, and thus benefit the country.

889. And leave private individuals to fix upon the locality? Decidedly. If private individuals make mistakes they cannot expect the Government to assist them: but if they do not make mistakes, but erect places for the benefit of the country, and the country sees it, I think that it is right that they should give us facilities for increasing the benefit.

890. I suppose you are a large shareholder in this company? I am not a particularly large shareholder in it, though I am as large as any of them. Individually we are not taking large interests, because we wish it to be an extensive thing—more of a co-operative institution. The shareholders are supposed to be recipients of the rebate from the commissions, and so forth—it is to be co-operative more than anything else. There is no proprietary interest that receives any direct benefit.

891. I suppose you contemplate supplying the company with stock yourself? I have never made that part of my calculation. I shall sell my stock wherever I can make most money by them.

892. Can you say what other traffic besides meat the railway would have if we brought it down to Kirribilli Point? I think it would have a large wool trade from the northern part of the colony, as it would give great facilities for taking wool direct to market or for export.

893. Is there any other company or association which is likely to erect buildings at Kirribilli Point. If the Government were to bring the railway down there they would then have to go back again if they intended to take it on to Neutral Bay; what other traffic do you think there would be to your particular warehouse? I do not know of any company that is desirous of building over there for that special purpose, though it is possible that they would see the advantage of doing so. Goods landed there—wool for instance—could be stored as cheaply as it could be stored at Darling Harbour.

894. You do not contemplate the Government making your warehouse the terminus of the railway—you would expect it to go further? It would not interfere with us if it went beyond, so long as it came near us.

895. Is there any likelihood of any traffic going beyond you that you are aware of? I am not aware of any special traffic, but with the increase of population I think it probable that railway communication would have to be extended all the way down the harbour.

896. The only inducement that you know of at the present time for the Government to extend the railway to Kirribilli Point is the existence of your particular business? No; I do not know that that is any special reason.

897. Do you know of any other inducement? I do not know that that is the only one. I think a public benefit would be derived from the extension.

898. Can you tell us what section of the public would be benefited other than your company? I think that all the travelling public would be benefited.

899. By being able to land at your warehouse? Close to there, so that they could get across to the Circular Quay.

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900. Could they not do that at Milson's Point? Yes.

901. What traffic do you think the railway would get by being extended from Milson's Point to Kirribilli Point; would there be any other traffic except that from your business? I do not know of any direct goods traffic other than ours, unless other buildings were erected there. A coal traffic might be formed there. Coal could be put on board the large ships by means of shoots, and thus get rid of the handling to which it is subjected by the lightering system.*

902. Do you think that now that they are exporting wool direct from Newcastle, people would be likely to send it from Sydney instead, if the railway were constructed? I think it is quite possible that people would prefer to send it to the central market, where they would have a chance of sale, and then take the same, or even better advantages in shipping.

903. Have you any reliable information as to the number of bales of wool that come to Newcastle from the northern ports? No; I have not got any statistical information, but that could easily be arrived at.

904. Could you give the Committee any information as to the number of bales of wool which come from Newcastle by steamer and the number which come by train at the present time? No, I cannot.

905. Do you know what the charge is by steamer from Newcastle to Sydney—per ton or per bale? No, I do not. In sending my own wool down I avail myself of the railway, rather than unload at Newcastle and have it handled again. I think it better to send it direct on by rail.

906. Is your wool offered for sale in Sydney? Yes; it was all sold in Sydney.

907. I suppose the majority of those who do not sell in Sydney would prefer to ship from Newcastle? I do not know. I shipped from there for two years; but now I have abandoned the practice, because I think it pays better to ship from Sydney, and for the last two or three years I have shipped from Sydney. I prefer to send it to Sydney. I like to send the wool direct from my sheds into the stores here.

908. From where do you anticipate getting your stock for the meat business—from the north or from the west? From the north, of course, and from as far west as the railway system will go.

909. Why from "the north, of course"—why not from the south as well? So it can; but the whole of the northern lines would come down to the North Shore, making a saving of 10 or 11 miles in distance and the meat would come direct from the up-country slaughtering depôts. Such a depôt could be established to a very great advantage on the Upper Hunter, since that is one of the finest fattening districts in Australia.

910. Could not this meat export business be developed from Newcastle at the present time just as well as from Sydney. Suppose it were found to be a profitable business, what is to prevent people from erecting freezing works at Newcastle and exporting direct from there? There is nothing that I can see to prevent them, but they have not done it, although it is not for want of facilities. A slaughtering depôt could be established on the Upper Hunter, another at Breeza on the Liverpool Plains, another at Tamworth, another at Gunnedah, another at Narrabri, another at Walgett, and another at Dubbo. The meat from all those places would come in on the Northern line, and the districts in which those towns are situated embrace the finest fattening land in New South Wales.

911. *Chairman.*] Not one of those depôts have been established yet? No.

912. They are waiting for the construction of the line to North Shore? I suppose so—they are waiting for something that will help them.

913. *Mr. Copeland.*] Were there not meat-preserving works at Maitland? I think they had tinning establishments there.

914. Was the tinning company at Maitland a success? I do not think so. I think it has been abandoned once or twice, and then started again. It was originally a boiling-down company.

915. Do you know anything of the freezing works in Queensland? Yes; I have heard of those at Rockhampton. I understand the company there paid a very good dividend last year, and that they are going very largely into the business just now. Very large meetings were held in Brisbane the other day, and a large amount of money subscribed for the establishment of companies there.

916. You say that that company has paid a dividend? I think they have paid a very good dividend.

917. It is the first? I think it is about the first.

918. How many years have they been at work there? I think they were tinning there before they commenced the export trade. A company was also started for the export of meat to Java, but it fell through, though I can scarcely tell you the cause. Not because the thing was a failure, as far as the refrigerating system went, but more on account of the management.

919. Do you know whether the pastoralists have joined the Association to any great extent with a view to exporting meat? No. The shares have all gone off very well, and a large number of pastoralists have joined the Association.

920. What is the nominal value of the company? £150,000.

921. In £1 shares? Yes; to be increased as it is required. At present only a portion of the shares are distributed.

922. The whole of the shares are not allotted? No. We do not want all the money yet. Only 50,000 shares have been allotted.

923. On those how much has been paid up? 7s. 6d. on each. A call of 2s. 6d. will shortly be made and the balance per share, as required.

924. That is £25,000? Only 30,000 shares have been put upon the market.

925. But those have all been subscribed for? Nearly all.

926. On those that have been subscribed for 10s. has been paid? No; not 10s. yet, about 7s. 6d.—it has not all been called in yet. We can call in what we want, but we do not wish to call in more money than we require.

927. Would it not be likely to be more profitable to export meat from Newcastle;—would not that save the railway freight between Newcastle and Sydney. If the meat is to come from the north it must come from the north of Newcastle? I cannot see that it would be more profitable to export from Newcastle.

928. Would you not save the railway freight from Newcastle to Sydney? Yes; but we might lose that in other directions. Here we have the Orient and P. & O. Company's boats, which would not go into Newcastle. They are fitted up for the trade, and when they are going out they like to get their meat on board at once.

929. Do you think that those boats would come to your wharf? I think they would; but even if they did not, the transit would be so easy and quick that they could receive the meat on board at any time. At present they have to get the meat down at night, and there is a good deal of bother over it. Then there

are

* NOTE (on revision):—A large general traffic would at once arise if there was a railway.

are other large ships which would come specially for the meat. I have been advised of boats which would be specially laid on for the trade, and some would take 30,000 carcasses away. The coal trade is another great feature in the traffic of the railway. The coal would come direct to the wharf, and be shot on board the steamers, thus saving an immense amount of labour.

W. F.
Buchanan,
Esq.

2 July, 1890.

930. *Chairman.*] Have you given the question of carrying coal any consideration? No; I was never in the trade; but that is done at Newcastle.

931. Do you know the difference in freight between carrying it by rail to the North Shore, and by ship to any part of the harbour? No, I do not exactly; but I know that the facilities would be greater.

932. Would you avail yourself of a great facility at an outlay of 50 per cent.;—because a thing was easy, would you pay 50 per cent. more for it? No; if a large transaction will pay 5 per cent. that is a great consideration. The Orient Company paid 5 per cent. last year as their dividend.

933. *Mr. Copeland.*] You stated just now that 30,000 shares had been allotted? Nearly that number; that is all that were put on the market.

934. Can you say how many of those have been sold? I think that about 8,000 are left.

935. So that only 22,000 have been sold? Yes; no effort has been made to get the others off.

936. In reality you have only about £8,000 of capital actually paid up? Of course, the other is available when we require it.*

937. Do I understand that you have let a contract for the erection of a building at North Shore? Yes, for a portion of it—100 feet square.

938. What is the amount of that contract? About £14,000.

939. You are of opinion that unless a railway is taken to your warehouse it will militate very much against the meat export trade? I think a railway would facilitate the trade. I do not know that it would militate against it if it were not carried there, but it would not give us the same facilities.

940. It would be a great advantage to you if the railway did go there, but not a very great disadvantage if it did not? I think it would be of greater advantage to the meat export of the country if it went there, and I think that that will be one of our principal exports.

941. I suppose you have no idea of what it would cost the Government to take the railway from Milson's Point to your warehouse? No, it is not far, and I do not think that it would cost very much. Facilities could be rendered by the Pastoralists' Association which would render it easier still.

942. I understand that the land on which you propose to erect a building is the property of the company? Yes, we bought it.

943. What was the amount of the purchase money? I think about £16,500.

944. Was that also paid for out of the £8,300 paid up capital? No; six of us bought it.

945. Six of the promoters? No; there are no promoters. We bought it and handed it over to the company. I did not receive anything for my interest in it.

946. I suppose the company has still to pay you for it? Yes; part of it has been paid for in cash and the rest remains on interest.

947. You have not heard of any other company or syndicate which intend to erect business premises in the vicinity of your warehouse? No, we have not entered into negotiations with any. We simply bought the land for the company to build upon. We bought up Geddes' business, and it forms the base of the company. We took over all their buildings and property over here, for which they get 20,000 shares paid up. That is part of the £50,000 I mention. As soon as all the shares are absorbed we will put some more upon the market.

948. Does the £16,500 embrace 908 odd feet of frontage? No, only 300 odd feet. It embraces Theulda. We also bought Beulah, and we hold it independently of Theulda. The same six of us bought Beulah first, but it has nothing to do with the company.

949. *Chairman.*] Beulah does not belong to the company? No.

950. Then you have only 300 feet of frontage? Nearly 400 feet.

951. Beulah does not belong to you? It does not belong to the company.

952. Mr. Geddes told us that you had 900 feet of frontage? That embraces the two properties. The company could buy Beulah if it was found necessary to do so, but it is not theirs at present.

953. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do you think that the large ocean steamers could go alongside your wharf without interfering with the navigation of the river? I think they would be out of the roadway altogether. There is a crescent-shaped inlet there. We looked at it very closely one day. The water is very deep—I think deep enough to allow any large ship to lay alongside.

954. Do you contemplate a wheat export business? Yes; I do not see why we should not have a very large export of meat.

955. It is not likely that that would be sent from Newcastle? I do not think that that is at all more likely than that it would be sent from here. As you increase the shipping facilities so you increase the means of loading.

956. As a matter of fact, do not ships that take wheat take a full cargo of it? I think they take a full cargo, but I was never in the trade.

957. Would the Orient ships be likely to take wheat? I do not know; they might take it from Adelaide. I do not see why they should not. There is no country in Australia better suited for wheat growing than the slopes of the western ranges on the northern and western side. I think the country there is some of the finest wheat growing land in the world; but it has never been used to any great extent, owing to the difficulty of getting the wheat to the sea board.

958. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Is it not a fact that the carcasses of merino sheep sent to England are dark and unsightly, whereas those of cross-bred sheep are clean looking? I have heard from experts that the carcasses of cross-bred sheep look the nicer.

959. That being so—merino sheep give an inferior meat? I do not say that the meat is inferior. I say that it is darker; but I find, from the reports of recent sales in London, that Sydney meat has brought as much as New Zealand meat, or nearly so.

960. Still, as a matter of fact, the merino meat as a rule is dark and unsightly, and brings an inferior price? Heretofore it has done, but latterly it has brought nearly as much as the New Zealand meat.

961. Do you think that we shall ever be able to compete with New Zealand, the Argentine Republic, or Chicago? I think so. There is no reason why we should not breed cross-bred sheep. I breed them very largely, and I fancy that I can compete with New Zealand. 962.

* NOTE (on revision):—Then Geddes and Co.'s business was given in, for which we had to give 20,000 fully paid-up shares, so that our capital paid up this moment represents £28,250.

- W. F. Buchanan, Esq.
2 July, 1890.
962. At the present time we have not many cross-bred sheep here? A sheep will grow to its full size in 18 months or 2½ years, so that you would not have to wait long.
963. We have now merino sheep principally? Yes; but cross-breds are very easily reared.
964. Do you think that people will go in for cross-breds for the meat export trade? I think so. I know that a neighbour of mine is selling his merinos so as to be able to go in for cross-breds. I also think that they will go in for cross-bred sheep very largely in the Illawarra district. We could breed them as well there as they do in Warrnambool.
965. Do you know of a single company which has been formed in the northern districts for the purpose of freezing meat to send to Sydney? No.
966. There is none? Not that I know of.
967. Is any agitation going on about it? Yes.

The following letter was forwarded by Mr. Buchanan in explanation:—

13 Phillip-street, Sydney, July 3rd, 1890.

To the Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works:—

Dear Sir,

With reference to my statement, made yesterday, regarding the cost of the buildings to be erected by The Pastoralists' Association, I find, upon research, that the amount stated, about £14,000, does not include foundations, wharf, canal, &c., the cost of which will bring the cost of the building now in course of erection to upwards of £20,000.

Yours, &c.,

W. F. BUCHANAN.

THURSDAY, 3 JULY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Arthur Samuel Hamand, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

- A. S. Hamand, Esq.
3 July, 1890.
968. *Dr. Garran.*] Are you a recognized member of any engineering institute? I was a member of the Institute of Civil Engineers in 1870.
969. Have you had practical experience in laying out railways? For nearly thirty years.
970. Have you had practical experience in working them? I have been a director of a railway for twelve years.
971. You know all the details as to the cost of running, working expenses, and so forth? I think so.
972. Is the plan before the Committee a fair representation of the route which you mention in the letter sent to the Committee by you? Yes; I think it is very approximate. Of course the plan which I have sent to you is on a very small scale, so that it was difficult to mark it out exactly.
973. I gather from the plan that you would leave the existing line about 9 miles from Hornsby;—you would not go on to the present St. Leonards terminus? At 9½ miles from Hornsby, I think.
974. Then you throw away about a mile of the line already made? I should not quite throw it away. I had not overlooked that point. You could, of course, commence much nearer to St. Leonards' Station; but that would make the line more roundabout. It had occurred to me that before long some line must be made on the north side of the Lane Cove River, and in that event the piece of line running down to St. Leonards' Station could be utilised.
975. Apart from that, in order to get to Milson's Point, you would not avail yourself of it? No.
976. For what purpose do you consider a line might at any time be taken to Lane Cove—on the north side of the Lane Cove River? The district will develop, and in a very short time become full of residences.
977. You are aware that originally the Government surveyors laid out this line to come down to Ball's Head? I cannot say that I am aware of it.
978. At any rate there was a line made out to Ball's Head? Yes.
979. Would this mile that we are speaking of be available for making a descent to Ball's Head? Certainly.
980. You know the route that the surveyors originally laid out from St. Leonards' Station, as it is now, to Cremorne Point? Yes.
981. Have you walked over that route? Not over the Cremorne end of it—not quite up to Cremorne.
982. Have you gone over the portion between St. Leonards' Station and where your line would join it? Yes.
983. Can you make a fair comparison between that line and your line, which is practically a little to the north of it? There will be, if anything, more work upon the Government line.
984. The length is a little greater with your line than with theirs? Not from the point I start from. If you look at the plan a moment you will see that my 12 miles comes almost exactly opposite their 12 miles.
985. From the point where you leave the main line to the head of Long Bay, which is the point where the lines join? The actual mileage of construction is longer.
986. It is not very much longer? No; very little.
987. But yet your gradient is easier than theirs? Yes. I have not seen their section over the Cremorne line, but I imagine that the line must rise after leaving the existing line before it begins to fall.
988. They both leave the existing line at the 9½ mile point, and meet again very near the head of Long Bay? Yes.
989. If your gradient is much easier than theirs, they must have some level or compensating gradients? I think they have a rise in between; I have no rise.
990. Is your descent continuous, or do you allow levels for stations? There would be level portions, of course.
991. Have you put those in, or have you merely left room available for them? I have left room for them in the gradient.
992. You have allowed for them? I have allowed for them: 993.

993. You can ascend from this point at the head of Long Bay with a gradient of 1 in 70? The gradient is very much less on the average—it is only 60 feet in a mile, or 1 in 88. A.S. Hamand,
Esq.
994. Looking at the little peninsula between the two coves in Long Bay, I see that you have avoided the heavy work by going round? I looked at that, and it did not seem to me worth while to cut through the hill, and bridge so many streets. The main thing for the public is the position of the stations, and how you get from one station to another does not matter to them. 3 July, 1890.
995. Stations should be at points to which as much traffic as possible converges? That is the main consideration—to put the stations where they would serve the public.
996. The red circles indicate where you would put the stations? Yes.
997. The one you show at a little past the 11 miles is close to the head of Long Bay; but, except for the bridge crossing to the North Sydney Company's land, that would not be a place for the concentration of traffic? No.
998. You look upon the bridge as bringing traffic from the estate? There would be traffic on the south side as well as on the north side.
999. That would cross the private tramway? Yes.
1000. You would put the station at the intersection with the tramway? Yes.
1001. The other station would be near the head of Willoughby Falls? It is marked at Willoughby Falls, but it is not quite close to the falls; it is in the valley there, on the Cammeray-road.
1002. From there you go in a generally south-west direction through the heart of the already occupied part of St. Leonards? Yes.
1003. In making your estimation of the cost, have you considered that you go right through the well populated part of the district there—that the ground would be very expensive to buy? We should tunnel at that point.
1004. Would the whole of the line be a tunnel between the station at the 12 miles and the next station at the 12½ miles? Not all of it, but nearly all.
1005. By that means you would avoid the expense of purchasing land? Yes.
1006. When you emerge from the tunnel again you have another station? Yes; that is not far off the end of Ridge-street.
1007. *Chairman.*] Ridge-street is where the terminus of the tram is? Yes; this is at the east end of Ridge-street, where it impinges upon the head of the valley at Neutral Bay.
1008. *Dr. Garran.*] You would have another station between that point and Milson's Point? Yes, in the other fork of the Neutral Bay Valley; not very far from Willoughby-street.
1009. You think that that would be well placed for catching all the traffic from the Neutral Bay district? That would take the whole of the traffic from Walker-street.
1010. Then you propose to go right on to the point? Yes.
1011. The part from the head of Lavender Bay to the point is common to your plan and to the Government plan? Yes.
1012. Do you think it important to go as far as the point? I had not considered this North Shore Railway alone. I have been looking at it in connection with the general accommodation of all the suburbs. I sent in a plan to the Royal Commission on the City Railway, a copy of which I hand in. You will see by that that I do not contemplate Milson's Point being a terminus.
1013. Your plan contemplates a bridge? No; my plan contemplates crossing the harbour in a tube laid almost on the surface of the silt, but sunk into it to some extent.
1014. If you laid it on the silt it would be immaterial to you how deep the rock was underneath? Yes.
1015. The sand and mud would give you sufficient bottom? Yes. The main advantage of crossing in a tube is that you have only to descend 60 feet below the water.
1016. But if you were going to use a tube you would have to make a descent in some point on the line? I do that by a helical curve, which you see marked on the plan.
1017. Do you mean a spiral? A helical curve—a spiral. That length of curve is something like seven-eighths of a mile.
1018. You enter this curve? At Milson's Point.
1019. So that your plan contemplates a level line along Lavender Bay to Milson's Point, before coming to the spiral? Starting there to descend on the spiral.
1020. And a circle of the diameter shown will give you the requisite distance to enable you to descend under the water? I go down 1 in 70, cross the water on a level, and rise 1 in 70 on the other side.
1021. On emerging at Dawes' Point do you rise with another circle? I rise 1 in 70 up to Circular Quay. I do not know whether I need go into the whole subject. The main point I wish to insist upon is, that you should never have a terminus if you can avoid it—always try to go on somewhere else.
1022. You would not have a terminus in Sydney? No.
1023. You would have a circular railway? Yes; always take your trains on.
1024. Never pull up to a dead stop in the middle of the city? I have made a calculation by which I estimate that the stopping and going back again of 100 trains a day, at Redfern, is a waste of something like £20,000 a year.
1025. Still, in London they all stop—Charing Cross is a stopping station, and so is the Mansion House? Only for certain trains.
1026. What about Liverpool-street? That must be so, of course, when you are not prepared to go on. Besides there you must remember that the jealousy of the different companies interferes to prevent the working of the lines as a whole; it is quite different here.
1027. Still you do not want to take the big trains from the north circling round the city? I should work them as a part of the suburban service.
1028. But the people from the north do not want to go cruising about the city? I am quite sure that they do not all want to be put down at the same place.
1029. But from that place they could radiate to wherever they wanted to go, and that will answer their purpose? It involves another journey by tram or cab.
1030. Does anybody ever come into the city who does not have to make another journey? At the present time, no; but I would put stations at places which would accommodate everybody.
1031. Your scheme for carrying the railway to Milson's Point is independent of the scheme for crossing the harbour. The latter could be added, or not, as we liked? Yes.
1032. Do you, by your descent, reach the wharf level at the head of Lavender Bay? Yes. 1033.

- A. S. Hamand, Esq.
3 July, 1890.
1033. So that you have the whole of the frontage on the eastern side of Lavender Bay available for wharf purposes? Yes.
1034. Supposing we did not want to make this circular railway of yours, but only wished to bring the passengers to a point at which they could be shipped to Sydney,—do you think it would be necessary to go all the way to the point, or would you land them at the head of the bay? I should bring them to the point.
1035. When they have to go in a steamer—does it matter much whether the journey is one-eighth of a mile more or less? I think so. Why should you not bring your passengers to the nearest point.
1036. But if the cost is pretty considerable, would you not avoid it. The Government has to purchase the whole of this frontage from the head of Lavender Bay to Milson's Point, which will cost a considerable amount of money;—would it not be better if you avoided that? You could, of course, avoid it altogether simply by tunneling.
1037. But without tunneling; suppose you put the passengers on board the ferry at the head of Lavender Bay instead of taking them by railway to Milson's Point, would it make any difference; you must put them on the steamer? Then your steamer would have to call at Milson's Point.
1038. Not necessarily, if another steamer was put on for that traffic? There is no doubt that that might be done. It would be a little inconvenient, but I do not think myself that it is the right way to handle traffic.
1039. Still you must put your people on board a ferry steamer? Yes; if you consider this as a line stopping there, but it cannot stop here.
1040. I am supposing that it does stop here. Until you want to make the line across the harbour, is it well to go to the expense of resuming the land along the eastern side of Lavender Bay? I do not know what the cost of the resumption of that foreshore would be.
1041. You have not gone into the calculation? No; I have no figures to guide me.
1042. The estimates given to us vary from £20 to £50 a foot? It is a lot of money.
1043. Would you face that expenditure in order to save a quarter of a mile in the journey by steamer? At the present time I would not face the expenditure of connecting the line at all—not with the existing traffic. It is the future traffic that will compel you to do this.
1044. Merely for present traffic necessities it is not required? I question whether the line itself is required for present necessities.
1045. If the Government brought the line to Lavender Bay that would add to the value of the land about there? Immediately you bring the line down to North Shore you will develop there precisely the same kind of building as is going on on the southern suburban line right up to Parramatta.
1046. Supposing the Government bring the line to the head of Lavender Bay, which you admit is enough for present purposes, will it be a good policy for them to at once possess themselves of the frontage to the bay, remembering that they will have to buy it some day, and that if they do not buy it now, its value will be enhanced by the improvements which they have created? There would not be a question that the Government should resume it or keep it.
1047. Whether they make the railway or not? They are not obliged to use it for the railway. They can use it for other purposes. The actual width required for a railway to the point would be trifling, but in the making of that railway they might reclaim a certain area which would go a very long way to repay the outlay.
1048. You are of opinion that if the line is ever brought to the head of Lavender Bay it is bound to go on to Milson's Point? Certainly.
1049. You therefore think that it would be good policy to resume the land there without delay? Yes.
1050. But that it is not wanted for the immediate purpose of traffic? No.
1051. You look upon this circular grade and the pipe as the cheapest method of getting across the harbour? I am sure that it is.
1052. Have you formed any estimate, starting from Milson's Point, of the cost of your circle, and of the tunnel under the point, together with the rise until you get on the level at Circular Quay? I have; but not separately—not detached from the rest of the scheme.
1053. Could you tell us roughly what it would cost? I cannot give you the figures at this moment.
1054. Would it amount to £500,000? As far as Circular Quay, yes—including Circular Quay.
1055. The line from the station at Milson's Point to the station at Circular Quay would cost not less than £500,000? That also includes the station at Dawes' Point.
1056. Have you formed any idea as to what it would cost to make a bridge? No, I have not, because I think that a bridge would be the wrong thing, for many reasons.
1057. Do you think that a bridge could be made for £500,000? I think it is more likely that it would cost £1,000,000; but the chief objection to a bridge is that to get an approach you would have to start from about the Town Hall on one side, and from Walker-street at the other side, and the railway will be of no use at all to the population between those points.
1058. We are told that we could get an elevation of 160 feet from Observatory Hill, and that we could get the same level on the other side? But you have to get up to Observatory Hill from somewhere.
1059. From Wynyard-square we could rise enough to cross the harbour at an elevation of 160 feet? I am afraid that it would be one of those tremendously steep gradients.
1060. 1 in 40 or 1 in 50? 1 in 50 is not possible.
1061. At any rate, you are clear in your own mind that Milson's Point is the best place from which to make a circular descent? Yes.
1062. And that Dawes' Point is the best place to strike the land on this side? Yes; it is the shortest crossing.
1063. You do not trouble your head at all about the depth of the rock? It really does not matter.
1064. It would be cheaper to sink the pipe in the mud? It is not mud; it is hard silt.
1065. A great deal of it is mud from the streets? You will find it very hard.
1066. Hard enough to give you all the bottom you want? Certainly.
1067. You would have to sink this pipe low enough to give enough depth of water to enable all kinds of vessels to cross it? The top of the tube would be 50 feet below the water.
1068. Would the tube itself dip, or would it be level? It would be practically level; there would be just enough fall to drain it.
1069. Drainage each way to the shore? Yes.
1070. There would be no fall in the middle? No. It would be much easier to lay such a tube in the water than it would be to construct it in earth or soil permeated by water.
- 1071.

1071. Supposing that the rock were solid at a depth of 50 feet, would it be harder to tunnel through it than to lay this tube? Very much harder.
1072. Can you refer me to any instance in which a tube of this kind has been laid? Not in water; but there are a great number of cases where such tubes have been laid in earth, clay, or gravel, which was pervious to water. In such cases, you had not only the water to deal with, but you had the earth in addition.
1073. Can you refer me to an example of such a submarine railway? I do not know.
1074. Then we should have to make an experiment? There is a railway under the Thames.
1075. Through the Old Thames Tunnel? No, a new one, just finished, going through an iron tube.
1076. That would be an instance that I want? That tube is not made in the water—it is laid in the gravel bed of the river, which is worse than laying it in the water, because you have the weight of the gravel to deal with in addition to the water. You would have to provide for the water outside the gravel.
1077. By your scheme would you have to dredge a channel? Yes; it would be dredged by a special revolving dredge.
1078. You would get the bottom level, and then lay the tube in it? Yes.
1079. What would be the length of the tube from Milson's Point to Dawes' Point? Twenty-five chains.
1080. What would be its diameter? Twenty feet externally.
1081. Would you have one or two tubes? Two—one for each line of rails.
1082. Quite separate from one another? Quite.
1083. You estimate the cost of your line at £350,000 from the point where you leave the Hornsby line to Milson's Point;—does that include everything? Yes.
1084. It includes the cost of land? Yes.
1085. Will there be only one tunnel? There may be a short tunnel under Alfred-street.
1086. The principal tunnel will be between the 12 and the 12½ miles? Yes.
1087. About half a mile in length? I think it would be a little over half a mile.
1088. Let us return for a moment to the question of the tube;—have you made a separate-estimate of that part of the work, which would consist of the cost of the tube, and of laying it? Yes.
1089. Would you mind saying what it is? I do not like to give figures unless I can give them accurately. I have not got the estimate with me, but I shall send it to you.
1090. What do you understand to be the cost of the Government line from St. Leonard's to Milson's Point? I think £260,000 or thereabouts, including the land.
1091. You are £90,000 above that? Yes; but I give you 2 miles more of line.
1092. That makes the journey from Hornsby to Milson's Point 2 miles longer? One mile longer.
1093. But one of the supposed advantages of this line is that it will shorten the journey to Sydney from the north, so that you would lessen that advantage by adding a mile? Shortness of the journey does not always depend upon distance. Sometimes it depends upon the time which you can save on the journey.
1094. Sometimes the longest road round is the quickest road home? Yes.
1095. You have mentioned in your letter that your proposed line would be a help towards a line to Manly? Yes; and I think you ought to take into account the fact that it is really 2 miles towards Cremorne.
1096. Your line to Manly would go to the Spit? Yes.
1097. Would you propose to cross there by a bridge? You must do that.
1098. If you take the railway there you must have a bridge? I think so. I would not like to say that I am now pronouncing a final opinion on the point, but I think that the land there is suitable for a bridge.
1099. At the head of Willoughby Falls you join the Government survey to Cremorne? I cross it.
1100. You could work into it with a curve? I do not know the levels of the Government survey to Cremorne; but I imagine that it is on a higher level than mine.
1101. Have you followed the Government line from Willoughby Falls to Cremorne? No.
1102. But you have dove-tailed that in as your method of getting to Cremorne? I have no doubt that it can be accommodated to that line.
1103. You have not looked into the line? I do not know the levels of the Cremorne branch, so I could not tell you whether my line could join it.
1104. I understood that you recommended your line as being equally convenient for getting to Cremorne? I know that from that point a line can be made quite as easily as the Government line.
1105. From the head of Willoughby Falls to Cremorne would be somewhat longer than if we extended the Government line from the head of Lavender Bay to Cremorne? I daresay it would.
1106. It would be a more expensive way of getting to Cremorne? Which?
1107. By going to Willoughby Falls? I do not think so.
1108. It would be a greater length of journey? I think it would be found easier, and I think that you would find the outlay less.
1109. You think that the greater distance would be compensated for by lighter work? Yes.
1110. Though the length will be greater the cost would not be greater? I do not think so.
1111. Do you think that from the head of Lavender Bay to Milson's Point there is shore-line enough to answer all the requirements of both goods and passenger traffic? Certainly not of goods traffic. In the first place there is not sufficient depth of water, nor is there space for the vessels to lie outside the wharfs.
1112. Lavender Bay is as large as Sydney Cove? It may be nearly as large, but I should say that it is not quite as large.
1113. If Sydney Cove has been large enough for the trade of Sydney for the last 100 years, and big steamers have been going in there for the last ten years, why should Lavender Bay not be suitable? I do not see very many ordinary commercial ships coming in to the Circular Quay. I see them going to Darling Harbour, Dawes' Point, and Miller's Point.
1114. Would there be as much accommodation in Lavender Bay as in Sydney Cove? You might make it, but you would not get the same depth of water in the middle.
1115. We are told that there is any quantity of water in Lavender Bay? The shape of the bay is different.
1116. I think that if you look at the map you will see that the two bays are very much alike? Now that I look at the map I see that Lavender Bay looks a good deal smaller. If you put wharves up there you take a certain amount of the water space away, and thus reduce the area.
1117. Would you recommend Lavender Bay as a place for shipping coal from the north? Certainly not.

A. S. Hamand,
Esq.
3 July, 1890.

- A. S. Hamand, Esq.
3 July, 1890.
1118. For what reason? There are plenty of other places that are far better.
1119. What makes it objectionable, supposing we get the railway there? In the first place it is already occupied by residences. I do not think that we should destroy residential property in order to make wharves, and erect coal shipping staiths, when we have plenty of space not far off in either direction.
1120. Do you think that if there was a coal shipping place there the coal-dust would spoil the neighbourhood for residential purposes? It would within half a mile of the wharf.
1121. Do you think it would have any disagreeable effect on Sydney? I do not think so.
1122. Do you know how far fine coal-dust travels? A very long way; it blackens the country for a long distance.
1123. Have you made any experiment in connection with the matter? No.
1124. Would not a north-east wind bring some of the fine coal-dust over to Sydney? That is quite possible, but the winds from that quarter do not seem to me to blow continuously enough to do that very much.
1125. You think that the North Shore people would feel the nuisance most? I think they would be blackened.
1126. Would it damage the district for residential purposes to ship wool from there? No; not very much.
1127. You do not want the whole length of the shore from the head of Lavender Bay to Milson's Point for a passenger station? I do not think that you want more than a short length at the point for a passenger station.
1128. Would 800 feet be enough? Certainly.
1129. You run along the edge of the water for the whole distance, but you do not want all that land? No; you do not require it for the railway, but it could be utilized with the railway there.
1130. What way would you utilize it? It depends upon where you make the railway. If you made the railway in a cutting you would have all the frontage to spare.
1131. But the probability is that the cliff would be cut down and levelled? Then you would have all the space outside of the railway to spare for general wharf purposes.
1132. Wharf purposes would be the only purposes to which it could be put. You would have 50 or 100 feet of level land, and you could do little more with it than construct wharves and warehouses there? You could not do anything more with it.
1133. If you have been the director of a railway perhaps you have considered the question as to the probable traffic which will be brought down to the water by the proposed line? That depends very much upon how the traffic is going to be worked.
1134. You are aware that it is a slightly shorter line to the water of the harbour than the route round by Ryde? Yes.
1135. Do you think that that shortening will induce the commerce, all things being considered, to go to the north side of the harbour instead of coming, as it does now, to the south side? I believe that the difference in length is something like 10 or 11 miles, but I do not think that 11 miles is worth considering.
1136. We were told by a witness yesterday that the Government undertakes to deliver wool and produce into people's stores in Sydney, wherever they may be;—in that case, would it matter to them which way it was brought? Not in the least—it could not. Besides, traffic rates are not always settled exactly by mileage. The rate from Sydney, let us say, to any place beyond Newcastle, would be the same, whether the goods were sent from the north shore or from the south shore.
1137. Supposing you were working this railway, would you break the trains at Hornsby, to send half of the trucks down to North Shore? Certainly not. I should concentrate all my goods traffic, and all my wool traffic, and whatever there was, as much as possible, at one dépôt.
1138. Concentration means economy, but dispersion means expense? Yes.
1139. Supposing the two lines were made and put under your management, and supposing it were part of your contract to deliver wool, tin, horns, and so forth, to some store in Sydney, would you concentrate the trade in Darling Harbour until your space there was too small? Yes.
1140. And you would not seek another dépôt until you were pressed for room? And then I should get a place as near as possible to the original dépôt.
1141. You are of opinion that it will not pay the Government to split the traffic at Hornsby unless it has some inducement in the way of extra trainage? Of course the public idea is that by having a line 11 miles shorter they will be able to get the rates reduced somewhat; but that cannot be so. In a general way you would have to haul 11 miles for a lesser rate, but Darling Harbour would get the advantage of any reduction.
1142. You mean that the rate for both places would be the same? Yes.
1143. The Government will not have two rates? I do not think that it is possible.
1144. From Tamworth to Sydney there would be a specified rate? Yes, to either point.
1145. If it will not pay the Government to split the traffic, will it pay the consignors to ask for it to be split? If there was a special traffic of sufficient importance to warrant a train being run separately for it it might pay the Government to work the line in that way, but I doubt whether that would be the case.
1146. There would have to be a whole train-load to one place;—it would not pay to split at Hornsby? They would never do it, and if they did the rate would be the same.
1147. In your estimate of £350,000 for the line, have you divided the cost of land and resumption from the cost of works? Yes; I did divide it, of course, in making it.
1148. Could you give us the figures;—I have not got them with me, but I will send them to you.
1149. You say that you would not take coals to Lavender Bay. Have you got in your mind any place where, supposing a coal traffic should spring up from the north, you would ship coal? The coal might either go to Cremone, or it might go to one of the bays further west.
1150. To Ball's Head Bay or to Berry's Bay? Yes.
1151. Either of those would suit well? Very well indeed.
1152. Supposing coal should come from the north, do you think it would be better to ship it from the north or from the south side of the harbour? I think it would be best to keep the whole of the coal shipping in one place, whether it came from the north, south, or west. I do not believe that any coal will ever come from the north by rail; it will probably all come from the south.
1153. The coal from the south must necessarily be shipped from the south side; so, therefore, we must have cranes and staiths on this side of the harbour? Yes; and I do not believe that you will ever require
1154.

1154. It being essential for us to ship from the south, you think that we had better concentrate all the traffic here? Yes.
1155. There would be no advantage to shippers in having two sets of wharves? No.
1156. Are you at all acquainted with the coal shipping trade in England? Yes.
1157. Does it bear any analogy to the coal shipping trade here? It bears some analogy, of course; but the quantities there are rather immense.
1158. The coal harbours in England are coal harbours specially;—they do not ship coal from London? No.
1159. Do they ship it from Liverpool? No; they do from Birkenhead, sometimes.
1160. Do the ships ever get coal brought in by railway, and have it put on board at the docks for cargo purposes? Where?
1161. In London? By railway?
1162. Yes? Occasionally.
1163. But there is no large trade of that kind? No.
1164. Ships going out of London do not, as a rule, carry coal for freight? No, never.
1165. But ships coming out from here do carry coal as freight? Yes; or they would if they had it to carry.
1166. *Mr. Trickett.*] What are your general views as to the desirability or otherwise of extending this railway from its present terminus? I think it ought to be extended.
1167. Have you considered the question of tram connection? Yes, I have.
1168. What do you think about that? I think it would be wrong to endeavour to work a passenger traffic of any magnitude by that tram service—I mean, of course, the projected tram extension to St. Leonards' Station.
1169. You think that that would be a mistake? I think so.
1170. Do you look upon the proposed extension in the light of a passenger extension, or of a goods extension? Mainly of a passenger extension.
1171. You do not attach much importance to the goods aspect of the question? Not at the present time, but it is my opinion that in the course of twelve years the trade of Sydney will double itself, and, therefore, I look forward to the possibility of the north side of the harbour coming out more boldly with a goods trade.
1172. And taking that view you think the railway should come in the direction you advocate, in preference to that suggested by the Government? Yes. I think, apart from the question of goods traffic, the line which I have suggested is more calculated to develop the district and to accommodate the public, and I think that in the course of a few years there will be more people residing along the line which I propose to make than along the Government line.
1173. Can you tell us the extra length of your line? It makes the distance from Hornsby 1 mile more.
1174. Where would you make your passenger terminus? At Milson's Point.
1175. Right at the point? At the point itself.
1176. On the western or on the eastern side? On the western side.
1177. What area do you think would be necessary for the purpose of providing station accommodation? If it were not a terminal station, probably some 4 or 5 acres would be enough.
1178. But looked at as a terminal station? You would want more than double that—10 or 12 acres.
1179. Is Milson's Point a suitable place for constructing a station at? No; it is an awkward place at which to arrange a terminal station.
1180. By reason of its narrowness? Yes, and also because of its height above the water.
1181. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What induced you to lay out your line on the eastern side of the North Shore? Do you mean why did I diverge?
1182. What induced you to go on that side instead of on the western side, as the department proposed to go? I considered the question as to which line would accommodate the public best.
1183. Do you think, then, that there is a larger population on the eastern side? There is already more population there than on the Government route.
1184. And the descent to the water is very much easier? That, of course, is one of the main reasons for the deviation—the easier gradient.
1185. Do you propose that a portion of your line shall be utilized afterwards as a line to Manly and Pittwater? It would in any case be the beginning of a line to Manly and beyond, and it would also serve to connect Cremorne.
1186. If your station were brought to Milson's Point, could you make the spiral descent which you have mentioned? It would be a continuation of the line, but the station at Milson's Point would cease to be a terminal station, and would become a through station.
1187. *Mr. Copeland.*] I suppose your scheme of a spiral descent could be availed of if the Government proposition were carried out? It could.
1188. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you made yourself acquainted with the proposal now before the Committee? The only one with which I am acquainted is that which is shown on the lithographed plan attached to the report of the Committee.
1189. You propose to increase the length of that line, as I understand, by 2 miles? By 1 mile.
1190. What is the length of your line altogether? I think that it is 13 miles 68 chains from Hornsby.
1191. Where would your terminus be? At Milson's Point.
1192. What is the total length of your line? Do you mean the additional mileage besides what is already constructed?
1193. Yes? Something like 4 miles.
1194. Have you made yourself acquainted with the value of the land at North Shore? Yes, pretty well.
1195. And you think that you have allowed sufficient in your estimate for resumptions? I think so.
1196. Where would your line strike the level in Lavender Bay? Strike the level of what?
1197. The water. You come down with a grade to Lavender Bay—where would your level run be there? Where would the gradient cease?
1198. Yes? About halfway between Lavender Bay and Milson's Point.
1199. For what length of run have you made provision in Lavender Bay? For something like a quarter of a mile.

- A. S. Hamand, Esq.,
3 July, 1890.
1200. How many tunnels do you have? There is one tunnel through the summit, and a very short one under Alfred-street.
1201. What would be the length of those tunnels? Perhaps three-fourths of a mile altogether.
1202. What would be the height of the mouth of your tunnel at the northern end? I cannot tell you.
1203. Have you taken any levels at all? Yes; but I do not carry all these small figures in my head.
1204. How far would your line extend from Willoughby Falls? I have marked it upon the plan—it is not a very great distance.
1205. Do you know where the bridge is that has been constructed over in that direction? Do you mean the suspension bridge?
1206. Yes? I do.
1207. What distance will your route go from that bridge? Perhaps 100 yards from the end of it.
1208. That is your proposed terminus? No; the line has no terminus.
1209. Is there any population at all along the route which you advocate? Between the 12-miles point marked on the plan and the terminus I should say that there was a great deal of population, but between the 12-miles point and the junction with the existing line there is very little at the present time—that is to say on the first half of the route there is very little settlement, and on the second half there is a great deal.
1210. Will you be good enough to explain to the Committee what population would be served by your line? You know where the Cottage Hospital is, on the North Sydney-road. There would be a station not very far from that, and that is not very far from a good deal of population.
1211. That is one portion? That will be the first station on the new route. At the next station there is no population at all, but at the one after that there is some population.
1212. Can you inform the Committee the amount in numbers? Well, I see streets being laid out and houses being erected, but I do not know the number of the population.
1213. You referred, in some answers which you gave to Dr. Garran, to a proposal for a bridge;—where would you propose that that bridge should be intercepted by the line? I proposed no bridge.
1214. You said that a bridge would have to be constructed at a certain point, and I do not think that you made it very clear where. You have not considered the question? You mean that it was a supposition?
1215. Yes? It would have to start from the head of Lavender Bay, at Blue's Point somewhere.
1216. You stated that you thought the bridge would cost £1,000,000 to construct? I have not considered the subject sufficiently to say. I know very well that there have been various estimates.
1217. I will ask you, as an engineer, why should a bridge from this particular point cost more than the bridge over the Hawkesbury, which cost £460,000;—would it be more difficult to erect—would it have larger spans? It is not the bridge so much as the approaches. No doubt the span would be a very large one—much larger than those at the Hawkesbury.
1218. Can you inform the Committee what would be the relative cost of a tube and a bridge? Yes. I should think that a tube would only cost half as much.
1219. *Mr. Garrard.*] That would include the approaches to the spiral descent? Oh, yes.
1220. *Mr. Dowel.*] What advantages do you claim for a grade of 1 in 70 or 1 in 80? Over a grade of 1 in 40?
1221. We are to have 1 in 50? Then your line will cost more money.
1222. What are the advantages which you claim for a grade of 1 in 70 over a grade of 1 in 50? Do you mean in point of haulage, or how?
1223. In point of haulage? In the first place a grade of 1 in 40 is risky and dangerous, and in the next place you can haul up a very much heavier load on a 1 in 70 grade than you can on a 1 in 40 grade, or you can take the same load of a 1 in 70 grade at twice the speed which you can take it up a 1 in 40 grade.
1224. What are the special advantages which you claim for your proposal? Really, I have set them out in my letter, and if you do not mind I will refer you to that.
1225. Is the route which you propose the route which the residents of Manly want;—is it what they have been agitating for? I cannot tell you.
1226. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Could you inform the Committee whether the spiral descent is an original idea of your own, or has such a thing been carried out in any other part of the world? I might say that it is a common thing. On the St. Gothard Railway, which crosses the Alps between Switzerland and Italy, I think there are four spirals on the one side and three on the other. They are put in for the purpose of gaining an additional length and avoiding a heavy gradient. The valley there rose too quickly, so they put in a spiral to get to a higher level before proceeding up it.
1227. What would be the diameter of the circle? 24 chains.
1228. And have you ample room at Milson's Point? It is 32 chains wide at the widest point.
1229. And on the Dawes' Point side are you able to rise without a spiral? There is sufficient length between Dawes' Point and the Circular Quay to allow us to get up without a spiral.
1230. With a grade of what? 1 in 70.
1231. Then the ascent or descent will not be more than 1 in 70 on either side? No.
1232. The gradient to get under the water will actually be less than will be required to run down from Hornsby to Milson's Point? Yes.
1233. Have you any idea of the grades which have been suggested in case of the construction of a bridge? I have seen nothing better than 1 in 40.
1234. Then your grades would be less than those suggested to Parliament for the approaches to a bridge? I think so. What is more, this particular line would earn more money than any other line you could propose, because it would go where the traffic is, and would pick it up.
1235. Whereas a bridge would have to be constructed wherever the conformation of the ground offered facilities? Yes.
1236. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is your estimate of £500,000 to bring the railway over to the Sydney side? I will send you the estimate in detail. From memory I think that it would cost £500,000 to extend the line from the terminus at Milson's Point, through tubes, across the harbour to the Circular Quay.
1237. That is in addition to the £350,000? Certainly.
1238. So that the cost of extending the line from a mile back from the present terminus to the Circular Quay would be about £850,000? Yes.
1239. *Mr. Copeland.*] How does this tube of yours get its level again at Dawes' Point;—how does it emerge from the water? It joins up to the rock.

1240. It continues a grade of 1 in 70 until it meets the rock, and then pierces the rock on the same grade until it comes to daylight? Yes. A. S. Hamand,
Esq.
1241. About where would it emerge into daylight—at Dawes' Point? It would come nearly up to the Circular Quay first. There would be daylight at Dawes' Point itself, because I propose to build the station there at the lower end of Fort-street. 3 July, 1890.
1242. You would continue the tunnel from Dawes' Point? Yes, because the ground there is so high.
1243. But it would take from Dawes' Point to the Circular Quay to run out your levels? Yes.
1244. In crossing the harbour of course the tube would be level all the way? Yes; that would be the easiest part of it.
1245. Would not the weight of the tube be likely to make it curve and sink into the mud? The difficulty would be to put weight enough into the tube to keep it down. You must remember that that tube would displace a column of water having a diameter of 20 feet, and put air in its stead. The air would give a certain amount of buoyancy to the tube, which would have to be made heavy enough to counterbalance the displacement.
1246. Still there would be the pressure from water above? It would be the pressure of 50 feet of water, but that goes on all round.
1247. Then you think that the tube would remain constantly in one position—that it would not be likely to sink? I am sure of it.
1248. Would it remain so when the train was passing over it? That would have no effect upon it.
1249. You said a little while ago that you were quite sure that there would be no coal traffic from the north? I do not know that I said that I was sure, but I said that it seemed to me one of the improbabilities. I do not see how they can haul coal over that railway.
1250. Would there be any more difficulty in hauling coal from Wyong than from Lithgow, on the Western line? No, no more difficulty—there would not be so much difficulty.
1251. If they bring coal from Lithgow, why should not they bring it from Wyong or Lake Macquarie? Because I think the southern coal is destined to displace all those coals that are farther away.
1252. All the northern coal? Yes, certainly for railway carriage.
1253. Do you not think that it would be cheaper to bring coal from Lake Macquarie to the North Shore by train than to take it to Newcastle, and then pay freight from Newcastle to Sydney? Yes, that might be; but I do not know.
1254. I suppose that you are aware that there is coal not more than halfway between Sydney and Newcastle—that the coal beds extend south of Newcastle for nearly half the distance? I know that.
1255. At a workable depth of 800 feet there is coal for over 40 miles south of Newcastle? In any case it would be much further away than the southern coal.
1256. Than the Metropolitan or Coalcliff coal? Yes.
1257. Suppose a trade in sawn timber and logs were to spring up, which do you think would be the most suitable dépôt for it; do you think that there would be any place for it in Lavender Bay? There would be accommodation there, but I do not think that it would go there,
1258. Where do you think that it would go? Round on the Darling Harbour side, where there is now a great deal of it—to Pyrmont. Nothing is more difficult than to move trade from one place to another.
1259. You think that the trade does not follow the railway? It is very often a long time about it.
1260. The Americans are supposed to be a smart people, and they generally hold to that doctrine? You are talking about the opening up of the country, but what you propose to do here is to put the North Shore into competition with the south shore, which is a different thing altogether.
1261. In any case I suppose it would only be the right hand competing with the left, seeing that it is a Government affair? Yes.
1262. Whatever trade is developed on the North Shore would to a great extent be taken from the south shore? For some time, but I think the time will come when the North Shore will develop in commercial matters.
1263. Speaking in general terms, without committing yourself too closely, do you think the North Shore Railway is a venture which is likely to pay the Government for its construction? Yes, I think so. I should certainly advise its construction.
1264. Would you like to take shares in it yourself? That is another question altogether. Before doing so I should like to know something about how it is to be worked. There is one point on which I have not touched. When you make railways the proper thing is to get as much mileage as you can, because all the rates and fares—passengers' fares at any rate—are based upon the mileage.
1265. So you would adopt the practice of circle-sailing? No; but I would not carry people up a 1 in 40 gradient for the same fare as I would carry them up a 1 in 70 gradient for—it is not right.
1266. You would rather make the distance longer and have an easy grade, and charge the people rather on the distance than on the cost of construction? Especially if I could give additional accommodation by making the line a little longer.
1267. *Mr. Garrard.*] What are your reasons for proposing a double tube instead of a single tube? I have several reasons.
1268. Would you mind stating them? In the first place, for all underground railways I should build each line with a single tunnel, because a train passing through a single tunnel drives out the air at one end and sucks it in at the other after it, thus keeping up a continual current, and assisting the ventilation. In the second place, two trains in different tubes could not possibly collide.
1269. Do I understand that your spiral descent would also be double? Oh, yes.
1270. Would not that add materially to the cost? I do not think it makes any difference. As a matter of fact the cube excavated, and the quantity of the lining of the tunnels would be very nearly the same whether you build two small ones or one large one.
1271. Would it be necessary in the tunnels to provide apertures for the escape of smoke and to allow ventilation, or do you apprehend that the rush of the train would clear the tunnel? The longest length unventilated in my proposed tunnel would be, perhaps, 30 chains— $\frac{3}{8}$ ths of a mile—and that is nothing.
1272. Has not the St. Gothard tunnel, to which you have referred, been found exceedingly objectionable owing to the accumulation of smoke in it? The St. Gothard tunnel is $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, and there is some slight difficulty there with the ventilation, but that is a double-line tunnel, and the coal used in the locomotives is what they call brick coal, made up with slack, tar, and other substances. It is a composite fuel.

- A. S. Hamand, Esq. 1273. Is not the coal used on the Northern line very dirty? It does not emit such a terrible smoke as that patent fuel. The smell of burning tar is worse than anything.
- 3 July, 1890. 1274. Is it not a fact that one of the principal objections to the underground railway in London is the want of ventilation and the nuisance of the smoke? They do not use coal there; they use coke. On some of the lines they use anthracite coal, which makes no smoke, and which contains a great deal of sulphur.
1275. Has not the smoke been a nuisance, and does it not militate against the success of the underground lines? There is no question as to their success. They carry 140,000,000 people a year.
1276. You do not anticipate any serious nuisance from the use of coal on this line? It would not be necessary to use coal. We might use coke. I do not anticipate the least difficulty. The principal section of the underground tunnel in London which is affected in the way you mention is three-quarters of a mile long, and contains a double line of rail. There is a train through it every minute, and these trains churn up the smoke and make such a confusion in the air that it never gets out. This was the length of the Metropolitan Railway which was first constructed, and in succeeding lengths they have remedied the nuisance to a large extent.
1277. Will you strike the Circular Quay at a level or overhead? I go below. I put the level of the rails 10 feet below high-water, and I raise the whole of the southern end of the Quay 4 feet.
1278. You do not interfere with the level of the roadway in any way? I think it would be an act of vandalism to put a viaduct there, or to interfere with the picturesque.
1279. Does that usually enter into the calculations of railway engineers? I think it ought to do so, though it does not do so always.
1280. *Chairman.*] Did you travel along the route proposed by the Government from the present railway station to Milson's Point? Not immediately upon the staked line. I walked over the ground, and touched the line at various points—that is all that I can say. I know the country pretty well.
1281. Do you think that your proposal would serve a greater number of people than the Government proposal would serve? I am sure of it.
1282. And with your improved grades I suppose you would take people from Milson's Point up to where you join the Hornsby line quicker than the Government could on their line? Although I should have a mile longer, the journey to Chatswood would be effected in quite as short, if not in a shorter time, by my route than by the Government route.
1283. You do not anticipate that there will be any goods traffic on the line except the local traffic from Milson's Point to Hornsby? That is all.
1284. You think that the line will never develop the goods traffic from the north as against Newcastle and Darling Harbour? No.
1285. Having the railway where it is now, you think that we must bring it to the water somewhere in order to make it pay? We must.
1286. The present line will never pay working expenses or interest? Interest is out of the question. I do not suppose that it pays working expenses at the present time.
1287. Do you think that the district will justify the proposed extension? I do. I think that it is a very valuable residential district.
1288. If there is to be no goods traffic, or only goods traffic of a very limited character, and the Government line is adopted, will there be any necessity for taking it the whole way to Milson's Point;—would it not answer just as well to come halfway down to Lavender Bay? I do not think so.
1289. Why? Because I think you should come as near to Sydney as you can get.
1290. Then what are you to do with the steam-ferry service there? If you continue the railway across the harbour the steam-ferry service will suffer.
1291. We can only deal with the proposal before us to bring the railway to Milson's Point. We have heard all you have to say as to the advisability of going on; and now what I want to know from you is, whether the line would not be equally remunerative if it were brought halfway along Lavender Bay as if it were brought to Milson's Point? I think it would be a lame affair to do that.
1292. Suppose the railway is brought to Milson's Point, what is to become of the ferry service? Of course, if the railway goes to Milson's Point the passengers will get out of the train and jump into the steamer, just as they do now with the tram.
1293. Is there sufficient space there, do you think? Oh, yes.
1294. That would be for passengers, but not for goods? Not for goods in any case. There is no room there for goods.
1295. Would there be room for goods in Lavender Bay further up? There would be enough room for local traffic, but for traffic of a large description there would not be room.
1296. Do you think that it might be made by cutting down the hills right up to the Lane Cove-road. To make a railway, a good deal of the land at Lavender Bay will have to be cut down? Some of it; but the Government purpose to have a viaduct across the baths.
1297. Coming out on to the level at Lavender Bay? Yes.
1298. You do not think that it would be wise to stop there, but that we should go right on to the point? I certainly should not stop there.
1299. Did you prepare a section of your plan? A somewhat rough one. I can let the Committee have a copy of it.

TUESDAY, 8 JULY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).	
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.	

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

John Duff, Esq., Chief Inspector of Forests, sworn, and examined:—

1300. *Chairman.*] You are attached to the Colonial Secretary's Department? Yes.
1301. Do you know why you were summoned to give evidence—were you consulted before you were summoned? It was through Mr. Barling that I came.
1302. He expressed a wish that you should give evidence here? Yes.
1303. About what? Respecting the timber on the proposed line of railway.
1304. Between Milson's Point and Pearce's Corner, or on the northern line? Mr. Barling did not specify which.
1305. Is there a large timber trade round Gosford and Cooranbong at the present time? The trade is not as large as it was several years back.
1306. Is there a large area of forest land there? Yes; between Gosford and Newcastle there are forest reserves, embracing a total area of 88,374 acres.
1307. Does that stretch away to Cooranbong and East Maitland? Yes.
1308. At the back of Newcastle? At the back of Newcastle.
1309. What is the character of the country—is it soft or is it hardwood? It is hardwood chiefly.
1310. There is no softwood there? Scarcely any softwoods near Newcastle, but there are softwood or brush forests in the vicinity of Gosford, Ourimbah, Wyong, and Cooranbong.
1311. You say that a great deal of timber in the past has been taken from that district? Yes, and especially from close to the railway line and to the main and minor roads.
1312. To your knowledge, has there been a falling off in the trade of late years? There has been.
1313. Since you have occupied your present position? Yes.
1314. To what do you attribute that? There has been a depression in the timber trade throughout the colonies, but I attribute it principally to the importation of American timbers of late years. They are much more easily wrought, and they are cheaper than our colonial hardwoods, though, of course, they are not so durable. Iron, of late years, has also largely superseded timber for building and fencing purposes.
1315. How far is this forest of 80,000 acres from Sydney? That area embraces the whole of the forest reserves between Gosford and Newcastle.
1316. How far is the most remote part of this forest from Sydney? The nearest is at Gosford.
1317. I said the farthest—is it 100 miles? I suppose it would be about 100 miles.
1318. Is the timber suitable for ordinary purposes?—Yes; there is excellent timber throughout the district.
1319. And do you mean to say that the American trade can beat that? No. I think the use of American timbers will only last for a while, and they will only be used for indoor purposes. It is also intended to plant forests of the leading species of useful American timbers, which will ultimately have the effect of largely reducing the quantity of these timbers imported.
1320. The American timbers are softwoods? Yes.
1321. No hardwood comes here from America? None that I am aware of. Hickory is imported for coach and buggy building, and American ash for tool handles.
1322. Is there much timber in those reserves suitable for building and other purposes? Yes; there is a great deal.
1323. I suppose the bad roads all through the district render it very difficult to get timber to market from those reserves? Yes, it is very difficult, especially in the loose, soft soil in the brush forests.
1324. Do you imagine that if that railway were taken to North Shore it would have the effect of developing the trade more than the existing line does? I think the proposed line would increase the trade in timber wonderfully, especially towards the North Shore.
1325. Why? The line would pass through good timbered country.
1326. But does it not do so now? Yes; but it only takes the timber to Sydney, Newcastle, Maitland, and Singleton, chiefly. If the line were tended, as proposed, I think it would take it direct to the North Shore.
1327. For what purpose? The line would enable the residents upon it to forward their timber to market.
1328. What market? At North Shore, chiefly.
1329. You think that if the line were extended to the North Shore a direct local market would be opened up there? Yes.
1330. But it would not help to develop the timber trade beyond that? No, not beyond that.
1331. Is there anything else which you can tell us about this subject? I have furnished a report upon the timbers of the whole of this district as far as I can give information about them.
1332. When was it prepared? I finished it this morning.
1333. You give a description of the timbers? Yes.
1334. With their botanical names and their local names? Yes; and the names of the reserves, with the number and area of each.
1335. I see that there are timber reserves in the district with a total area of 88,374 acres? Yes.
1336. And the revenue derived from them since 1883—seven years—has been £1,477 3s. 6d.? Yes. An immense quantity of the timber from that district has been cut on private land, and more, I think, than from Crown land or from forest reserves.
1337. You hand in this report to the Committee? Yes. [*Report handed in.*]
1338. You think that the extension of the railway to the North Shore will afford a local market at that place? Yes.
1339. And to that extent it may develop the trade? Yes.
1340. But no more? No.

J. Duff, Esq.
8 July, 1890.

1341.

- J. Duff, Esq. 1341. *Mr. Garrard.*] Is there any export of this hardwood to any other colony, or to any other place in the colony? Some timber has been shipped direct from this district to China, Victoria, and New Zealand, but the major portion of it goes to Sydney, Newcastle, Maitland, and Singleton.
- 8 July, 1890. 1342. Do you think that if the line were constructed to the deep waters of Port Jackson it would lead to a development of the export trade in timber? Yes, to the other colonies, and especially to Victoria.
1343. There is a dearth of good hardwood in Victoria? Yes.
1344. And that colony largely draws its supplies from New South Wales? Yes.
1345. You think that if the line were constructed to the deep waters of Port Jackson it would lead to a development of the export of timber from this district? Yes.
1346. But they have now the opportunity of taking their timber to the deep water of the harbour at Darling Harbour? Yes.
1347. You therefore think that the shortening of the journey would materially improve their position in exporting timber? I am not certain that it would.
1348. You do not think that a shortening in distance of a few miles would very much improve their position? No, I do not think so.
1349. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What hardwoods are there in the district? I have furnished a complete list of them in the report.
1350. Do you include ironbark? Ironbark, spotted gum, blue gum, grey gum, turpentine, swamp mahogany, red mahogany, &c.
1351. Many of these are not timbers which are used for building houses? Some of them are not.
1352. But there would be a demand at North Shore for timber for building houses? Yes; the principal timbers sent from the district are ironbark, blackbutt, and spotted gum.
1353. *Mr. Copeland.*] To what distance does your district extend? I go throughout the colony; I am Chief Inspector.
1354. Do you know how many sawmills there are at work between Sydney and Newcastle? There were at one time as many as twenty at work between Gosford and Newcastle, but I believe that there are now only six mills at work in the district.
1355. Do you know where those are? There are two sawmills at Wyong, one at Ourimbah, one at Wyee, one at Dora Creek, and one now being erected at Tuggerah railway platform.
1356. Do you know the Wyong Estate? I do.
1357. What sort of forest is there there? The timber in that locality is about the best on that line of railway—about Wyong, Wyee, and Cooranbong.
1358. Do you consider that there is a good forest at Wyong;—what kinds of timber are there—blackbutt, spotted gum? Yes, and grey gum.
1359. Turpentine? Yes, and a good many kinds of brush timber.
1360. Those are all useful timbers? Yes.
1361. Do you know where they send the timber to at the present time from the sawmills at Wyong? The timber is sent from the sawmills at Wyong chiefly to Sydney and Newcastle.
1362. Can you say whether there is a very large amount of useful timber in the district? There is a very large quantity of useful timber in the district.
1363. If the railway were extended to the North Shore, and 11 miles of journey thus saved, do you think people would be likely to send their timber by the North Shore line instead of through Redfern? I do not think that a few miles of carriage counts much, as the principal expense is in loading and unloading the timber.
1364. Do you know whether any timber is exported to the other colonies? Yes, to Victoria and New Zealand.
1365. Do you think it likely that a timber trade would spring up on the North Shore if the railway were brought to the deep water there? Yes.
1366. Do you know of any other forests of timber as near to Sydney as the Wyong forest is? Not of as good a quality of timber.
1367. I suppose you are of opinion that there is still enough timber there to last for very many years? Yes, there is.
1368. Do you know the mountains away to the west of Lake Macquarie, where the timber was got for the Newcastle railway. I think Amos Brothers have some selections up there? I do not know that locality very well.
1369. Do you know the selections which Amos Brothers took up for timber at the time when the Northern railway was being constructed? No.
1370. Then you do not know the country to the westward very much? Not so well—I have not travelled over it so much.
1371. Have you any idea whether it is the intention of the Wyong people to erect more sawmills there? I am not aware that it is their intention to do so.
1372. Up to the present time they have not done so? No.
1373. There is only one sawmill there? Two.
1374. One is alongside the railway station? Yes, and the other is on the Maitland-road.
1375. Have you any idea of the quantity of hardwood which comes into Sydney during the year from the various ports? I could not tell you the quantity without referring to statistics.
1376. You know of no forest equally as good as that at Wyong within a reasonable distance of Sydney? Not so close to Sydney. One of the best which I know is the Nelligen forest reserve, near Bateman's Bay. That is even better, I think, taking it altogether, than the Wyong forest, and there is a much larger quantity of good timber there.
1377. Would that be further from Sydney? Yes; but I do not know its distance from Sydney.
1378. It would be considerably further from Sydney than Wyong is? Yes; it is not far from Moruya.
1379. *Chairman.*] Do you know that the Harbour Trust of Melbourne, at the present time, get nearly all their timber from the Clarence River—their hard timber? No; I was not aware of that. I know that all our red gum on the Murray goes into Victoria.
1380. They get all the timber for piles from the Clarence River; and it struck me as extraordinary that they should go to the Clarence, where the entrance is difficult, for timber, instead of to Broken Bay, where the entrance is good. Turpentine, I think, is considered one of the best timbers for piles? Yes, it is.
1381. Is there any great quantity of that timber in these reserves? In the brush forests there is the largest quantity, and the best quality of it. 1382.

1382. Is not the timber rather inaccessible there? The difficulty is in getting it out. The ground is so soft and moist—no roads having been formed—that the drays frequently bog. J. Duff, Esq.
1383. I suppose the best timber is left simply because it cannot be got out through the want of proper roads? Yes; that is one of the main reasons. 8 July, 1890.

Hugh M'Lachlan, Esq., Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

1384. *Chairman.*] You were examined during the previous inquiry into this line of railway, were you not? Yes. H. M'Lachlan, Esq.
1385. Do you remember saying on that occasion that the Commissioners recommended this particular line purely on the ground of its being likely to be profitable as a suburban passenger line? Yes. 8 July, 1890.
1386. This is your evidence, questions 736 and 737:—"736. Do you think it would be an advantage to make the terminus of the Great Northern line at Port Jackson;—do you think it would relieve the traffic very considerably, and that it would be advantageous to have this terminus at Milson's Point for the whole of the traffic—passengers and goods? I do not think it would answer for general goods traffic—that is, for Sydney goods traffic. I do not think it would be so convenient as Darling Harbour except for the local traffic on the Shore. 737. You do not think it would be a suitable place then for goods traffic, whatever it might be for passenger traffic from the north? I do not think it would be so convenient as Darling Harbour." Have you any reason to alter that opinion now? No.
1387. Do you think that if the line were constructed to Milson's Point it would develop any goods traffic? It might develop a little, but I do not think that it would develop a great deal of what you might call foreign goods traffic—that is, goods traffic which at present goes to Sydney.
1388. Do you know whether the Commissioners have changed their views on the subject? No, they have not changed their views materially. They have noticed that one or two wool companies, and one in particular—perhaps attracted by the prospect of getting cheaper land at North Shore—are building stores there, and, no doubt, those people will in their own interest get their wool consigned to the local station, but the Commissioners do not think that the general bulk of the traffic will be affected.
1389. The Commissioners do not expect any great traffic in wool or coal? No. They are not counting upon there being any great goods traffic on the line.
1390. Is the carriage of coal profitable to the department? Not particularly, because it means empty running back.
1391. It is like the carriage of stock? Yes; and we carry coal at a very low rate.
1392. But your rate is rather high compared with the English rate? Yes; it must be noted, however, that we carry much smaller loads.
1393. On account of the grades? On account of the grades.
1394. Would there be any difference, supposing the line were extended to Milson's Point, between the rate for the bulk of produce to that place and to Darling Harbour, or would the rates be the same? For wool, I think we should charge the same, but for produce there would be a difference of 6d. or 7d. a ton.
1395. In favour of Milson's Point? Yes. Produce is carried at about 1d. a ton per mile, and there would be a saving of 6 or 7 miles.
1396. What is the policy now in the carriage of wool from the north, say from Narrabri to Newcastle;—do you know the rate for that per 100 miles? We have a regular tonnage rate to Newcastle, which is pretty well the same from any distance outside of a small differential area. To Sydney it is 22s. 6d. a ton. That is a common rate for all northern wool coming into Sydney.
1397. What is the rate from 100 miles north of Newcastle, say from Scone? Scoured wool, £2 a ton.
1398. And then you carry it another 100 miles for 22s. 6d.? Yes.
1399. Why is that—the grades are steeper on the latter half of the journey? It is to an extent influenced by the competition there. The passenger fares are also cheaper. We charge the same passenger rate from Milson's Point to Newcastle as from Sydney to Newcastle, though at the present time the distance by the former route is several miles shorter than that by the latter.
1400. Would it not be more advantageous to the department for the through goods traffic from the north to go to Darling Harbour than for it to be transferred to the North Shore Railway? I daresay it would be better for us; it would save us having another staff, and working separately. It is an advantage to concentrate your traffic, if you can.
1401. Do the Commissioners desire to divide the goods traffic on the northern lines? No; they desire to concentrate it, because it is cheaper to work it in that way.
1402. By concentrating it, are they able to give the public advantages which they would not be able to give if it was scattered about. Do the public reap any benefit by increased earnings, or otherwise? They would indirectly, because it is more economical to work all the traffic at one place. It allows you to bring in full trucks, and means a saving in working expenses in more ways than one.
1403. When you get north of Scone, what is the carriage of wool per ton for 100 miles? About 4d. a ton.
1404. Per mile, or per 100 miles? Per mile. It would run nearly that. From Scone it would be £2, and from Tamworth, 82 miles further north, £1 10s. more.
1405. Take Armidale, about 75 miles further north? The rate from Armidale would be £4 4s.
1406. Can you tell us what quantity of wool has been brought from the north to Newcastle for shipment during the last two years? Last year we had 68,700 bales.
1407. Do you know what the northern produce is? About 126,000 bales came from the northern districts.
1408. Then the other half of it went to Darling Harbour? No; more than half of it went to Morpeth.
1409. What quantity went to Morpeth? About 34,000 bales.
1410. I suppose some of the wool from the most northern parts of the colony was sent into Queensland? No; I do not think that we lose much by rail that way. A little comes down through Grafton.
1411. *Mr. Garrard.*] The balance of the wool comes through? Yes.
1412. *Chairman.*] Can you say whether the opening of the railway through from Newcastle to Sydney has affected the quantity of wool which is sent from Newcastle—has it reduced it? We have brought 21,000 bales to Sydney this year which we did not get two years ago, though we had not the railway then.
1413. You have no means of telling? No. We know that that quantity came to Sydney by rail last year, and that it did not come before. 1414.

- H.M. Lachlan, Esq.
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1414. What is the rate per ton at which coal would be conveyed by railway to the North Shore—first from Newcastle? From Newcastle to Milson's Point it would be about 8s. Some of the mines are nearer than Newcastle.
1415. Now, from Lake Macquarie? About 6s. 9d.
1416. *Mr. Copeland.*] Which station are you taking? Cockle Creek. It would come to about 7s. to bring it down to the point.
1417. *Chairman.*] Suppose there were coal at Wyong? That would be about 5s.
1418. What do you charge per ton per mile? Up to 100 miles it is about 1d. per ton per mile.
1419. Now, take Gosford? That would be about 4s.
1420. Is there at the present time any coal traffic to speak of between Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, or any of the other northern coal centres, and Sydney, by rail? No, nothing to speak of.
1421. Would it be possible to develop a coal traffic if you carried coal for less than you are now carrying it—for, say, half the rate? I daresay that it would be possible, if we carried coal for half the rate at which we now carry it.
1422. Would it be possible to reduce your coal rates, having regard to the power of your engines, and to the grades between Sydney and Newcastle? It would not be profitable to reduce them to any appreciable extent.
1423. You have told us that there is very little profit now on coal, because the trucks run back empty? Yes.
1424. We need not look upon the line to Milson's Point as likely to earn anything by a coal traffic? No, unless they opened up coal mines about Gosford—that might affect the trade.
1425. Do you know whether the Commissioners anticipate any great traffic from the north along the North Shore Railway in agricultural produce? That is for Sydney business?
1426. For any business? There would be so far as the local market is concerned.
1427. That would not be a source of profit to the department? I do not think that it would be very remunerative.
1428. If it is taken by Milson's Point Railway it will be taken away from the Darling Harbour Railway? Yes.
1429. You still adhere to the opinion which you expressed before, that if the line were constructed it would have to depend upon the passenger traffic and the local goods traffic for its earnings? Yes, almost entirely.
1430. We had a witness before us the other day who told us that wool was carried by the railway, and delivered into the warehouses free of expense? Yes, the delivery is included in the charge.
1431. Have you done that with coal, or with anything but wool? It has been done principally with wool and parcels, but not with coal.
1432. Do I understand that general produce is taken from Darling Harbour in drays? No, but we deliver all wool.
1433. Are there not many things upon which you charge a higher rate than you do upon wool, and which you do not deliver to the owners? Yes.
1434. If I book my portmanteau by train, would you deliver it for me? Yes.
1435. Free of charge? No.
1436. And would you not charge a higher rate for it than you do for wool? Yes, proportionately.
1437. You must get the wool traffic, whether you deliver the wool to the warehouse or not? Of course there is competition for it on each side with the different colonics, though there is a certain amount of wool which we are bound to get. In the border districts it is a matter of competition.
1438. What does it cost you a bale to deliver the wool in Sydney. About 3d.
1439. Have you ever tried delivering coal? No, we have not.
1440. Do you make any profit out of the delivery of wool, or is there a loss? It is simply included in the charge. You pay £4 a ton for your wool, and the carting is part of the charge.
1441. But you do not pay £4 from Newcastle to Sydney? No; that is an imaginary figure.
1442. If Geddes & Co. put up warehouses on the North Shore, would you punt the wool over to them? No.
1443. Why not, if you deliver it on this side? It is an assistance in the busy times to clear the station, and it has been an inducement for the people in the border districts to send their wool to Sydney.
1444. But why would you not deliver it to Geddes & Co.? The matter has not been considered by the Commissioners.
1445. Would it not be cheaper for you to punt it than to cart it? We have never delivered outside of Sydney. We have only delivered within the city of Sydney.
1446. Suppose you did deliver it, would it not be cheaper for you to take it from Darling Harbour by punts than from Lavender Bay by drays. You know where they propose putting up their warehouses, near Kirribilli Point, and you know where it is proposed to bring the line of railway to, at Milson's Point. There can be no connection between that place and Geddes' by direct road. Would it not be cheaper to take it by water? I daresay it would be cheaper to lighter it.
1447. To take it from Darling Harbour to Geddes', instead of from Milson's Point? I do not know that there would be any appreciable difference.
1448. Mr. Deane told us the other day that it was suggested that the line should be brought about midway between Milson's Point and the head of Lavender Bay, stopping there;—do the Commissioners approve of that? The Commissioners are strongly in favour of having the line brought down to Milson's Point. Their idea is that if it stops anything short of there it would be simply of a makeshift character. The line is in North Shore already, and to make it convenient for the public it should be brought to Milson's Point. The Commissioners think that it would be a convenience if it were taken to Lavender Bay, but that it would be more convenient if it were taken to Milson's Point.
1449. Have the Commissioners done all they can to develop the North Shore line, by giving the public proper conveniences for travelling to and fro upon it? We have at the present time a train service there which we think is convenient.
1450. Three or four trains a day? There is not much traffic.
1451. Take the mail train from the north;—have you attempted to study the convenience of passengers by that train? To meet those mail trains we should want a second set of men. At the present time we are running the line as cheaply as we can, with one set of men. To meet the mail trains we should want two sets of men and vehicles.
1452. But you do not arrange to meet any of the trains going north, except the mixed goods trains? No special connections have been made.
- 1453.

1453. Do you not think that it would have added very much to the convenience of the line if the mail trains were met? We do not know whether it would pay for the extra working expenses. H.M. Lachlan,
Esq.
1454. What extra expenses would there be in meeting these trains? We should want another train. I am referring to the mail train in the morning. I 8 July, 1890.
1455. But take the 9 o'clock express from Sydney;—do you not think that it would be a great convenience to the public to be able to meet that at Hornsby? Yes, no doubt, if you could arrange the working of the line without extra expense.
1456. What greater difficulty would there be in meeting that train than in meeting the mixed goods trains? I do not know whether the train is at this end at that time.
1457. Can you tell us anything about the earnings of the North Shore line? So far they have been very poor.
1458. When was the line opened? I simply took out the earnings for several months. During the first four months of the present year the line earned £464.
1459. What was your expenditure for wages during the same period? £1,489.
1460. And for interest? £2,676.
1461. I suppose the Commissioners regard it as an impossibility to make the line fairly remunerative if it is left where it is? Yes.
1462. What were the earnings for the first month of the year? £122.
1463. And for the fourth? £144.
1464. Do the Commissioners regard it as hopeless to make the line pay interest while it is left where it is? Yes; they cannot see any prospect of its being a paying line under present circumstances.
1465. If the line were brought down to Milson's Point it would take some time for the population on it to increase so as to develop the traffic? Yes. But the Commissioners look upon the district as a splendid one for residential purposes, and they expect that a big population will settle there.
1466. To the right and left of the line? Yes, right through.
1467. What is the nearest point to the Lane Cove River from the line? I do not know exactly.
1468. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do the Commissioners see a prospect of the line paying within a reasonable period if it is extended to Milson's Point? They think it will pay far better if it is taken further down.
1469. Better than it pays now? Yes.
1470. The loss will be reduced? Yes.
1471. Where would the goods trains have to break? They would have to break at Hornsby.
1472. I suppose it would be necessary for the wool and produce consigned to Milson's Point or North Shore to be put into separate trucks? Yes, and in that way you might only get half loads for each place, whereas by concentrating the traffic the trucks would be full.
1473. To load up the trucks the wool would have to be discharged again to other trucks? Yes.
1474. Do the Commissioners anticipate any increase in the wool trade? The natural increase, of course.
1475. I think you said that you received 21,000 bales from the north last year? Yes.
1476. What warranted the Commissioners in anticipating any increase upon that? It is a convenience to get your goods brought direct to your stores, and as long as we can compete at all with the water carriage we are likely to get a great deal of the freight.
- 1476½. But is not Newcastle developing a direct export trade? They have been exporting from Newcastle for some years past.
1477. Is not that trade likely to develop? There was a falling off in the wool sent from Newcastle last year, because of the opening of the line.
1478. You anticipate being able to compete successfully with the steamers trading between Newcastle and Sydney? Of course the wool for direct export will go into Newcastle, and it may be that some will come down by the steamers, but we expect to get a fair amount of the wool coming down, and, as a matter of fact, we did so last year.
1479. Do you expect it in an increasing ratio—do you anticipate taking the trade from the steamers? I do not think that, for the present, we will do much more than we are now doing. I do not think that we shall have any very great increase.
1480. The only increase you expect will be from the increased number of sheep? Yes, and I think the greater convenience of having their wool sent direct to the stores will lead people to send it to Sydney. It will be remembered we have made a differential rate from some of the districts up north.
1481. I suppose the Commissioners think it a sound policy to enter into competition with private enterprise—to enter into a cut-throat competition? I do not think that they wish to work the traffic at a ruinous rate, either for themselves or for anybody else, but still they have the railway, and they want to make use of it.
1482. But it is their policy at the present time to carry goods between Sydney and Newcastle at so low a rate as to virtually make the steamers unprofitable? No; we have made no alteration in our general goods rate.
1483. Only in the wool rate? That is a special rate—22s. 6d.
1484. Have you not differential rates from New England? Yes, but we also have them from Newcastle.
1485. In the rate from Armidale or Guyra, do you not eliminate the charge between Sydney and Newcastle altogether? No; it is cheaper to send it to Newcastle than it is to send to Sydney.
1486. Do you not charge the same rate from Sydney to Guyra or Glen Innes as from Newcastle to Guyra or Glen Innes? No; take wool. We charge £3 15s. a ton to bring wool to Sydney, but we take it to Newcastle from that district for £2 17s. 6d. That is a difference of 17s. 6d., which is not a great cutting under of the 22s. 6d.
1487. But for goods which you send up there, say rice? There is still a fairly good difference. It is not as much as the ordinary tonnage rate, but there is a difference between the charge from Newcastle and from Sydney.
1488. You do not anticipate that there will be any large goods traffic on the North Shore Railway if the proposed extension is carried out? No, not any large general goods traffic.
1489. You will depend almost entirely upon the development of the passenger traffic for profit? Yes.
1490. But is there not a danger of your gaining at North Shore what you lose from other suburban districts;—would not people be likely to leave districts in which they are now living to reside on the North Shore line? I do not know whether that would affect us to any great extent—it might to a limited

- H. M. Lachlan, limited degree. The North Shore people, no doubt, will move out, and the Sydney people will move out. There is a natural growth of population. Sydney is growing bigger every year, and the increase of population tends to spread the people out in that way.
- Esq.
8 July, 1890.
1491. You think this district will develop by the natural increase of population? Yes, and by the pushing out of the city.
1492. You anticipate that the development will be sufficient to make the line something like remunerative? Yes, in a few years.
1493. Do you know what the Commissioners' opinions are with reference to the Cremorne route or a route to some of those other eastern bays? No, I do not think that the Commissioners have ever considered those projects.
1494. I suppose they have not considered the goods question at all? Not to Cremorne.
1495. They do not anticipate any coal or timber trade? Not to Milson's Point.
1496. Nor to the North Shore, supposing a goods line was to deviate from the Milson's Point line to Cremorne and Neutral Bay? I do not think that they have looked into the Cremorne extension at all.
1497. According to the Commissioners' views, I suppose the Committee must judge almost entirely from the amount of passenger traffic as to whether the line will pay? Yes; it is largely on the basis of the passenger traffic that the Commissioners think that the line is to be a success.
1498. Have the Commissioners considered the question of having steam punts to Milson's Point? To bring the passengers across in opposition to the ferry service?
1499. Yes? I know that the feeling of the Commissioners in the matter is that the present ferry company is giving a good service, and they would leave it to them to meet the development of the traffic, and to adapt themselves to its requirements.
1500. Do the Commissioners think that there is land enough available for a terminal station at Milson's Point? Yes.
1501. Notwithstanding all the land which they require at Redfern and the difficulties which they have in managing the traffic there? They think there is sufficient room at Milson's Point for a terminal station. Mr. Deane has shown them the plans.
1502. *Dr. Garran.*] Although you do not anticipate any through goods traffic to Lavender Bay, there would be a certain amount of local goods traffic upon the line,—suburban goods traffic? For short distances you get very little goods traffic. The cost of handling is too great.
1503. There might be some traffic in bricks, perhaps? There might be a little.
1504. If any manufactories sprang up at North Shore, all their goods would come down to the terminus? If there were brickworks anywhere near Milson's Point they would probably get their coal sent there, so that we might get local traffic in that way.
1505. Will there be room enough for this suburban goods traffic in addition to the passenger traffic on the shore line of Lavender Bay? Yes. Some of the goods traffic would stop short at the station on the top of the hill. We are getting a little there now.
1506. Have you considered whether there is room enough between the head of the bay and Milson's Point for the passenger traffic and such moderate goods traffic as you anticipate? Yes; the Commissioners think so.
1507. Quite room enough; there will be no need to go to further expense? Yes.
1508. And without confusing the two kinds of traffic you could accommodate both? Yes.
1509. Then there is no necessity to go further afield for a water frontage? Yes.
1510. You would make one continuous wharf from Lavender Bay to Milson's Point? Yes. The Commissioners think that all that frontage ought to be resumed.
1511. And you would extend the wharf as you wanted the space? Yes.
1512. The first thing that you would want would be a wharf for the passenger traffic? Yes, and a few sidings as the goods traffic required them.
1513. But in the matter of wharfage? Yes; I think that would be all at first.
1514. You do not think that any further outlay of money is necessary in the first instance than what is sufficient for making the line and constructing the necessary passenger station and sidings, and the wharf for the passenger traffic? Yes.
1515. And you could add on wharfage to meet your growing requirements if a goods traffic sprang up? That is the view of the Commissioners.
1516. But it will be some years before they want more wharfage accommodation than they could get between Milson's Point and the head of Lavender Bay? Yes, the Commissioners think that that frontage will meet all requirements for some little time to come.
1517. Suppose there was a good fruit trade, would you have room for it? Yes, there would be room in those sidings.
1518. This is a fine fruit district? I understand that it is a good fruit district.
1519. Would you be able to get the trade, and deliver the fruit to the markets or elsewhere, in Sydney? We shall not get all of it—the people would probably cart a good deal of it direct to Sydney.
1520. Do not many of them cart back loads of manure? Not that I am aware of.
1521. Is it not a common thing for the orchard people to bring their fruit into market, and to take manure out again? I do not think that it is done a great deal.
1522. Is not the bulk of the Sydney stable manure taken away in that manner? By market gardeners.
1523. And by fruit-growers too? I have not seen it done.
1524. Have you counted upon a fruit traffic for this railway? Not to a great extent.
1525. It will have a passenger traffic principally? Yes.
1526. Have the Commissioners considered the advisability of making a bridge or tunnel across the harbour? That has been before them; but they think that it is a matter for the future. If a tunnel were constructed this line could be worked in to it.
1527. Where would they work it in—on the Sydney side? Their line will go down to Fort Macquarie, if they continue it at all? The map would show pretty well the line which they have in view.
1528. For a bridge? For a tunnel.
1529. Where from? From Fort Macquarie.
1530. That would go to M'Mahon's Point? Yes.
1531. Is it not a very much longer journey from Fort Macquarie to M'Mahon's Point than from Dawes' Point to Milson's Point? I see the plan shows the bridge to M'Mahon's Point, and this I took for Milson's Point; the tunnel is proposed to come in at Milson's Point.

H. M'Lachlan,
Esq.
8 July, 1890.

1532. If they make the line to Fort Macquarie they must make the tunnel there? Yes.
1533. They have no provision for getting to Daves' Point? No; it is a matter they have not considered—they think it is a matter for the future.
1534. For the present they think that the private ferry service would be sufficient? Yes.
1535. And that a good passenger traffic would be developed without the construction of a bridge or of a tunnel? Yes.
1536. They think the prospect of such a traffic so good that they recommend the expenditure of this additional sum of money? Yes.
1537. Do you know whether the Commissioners have considered any alternative route westward to Milson's Point? No; I do not think that they went into the matter of alternative routes—they left that to the engineers largely.
1538. They are more anxious to get a line down than to determine which way it should come? I believe they think that Mr. Deane has selected a very fair line.
1539. Do you know whether they have considered these two routes—the 1 in 40 and the 1 in 50? From what I heard from them they think that Mr. Deane has selected a very fair line, and one which they would be prepared to recommend with a grade of 1 in 50.
1540. Are they not against 1 in 40 grades, as a rule? Yes.
1541. Do you know that the line under our consideration has a grade of 1 in 40? I understood that the grades were 1 in 50.
1542. Do you know that the line with the grade of 1 in 50 has absolutely never been surveyed? No; I understood that it was the 1 in 50 line that was under the consideration of the Committee.
1543. We are told that between St. Leonards and Hornsby the grade is not more than 1 in 50, but that in the descent to Milson's Point it is 1 in 40;—are you prepared to say anything as to the relative merits of the 1 in 40 or the 1 in 50 grade? The Commissioners would prefer a grade of 1 in 50.
1544. Other things being equal? Yes. I believe that Mr. Deane can get that grade with very little extra expense.
1545. You are not prepared to say anything about the Commissioners' opinion? I understood that it was a 1 in 50 grade line, which they thought was a good one.
1546. *Mr. Tonkin.*] In the event of this extension to Milson's Point being made, do you expect a very large increase in the number of passengers from the Northern Districts? That is a foreign traffic, you might say.
1547. Yes? No; we do not expect a great increase.
1548. The traffic which you expect is purely local? Yes.
1549. If that is so will not the railway in some manner compete with the tramway? Not to a great extent. The tramway serves a different body of people; it serves the people to the east, and all the populated parts of St. Leonards which the railway will not serve.
1550. You think that the railway will not affect the tramway? To a slight extent it will; but not to a very appreciable degree. The people are commencing to settle largely on the eastern side of the tramway, while the railway goes to the west of it.
1551. It is purely with the idea that there will be a local traffic that you are advocating this extension? Yes.
1552. Will it not take some years before there can be this large increase of population? Yes, it will take a few years; but the Commissioners think that the line as it is at present will never develop the traffic, while if it is extended to Milson's Point people will be led to settle along it, so that it will in time become a paying line.
1553. You think that the proposed extension would in itself more than pay for the other line? Yes.
1554. That is, supposing the other line were not constructed, but the line to and from Milson's Point to the Crow's Nest were constructed, the latter would be the better paying line? It would help to make the other line of some use.
1555. *Chairman.*] You do not mean to say that the length from Milson's Point to the Crow's Nest will pay of itself? No; its construction, of course, is a means to an end.
1556. There would not be enough traffic on it to make it pay? I do not know that there would be so much traffic on that local section.
1557. *Mr. Tonkin.*] But I understood you to say that you expected the whole of your returns from the local traffic in the event of the line being constructed? Yes; that is from Hornsby to Milson's Point.
1558. You do not expect any traffic from beyond Hornsby? Not a great deal. The Commissioners think that there will not be a great deal of through traffic.
1559. *Mr. Trickett.*] What will be the total cost of this extension? I think Mr. Deane set it down as somewhere about £240,000. He has proposed several alternative schemes, but I think that that would be the whole cost, including everything, of constructing the line to the point.
1560. What revenue would have to be earned by this portion of the line to recoup the Government for working expenses and the interest on that amount? At 3½ per cent. the interest would come to £8,400.
1561. That is on the extension? Yes.
1562. And what would be the increased working expenses on this portion of the line? I do not think that they are worked out.
1563. Including station management? Of course they would not be so particularly heavy, because the engines perhaps would otherwise be lying idle. You could use the same engines and men.
1564. It would not come to very much? No, it would not.
1565. Can you give us any idea of what the expense of working would be? £2,775, according to the Commissioners.
1566. Does that include the maintenance of the stations—the porters, cleaners, and people of that kind? Yes.
1567. They are all included? Yes.
1568. So that the interest and expenses would come to over £11,000? Yes.
1569. Do you see any reasonable prospect of the Government being recouped that yearly expenditure in the shape of returns? Not immediately. I do not think that the line will pay immediately.
1570. From your experience of other suburban lines how long do you think it would take before it would pay? I should not like to say.

Tannatt William Edgeworth David, Esq., Geological Surveyor, Department of Mines, sworn, and examined:—

T. W. E.
David, Esq.
8 July, 1890.

1571. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do you know the district lying between Sydney and Newcastle? Geologically, I am acquainted with the greater part of it.

1572. Do you know the coal-fields? Yes, pretty well.

1573. Can you tell the Committee whether there is any prospect of coal mines being opened up, (say) between Gosford and Newcastle, or between Gosford and Lake Macquarie? I can say that the coal lies within a workable depth between Gosford and Lake Macquarie. By a workable depth I mean at a less depth than 2,600 feet.

1574. Do you know anything about the coal which was discovered on the Wyong Estate? Only by the reports furnished by Mr. Wilkinson and by Mr. Mackenzie, the Government Examiner of Coal-fields. I was not present when the cores were drawn from the bores, but I know the particulars of those bores as furnished by them, and I also know the rate of dip from the disappearance at Lake Macquarie towards the Wyong bores, which would lead me to suppose that the seams struck in the Wyong bores must be the same as we see cropping out in the cliffs at Lake Macquarie.

1575. The coal at Wyong is the southernmost coal in the northern district? Yes. Alison's is the southernmost proving of coal in the northern coal-field.

1576. There are two bores, one to the north of the other? To the north-east—yes.

1577. Do you know the depth of the bore to the north-east? In the Wallarah bore there is a 5-feet seam, struck at a depth of 535 feet—at least it was reported so in our annual report. I was not present myself when the coal was drilled through. There was also an 8-feet seam of coal and bands at a depth of 641 feet, and a seam 12 feet thick with a few bands at a depth of 778 feet. This is at the Wallarah bore, which is to the north-east of what is commonly called the Wyong bore.

1578. Do those seams accord with the seams discovered at Lake Macquarie and north of it? They accord tolerably well in their sections, and in the relative thickness of the strata separating them, with the first three seams observable in the coast sections, except that the upper seam is only 5 feet at the north-eastern of these two bores, whereas near Redhead it is from 6 to 8 feet thick, and of a somewhat better quality, apparently.

1579. You know the seams at Catherine Hill Bay? Yes.

1580. You know that there is what they term a 5-feet seam on the top of the cliff there? Yes.

1581. Down at the ocean level there is a 14-feet seam? Yes.

1582. There is another seam about 11 feet in thickness which was bored through by Hardie and Gorman, on the beach, below the 14-feet seam? Yes.

1583. Further westward, about the same latitude, Amos Brothers bored through a seam about 11 feet thick, between Catherine Hill Bay and Wyong, in that direction? Yes.

1584. Do the seams at Wyong accord with those at Catherine Hill Bay, and with the seam found by Amos Brothers? I think that, approximately, the three seams struck in the bore near Wyong accord with the three seams seen in Catherine Hill Bay. The third seam struck at Wyong, a 12-feet seam, would, I think, be identical with the seam which you have referred to as being struck at ocean level at Catherine Hill Bay. Above that there is a seam from 3 to 5 feet thick, and above it again there has lately been proved an uppermost or No. 1 seam in the Newcastle coal-field, which is from 6 to 8 feet thick, and where it has been worked at the Wallarah Colliery, near Catherine Hill Bay, it is 8 feet thick at the tunnels.

1585. They have also tunnelled in from the lake, have they not? They are between the lake and the shore line, near the ballast quarries between Catherine Hill Bay and Swansea.

1586. Would it pay to work at a depth of 535 feet? It would, if the coal were of a good marketable quality.

1587. Do you know the distance from that bore at Wyong to Sydney by the present railway line? My impression is that it is about 68 miles.

1588. Do you remember the exact distance of the bore to the north of Wyong Station? About 2 miles. The northernmost of the two bores is 5 or 6 miles northerly from the Wyong Station.

1589. It is the northernmost bore of which you are speaking? Yes.

1590. Do you think that it would pay to send that coal by railway to Sydney, assuming it to be a marketable coal? As a geological surveyor it is, perhaps, a little beyond my province to give an opinion upon the subject. I am not quite aware what rate would be charged on the coal—so much would depend upon the rate of carriage.

1591. Comparing it from the distance from which they send coal from Lithgow? If the coal could be carried at about the same rate as the coal is carried from the western and southern fields, I think it ought to pay to work a seam at that depth.

1592. Would it not pay as well, or better, assuming that the mine was worked, to send the coal to Sydney than to send it to Newcastle, and then to ship it from Newcastle to other parts? If it was intended to bring it to Sydney after it had been shipped at Newcastle, and then to tranship it here, I think it would be cheaper to bring it direct by rail.

1593. Do you know anything about the quality of the coal found in the north-east bore? No, except from the reports of others in the records of the Department of Mines.

1594. What do those records show? They do not speak much about the first two seams. Mr. Wilkinson saw the core that was reported to have come from the third seam, the 12-feet seam at 778 feet, and he expressed it as his opinion that the coal was of good quality.

1595. That core was burnt in the Garden Palace fire? It was. Mr. Wilkinson could not himself guarantee that it was drawn from that particular bore, but he saw the core when it was forwarded to Sydney, and he told me himself that it was a good sample of coal.

1596. The elder Mr. Alison reported it as having come from that bore? I presume so.

1597. Do you know whether there is any gas escaping from the bore; have you inspected it yourself? There was none issuing from the bore when I inspected it, because I tested it with a match, but the residents in the district round assured me that for some time previous gas had been escaping from the bore, and my guide told me that he had lit it and boiled his billy over the flame.

1598. Did you try both bores for gas? Yes. There was no gas. At the time of my visit neither bore showed any escapement of gas.

1599. Do you remember the distance between the two bores;—I want to get at the rate of dip? The rate of dip, as calculated exactly from the distance, is 113 feet per mile to the south-west. 1600.

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1600. Have you gone into any calculation to show at what depth coal would be found, supposing it existed, at Gosford, or Broken Bay? Yes, I have made calculations, and I find that the south-westerly dip coming towards Broken Bay changes to a westerly dip, which prevails past Narrabeen to Sydney Heads, and probably dies out gradually about Port Hacking. It then changes to a northerly dip, so that practically from Gosford, as far perhaps as Sydney, a line running north and south along the coal would be almost a level line. The chief dip would be to the west. At the Narrabeen bore, near Narrabeen, strata, known as the chocolate shales, red ferruginous shales which crop out on the surface, at Narrabeen Head, were not struck in the bore until a depth of 318 feet was reached. The Narrabeen bore is only $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles west-south-west from Narrabeen Head, so that there must be a pretty considerable westerly dip of the measures between Gosford and Sydney Heads, which would mean that the coal-seams would not be increasing much in depth from Gosford towards Sydney.
1601. Did you say at what depth the coal would be found at Gosford, according to your calculations? My calculations show that the depth of coal at Gosford would be between 2,100 and 2,400 feet.
1602. Then the Wyong coal-field would really be the nearest on that line where there was coal at what might be called a reasonably workable depth. Can you tell us the depth at which coal was found in the southern bore on the Wyong Estate? Yes. According to the report of the Department of Mines, the first seam in the southern Wyong bore was struck at a depth of 787 feet, as against 5,535 feet in the northern bore.
1603. The second seam? At a depth of 892 feet as against 641 feet in the northern bore.
1604. I think that they did not strike the lower seam at all in the southern bore? No; they did not go deep enough to reach the horizon where they might expect to strike it.
1605. Coal has not actually been discovered south of the southern bore on the Wyong Estate? Not that I am aware of. A bore has been put down at Ourimbah, between Wyong and Gosford, to a depth of about 1,450 feet, without striking the coal.
1606. Do you know whether any coal has been discovered west of Wyong anywhere near the railway line? No; I am not aware that any coal has been discovered for a considerable distance west.
1607. Can you say whether there is a probability of the coal rising as it approaches the ranges to the west? According to the dip at Wyong, which is south-westerly, and going in a westerly direction from that place, the coal would deepen, unless there was a strong change of dip.
1608. But is there not a likelihood of the coal rising again as the hills have been elevated? The evidence in the hills, as far as I have seen them, goes to show that they are due to a survival of newer rocks rather than to the elevation of the coal measures, being chiefly composed of masses of the Sydney sandstone, such as we have in the mountains. The hills to the west of Wyong are chiefly composed of the sandstone of the Hawkesbury series.
1609. Have you seen conglomerates there? At Wyong?
1610. West of Wyong? Not any of the conglomerates belonging to coal measures until you get near Awaba. There the conglomerates are very strongly marked, as they are also at Dora Creek; but I have not seen any conglomerate which I should refer to the coal measures to the west of Wyong.
1611. Have you to the north-west? I have not been there much.
1612. Do you know of any other mineral deposits in this neighbourhood—iron, for instance? No; I am not aware of any iron deposits.
1613. Do you know of any shale? I have been informed that kerosene shale exists, and I have been shown samples of it, but the samples have been of a very inferior variety of shale.
1614. You know no other minerals of a marketable character likely to be brought to Sydney by train? No.
1615. Limestone? I know of no limestone. I was informed of the occurrence of gold at a place called Yarramerlong, near Wyong, and was sent to report on it; but it proved to be a large mass of basaltic rock which had burst up through the coal measures. It was said to have yielded gold in payable quantities, according to some assays; but my assays only showed traces of gold. It was trap-rock, similar to that at Pennant Hills and at the Prospect reservoir.
1616. *Mr. Tonkin.*] How far to the north of Newcastle do the coal measures run? The Newcastle measures?
1617. Yes? The Newcastle measures have at their base the Borehole or Wallsend seam, and it is assumed that that extends only a short distance to the north of Stockton harbour, and that then the line of outcrop runs under the sea.
1618. Do you know of any coal discoveries on the Clarence, or up the Clarence anywhere? We have not had any important discoveries reported to us lately.
1619. *Mr. Garrard.*] Are you aware whether a bore was put down on the eastern side of Mullet Creek by Mr. Alison? Yes.
1620. Do you know to what depth he went? It was over 1,000 feet.
- 1621-2. Do you know if coal was struck? Coal was not struck. I cannot tell you the depth from memory.
1623. Wyong is the furthest place south on the Newcastle-Hornsby line where coal has been struck? So far, yes.

WEDNESDAY,

WEDNESDAY, 9 JULY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

William Bethel Sharp, Esq., Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, Newcastle, sworn, and examined:—

W. B. Sharp,
Esq.
9 July, 1890.

1624. *Mr. Copeland.*] Where do you reside? At Newcastle.
1625. What business are you in? I am the representative of Dalgety & Co. (Limited).
1626. Are Dalgety & Co. interested in the export of wool? Yes.
1627. In anything else? In coal.
1628. I suppose the Newcastle office is a branch office? Yes.
1629. In connection with the Sydney office? There are offices at Sydney and at Melbourne.
1630. Do you occupy the position of manager? Yes.
1631. How long have you held that position? For seven years now, at Newcastle.
1632. Can you tell the Committee what quantity of wool was shipped by your firm from Newcastle last year? I can tell you the total quantity that was shipped; it was 59,693 bales.
1633. That was from Newcastle, not including Morpeth? Not including Morpeth.
1634. What quantity was shipped the year before? 61,180 bales.
1635. And during the previous year? I have the complete list here. The first shipments were made in the season of 1883-4, when the total quantity of wool handled was 42,961 bales. In 1884-5, it was 44,298 bales; in 1885-6, 57,455 bales; in 1886-7, 50,927 bales; in 1887-8, 57,766 bales; in 1888-9, 61,180 bales; and in 1889-90, 59,693 bales—an increase of 50 per cent. since we first started.
1636. Where was that wool shipped to? To London.
1637. All to London. Yes.
1638. Was none of it shipped to Sydney by your firm? Three thousand or 4,000 bales of that quantity would be shipped to Sydney this year.
1639. The rest of it was sent to London? To London direct.
1640. Have you any knowledge of the number of bales which passed through Newcastle;—do you know the total northern clip? The total northern clip now equals about 150,000 bales.
1641. Have you authentic information on that point? Yes; I got the particulars from the railway, together with the amount carried from Morpeth.
1642. Can you say whether the total clip is increasing? Yes. When we first started there I do not suppose that the total clip was more than 120,000 bales at the outside.
1643. When was that? In the season 1883-4.
1644. Do you anticipate that there will be a continuous increase in the total clip? Yes; and also an increase in the shipments.
1645. But how do you come to the conclusion that there will be an increase in the total clip, seeing that large areas of land are being taken away from wool-growing and used for agricultural and other purposes? The increase of agriculture in the northern districts will not affect the wool yield one iota, because every year more country is being used for feeding sheep upon, and as the railway extends to the north and west we shall get so much more wool, much of which now finds its way to other ports for shipment.
1646. Then you anticipate a steady increase in the clip? Yes.
1647. Do you anticipate an increase in the shipments from Newcastle—do you think that Newcastle will have a larger proportion of the export trade? I expect that the wool sent from there this year will be between 75,000 and 80,000 bales.
1648. What does it cost to send wool from Newcastle to England? Exactly the same as to send it from Sydney to England.
1649. Then any saving would be on the freight from Newcastle to Sydney? Yes, by coasting steamer or by train.
1650. What is the freight to England? $\frac{3}{4}$ d. and $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in a sailing ship. We only load sailing vessels and steamers at Newcastle during the wool season. It is $\frac{3}{4}$ d. for greasy and $\frac{1}{2}$ for scoured wool now.
1651. That is by sailing vessels? Yes.
1652. How much is it by steamer? You could get it taken by steamer at the same rate. There is a scarcity of wool, and they will take it for cargo at any rate you like to offer.
1653. By steamers and sailing vessels the freight from Sydney is the same as the freight from Newcastle? Yes.
1654. What is the freight by steamer from Newcastle to Sydney? It used to be from 3s. 9d. to 4s. a bale. Then they made reductions, and now that the companies' agreement no longer exists, I believe they are running the wool down for a great deal less.
1655. Do you know what they are charging now? I believe you can get it down for about 2s. a bale.
1656. With steamers, is there any fixed standard for the weight of a bale? No; they take the wool at so much a bale, whether it is scoured or greasy.
1657. Can you say what the rate amounts to per ton? At the present time it would amount to about 8s. or 10s.
1658. Do you know what the railway freight is? Seventeen shillings and sixpence.
1659. Can you explain why it is that not more wool is sent from Newcastle to Sydney by steamer;—we were informed yesterday that 21,000 bales came down from Newcastle by train? That would be about the quantity.

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1650. If it is so much cheaper to send it by steamer, how is it that people do not use the steamers more? As a matter of fact the steamers do get a great deal more wool than the trains get.
1661. I do not think that the figures show that? You must include what goes from Morpeth.
1662. Thirty-four thousand bales came from Morpeth? Yes, as against 21,000 bales by railway.
1663. I suppose no wool is shipped direct from Morpeth to London? No.
1664. All that goes from Morpeth is for Sydney? Yes.
1665. I suppose the contention is that the steamers will always be able to compete successfully with the railway, as far as freight is concerned? Of course there is a disadvantage with steamers, because there is more handling if you ship by them; but for all that I think that they will always carry a fair proportion of the wool.
1666. The steamer freight, I suppose, merely includes taking the wool on board at Newcastle and Morpeth, and discharging it at the steam company's wharf in Sydney; they do not undertake, as the railway authorities do, to deliver the wool at the warehouses of the merchants in Sydney? I believe not.
1667. They simply land it on the wharf? Yes; they do not cart it.
1668. Are you of opinion that if the North Shore Railway were constructed it would produce any development of the wool trade, by train, between Newcastle and Sydney? No; I do not think that it would alter it one iota.
1669. Supposing the railway were constructed to Cremorne, or to Neutral Bay, or to any of those bays, where there is plenty of room for the accommodation of shipping, do you think that people would be likely to send their wool there in preference to sending it to Newcastle? I do not think that they would send it there for shipment. They might send it down for sale.
1670. Do you think that the extension of the railway would be an inducement for them to send it to Sydney, over and above any inducement that they have at the present time? No, because they would not have as good shipping facilities at Cremorne, or at the places which you have named, as we have at Newcastle. We have every facility there for shipping wool.
1671. You do not think that the Railway Commissioners would get an increased share of the wool trade if the railway were extended? I do not think that they would get any increase whatever.
1672. And you anticipate that in future they will lose a portion of the trade which they now have—that is to say, that the exportation of wool from Newcastle will increase more than the exportation from Sydney? The exportation of wool from Newcastle depends very considerably upon the colonial market. If that market is good, the wool comes to Sydney for sale in large quantities; but if it is indifferent, the wool is shipped at once to London. Last year the market in Sydney was good, and consequently our shipment fell off by about 1,000 bales.
1673. You have no sales of wool in Newcastle? No. We had once, but the Sydney buyers did not attend them in sufficient numbers to warrant our continuing them.
1674. Was there not some arrangement amongst the wool-buyers in Sydney not to attend the Newcastle wool sales? I believe that there was such an arrangement, though it was kept quiet. They endeavoured to boycott the sales, and they effectually did it.
1675. That was before the railway was opened? Yes.
1676. I suppose there is no attempt at the present time to recommence the sales? I believe that they will be recommenced again there.
1677. In that case a still greater quantity of wool will be shipped from Newcastle? Yes; a lot of wool will be kept in Newcastle than which now goes to Sydney for sale. The railway communication now is so rapid that it would be no trouble for the buyers to go to Newcastle.
1678. You appear before the Committee as a delegate from the Newcastle Chamber of Commerce? Yes; I am Chairman of that body. I was commissioned to come here by a special meeting. We read the evidence given before you upon the line about a fortnight ago.
1679. Will you explain to the Committee how it is that you have come here to give evidence against the proposed extension of the line if you are under the impression that it will not, if constructed, divert trade from Newcastle? Because statements were made by witnesses which might have led you to infer that if the railway were made it would bring the whole of the northern wool to North Shore, and we thought that it would be just as well for us to tell you exactly what the facts of the case are. We do not consider that the extension of the railway would bring any more wool to Sydney from the northern districts than comes at the present time, though it was publicly stated by one of the witnesses that the whole of the wool from the northern districts would come here if the line were constructed. That statement was quite absurd.
1680. You are here through a desire for the public interest, and not because of any fear of losing trade from Newcastle? No, provided that the present railway rates are charged. If differential rates are established, and the wool is run as cheap to Sydney as it is to Newcastle, the chances are that we shall lose a portion of it.
1681. Do you find that the differential rates are injurious to the Newcastle trade at the present time? To a certain degree they are.
1682. Can you explain to the Committee in what direction the Newcastle trade suffers by the present wool rates? At present they take a truck load of goods from Sydney to Guyra for £24; while they charge £21 to take a similar load from Newcastle to Guyra, so that there is only a difference of £3 a truck.
1683. That is a truck of 6 tons? Yes.
1684. That makes a charge of 10s. a ton from Sydney to Newcastle? Yes.
1685. But you could get your goods taken by steamer from Newcastle to Sydney for 10s. a ton? For 7s. 6d. a ton.
1686. Then you are in the same position as the people who send goods by rail? Yes.
1687. It matters nothing to the Guyra storekeeper whether he gets his goods sent by railway to Newcastle for 10s. a ton or whether they are taken by steamer? The charge offers an extra inducement to the Guyra people to buy in Sydney instead of in Newcastle.
1688. If the Newcastle people sell at the same rates? Yes.
1689. Where is the extra inducement? The inducement is this, that if the Newcastle people have to buy their goods the storekeepers hold them at a disadvantage of 10s. a ton.
1690. Do not some of the Newcastle people import direct from home? Yes; a great many of them do.
1691. Supposing you get goods from England, they are brought out for the same charge as if they were sent to Sydney? Yes.

- W. B. Sharp, Esq.
9 July, 1890.
1692. So you would have an advantage of 7s. 6d. a ton—that is, the Guyra people should be able to buy at Newcastle for 7s. 6d. a ton less than at Sydney, because if they bought in Sydney they would have to pay 7s. 6d. a ton extra carriage by steamer, or 10s. a ton for extra carriage by rail? Yes; but I wish to point out that the Railway Commissioners only charge 10s. a ton for a distance of 100 miles, while beyond that the rate is higher.
1693. But the steamers charge 7s. 6d. a ton for 100 miles? Somewhere about that.
1694. Can you tell the Committee what is the usual freight for coal from Newcastle to Sydney? About 4s. a ton.
1695. That is the present freight? Yes.
1696. Do the freights vary at all? No; that is the standard freight. You can get it cheaper occasionally—perhaps 3s. 6d. a ton.
1697. The mine proprietors pay the craneage, do they not? Yes.
1698. The freight is simply for taking the coal from the wharf at Newcastle to the wharf at Sydney? Yes.
1699. Do you know what the railway freight is for the same distance? 1d. per ton per mile.
1700. That is 8s. 6d? Yes.
1701. You do not anticipate that a coal traffic would spring up to the North Shore? No, never.
1702. Do you know the country south of Newcastle? Yes, I know the whole of the country.
1703. From Lake Macquarie down to Wyong? Yes.
1704. Do you think that there is any likelihood of there being a coal traffic from that neighbourhood? It is quite possible that they may find coal there, but it would be very expensive to work.
1705. Why? It is at a great depth.
1706. Is there not plenty of coal there at a depth of from 200 to 500 or 600 feet? I do not know of any.
1707. You are not aware that coal has been found at Wyong at a depth of 500 feet? I was not aware of that fact.
1708. I suppose you know that at Wallarah, on Amos' property, coal was found at a depth of 200 feet? I was not aware of that. Was it a surface seam or good coal?
1709. Good coal. Suppose coal were discovered at a depth of from 200 to 500 or 800 feet anywhere about halfway between Newcastle and Gosford, do you think it likely that a coal trade would spring up from there to Sydney? If collieries are opened up the coal must be exported, and I suppose they would have to send it by rail.
1710. Would they send it by rail to Sydney, or by rail to Newcastle, and then take it by steamer from Newcastle to Sydney? If they sent it to Sydney it would be for export, and if they sent it to Newcastle it would be for export. They would not send it to Newcastle and then ship it from there to Sydney. They would send it to whichever place was the nearer.
1711. Do you think that if coal mines were opened up at Wyong they would be likely to ship the coal from the Hawkesbury? I think that is the place from which it ought to be shipped.
1712. Do you think that vessels would be likely to leave Sydney and go to the Hawkesbury in ballast in order to take a cargo of coal from there? I think that it is quite likely.
1713. Do you think that it would be better for them to do that than to pay a few extra pence for railway freight and have the coal brought here? They would have to pay 3s. or 4s. extra to have the coal brought to North Shore.
1714. But they would have to pay something to purchase ballast? They would only require a small quantity of ballast. A ship of 1,000 tons would only take 250 tons of ballast.
1715. Would they have to buy that? Yes.
1716. About what would they have to pay for it per ton? 1s. or 1s. 6d.
1717. What would it cost them to load and unload it? About another 1s.
1718. One shilling to load and another shilling to unload? Yes.
1719. They would have to pay about 4s. 6d. a ton, then, for ballast? From 3s. 6d. to 4s.
1720. And would they not have to pay extra insurance? No; ships are always insured for twelve months, no matter where they go.
1721. You do not anticipate that there would be any immediate coal traffic to support a line to North Shore? I do not think that there would.
1722. And you do not think it likely that there will be any increase in the wool freight? I do not think that they will get a bale more wool than comes to Sydney at the present time.
1723. Do you know anything about the fruit business; do you think that there will be any fruit traffic on the line? From what I can see in passing through, nearly all the fruit business is served by the present line.
1724. Do you know anything of the timber trade between Newcastle and Gosford? Yes.
1725. Do you think it likely that there will be any sawn timber or logs sent from about Wyong to Sydney? I do not think so.
1726. Do you know whether there is any good timber there? Yes; there is about Wyong.
1727. Do you not think that timber will be required in Sydney? Why do they not send it at the present time; they have got the railway into Sydney?
1728. I suppose you know that the railway, if extended, would save some 11 miles of carriage from the north? They would not bring timber to Sydney to land it on the North Shore—at least I do not think so.
1729. I suppose you know that an export trade in colonial timber is beginning with England? Yes, but it is very small.
1730. Do you think that there is any likelihood of that trade developing? Yes; but it would not develop for the timber between here and Newcastle.
1731. Why? It is the timber growing on the northern rivers that is exported.
1732. Is there not equally good timber between here and Newcastle? Not suitable for export.
1733. What kind of timber is exported? Cedar, I think, and some particular kinds of timber which grow on the northern rivers.

1734. Is it not all hardwood that has been exported? Hardwood is not exported to England, at least I have not heard of any being exported there. The principal export of hardwood is to the various colonies, for public works. I do not think that a single cargo of it has ever left Australia for England. W. B. Sharp,
Esq.
9 July, 1890
1735. You do not anticipate any timber trade to North Shore? You will not get a shipment of timber from there for the next twenty years.
1736. Your opinion is that no traffic whatever will be developed by the construction of the proposed railway? I do not think that its construction would advance the trade one particle.
1737. You do not think that there would be more railway traffic than there is at the present time? I do not think that there would be any more goods traffic.
1738. And whatever traffic there was on the North Shore line would be taken away from the existing lines? It would be taken from Redfern—yes.
1739. Do you think that there is likely to be any passenger traffic on this particular line? I do not think that there would be any through passenger traffic. Of course there would be a suburban passenger traffic.
1740. Do none of the people living on the North Shore travel to the north? Yes.
1741. Would not they be likely to use the branch line in starting away from home or coming back? It is quite possible that they would if it suited them.
1742. I suppose you anticipate that that part of Sydney will increase in population very much as the years go by? I believe that the whole of the suburbs will increase in population.
1743. Then it is likely that the passenger traffic would develop to something considerable? I think that the suburban traffic would. I do not think that the through traffic would.
1744. Is there not a chance of North Sydney growing to equal proportions with what may be termed South Sydney? It is quite possible, but I think that they have as many conveniences at the present time as South Sydney.
1745. Water accommodation and good sites for buildings? I think they have all the accommodation that they want at the present time.
1746. Do you know anything about the frozen meat trade? Yes.
1747. Can you say whether there is any likelihood of its being developed? It is going to be developed at Newcastle. An English company has been there, and I have been up the line and selected a site.
1748. Can you tell us where? I am not at liberty to divulge the name of the place.
1749. This meat will be exported direct from Newcastle to England? Yes.
1750. Is there any likelihood of the meat coming to Sydney if your line is constructed? No; because if they have facilities for shipping at Newcastle they are not likely to carry it 102 miles further to ship it from Sydney. We have Government wharves at Newcastle, and the trucks can go alongside the ships.
1751. You have every facility there that could be given at any part of the North Shore? We have better facilities there than there are in any other port in New South Wales.
1752. Do you think that any of the mail steamers would be likely to go to Newcastle for a cargo of frozen meat? For part of the cargo.
1753. You think they would be more likely to take meat from Newcastle than from Neutral Bay? Yes; because they could get their coal from Newcastle at the same time as they were loading meat.
1754. Have any of the Orient boats ever gone to Newcastle for coal? One came there for wool, but none of them have come for coal.
1755. *Mr. Garrard.*] Which boat? The "Potosi."
1756. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do you anticipate that these large steamers will go to Newcastle for frozen meat? As soon as the trade is established the steamers will go there for freight. The freight is very high on frozen meat.
1757. Do they consider Newcastle as safe a harbour as Port Jackson? It is quite as safe, but it is not so deep.
1758. If it is not as deep how can it be as safe? Quite as safe, if a vessel is drawing not more than 22 feet 6 inches.
1759. But I am speaking of the large mail boats? They would go there light.
1760. And then come back to Sydney to load up? Yes, and go on to Melbourne and Adelaide to finish, as at present.
1761. You do not think that we are likely to get any of the frozen meat trade. What about wheat, supposing that were exported? The same objection applies as applies in the case of wool. If the wheat was intended for exportation it would be shipped from Newcastle.
1762. Do you think that whatever wheat there was for exportation it could be shipped from Newcastle, and would not be likely to go past a good harbour like that in order to come to Sydney? It stands to reason that it would not come to Sydney.
1763. Do they charge any wharfage dues at Newcastle? No.
1764. They have not done so for some years? No.
1765. Can you say how many years it is since wharfage dues were abolished there? It must be nine years.
1766. There are wharfage rates in Sydney? We pay wharfage rates on ships loading at Newcastle, but not on the goods. The ships all pay a wharfage rate just as they do in Sydney. I think the wharfage returns at the present time are about £5,000.
1767. Do you know what wharfage rates are charged in Sydney? I know that it is 4d. per bale on wool—there is a regular tariff.
1768. Suppose the same rates were charged from Newcastle, would that affect the sales here? Not a bit.
1769. They would have to pay it just the same as they do in Sydney? Yes.
1770. I understood you to say that wheat intended for export would not pass Newcastle to get to Sydney? No.
1771. Are you aware that last year 250,000 bushels of wheat did pass Newcastle to come to Sydney? It is quite likely. No doubt it was offered at Sydney for sale first and then shipped.
1772. Do you not think that the trade is likely to increase if more land is brought under cultivation? We shipped wheat from Newcastle last year, but it came from Adelaide.
1773. Then you shipped it to England? Yes.
1774. Why was it brought from Adelaide to Newcastle? It was brought to Sydney, but we could offer cheaper freights from Newcastle.
1775. I suppose the wheat was sent from Adelaide to Newcastle because the steamers were going to Newcastle for coal? No; this was a sailing vessel. They could not get a freight in Sydney, and we shipped the wheat to London from Newcastle.

- W. B. Sharp, Esq.
9 July, 1890.
1776. I suppose some of the steamers do bring freight from Adelaide to Newcastle when they are coming for coal? Yes.
1777. What is the freight—on flour for instance? 3s. a ton.
1778. From Adelaide to Newcastle? Yes.
1779. Anything less than that? It is sometimes taken for ballast at less than that. That is a fair average.
1780. Do you know what freight is paid for bringing this particular kind of wheat to Newcastle? I cannot remember now.
1781. Is the wool usually dumped at Newcastle before shipping? It is all dumped at Newcastle.
1782. Brought down by rail? The train comes right alongside the wool stores, which are on the wharf; there is no handling at all. The wool is discharged into the stores, dumped, and put on board the ships straight away.
1783. I suppose it would not be possible, under any circumstances, to have an improvement upon that system? I do not think so. I think the arrangements at Newcastle are perfect—in fact, we have much better shipping facilities there for wool than you have here.
1784. *Mr. Garrard.*] Did you not obtain the returns which you have read to us from the railway authorities? No; the wool passed through our own hands.

Henry E. Stokes, Esq., Member of the Chamber of Commerce, Newcastle, sworn, and examined:—

- H. E. Stokes, Esq.
9 July, 1890.
1785. *Chairman.*] Will you tell the Committee why you come here to-day? Well, I understood that one of the reasons why it is proposed to extend the railway is that there are not sufficient facilities at Newcastle for transacting the shipping trade of the north and north-western districts, and that the railway is to take a portion of that trade. I maintain that it is quite possible to deal with the whole of the northern and north-western trade at Newcastle, and I think that the traffic upon the railway will not be supplemented by any trade from the north and north-west, because that trade will naturally seek its nearest shipping place.
1786. The port of Newcastle has been very much improved during the past few years for shipping? Yes; and it could do a great deal more trade than it is doing at present. If there were more ships coming there we could do a larger trade.
1787. You think that even if the line is constructed goods will not be sent past the port of Newcastle to Sydney, any more than they are sent now? Yes. I may say that I am a large shipper from Newcastle, and have had a great deal to do with the shipping of that port for the last twenty-five years. I am a large exporter of wool and other produce from there, so I have good opportunities for forming an opinion on the subject.
1788. What is the draught of the largest vessels that come into Newcastle—sailing vessels and steamers? About 23 feet. Perhaps, with a good tide, vessels drawing 6 inches more might get in.
1789. Any vessel drawing over 23 feet 6 inches could not get in or out? Not unless there was a very good tide. I should say that that was about a fair depth to reckon upon.
1790. Could a vessel drawing that depth get up alongside most of the cranes? Yes.
1791. I suppose at Newcastle you do not look upon it as possible to develop the coal trade to Sydney by railway with the present rates? Oh, no, because, in the first place, they can ship so much more cheaply by steamer. Colliers can take coal far cheaper than the railways can.
1792. I suppose, so far as the Newcastle people are concerned, they do not care whether the line is extended or not? I do not think they do.
1793. You do not care yourself—you do not come here to protest against the extension? No.
1794. Your object is merely to inform us that the extension of the railway will not take the trade from Newcastle? I do not think that it will. I do not think that it will affect Newcastle at all.
1795. Suppose there was a determination on the part of the woolgrowers to test the market in Sydney, that would affect the exportation from Newcastle considerably? That is already being done to a great extent. A great many woolgrowers do send their wool to Sydney now.
1796. And some of them ship direct, without trying the Sydney market at all? Yes. They find it cheaper to ship from Newcastle than from Sydney. Of course if they wish to try the market, they send the wool to Sydney.
1797. But they often try the market and then ship direct? Yes.
1798. That adds to the cost considerably? Yes, it adds to the cost materially.
1799. Have you any hope of inducing buyers to go to Newcastle;—have you tried to get them to do so since the railway has been opened? I think there has been one sale since the railway has been opened, though I am not sure.
1800. It was tried before the railway was opened, by Dalgety & Co.? Dalgety & Co. held sales there for two years.
1801. They did not prove a great success? I think they sold pretty well, but I think the sales were abandoned because of a combination of the Sydney brokers, who objected to bidding at the Newcastle sales.
1802. But, as a shipper, do you not think that it would be an advantage for the colony to have one market where the buyers could congregate, instead of splitting up the buyers and producers;—do you not think that it would be an advantage to the buyers and producers to have one place in which to buy and sell? I do not think that that is very likely to happen. I think that, as a rule, buyers will go direct to the stations. I think that that will be the future of the wool trade.
1803. But the men who do that do not buy the wool for the purpose of exporting it, but rather to speculate with it. It has been done for years? I think it is done rather by the agents of the consumers, who wish to put themselves into direct communication with the producers. They buy on the station and ship the wool away—it is not tried in the market. They send a man round to buy the wool from the producers.
1804. Do you know any other commodities besides coal which are exported from Newcastle—wheat or grain of any kind, or tin or other metals? A good deal of tallow is sent away, and some metal.
1805. Tin, I suppose? Some tin, but not very much.
1806. Does that generally come to Sydney? No. Some of the tin ore goes in the wool-ships, I think.
1807. Is any wheat exported from Newcastle? No, none.
1808. Do you know what quantity comes to Sydney? I do not think that there is any wheat grown in the northern districts that comes to Sydney.
1809. What do you find has been the effect of the construction of the railway from Newcastle to Sydney;—has it added to the prosperity of the town, or otherwise? I do not think that it has affected it.

1810. But has it not given very great facilities to the Newcastle people for transacting business in Sydney? Well, perhaps it has, but I do not think that it has had any effect either for good or for evil upon the place. I do not notice any depreciation in value there, and I cannot say that I have noticed any marked increase, more than you might expect from the increasing age of the town. H. E. Stokes,
Esq.
9 July, 1890
1811. *Mr. Garrard.*] How many ships were there at Newcastle last year loading wool only? I cannot tell you how many ships there were, but I think there were about 60,000 bales shipped.
1812. *Chairman.*] Were any of those ships entirely loaded with wool? A good many of them were loaded entirely with wool.
1813. *Mr. Garrard.*] Did any of them bring inward cargoes, or did they come in ballast? Some came with cargoes and some with ballast.
1814. From what ports? They would bring cargoes from the home ports.
1815. From what ports did the ships come in ballast? From various ports, but mostly colonial.
1816. Mostly from Sydney? I think that some came from Melbourne, but, perhaps, most of them came from Sydney.
1817. Do they require ballast stiffening to get from Sydney to Newcastle? Yes.
1818. What would be the cost of putting in and taking out of ballast for a vessel going from Sydney to Newcastle? It would not be very much.
1819. How many inward cargoes of merchandise came from Europe direct last year? I daresay from fifteen to twenty ships.
1820. With full cargoes? Yes. There is generally a ship a month to one firm, and a ship or two come in at odd times.
1821. Did you say that the facilities for shipping at Newcastle were more than the trade required? Yes; we could do twice the trade.
1822. Is it true that large sums of money are being spent there to increase those facilities? There is a proposal to do certain necessary work there, I think, but I am not prepared to say what sums of money are to be spent.
1823. I think there is a proposal to erect half a dozen extra cranes? Yes.
1824. That is not necessary? I do not say that it is not necessary. We hope that the trade will grow. If we had more ships we could do more trade. We have, at the present time, more orders for coal in Newcastle than we can execute, because we have not enough ships. If enough ships came we should need more cranes. The trade is a growing one.
1825. How long is it since wharfage rates were discontinued in Newcastle? I should say about seven or eight years.
1826. Are you aware whether any of the wool-dumping buildings belonging to Dalgety & Co., and others, are erected on railway land, and held at a very low rental? They are erected on railway land; but I do not think that they are held at a low rental; I think they pay a very good rental.
1827. Dalgety's, for instance? I think that they pay about £2 per foot per annum for rent.

Arthur Harrison Collings, Esq., Manager of the Gore Hill Brickworks, St. Leonards, sworn, and examined:—

1828. *Mr. Dowel.*] What is your occupation? I am manager of the Gore Hill Brickworks.

1829. Where do you reside? At West-street, North Shore.

1830. Have you made yourself acquainted with the proposal now before the Committee with respect to the construction of a railway down to the deep waters of Port Jackson? I have.

1831. What is the nature of the evidence which you desire to give to the Committee? Simply as to the effect which the construction of the line would have upon the brickworks with which I am connected. I have prepared a written statement, which I should like to read. It is as follows:—

EXTENT to which the Railway Department would be benefited in revenue derived from carriage of bricks and coal to and from the Gore Hill Brickworks, provided the terminus was at Milson's Point instead of where it is at present; we would then connect with a branch line into our works from siding at St. Leonards' Station.

Our ordinary output of bricks is about 200,000 per week; but through slackness of trade it has been reduced to 180,000 per week. The total extent of our plant production, if utilized to full capacity, is 450,000 per week. We have added largely to our plant during the past twelve months, in anticipation of an increase in trade, through better facilities being given us for delivery. We felt certain the railway would be extended to Milson's Point, and we could then connect with the siding at once, thus enabling us to reload our bricks from railway trucks (these would be loaded direct from the kilns) into waggons at Milson's Point, for Sydney, Milson's Point, or direct from railway trucks into boats for harbour, river, or coast trade, which is a considerable factor in our calculations. I shall mention six contracts, together with quantities we supplied them, during the past twelve months, in order to prove to you that the figures I quote are not given in anticipation of trade to come, but as it exists at the present time. The following are the quantities supplied:—

Messrs. Dean & Sons, "Australian Hotel"	5,350,000
Messrs. Waine & Baldwin, Lands Office	250,000
"Wentworth Hotel"	325,000
Crown-street Reservoir	75,000
Bulli Coke Co.	350,000
Total	6,350,000

Now we come to the question of amount of money which would have been saved to our company had the Milson's Point extension been carried out, and the goods traffic of our works carried on it, instead of the road, as at present.

Cartage of bricks to Sydney by carts, per 1,000	£0 16 6
Cartage of bricks with siding at works, and extension of railway to Milson's Point, per 1,000	0 12 9
Cartage of bricks to Darling Harbour <i>via</i> Hornsby, per 1,000	0 17 8
Of course, sending them <i>via</i> Darling Harbour is dearer than the cart system, so the line is practically useless to us for carriage of bricks with the terminus as it is at present.	
We sent 6,000,000 at a less rate of cartage of 3s. 9d. per thousand	£1,125 0 0
We sent to Blue's Point wharf, for Bulli Coke Co., 350,000; our cartage was 10s. per 1,000; if taken by rail to water's edge, 5s. 3d., meaning a saving of 4s. 9d. per 1,000	83 2 6
Our trade at Milson's Point averaged 5,000 per day; forwarded by rail we save 1s. per 1,000...	75 0 0
Total saving in carriage of bricks	£1,283 2 6

The next item is the saving in coal, by being able to receive it from boats at Milson's Point and take to place of destination direct by rail.

A. H. Collings
Esq.
9 July, 1890.

A. H. Collings,
Esq.
9 July, 1890.

We usually consume per week 50 tons of Southern coal and 20 tons of Lithgow. The cost of it is as follows, by rail :—

Large coal—At mine, 8s. ; rail, 5s. 6d. ; road, 2s.—15s. 6d.	
Small coal—At mine, 3s. ; rail, 5s. 6d. ; road, 2s.—10s. 6d.	
Coal landed at Milson's Point from boat, and thence by rail to yard :—	
Large coal, freight—At Point, 11s. 6d. ; rail freight, 1s. 6d.—13s.	
Small coal—At Point, 6s. ; rail freight, 1s. 6d.—7s. 6d.	
22 tons of large coal per week, at 2s. 6d.	£143 0 0
28 tons of small coal per week, at 3s.	218 8 0

Total £361 8 0

With siding into works we would save the sum of £104 per annum on 20 tons per week at 2s. per ton; present price for cartage, from St. Leonards to works	104 0 0
Add to this the saving on bricks, cartage.....	1,283 2 6

Total saving to our Company with railway to Milson's Point (minimum amount) ... £1,748 10 6

Next item is the revenue received by department for carriage of bricks and coal on the Milson's Point line :—	
26,166 bricks per day, by rail, at 5s. 3d. per 1,000	£2,060 7 3
50 tons of coal per week, at 1s. 6d.	195 0 0

Total, provided railway taken to Milson's Point £2,255 7 3

We receive on Hornsby route, 20 tons of Lithgow coal per week, at 9s. 3d.	481 0 0
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Grand total £2,736 7 3

We are now getting southern coal by steamer landed at Point, and find it more economical than by rail, with present terminus, and shall continue to do so until line is extended to Milson's Point.

In these figures no calculation is made for increase in trade, which we are certain must ensue, as we can tender for several contracts which under present conditions we would not, as if our bricks were carried to Point by rail we would have an advantage over last year's quotations through saving of cartage into Sydney, 3s. 9d., 1s. at Milson's Point, and 4s. 9d. per 1,000 for rivers, harbours, and coast trade.

We lost several good contracts, one for 3,000,000 to be delivered by water to Walker's Hospital, Concord, on the Parramatta River; and 1,000,000 of Messrs. Dean's order, we had to procure from Messrs. Bakewell Bros. Although we had more than that quantity in stock, we were handicapped by being unable to secure sufficient carts to deliver them up to time. If the railway had been there it would have been avoided, as then no difficulty would have been met with. We are now sending 600,000 facing bricks by water carriage from Point to Walker's Hospital, on Parramatta River; also some 2,000,000 to Garden Island; all these would come by rail to Point if completed to it. We have already had sixty boxes made to hold 500 bricks each, to facilitate the handling from railway trucks to waggons or boat, whichever purpose they were required for; they are at present being used to convey the facing bricks to Parramatta and bricks to Garden Island. Having had a large experience amongst the clay shales of Victoria, New Zealand, Tasmania, and New South Wales, I can safely assert that the clay and shale of North Shore is superior to any I have met with in the other colonies for all classes of potteryware; in fact the majority of it should never be used for ordinary bricks, being very valuable for fancy ware. There are already four potteries making regularly now all the articles in finer branches of earthenware trade. Fire-clay, from which first-class fire-bricks are made, abounds largely on North Shore. I, myself, have made already more than half a million of them; therefore these resources are sure to be developed far more largely in the future, thereby increasing the revenue derived from carriage of goods on the railway of North Shore. I fully anticipate that very few months after the line is completed we will double our present output, and the Milson's Point line will receive in revenue the sum of £5,472 17s. 6d. derived from our works alone, independent of any of the other two brickworks.

1832. *Chairman.*] You swear that what the statement you have just read contains is true? Yes.

1833. *Mr. Dowel.*] You anticipate that the freight on your bricks alone will give a revenue to the railway, if it is extended to Milson's Point, of over £5,000? £2,736 under present conditions; but if the trade increases it will amount to that, because the railway will enable us to tender for jobs which we cannot tender for now.

1834. Would the construction of the railway place you in a better position for tendering? In a far better position. At the present time we cannot procure enough drays to take the bricks away.

1835. Are your bricks of such a quality that they are always likely to be in demand? Certainly, if we could procure drays enough.

1836. You do not anticipate any competition in the future which will prevent their being in demand? Certainly not. With the plant which we have no competition could affect us.

1837. The railway would also offer you very considerable facilities for working your business as regards the supply of coal? Certainly; it would make a considerable saving.

1838. And you would pay the Government a considerable amount of money in the shape of freight for the coal? Yes.

1839. Is there any further information which you would like to give to the Committee? No; there is no further information.

1840. *Chairman.*] How many bricks are there to a ton? They run about 3 ton 10 cwt. to the thousand.

1841. At the present time the Railway Department get nothing from you except for the haulage of the Lithgow coal which you consume? Yes.

1842. Are these boxes which you have constructed to provide a new method of loading trains? Yes; they facilitate the handling—you can handle them more quickly.

1843. Would you put the boxes into the trucks? You could, but at the present time we put them on lorries.

1844. Suppose you were working with these boxes in connection with the trains, would you put a box containing the bricks on to the truck and send it down to Milson's Point? No; I should not do that. The boxes are mostly for the lorries. They would increase the cost of carriage by their weight.

1845. In that case you would not have the handling of the bricks again at Milson's Point in unloading? That is all provided in the cost which I have given.

1846. You mention 1s. 6d. a ton as the cost of hauling coal from Milson's Point? Yes, that is correct—1s. 6d. will take it to Hornsby.

1847. *Mr. Humphery.*] That is the minimum charge? Yes.

1848. *Chairman.*] It is 12 miles to Hornsby? Yes.

1849. *Mr. Dowel.*] Are there any other brickmakers in this particular locality who would use the railway if it were constructed? There are two just alongside the railway.

1850. Doing a large business? Not so extensive a business as ours, but they are doing a large business.

1851. A considerable amount of railway freight would be derived from the carriage of bricks on their account? Yes, and there would be the carriage of their coal too.

1852. What are the names of these brickmakers? Magney and Wainton, and the Crown Plastic Brick Company Limited. 1853.

Sydney... 20,000
Milson's
Point... 5,000
Boats .. 1,166

1853. Is there any specially good shale and brick-clay on any other portion of the line between your works and Hornsby? Yes; throughout the whole of the district clays and shales of the most superior quality for the manufacture of any class of earthenware abound.

A. H. Collings,
Esq.
9 July, 1899.

Walter Liberty Vernon, Esq., surveyor and architect, North Shore, sworn, and examined:—

1854. *Chairman.*] You are a surveyor and architect? I am.

1855. Residing at North Shore? Yes.

1856. You hold the position of alderman over there? I am an alderman of the Borough of East St. Leonards, and I have expended between £40,000 and £50,000 in building residences there.

1857. You know the North Shore pretty well? Very well, indeed.

1858. You are engaged there now in laying out some large areas of land? Yes, and in some large building operations too.

1859. Do you know the proposal to construct the railway down to the deep waters of the harbour? I have not seen the recent scheme.

1860. It is shown on the map before the Committee by a dotted red line. The railway would have a grade of 1 in 50 on that route? I came to raise an objection to such a westerly route being taken, because I do not think that it will be used for suburban traffic or for the general traffic. It does not seem to me, and I know that others think with me, that it is sufficiently central to convenience the people over there. There is a very large population to the north-east of the line, and if the line skirts the water's edge, as it is proposed that it shall do, it cannot serve that population. It will only serve the population on one side of it at most. I have a rough scheme here, based on a plan prepared and published some time ago by the *North Shore Times*, showing the trial surveys for this line.

1861. You propose to branch off from the existing line at about 10 miles from Hornsby? From the present station. Then I pass below the Cottage Hospital in order to keep down the levels.

1862. That is to the north? Yes; I get to a natural depression of the ground there.

1863. Have you made any rough surveys of this route? I cannot say that I have. I have some rough data to go upon, but it is not sufficiently accurate to give as evidence.

1864. I see that you put a station just where I live? I put a station there because it would enable the train to take the existing tram traffic, and it would also serve the large district, called North Sydney, lying beyond the new bridge which they are building. The advantage of going so far north is that you keep at a lower level.

1865. Do you know what grades you would have coming past Alfred-street? As near as I can tell, about 1 in 60.

1866. Have you seen Mr. Hamand's proposal—his scheme bears away east as far as Willoughby Falls? No; I have not.

1867. He only gets a grade of 1 in 70? I think I am on the safe side in saying 1 in 60. I did make it a little more but I wish to be safe. There is a natural depression on the other side of the Military-road, where the creeks run down to Middle Harbour, and I propose to take advantage of it before you get to Milson's Point or to the southern shore.

1868. Your objection to the proposed route is that it goes too far to the westward to serve the population which must spring up to the eastward of the tram-line? True.

1869. Do you not think that if the tram service were extended to the east it would suit the requirements of those people. Suppose the tram were extended along the Military-road, would not that afford a great convenience to the people of all those suburbs? I do not think that it would answer the same purpose as a railway.

1870. But if the tramway were extended along the Military-road nearly as far as Middle Harbour, what would be the furthest distance that any of the inhabitants there would have to travel to get to it? Probably not more than three-quarters of a mile.

1871. Do you not think that it would be infinitely cheaper to construct a tramway than to make a detour with the railway? I do not think so. I consider that there are certain advantages to be gained by taking the line in the direction which I have shown which no other route would have.

1872. Will you tell us what they are? The line from Miller-street, running under the Military-road, at the eastern corner of the reserve, by a short tunnel, would come out into the Neutral Bay valley, which is very rough land, and would be, comparatively speaking, inexpensive. There is a quarry there. That would bring you to the head of Neutral Bay, where the Government, in conjunction with the East St. Leonards Council, propose to reclaim some land to the extent of $7\frac{1}{2}$ or 8 acres, so that they will be put to no expense in purchasing a frontage. The property will be extremely valuable for wharfage purposes, and the only expense which the Government would have to incur would be in filling in. Then a short tunnel would bring the line to the head of Careening Cove, where there are $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land which the excavations from the tunnelling would no doubt reclaim. From there it would be an extremely short cut by a tunnel either to Milson's Point to the line proposed, or to Kirribilli Point, which would be directly opposite the line on the other side, if the Railway Commissioners' scheme for carrying the railway to Hyde Park were agreed to.

1873. So that you have four tunnels? Three tunnels.

1874. If you came down to Kirribilli Point you would come out by a tunnel? Yes.

1875. And you would do the same with Lavender Bay? Yes; but I should make Careening Cove the depôt for the railway.

1876. But you would also use Neutral Bay for that purpose? If it was required. It is in the hands of the Government, and something like 10 acres could be reclaimed there.

1877. You would put the passenger stations at the mouth of the tunnel either at Lavender Bay or at Kirribilli Point? Yes. I think that there are about 40 extra chains in the route which I propose. You could also extend the line to Cremorne, and to Manly from the top—it would serve both extensions.

1878. Your proposal has this advantage, that it serves the people between the present terminus at St. Leonards and Pearce's Corner? Yes, most decidedly.

1879. And it has the advantage of serving the people in the most densely populated part of St. Leonards? Yes.

1880. It is about centrally situated for the suburbs of the North Shore? Yes.

1881. What is the difference in cost between your proposal and that of the Commissioners? I have not reckoned that out at all, but I should say that the cost of my scheme would be considerably less than the cost

W. L. Vernon,
Esq.
9 July, 1899.

- W.L. Vernon, cost of the proposed scheme, because the value of the land required to be purchased would be less. I think I understood that the resumption of land in Lavender Bay would come to something like £67,000. There will be nothing like that to buy in this scheme.
- 9 July, 1890. 1882. But you have three tunnels? Certainly; but purchasing land for a tunnel is very different from purchasing a water frontage.
1883. You are a professional man;—do you think it possible to offer any evidence in favour of this proposal without first testing its practicability by taking levels? I think the tunnels get one over the difficulty of all the inconvenient physical features of the land.
1884. What are the lengths of these tunnels, roughly;—what is the length of the first one, towards Long Bay? About 25 chains.
1885. Then the middle one? About 15 chains, between Neutral Bay and Careening Cove.
1886. Then between Careening Cove and Lavender Bay? About 20 chains.
1887. And between Careening Cove and Kirribilli? About 28 chains.
1888. Can you get to the wharf level at the head of Lavender Bay? No, you cannot. You would have to take a siding with the same grade to get down to it.
1889. At Careening Cove you do get to the wharf level? Yes.
1890. Is not Careening Cove very shallow? No; there is a deep-water frontage where the new wall is to be erected.
1891. Can you say what the feeling of the people of the North Shore is about this? I am not prepared to speak definitely, but I know that those on the eastern side would feel it greatly if no more accommodation was granted to them than the western scheme would give them.
1892. The western scheme will be of no advantage whatever to the people east of the tramway line? I do not think that it will.
1893. Practically it would only open up the country between what points would you say? Between the present tramway and the existing station at Gore Hill, I imagine.
1894. Would not the extension of the line to Milson's Point open up the country between Pearce's Corner and the present St. Leonards' Station? That country would be opened up in either case, but it would give greater conveniences to the people on the North Shore if a central line were constructed. To mention my own case, I have a place at Hornsby, but I cannot get there by the present line, so I drive; I never go by rail.
1895. *Mr. Copeland.*] The adoption of the tunnels which you propose would get rid of any difficulty as to grade? Yes.
1896. All that you would have to do to alter the grade would be to take an extra few feet from the length of the tunnel? True.
1897. May you not find when you come to make an accurate survey and to work out the levels that you will have to extend the curve considerably, so as to get the level to the eastward? That may possibly be necessary, but from my rough calculations and observations I do not think so.
1898. You have gone to no calculation whatever as to the cost of land resumption? No. I have only looked over the country generally. Anyone can see that the ground on the route which I propose is covered by far less valuable properties than is the ground upon the other route. There is no comparison between them at all.
1899. You are under the impression that the route which you propose would accommodate a greater number of people than the route which we are considering? That is my idea. There is another point in favour of my line, but I am not prepared to speak on it so confidently, and that is, that the shipping will be kept on the eastern side of Kirribilli Point instead of passing through the confined space to Lavender Bay, which is becoming more crowded every day.
1900. Do you propose to have the terminus at Milson's Point? I make that optional. I do not think that that affects my scheme at all.
1901. Would there be any necessity, if your scheme were carried out, to continue the tramway? I should take it up to the station in Miller-street, so as to make a junction, and it would then go right on over the new bridge.
1902. Would not the tramway and railway be running parallel? No; they would run across each other at right angles.
1903. You say that the tunnel to Kirribilli Point would be 28 chains long—do you think that anyone residing midway over it would care to travel 14 chains to get to the railway? Yes; they would have to take the ordinary roads, I presume.
1904. Do you think people would prefer to travel through tunnels like rats to coming out into the open daylight? You have certain physical features to contend with, and you must deal with them the best way you can. I think the short tunnels will be no great objection.
1905. I suppose you have seen Mr. Hamand's proposal? No, I have not.
1906. I suppose you can give the Committee no assurance as to what grade your proposed line will have? Not accurately, because I have not been in a position to take the accurate levels, but I know pretty well the height from the water at Miller-street, and with these tunnels I think you can take a very level grade right down to the water. I have calculated it out, and I think the grade would be 1 in 60.
1907. Still you have made no survey? No.
1908. So that it is mere guesswork at the present time? It is, to a certain extent, but I have some data.
1909. Your opinion is based upon the mean levels, I suppose? Yes.
1910. *Dr. Garran.*] Your route runs through what is now the settled part of St. Leonards? Yes.
1911. If Mr. Deane's line is made, and the Crow's Nest Estate is cut up, that will be as thickly populated as the present settled part of St. Leonards? On one side, but it skirts the water closely.
1912. Still there is a good deal of land between the railway and the water's edge upon which houses could be built? There is some, but the line has not a central position.
1913. The land on the western side of the line will not contribute so much traffic as that on the eastern side? Yes.
1914. Because it is limited in area? Yes.
1915. Still there will be a considerable population settled there some day? Undoubtedly.
1916. If we take your route we shall have to buy small pieces of land from a large number of proprietors? Yes.
1917. But with the other route we should have to buy a large quantity of land from one proprietor? On the Berry Estate—yes.

1918. In that case the clause of the Land Resumption Act which allows us to deduct from the value of the land taken anything which it gains by the construction of the railway will come into force? Yes.
1919. So that we shall not have to pay so much for land going through the Berry Estate? I think you would have to pay more for the water frontage.
1920. You think that the ground gained at Careening Cove and Neutral Bay would compensate us for what we lost in other ways? Yes.
1921. You think your line will be cheaper, and would suit the present population better? Far better.
1922. Still you would have to make some resumption in Lavender Bay? Yes, at the extreme point.
1923. You have not considered the question of crossing the harbour? No. I have taken my line to Kirribilli in order to meet Mr. Eddy's scheme which was published in the newspaper some short time ago, and I was shown the ferry service which would connect across.
1924. Do you mean Mr. Eddy's scheme for a ferry or his scheme for a tunnel? For both. The tunnel could come out at Careening Cove, while the ferry could go to Kirribilli—that is another of the advantages of my scheme.
1925. Are you aware that the borings across the harbour have shown that the rock is as much as 116 feet deep in some places? Yes.
1926. That would greatly increase the cost of the tunnel? Yes.
1927. Are you aware that Mr. Hamand has suggested a scheme for laying the line in iron tubes? I think I saw something in the newspaper to that effect.
1928. You are not engineer enough to check his estimate? I should not attempt it.
1929. You think you can form an estimate of the surface work and cuttings? Yes; I have been at that all my life.
1930. You have looked into the line sufficiently to hazard the statement on your professional reputation that you think it would be cheaper, all things considered? I am prepared to say so.
1931. You cannot tell us at all about the grades? I give you 1 in 60 as the maximum grade.
1932. Do you know the elevation above the water level at Amherst Station? 240 feet.
1933. You have measured that? Not by a survey, but by aneroids.
1934. You have calculated the mileage in which to make the descent to the water? I have.
1935. *Mr. Humphery.*] You propose to serve the traffic on the eastern side by the line coloured red—would not most of the traffic which you propose to serve be served by the existing tramway and the extension in course of construction? It would to some extent, but not so fully as by a railway, because I anticipate that there will be a large traffic from North Shore itself up into the northern districts, and to the settlements round Gordon and Pearce's Corner. It is far more convenient for the public to drive right to the railway station than to get into a tram and then shift again.
1936. Supposing the people round Pearce's Corner and on the existing line can get to Milson's Point by railway, does it make any difference to them whether they travel to the east or to the west of the present tramline? I will instance my own case. To get from Hornsby to my house at Neutral Bay the railway at present is useless to me, and therefore I drive, and if it were taken to Milson's Point it would be of very little more use to me; but if I could get out at a station centrally situated I should be near my own home, comparatively speaking.
1937. But would it not suit people going to Sydney for business just as well to travel to the west of the tram as to the east of it, as proposed by you? Yes; but I do not think that it would suit the North Shore so well. I do not think that the line as proposed by the department is sufficiently central for the North Shore people, though I admit that for Sydney people, going direct to Hornsby or to Pearce's Corner, it does not matter two-pence half-penny whether they go to the east or west of the line.
1938. *Mr. Dowel.*] What is the length of your route? About 275 chains, as against 235 chains on the proposed route.
1939. The length of the proposal which the Committee are considering is 181 chains? That line starts from the Railway Station at St. Leonards.
1940. Where does your line start from? From the same place.
1941. So that your route is 1 mile and 14 chains longer than the route under the consideration of the Committee. What is the estimated cost of your proposal? I have made no estimate of the cost.
1942. Did I not understand you to say that you had made an estimate, and that your scheme would compare favourably with that which we are considering, both as regards grade and cost? I have made a rough estimate as to the value of the resumptions, such as an ordinary business man, looking over the ground, might make.
1943. What is the value of the resumptions? I have not gone into particulars.
1944. Then how did you arrive at your estimate? I walked over the two routes, and saw the difference in the character of the settlement on each.
1945. Have you made any estimate of the cost of construction? No.
1946. Do you know anything of the cost of the earthworks or of the tunnels? I am not prepared with that evidence.
1947. *Mr. Copeland.*] You merely indicate a route? Yes. I should like to say, in explanation of the length of my route, that I take up the Cremorne and Manly route. I made the Government route 2 miles 75 chains. I have not had the advantage of seeing the last scheme submitted to the Committee. I admit that my route is the longer, but it serves a double purpose.

The following letter was forwarded by Mr. Vernon in explanation :—

Sir,

Union Bank Chambers, 10 July, 1890.

In connection with the evidence I had the honor of tendering yesterday, in reference to the extension of the North Shore Railway, it was suggested that the alternative scheme I advocated involved an additional length of line of nearly 2 miles beyond that of the Government scheme.

May I be allowed to confirm my own evidence by stating that measurements taken on the map of the Government scheme give the following results :—

Government scheme, from St. Leonards' Station to Milson's Point (westward), 2 miles 44 chains.

Alternative route (eastward), 3 miles 12 chains.

Or a difference only of 48 chains (half a mile) against the latter, instead of the suggested 2 miles.

I have, &c.,

W. L. VERNON.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

Mr.

Mr. Richard Porter, fruit-grower, Gordon, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. R. Porter. 1948. *Mr. Copeland.*] Where do you reside? At Gordon.
 9 July, 1890. 1949. What is your occupation? I am a farmer—a fruit-grower.
 1950. Have you come prepared to make a statement to the Committee either in favour of or against the proposed line? I have come to speak in favour of it, and to show the produce and wood taken from the district, and the manure brought into it.
 1951. Have you prepared any statement? No.
 1952. You know the route of the proposed railway? Yes.
 1953. I suppose you have seen the surveys? Yes.
 1954. Do you think that that railway would convenience yourself and your neighbours? Yes. About 50,000 cases of fruit go out of the district in twelve months.
 1955. Is there any likelihood of that increasing? Yes; it increases every day, because more orchards are continually being planted.
 1956. Do you know how many cases went away the year before last? About the same number.
 1957. Then the quantity has not increased much in one year? It would not increase very much in one year.
 1958. But you think that it will increase considerably? Yes, because more people are planting.
 1959. I suppose there is plenty of good land available for additional orchards? Yes, plenty.
 1960. Are you and your neighbours desirous of seeing the line constructed? Yes.
 1961. If it were constructed, would you make use of it to bring your fruit to Milson's Point? Decidedly.
 1962. It would be the easiest way of getting to the Sydney market? Yes.
 1963. Do you make any use of the railway at the present time? No; it is too far round.
 1964. Where do you reside? About a quarter of a mile from Pymble Station.
 1965. You are decidedly in favour of the route proposed by the Government? Yes.
 1966. You wish to see it carried out? Yes.
 1967. Do you speak for yourself only or for the Lane Cove people—have you had any meetings? No. We had a sort of meeting. We were speaking about the line, and we came to the conclusion that it is no use where it is.
 1968. Were you asked to represent your neighbours' views here? Yes.
 1969. How many were there at the meeting? It was not quite a meeting. I went through them and spoke to them.
 1970. You think that the people generally are in favour of the proposed line? Yes.
 1971. And that if it is constructed they will make use of it in order to send their fruit to market? Yes.
 1972. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you think the quantity of fruit produced by your district would be doubled if the railway were made? It would take some time.
 1973. Do you think it would be doubled in three years? No.
 1974. Would it in five? No; I think it would take ten years.
 1975. Before the 50,000 cases became 100,000? Yes.
 1976. How far are you now from Milson's Point by road? Ten miles.
 1977. If you were only five miles off, would you send the fruit by railway? I should.
 1978. And have it shipped across the water? Yes.
 1979. Do not many of the fruit carts bring back manure? Not many. They bring a bag or two sometimes.
 1980. There is very little return freight? They have as much bulk going back as they have coming, because empty boxes take up as much room as full boxes.
 1981. But they do not bring back anything heavy? No.
 1982. What do you think it costs to cart fruit to market now? It requires a man and a horse, and the man has to get up at two or three o'clock in the morning to get to market in time. It costs 10s. or 12s. a load.
 1983. For what do you expect to send it by railway? For less than half that.
 1984. That would include the ferrying across, and the cartage on this side? Yes, and you would not be troubled with a horse in town.
 1985. Would you have to make your own private arrangements for carting to market? No; there would be plenty of vans.
 1986. Would you save half what you at present pay for cartage, and have all trouble taken off your hands? Yes, fully that. About 1,000 tons of bonedust and lime come into the district each year. They use a large quantity of lime now. The trees are subject to a number of diseases, and they apply a great deal of lime to them; they think that there is nothing so good.
 1987. Where do the lime merchants get that lime? They get it from Marulan and those places.
 1988. It does not come by sea? No, by rail. We buy it from the dealers in Sydney, and they send it to us.
 1989. Do you think that the railway would carry 1,000 tons of lime and other manures? I do.
 1990. What would be the freight on that to Gordon from Milson's Point? I do not know what it would be. They charge 1s. 6d. a ton for wood.
 1991. How many tons do you think come down by the railway? Some of the wood is carted, and some is sent down by trucks. I suppose there are about 50 tons a week sent down altogether, but there are thousands of tons which would come down but for the expense. The railway charge is 1s. 6d. to St. Leonards, and then you have to pay 2s. 6d. more to have it delivered to the wood-yards, so that it costs you 4s. for 6 or 7 miles of carriage.
 1992. You think there would be an increased traffic in wood, lime, and fruit, if the railway went down to the water's edge? Yes; I am sure that there would be.

THURSDAY, 10 JULY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Captain Benjamin Jenkins, Member of the Marine Board, sworn, and examined:—

1993. *Chairman.*] You were at one time, I think, Mayor of the borough of St. Leonards? Yes.
1994. And an alderman of that borough? I was an alderman for ten years, for four years of which I was Mayor.
1995. Are you still an alderman? No.
1996. You are a member of the Marine Board? Yes.
1997. An elected or a nominated member? An elected member.
1998. Representing what interest? The shipowners.
1999. Do you know the proposal to extend the line of railway from the present station at St. Leonards to Lavender Bay? Yes.
2000. Are you well acquainted with that part of the district? Yes.
2001. In your opinion, does Lavender Bay offer good facilities for shipping goods to and from a railway? I did not approve of the line coming down to Milson's Point.
2002. Why? Because I think that, what with the tram and the ferries, Milson's Point has as much traffic now as it can have, while it is not a suitable place for shipping.
2003. Lavender Bay is not a suitable place for shipping? Lavender Bay is not a suitable place for shipping, because all the vessels going there would have to come through the very narrow waters between Milson's Point and Dawes' Point, which is the narrowest part of the harbour.
2004. Have you had much to do with the shipping of this port? Yes.
2005. For how long? It is thirty-six years since I first came here. I came here as first mate of a ship, and have been connected with the shipping of this port ever since.
2006. Why is Lavender Bay not a suitable place for shipping? Because of the want of room there, and because all ships going there would have to go through the narrow channel which I have mentioned. In my opinion the shipping should either be below Kirribilli Point or above Blue's Point—below preferred.
2007. Apart from that, would the railway serve the best interests of the North Shore district, suppose it were for passengers only? It would not serve those living about St. Leonards—they seem to have been ignored altogether.
2008. Would it be of any use to the people living down towards Middle Harbour? In my opinion it would be of no use to any one on the heights of St. Leonards, as there is no station near there.
2009. Whereabouts is the population located which this railway would begin to serve? The population is all to the east of the proposed line. It would not serve any of the people of St. Leonards.
2010. Where would you suggest that the railway should be brought? I think Kirribilli Point, if you must have it at the nearest point to Sydney. That, in my opinion, would be the nearest and most suitable place, while the line would come down into Neutral Bay, a fine harbour for shipping.
2011. You would extend it so as to touch Neutral Bay and come to Kirribilli Point, if it were necessary to bring it to the place nearest to Sydney? Yes.
2012. Is Neutral Bay suitable for shipping? Neutral Bay is the best place for shipping on that side of the harbour.
2013. Is it better than Cremorne? I consider that Cremorne Point and Kirribilli Point enclose Neutral Bay. Cremorne is a fine natural wharf with deep water on each side.
2014. Have you anything else to tell the Committee? No; I do not think so.
2015. *Mr. Dowel.*] You have stated that there will be considerable difficulty in taking vessels to Lavender Bay? Yes; because you have to manœuvre in the narrow fairway.
2016. Would there be more difficulty in taking them into Lavender Bay than into Sydney Cove? Yes; for the Cove is nearer to the wide part of the harbour, and it would be increasing the traffic in the narrow part of the harbour.
2017. What would be the difference between taking a vessel into Lavender Bay and taking it into Sydney Cove? A vessel going to Lavender Bay would have to come from the wide water below Fort Macquarie and Kirribilli through a narrow channel, and in going out large ships would be nearly across to Dawes' Point before they could turn round.
2018. Is not Lavender Bay as large as Sydney Cove? Nothing like it.
2019. What is the area of Sydney Cove? I think Sydney Cove is about 1,800 feet wide at the entrance, and that width does not diminish very much as you approach the head of the bay. And you must remember that Sydney Cove is smaller now than it was before the wharves there were erected. If you make wharves in Lavender Bay its area will be very much diminished.
2020. What is the area of Sydney Cove? I cannot say.
2021. Can you inform the Committee of the width of Lavender Bay? I have a plan of the harbour here, on which I can explain matters. [*Witness pointed out on the map the relative size of Lavender Bay and Sydney Cove.*]
2022. So I understand that there is very little difference between the areas of the two bays? There is a good deal of difference. In the first place the Cove is much deeper.
2023. Not according to the measurements which you took just now on the map? Yes, there is, because a couple of hundred feet must be taken up for wharfage purposes on each side of the bay, and more at the head of the bay.

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2024. But I mean their areas at the present time? There is not much difference in width at the entrance at M'Mahon's Point and the eastern shore than there is between Campbell's and the Orient Company's wharves.
2025. But you can give us no further information with respect to the areas of the two bays? No.
2026. What is the depth of water in Sydney Cove? From 8 fathoms at the entrance to $3\frac{1}{2}$ close up to the wharves at the southern end.
2027. What is the depth in Lavender Bay? From about 6 fathoms to perhaps 3 fathoms a little way from the shore.
2028. Then the depth of water in Lavender Bay is nearly equal to that in Sydney Cove? There is not much difference.
2029. Do you not think that the eastern side of Lavender Bay is a suitable place to bring the railway to for shipping purposes? I do not think that it is.
2030. For what reason? In the first place you have not got one foot of level land—you will have to make all the land, and there is no road down to it.
2031. That is provided for in the proposal before the Committee? I have not taken notice of it. I go by what I know of the bay.
2032. That difficulty in your mind having been got over, what other difficulties exist? The place is very small. If a steamer 400 or 500 feet long went in there to load coal there would not be much length to swing.
2033. But the width of the two bays being about the same, it appears to me that there would be no more difficulty in swinging in one than in swinging in the other? The bays as they are now are nearly alike, but, in width, when you make the wharfage at Lavender Bay, there will be a considerable difference in every way.
2034. Have you made yourself acquainted with the proposal before the Committee? I have not seen the maps; I have seen the line. I speak from what I know of the place.
2035. Of course you know the bay exceedingly well? Yes.
2036. You were asked by the Chairman whether you consider Milson's Point a suitable place for a passenger terminus—is it not, in your opinion, the best point in the harbour that could be selected? I think that if the railway passengers must come to Lavender Bay, they could just as well go on board the ferry steamers at the head of the bay as at Milson's Point, which is now fully taken up with the tram and vehicular traffic. There is not much land at Milson's Point.
2037. You do not think that there is sufficient room for a passenger terminus there? No. A train could come in and go back again, but there would scarcely be room for a turntable.
2038. Suppose there were sufficient room there for a passenger terminus, would it not be the most convenient spot to which the train could be brought so as to give access to the Circular Quay? I suppose it would be the nearest point to the Circular Quay, but I do not think that it is a suitable place for a railway terminus, because we never bring ships to a point; they generally go up into a bay.
2039. I understand that you think some other spot on Lavender Bay would be much more suitable for a station? I think so, because of the traffic which there is already at Milson's Point, and that traffic must increase.
2040. *Dr. Garran.*] You seem to think, as a nautical man, that there will be some difficulty in manœuvring ships in Lavender Bay? Yes, and I am opposed to forcing traffic into those narrow waters, so as not to block the fairway.
2041. Will there be any greater difficulty than there is now in manœuvring ships between Dawes' Point and Miller's Point—is not that equally in the narrows? No; it is not so narrow there.
2042. Still all the ships have to pass between Milson's Point and Dawes' Point? Yes, but I object to ships manœuvring there. Sometimes, when the large boats are coming out of the Cove they swing right out and block the traffic.
2043. I understand you to divide Port Jackson into three parts—the broad lower harbour, this narrow part, and the broad harbour above? Yes.
2044. You object to congregating too many large ships in what we may call the narrows, between Kirribilli and Blue's Point on one side, and Fort Macquarie and Dawes' Point on the other? Yes.
2045. Would there be more trouble in berthing a vessel in Lavender Bay than between Dawes' Point and Miller's Point? At the latter place you have more room.
2046. But in either case you have to pass through the narrows? Between Milson's Point and Dawes' Point is the narrowest part of the harbour, and a ship must naturally find it difficult to swing there.
2047. They go in bow first? Yes.
2048. Would they not swing in Lavender Bay itself? These boats would have steamers to assist them.
2049. Do not the Orient boats come straight into Sydney Cove? Yes, with two steamers attached to them, and then they nearly block up the place. If more boats came in it would make things worse.
2050. Would vessels swing in the fairway before going into Lavender Bay? They would swing either going in or coming out.
2051. Do not they swing from the Quay itself? They do not do so always. Sometimes they swing outside and come in stern forward.
2052. But they often come straight in, and are tugged out, swinging in Sydney Cove itself? I saw the "Kaiser-i-Hind" one day trying to come up, and she had to make a second attempt.
2053. You wish to show that there is some difficulty now in Sydney Cove, and that the difficulty would be greater in Lavender Bay? Yes, while the traffic would increase.
2054. You say that there will be greater difficulty in dealing with large ships in Lavender Bay than there is in dealing with vessels in the little bay between Dawes' Point and Miller's Point? Yes.
2055. You know that the Government have bought land at Darling Island;—would there be greater difficulty in getting there than in getting to Lavender Bay? No.
2056. There would not be so much difficulty in swinging at Darling Island as there would be in swinging in Lavender Bay? No, because there is not as much traffic there.
2057. You would rather take an Orient liner to Darling Island and bring it back again than take it in and out at Lavender Bay? I do not say that I would rather do that; but still at Lavender Bay there is more traffic, and there is the difficulty of the narrow waterway.
2058. The difficulty in the narrows is not in passing through, but in swinging there? Yes, there it comes in.
2059. Will the difficulty of swinging at Darling Island be greater than it is at Sydney Cove? No.
2060. It is an easier place? Yes.
2061. If you had to berth vessels you would rather berth them at Darling Island than at Sydney Cove? I think I should.
- 2062.

2062. If you had large ships you would rather take them to Darling Island than to Lavender Bay? Yes.
2063. *Mr. Copeland.*] If I understand you aright your greatest objection to the Lavender Bay scheme is that it would tend to concentrate more shipping in Lavender Bay, and thus increase the traffic at this point? Yes.
2064. Not only is Lavender Bay smaller than Sydney Cove, but it would also confuse the existing traffic to concentrate the shipping more in this narrow part? Yes; that is my idea. Some people say that there will be no coal trade to this place, but I believe that there will be a great deal of traffic.*
2065. Would you anticipate any difficulty with the shipping if it were concentrated in Neutral Bay? Neutral Bay is so much larger—there is plenty of room.
2066. You think that it would not interfere with the fairway? It would not; and it would be more convenient for a vessel, if she were going to sea, to leave Sydney Cove and go to Neutral Bay than it would be for her to go to Lavender Bay.
2067. Then you think that there will be no difficulty in providing ample accommodation for coal and other trade at Neutral Bay? No; it is a very fine harbour, and ships could get away at any time.
2068. *Mr. Trickett.*] There is a proposal to bring the line round to the eastern side of North Shore? I have seen it.
2069. What do you think of it? In my opinion it is the better scheme of the two.
2070. Why is it the better? It would give you a station in St. Leonards; whereas, with the Government scheme, there is no station at all in St. Leonards. It appears the people of St. Leonards are not considered.
2071. Would it serve as much or more population than the Government scheme? More.
2072. Would the present scheme be of any benefit to the people who use the existing tramway? None whatever.
2073. Not one of those people would use the railway? Not one; the station is too far away.
2074. You know the property adjoining Admiralty House, where they are proposing to build wool-stores? Yes.
2075. Do you think that that would be a desirable place at which to concentrate a large amount of shipping trade? No, I do not.
2076. For what reason? Because it is right in the narrow part of the harbour—it would block the fairway.
2077. If a large wool and coal shipping trade were done there would it inconvenience the general traffic of the port? It would, as I have before stated.
2078. Because of the narrowness of the harbour at that place? Yes.
2079. When you were speaking about Lavender Bay a little while ago you said that it would provide less shipping room than Sydney Cove? Yes; the Cove is the finest shipping place in Sydney.
2080. Did you mean that Lavender Bay would have to be filled in considerably and made much less than it is now? Yes.
2081. Do you remember when the American mail boats used to lie in Lavender Bay? Yes.
2082. Was it found a suitable place for ships to lie in? No, it was not a suitable place, and there was a good deal of complaint about the vessels lying there. They used to swing too far out into the fairway, and were in the way of the ferry-boats. The people petitioned to have the steamers removed from there.
2083. *Mr. Garrard.*] Would not the same objection hold good in Sydney Cove if a vessel were allowed to swing at her anchors there? Yes.
2084. Did I understand you to say that your objection to Lavender Bay as the terminus of the line was that it would not afford sufficient facilities for the shipment of cargo? Yes.
2085. How do you propose to get the line down to Neutral Bay? Well, I am not an engineer.
2086. But you said that you believed in that scheme? I believe that they have a tunnel to get into Lavender Bay, and they could tunnel under the reserve and come into Neutral Bay.
2087. Take a header down. The reserve is the highest part of St. Leonards? The tunnel would be a long one, of course.
2088. Do you think that Neutral Bay would be as convenient for passengers as Milson's Point? No. I said that Milson's Point would be a more convenient point for passengers than Kirribilli Point, if they must go to the Circular Quay.
2089. But you think Kirribilli Point would be nearly as good a place for passengers as Milson's Point? Yes, because you could run them across to Fort Macquarie.
2090. We should interfere with a great deal more valuable property on your route along the western side of Neutral Bay to Kirribilli Point than we should on the route to Milson's Point? No; I should say that some of the most valuable property on the North Shore is in Lavender Bay.
2091. Upon the east side of the bay? From the head of the bay, where the tunnel is to come out, to Milson's Point.
2092. Is that more valuable than the properties at Kirribilli Point? I do not know, but it is more valuable than any other part.

George Pile, Esq., auctioneer, sworn, and examined:—

2093. *Chairman.*] You reside in Sydney? At Parramatta.
2094. You carry on business in Sydney? Yes.
2095. You are pretty well acquainted with all the suburbs? Yes.
2096. You have offered to give evidence before the Committee in reference to the proposal to extend the railway to Lavender Bay;—what information can you give us? First I will give you the number of houses to the east of Milson's Point.
2097. That is, to the east of the proposed line? Yes.
2098. You know where the line comes in at Lavender Bay, and where it runs through the Berry Estate? I think so.
2099. You know the Government proposal, and you have seen a sketch of Mr. Hamand's proposal? Yes. The number of houses in the two boroughs in Neutral Bay—
2100. East St. Leonards and St. Leonards? Yes. The number of houses there is 221—171 in East St. Leonards, and about 50 in St. Leonards. In the Mossman's Bay ward of the St. Leonards' Borough there are 172 houses, and in the Warringa ward 181 houses, making a total of 574.

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* NOTE (on revision):—For this reason—Time is of great importance to large vessels. Should a large steamer require a thousand tons of coal, say, this evening, it would be brought here ready, if a suitable coaling-place were made. She would go alongside, have them in in a few hours, and be off, thereby saving the expense of loading at Newcastle and the time in going there, which would be more than would pay for the carriage of the coals to Sydney.

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2101. But there must be more than that number of houses to the east of the railway? Those are the houses which would use a railway to Neutral Bay and Cremorne. Another thing which I should like the Committee to have on record is the space required in other places for terminal stations. As far as I can ascertain, the total station area at Redfern is 35 acres, 20 of which are devoted to the goods traffic. At Darling Harbour, as far as Union-street, there are about 19 acres; and the reserve for goods traffic at the Melbourne Spencer-street station is about 350 acres—that is to meet the increase of traffic in the future. So it will be necessary that ample provision should be made at North Shore for the large traffic which there will be there.
2102. You know Milson's Point, to which it is proposed to bring the railway? Yes.
2103. Do you think there is sufficient room there for all the possible requirements of a railway at present? There would be if only the parishes of Gordon and Willoughby were served, but I do not think it will be sufficient for the traffic which there will be when the country to the north is more settled, as it will be in time.
2104. You think that the construction of a railway to the proper point at the deep waters of Port Jackson would develop a large passenger traffic on the North Shore? Yes.
2105. But it would, of course, depend upon the conveniences given by it for getting to Sydney? Yes. If you leave the terminus of the railway where it is I do not think that the traffic upon it will grow very fast.
2106. But you think that if a railway is brought to a convenient point on the harbour the traffic will increase? Yes. There is no traffic which increases so much as suburban traffic does.
2107. You know the whole of that country? I do.
2108. Is it not very admirably situated for residential purposes? The district on the Lane Cove ridge is unquestionably the most beautiful of all the suburbs.
2109. Do you think that the scheme before us would serve the greatest population, present and future;—take the present population? Do you mean taking the railway from Milson's Point, and doing nothing further?
2110. Yes? I do not think that it will sufficiently serve the North Shore districts.
2111. Do you think that the line ought to go more to the eastward than it does at the present time? I think that the proposed line may give you the easiest grades, and may be the cheapest, not having any lengthy tunnels; but if you wish to serve the North Shore districts you must carry a railway to the east, touching Neutral Bay, Shell Cove, and Mossman's Bay.
2112. If you touched Neutral Bay with the railway you could extend the line on to any of the bays to the eastward? I think so; and also to Manly and towards the Spit.
2113. What do you think of Mr. Hamand's scheme? For the special object which you have in view I do not think that it is as good as the Government scheme.
2114. What object have we in view? To get the quickest route to the existing ferry steamers.
2115. Should not the object of the construction of a railway be to serve the greatest number of people? Yes.
2116. Do you not think that a good grade is a great advantage, especially on a suburban line, where you want to carry heavy loads? Yes.
2117. Do you not think that it would be worth while to lengthen the line in order to get a good grade? Provided that you can go through the large residential areas of St. Leonards. I have not had much time to consider the proposal before me.
2118. You think that a line to serve the residents of North Shore should be more to the eastward? I do not think that the line which the Government propose would be sufficient. You would require another line to Neutral Bay, and out in that direction.
2119. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do I understand you to say that those people will only benefit by the extension of the line from the head of Lavender Bay through to Neutral Bay? If the line is only taken to Milson's Point, as shown on the plan, it will not serve a great part of the district; but you will need another branch from the head of Lavender Bay towards Neutral Bay.
2120. Do you not think that more population would be served by a railway going to the east, such as Mr. Hamand proposes? Certainly, if you could construct it with an easier grade.
2121. The railway proposed by Mr. Hamand would have an easier grade than the Government railway; but, leaving out of consideration the question of grades, do you think that it would go into a better-populated district than the proposed line? Yes; it would go through the centre of the present population.
2122. If that is so do you not think there would be more traffic upon it than upon the proposed line? Yes; the present population of St. Leonards is not on the Government line at all.
2123. It is to the eastward of it? Yes.
2124. Referring to the map, which line do you think would serve the greater population—Mr. Hamand's or the Government line? Unquestionably Mr. Hamand's. It goes right through the centre of the population.
2125. Which line would you recommend? I should have to go into the question of cost.
2126. Supposing the cost to be nearly equal and the grades the same? Unquestionably Mr. Hamand's line serves the larger population, and it also goes close to the township of North Sydney.
2127. Would that line serve the future population as well? It would give direct communication to a large quantity of land which the Government line would not serve at all.
2128. And would also give facilities for a branch towards Manly and Cremorne? I question whether it would serve Cremorne. It would not serve the slopes to the harbour, but it would serve the slopes towards Long Bay and Middle Harbour.
2129. Supposing that the deviation lengthened the distance by half a mile, while it reduced the grade to the almost nominal one of 1 in 75 from 1 in 50, do you think it would be preferable? Singularly enough this is the very line about which I made calculations some years ago, starting from Willoughby Falls.
2130. You have no hesitation in saying that you prefer Mr. Hamand's line to the proposed line if it can be constructed with a less grade than, and with a slight increase of distance over, the proposed line? Yes.
2131. Do you think that if the railway were extended to Milson's Point the goods traffic should be concentrated there, and along the east side of Lavender Bay? If you have sufficient space.
2132. Do you consider that there is? I have told you what is required in other places. Of course Lavender Bay is very central if you have sufficient room there, but I think that if the traffic grew to large proportions you would not have sufficient space at Lavender Bay for it.
2133. Do you think that there is any probability of a very large traffic coming there? I think so, eventually.
2134. To meet local requirements? No. I think that when the railways penetrate into the agricultural district of the north, and when New South Wales becomes, as it will become, a very large wheat-producing country, you will require great facilities for the shipment of wheat as well as for the shipment of other produce.

2135. Do you know that we have communication at the present time from Darling Harbour with the G. Pile, Esq. north? Yes.
2136. Remembering that, you think that North Shore would be a large depôt for produce? I think so. 10 July, 1890.
Not only is the distance to it from the north less, but the existing wharfage accommodation round the harbour is also being so rapidly used that it is getting scarce, and you will have a need for the water frontages at North Shore in the course of time. The Government alone are taking half a mile of water frontage in Darling Harbour.
2137. Taking into consideration the water frontages which would be available if the railway was carried on towards Neutral Bay? I suppose you could get 4 miles of water frontage on the shores of Neutral Bay, Shell Cove, and Mossman's Bay, or at least over 3 miles.
2138. Taking that into consideration, would you advise the carrying of the line beyond through to Neutral Bay? If you had a large goods traffic I do not think that the accommodation which you get on the shores of Lavender Bay would be nearly sufficient.
2139. If we were to have a very large goods traffic it would be necessary to carry the line through to Neutral Bay and use the water frontage there? Yes; my estimate of the amount which the Government would have to pay for resumption in Lavender Bay is about £50 a foot for water frontage.
2140. What do you think would be the value of water frontages at Cremorne and Neutral Bay, per foot? The value of the water frontages at Cremorne is from £10 to £15 a foot.
2141. And Neutral Bay? £20 to £25, and you will probably have to give compensation to the people who have frontages to the cross-streets which the railway will stop.
2142. *Mr. Garrard.*] What depth do you allow? Well, about 150 or 200 feet. -
2143. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you inform the Committee what would be the probable cost of resumption upon Mr. Hamand's line? I assume that you will take the same width as the Government have done with other railways— $1\frac{1}{2}$ chain, and I do not think that from the junction to Willoughby Falls the land would cost more than £10 or £12 a foot, besides reckoning the cost of the houses and small corner pieces which you might take. I think you might reckon upon £25 a foot for the land on the rest of the journey.
2144. Right to the head of Lavender Bay? Yes.
2145. Can you tell the Committee what would probably be the cost of resumption to Cremorne? £20 a foot as far as Cremorne, and £12 a foot to the point.
2146. Would Mr. Hamand's line pass through costly or much improved property? No; you do not take any exceedingly valuable properties till you get to M'Laren-street; to Alfred-street the property is not quite so valuable—there is a cliff there; and there is nothing specially valuable south of Alfred-street until you get on to a level with William-street. From William-street there is some valuable property.
2147. After careful consideration you are of opinion that the resumptions would exceed in cost the amounts which you have named? Yes.
2148. Do you know the distance from the head of Lavender Bay to Milson's Point? From 2,500 to 2,600 feet.
2149. Are you of opinion that that would be a sufficient length for the present traffic, both goods and passenger? If you confine yourself to the local traffic of the parishes of Willoughby and Gordon, taking a fair depth towards the hill, say from 150 to 200 feet, it would be sufficient, but I do not think it will be enough if you have the traffic which I anticipate you will have.
2150. Is Milson's Point a convenient place for connecting the passenger traffic with Sydney? Yes, very convenient.
2151. The distance from there would be shortest? Yes.
2152. You are aware that Mr. Hamand's route increases the cost and lengthens the line very considerably? I am aware that it increases the cost, but I have no knowledge as to what extent it increases the cost.
2153. Taking into consideration the increased length of Mr. Hamand's route—nearly a mile and three-quarters—do you not think that we could gain access to Port Jackson more quickly by the Government route? Of course the Government route is shorter, but it does not go through as much settlement as the other route does, and only on one side of it would the land be settled upon to any extent, besides there is the question of grades for the Committee to consider.
2154. All that would be gained by Mr. Hamand's line would be a local traffic—a suburban traffic? Yes, but if there were a goods traffic from Sydney and the North Shore into the country districts you must bear in mind that a heavier load could be taken up an easy gradient than up a stiff gradient.
2155. Would it not be a disadvantage to have to travel a mile and three-quarters more in carrying goods? But in going up a hill you can take a much larger load with an easy grade than with a stiff grade.
2156. You are of opinion that for present requirements Lavender Bay would provide sufficient accommodation for both goods and passengers? If you only look to the local trade which would be developed in the parishes of Willoughby and Gordon.
2157. You have a considerable knowledge of the northern districts, and know what they produce? Yes.
2158. Would any of those products be likely to pass Newcastle and come on to Sydney? I think so. Ships will take in cargo where they discharge. Vessels coming from England or Europe to Sydney would like to take in cargo at the place where they have discharged inward cargo.
2159. What produce do you think would be carried by this railway? I think it probable that New South Wales will be one of the largest wheat-producing countries in the world in the course of a few years.
2160. You are aware that at the present time large quantities of wheat pass Newcastle, and come on to Sydney for sale? Yes.
2161. Do you anticipate that there will be any large business in frozen meat? Yes, I think so, but I have no means of knowing.
2162. But from what you know of what is being done at the present time? Yes.
2163. Do you anticipate that large quantities of hay, chaff, maize, and such produce will come to Sydney from the northern districts? I have not the slightest doubt that large quantities of farming produce will come, and I think that with our climate and soil, which are so eminently adapted for the growth of wheat, New South Wales will become, in the course of time, one of the largest wheat-producing countries in the world.
2164. Do you think that a large quantity of wool will pass Newcastle and come to Sydney? I think so.
2165. It does so at present? I believe so, but I have no special knowledge of the trade.
2166. *Mr. Trickett.*] Suppose this produce did come to Sydney, do you think that the producers would prefer to send it to Lavender Bay if they could take it to Darling Harbour for the same rate? I think that there will be more facilities for shipment at North Shore—more wharves will be available. Of course, in time wharfage space on the south side of the harbour will be very valuable. 2167.

G. Pile, Esq. 2167. You have said that Lavender Bay is only suitable for the traffic from the parishes of Willoughby and Gordon? I do not think that Lavender Bay alone would give sufficient accommodation for the whole traffic. I think you will have such a large trade from the northern districts that it will be found more convenient to ship it from the North Shore.

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2168. Captain Jackson, the chief wharfinger here, has stated in evidence that if the trade of Sydney increased 50 per cent. at once there would still be sufficient wharfage accommodation for it at the Circular Quay, Woolloomooloo Bay, and Darling Harbour. That being so, do you think that people would prefer going to Lavender Bay? I very much question that it is so; but while wharf space is available on the south side of the harbour, it would be preferable to ship there than from the north side.

2169. They would not like to take the produce to North Shore and then punt it over to Sydney to put it into the ships here? No; but Circular Quay is becoming a dock for large ocean steamers. I do not think that you will ever see anything but steamers there in future.

2170. But are there not wharves round Miller's Point and Darling Harbour? That wharfage is being rapidly used up. The New Zealand boats now go to Woolloomooloo Bay, and the Union steamers go above the bridge.

2171. You estimate the value of the wharfage frontage at Cremorne at £12 a foot;—is it not a fact that the Government have a right to a depth of 100 feet there? As you know, I am interested in property at Cremorne, and our solicitor disputes that right. I believe there is a lawsuit going on about it now.

2172. At any rate, the Government claim it? One of the Government officers has threatened to do certain things; but he has not done them yet.

2173. How much land have you sold there at £12 a foot? A large quantity.

2174. How many feet? 700 or 800 feet.

2175. Did not a good deal of it sell for less;—I think that I saw some of it sold for £8 a foot? No; none of the water frontage sold for less.

2176. What class of population do you think would spring up on the North Shore heights? Very much the same class as are now living in the other suburbs, excepting that there would be no Darling Point people.

2177. Would there be a large working population? The working population are settling fast at North Shore.

2178. Far out? As far out as North Sydney, 3 or 4 miles inland.

2179. You think that that class of population will go out? All classes of population are settling there now.

2180. Do you think that a working man could go 6 or 7 miles out along this railway and come into Sydney for work? They do so in Melbourne.

2181. Where they have land and water journeys to get to their work? The water journey would only cost 1d. each way.

2182. It is the matter of time that I am speaking of? Those who were employed in the northern parts of the city could afford to live at North Shore.

2183. You think that a working population would grow up there, as well as a population inhabiting houses of good value? Yes.

2184. *Chairman.*] I judge from your replies about the wharf accommodation that you think it is not equal to the demand for it? The present accommodation is getting used up fast.

2185. Do you not think that Mr. James Powell is a pretty good authority on the question of wharfage accommodation? Yes.

2186. Tell me if you agree with this:—"Do you think that at the present rate of increase of the population the present accommodation will be sufficient for the shipping trade which we may expect, say, ten years hence?" "I think it would be very hard to forecast ten years." "Take the average increase in the population?" "Judged by the past, I think that the present accommodation will be amply sufficient for the next ten years. I am speaking of the accommodation of the port as it is, and not of the Circular Quay alone."

2187. Do you not think that Mr. Powell has given the matter more consideration than your business would allow you to give it? I think that Mr. Powell has considered only part of the question. He does not there allude to the large amount of wharfage accommodation necessary for the economical management of certain businesses and factories, such as timber yards and smelting works. Several of those businesses have been removed from Pymont, and land is now being reclaimed in Blackwattle Bay to be used for wharfage purposes.

Charles Cyrus Bullock, Esq., surveyor, sworn, and examined:—

C. C. Bullock, Esq. 2188. *Chairman.*] What are you—a surveyor? Yes. I should like to point out that I received my professional training in one of the largest and oldest firms in the west of England, and that that firm carried out engineering works of every description. After I had completed my articles there I was engaged under the supervision of one of the engineers of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, and, under his supervision, was afterwards engaged on various other railways, so I profess to have some little knowledge in the laying out of railway lines.

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2189. Have you ever laid them out? Yes, I have laid out short railways, sidings, and so forth.

2190. What railways have you laid out? The railway from Macclesfield to Romily, the Burscough Junction, and others, though not on my own responsibility, but under the supervision of superior officers. I then came out here, and passed as a licensed surveyor in 1877, and, because of my engineering training, was sent to Orange to carry out a scheme for supplying water for that town, under the supervision of Mr. Clarke. Subsequently I was employed at North Shore; and in 1882, when I was a first-class staff surveyor, I resigned my position in the Government service to practise my profession privately.

2191. You have already given evidence in reference to this railway, and I understand that you desire to give some further evidence? I merely wish to say that the route proposed by the Government, with the modification suggested by Mr. Deane—that is the flattening of the grade from 1 in 40 to 1 in 50—is the best scheme that has yet been proposed or can be proposed. I assume that it is necessary to take the line down to the water, and I think that the Government route is the cheapest, shortest, and most direct.

2192. Have you seen Mr. Hamand's scheme? I have not seen it, but my partner has been here during the investigation, and I have it sketched on the plan which I will now show you (*plan produced*). I may tell the Committee that I speak from figures arrived at by the actual survey of the ground. The Government line from its point of commencement follows the Parramatta River watershed, which, as you see, has a long fall.

2193. You are speaking now of the line sent to us, not of Mr. Deane's deviation? I am speaking of the line sent to you, but the deviation does not make much difference; it is very slight. The line follows the

the watershed of the Parramatta River, and from the highest point of the plateau at North Shore the slope to the water is much longer than it is on this side. The plateau extends to within a few chains of Long Bay, and if you wish to take a railway down to the water by the Middle Harbour watershed you must follow it as Mr. Hamand has done. Mr. Hamand's line has the merit of being carried out by an engineer who understands his business, whereas the principal Cremorne route has been designed in the face of the natural features of the country. The Government line, on the other hand, falls all the way. To Bay-road it would fall with a grade of 1 in 44, or, with the modification suggested by Mr. Deane, with a grade of 1 in 50. It would fall all the way to Lavender Bay, while Mr. Hamand is compelled, through following the wrong watershed, to fall only about 80 feet in nearly 2 miles. Of course he gets a grade into 1 in 70, but then his line is lengthened by a mile. Mr. Hamand says that that mile will collect more traffic, but I say that it will not, and when Mr. Hamand designed it he was compelled to go in that direction, because of the natural features of the country, which forced him round by Willoughby Falls. The physical features of the country govern the position, and you cannot take a line anywhere you like.

2194. *Mr. Tonkin.*] But do not the physical features force the Government line to the west just as much as they force Mr. Hamand's line to the east? Yes, but the Government line is forced in the best direction.

2195. *Chairman.*] Why? Because it will follow the shortest and cheapest route, and will provide as well for the local passenger traffic and the distribution of goods as Mr. Hamand's scheme or any other scheme. The plateau ranges from 325 to 270 feet in height, and Mr. Hamand's scheme is so low that he could not get access to it from the land, except by the station at Willoughby Falls, from Folly Point-road to Miller-street. Mr. Hamand has no get-out. The land is so much higher than the railway that he cannot arrange for the get-out. The only get-out which he has is the station at Willoughby Falls Creek.

2196. But he proposes a station near the hospital? The hospital is at the end of the line. Mr. Hamand starts at 240 feet in height, and he apparently rises, instead of falling. (*Explaining on map.*)

C. C. Bullock,
Esq.
10 July, 1890.

Dugald Thomson, Esq., merchant, sworn, and examined:—

2197. *Chairman.*] Will you tell the Committee what you have to say on this matter? I give evidence because I was appointed by a committee at a meeting held in East St. Leonards, at which I was not present, to look after the interests of the district in connection with railway extension. I had, at first, a personal bias against the Milson's Point scheme, because I reside near Kirribilli Point, and know that if a railway comes near there it will take away from the picturesqueness of the locality, and render it less suited for residential purposes; but when I came to look closely into the matter I saw that these considerations would have to give way in the interests of the district and of the railway. In addition to the evidence which I gave before, and which I came here prepared to support in all its details by authorities for figures, arguments, and so forth, but which I shall not now allude to, I would say I do not think it has been given in evidence that, in spite of what looks like a large sum for this extension, the line from Hornsby to Milson's Point will be the cheapest suburban line yet constructed. The line from Granville to Sydney cost £80,000 a mile; that from Hurstville to Sydney, £40,000 a mile; while the line from Hornsby to Milson's Point would cost only about £32,000 a mile, including the valuable and extensive water frontage, which is an asset that neither of the other lines have. I should also like to say that although Melbourne has twelve suburban railway arms, while Sydney has only three, the Victorian Minister for Railways is proposing a further suburban extension, which will cost £1,683,000, which means a cost of £54,000 a mile, against which our North Shore line would cost only £32,000 per mile. The question has been raised whether a bridge to North Shore would do away with the necessity for the extension of the line, but I think that bridge or no bridge the line would have to be extended to the waters of the harbour, because, should there be no bridge connection between the North and South Shore Railway systems, the extension of the North Shore Railway is necessary to reach the main traffic centre and the waters of the port; whilst, if there is a bridge connection, the proposed extension is the only route by which the approach to the bridge can be reached, and with a bridge the connection of the railway with the water will still be necessary on the North Shore (as it has been found necessary on the South) to develop and provide for the shipping and commercial interests of what will be a large city, which commercial and shipping interests are even now being established, and to provide for, and take advantage of, the very considerable and growing traffic which will continue to centre at Milson's Point even if there be a bridge. It is not to be thought that this line would merely draw passengers from the other suburban lines, though, of course, it would do that to some extent, but it would increase the railway revenue by attracting people on to a railway line who do not now live on one, and would provide for some of the 3,000 new households by which Sydney is yearly growing. It must also be remembered that as North Shore becomes a large city this will act as a suburban line to it. Now, as to the prospect of a goods traffic; as to the route, if the extension of the line be approved; and as to the position of the terminus, should the Milson's Point scheme be adopted, I will shortly state my views. I may say that since I last gave evidence here the prospects of a goods traffic are much stronger than they were previously—that is to say, the immediate prospects, because it was pointed out before that there would be a very large goods traffic. It has been shown by some of the witnesses that there would be a timber trade, especially of firewood, and also a brick trade, and that the traffic would be increased through the establishment of the Pastoralists' Company, which example is likely to be followed by other industries, because with stores for salt, cement, and other heavy goods, a saving of 3s. to 5s. in a ton could be effected upon the carriage of those commodities if they were in touch with the two great highways, the water and the railway, as they would be at North Shore if the extension were made. Supposing a flour mill turned out 400 tons a week, and there was a saving of 5s. a ton, the total saving in a year would be about £5,000, or proportionately less if the saving on a ton were 2s. or 2s. 6d. Although the Commissioners will try not to divide the goods' traffic but to take all to Darling Harbour, they cannot altogether prevent the traffic from going to this terminus, because of the establishment of these businesses, and because the growth of population at North Shore, and the consequent local requirements will necessitate traffic coming down to Milson's Point. As to the question of route, I think I went into that pretty fully before. The only new routes are Mr. Hamand's and Mr. Vernon's. Next to the Government route, Mr. Hamand's is the best which has been suggested, but there are several objections to it which, since, I dare say, they have been dealt with, I need not go into. But there was one remark made by Mr. Vernon in favour of his scheme to which I should like to refer. He stated that the population was all left to the east of the Government proposal, but I think that as the railway has been confined, partly by natural causes, to the Lane Cove ridge, it cannot be proposed as a good thing to take it from the present terminus winding about the Shore, when

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there is a pretty direct route to the centre of traffic at Milson's Point. To do that it would be injuring the people along the line in order to confer a supposed benefit upon some of the residents between the end of the present terminus and the water, but, if the line wound to the eastward, this benefit would be conferred very largely upon the leasehold property of the Cooper Estate, while the freehold property along the Government route would be injured. The population is now settled mostly to the east, because that part of the district is within reach of communication with the heads of the bays, and when communication is given to parts to the west and further out they will rapidly be settled upon. The Berry Estate possesses some of the finest land upon the shore for residential purposes, and if it is thrown open there will be almost a city population there in the course of a few years, and in that way the balance of the population will soon alter from east to west. Next, as to the question of where to put the terminus—whether the line is to end at Milson's Point, the head of Lavender Bay, or half-way along the bay. With regard to all but the first site, there is the difficulty of levels, which, no doubt, has been alluded to, and the fact that approaches would have to be made for carts and other vehicles. I notice that Mr. Eddy, in his evidence before the City Railway Commission, stated that at Liverpool £750,000 had been expended in trying to bring Tithebarne-street station down to the level of the street. I know that station myself, and it was not more out of level than stations half-way up Lavender Bay would be. The natural approach to these places is from Milson's Point, and the road to them would probably have to be carried from Milson's Point. Besides that, the improved value which the Government line would give to the Government land at Milson's Point has to be considered. I think that it is a mistake that the Government are not allowed to resume more land than they actually want for a railway, and even if they did not want it, I think it would be better to resume this part of the foreshore, because of the increased value which contact with a railway would give to it, and if they sold it again they would reap the value of the improvement. I also think that a very strong argument in favour of the construction of the line to Milson's Point is the fact that a railway should go to where the traffic converges. The private lines try to do that, as is illustrated by the action of the Glasgow Railway Company, who crossed the Clyde at an expense of £4,000,000 in order to get to the traffic centre, as was mentioned by Mr. Eddy. At Milson's Point the tram line and the horse and passenger ferries converge, and it is just the place that a railway company, which lives on traffic, would seek to reach, especially for passenger traffic. It may be said that while private companies might have to go to such a place because of competition, there would be no need for the Government to do so, although the expense would be comparatively small. But I think that it is still more the interest of the Government to carry the railway to such a place, for while a private railway, through competition, might at any moment lose some of the traffic sought by the construction of another line, that would never occur in the case of a Government railway which would gain for all time the full advantage. Then, as to going on to other portions of the harbour, if there was not sufficient accommodation in Lavender Bay for the goods traffic that goods traffic would certainly be payable, and it would be justifiable and easy, since the line was down to the water's level, to take it further on at any time to the other bays, as the work would be mostly tunnelling. As to going further along the foreshores, I think the Government should go to the best position for its own advantage and convenience; and if industries beyond that point desired railway connection, I do not see why they should not allow running rights over their ground, and secure the intervening properties, if necessary, which would prevent the granting of those running rights. It would be to their advantage to do this, and the Government would not hesitate to run their line to wherever these places were established. I have fuller notes, but, in deference to the wish of the Committee, I shall cut them short, and not attempt to elaborate my remarks, but I can do so, if desired.

2198. Do you know the area of the Spencer-street station ground in Melbourne? I do not.

2199. We were told just now by Mr. Pile that the Government there were reserving 350 acres? There is an immense swamp there, where they could practically reserve any area they liked.

2200. *Mr. Dowel.* You stated just now that you had some objections to Mr. Hamand's scheme—have you made yourself acquainted with his proposal? Yes, so far as it is possible to do. His line strikes off about a mile—I am speaking roughly as to the measurements—on the Hornsby side of the present terminus. It passes by the end of Miller-street, near the termination of the private tramway which it is proposed to construct, and then goes over near Willoughby Falls, and down to Neutral Bay by a tunnel, then under Willoughby-street to Milson's Point.

2201. What are your objections to that route? First of all, its greater length, which I heard stated was an advantage, because it would bring more mileage revenue to the Government. This might be the case with a private company, though not if they had competition; but the Government acts for the people, and it would be absurd to make those further out on the line pay more by lengthening the route, so that the line should earn a little larger total. It would also come into competition with the tramway more than the present line would do, and would not serve more people, because the St. Leonards' people would have to go too great a distance to get to it. The places from which he proposes to get traffic are either now well served or are very little inhabited, and although they would become inhabited if the railway were made, such a railway would lose the population on the proposed route from the head of Berry's Bay to the present terminus, which I consider would be much greater than that on Mr. Hamand's route. I also understand that the cost of Mr. Hamand's line will be about £100,000 more than the proposed line, while its only advantage is the better grade which it will have, and that, of course, on the extension only. But I suppose you could get a better grade with a greater length upon almost any line, unless natural difficulties prevented you. I think, however, that Mr. Hamand's line is the best that has been proposed after the Government route.

2202. Do you think that the residents on Mr. Hamand's route would be better served by a railway or by a tramway? Some of them would be better served by a railway, and some by a tramway. All the nearer localities would be better served by a tramway, while the people residing in the very sparsely-populated neighbourhood, at the end of Miller-street and on to the present terminus, would be better served by a railway.

2203. Have you a tolerably good knowledge of the port of Newcastle? Not a good knowledge. I have been there twice.

2204. You have some knowledge of the resources of the northern district. You know its produce of wool, wheat, and stock? Not of my own knowledge—that is, not the exact quantities.

2205. From your knowledge of the way in which business is transacted in Sydney and Newcastle, are you of opinion that any proportion of the produce of the northern districts would pass Newcastle and come on to Sydney, or would it stop at Newcastle, and be shipped from there? I think that all the less valuable produce would be shipped from Newcastle. I saw that some one was said to have made a statement that

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the whole of the northern traffic would come to Sydney if the line were constructed. I do not think that anyone would make such a foolish statement, but I think much traffic that would otherwise go by rail to Darling Harbour from the north would come to Milson's Point, on account of the shorter distance, if the Commissioners allowed it, and there would be some other traffic in addition to that which does not now go to Darling Harbour because of the extra mileage. But I do not think that the line would interfere with the Newcastle trade to any serious extent.

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2206. Do you not know that a large portion of the wool, maize, wheat, and hay from the northern districts finds its way direct to Sydney by the present railway passing Newcastle? Yes; and that part of it which comes to Sydney now would certainly continue to come, though not all to Darling Harbour.

WEDNESDAY, 16 JULY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

David Kirkcaldie, Esq., Chief Traffic Manager, Railway Department, sworn, and examined:—

2207. *Dr. Garran.*] Supposing the line were continued to Milson's Point, would that in any way affect the working of the goods traffic from the far north? I think not.

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2208. When you have completed the arrangements at Darling Harbour which you are now carrying out, will you have room there for all the waterside goods traffic? Yes.

2209. If you can accommodate it all there you will rather not have another wharf on the north side? Decidedly.

2210. We understand that you deliver wool into the stores of the wool merchants? That is so.

2211. Shall you continue to deliver it by dray when you have got your Darling Harbour premises complete? So long as there is no railway round the wharves we shall deliver it.

2212. But where a wool-store is alongside the water, will you deliver the wool by dray or by punt? By dray, if the railway would not go alongside the stores.

2213. Suppose the Pastoralists' Company complete the structure which they are erecting at North Shore, and you have wool to bring to them, will your contract of delivering wool into the stores apply to them? No.

2214. You have not yet committed yourselves to delivering it there? Nowhere, except at Darling Harbour.

2215. You do deliver it to the stores in town—to Messrs. Geddes' store on this side? Yes.

2216. Would you consider yourselves bound to deliver it at North Shore? No.

2217. Why not? Because we only undertake to deliver wool within the city of Sydney. The question has never arisen about delivering wool at North Shore.

2218. It might arise, and you would then have to decide whether you would or would not deliver it? Yes.

2219. Suppose you were to decide to put their North Shore store on as good a footing as their Sydney store, would it pay you better to deliver the wool by steam punt from Pymont than to take it by dray or by punt from Milson's Point? It would depend on the quantity. If there were any large quantity I should think it would be cheaper to deliver it by punt.

2220. It would not pay you to make an extension of the railway to these stores in order that you might deliver the produce? No.

2221. You are sure? Yes, unless there was a very large quantity.

2222. Mr. Geddes appeared to be under the impression that it would pay the Government to extend the line to their stores rather than to cart the wool there from Milson's Point; is he right? I do not think so.

2223. You do not contemplate having to do this? No.

2224. Supposing the line came down to Milson's Point, it would not, so far as other goods traffic is concerned, make the slightest difference in your present arrangements? No.

2225. You would not split the traffic? No; but if large wool-stores were erected at North Shore, and the wool consigned to Milson's Point, we should have to bring it there.

2226. If they told you that they had 250 bales coming down, and that they wanted them to be delivered to North Shore, would it pay you better to split the goods trains at Hornsby than to bring the wool on to Darling Harbour, and to punt it across? It would pay us better to bring the wool to Darling Harbour.

2227. And punt it across. I am supposing that you had to deliver it into their stores? Then we should bring it from Hornsby to Milson's Point.

2228. If you agreed to give their North Shore premises the same advantages as you give the wool-stores on the south side, it would pay you better to split the traffic at Hornsby than to bring the wool to Pymont, and then send it across to North Shore? Yes.

2229. But even if you took it to North Shore you would have to cart it from Milson's Point? Yes.

2230. Would it pay you better to cart the wool from Milson's Point than to take it by punt? Yes, it would, if the railway were taken there. The distance would only be 300 or 400 yards.

2231. It would not pay you better to extend the line from Milson's Point to the stores than to cart the wool on drays? Not unless there was a very large traffic.

2232. Then you do not contemplate being forced to extend the line? No.

2233. But you do contemplate the possibility of splitting the trains? Yes.

2234. I understood Mr. M'Lachlan to say that it did not pay to split the trains? No; we would rather have all the traffic at Darling Harbour. But if the wool were consigned to Milson's Point we should have to bring it there.

2235. Then the people on the North Shore would put you to more expense than those on the south side do—you would make less profit from their wool than from that which you bring to Darling Harbour?

- D. Kirkcaldie, I do not know. We have arbitrary rates for wool from the northern district, and we should charge the same to Milson's Point as to Darling Harbour.
- Esq. 2236. If you had to split the traffic at Hornsby, would you have to keep a larger staff of men there? Yes, but not many more.
- 16 July, 1890. 2237. One or two men extra? Yes.
2238. Will you always be able to load up the wool intended for North Shore into special trucks? We can always do that. We can always get good loads for wool-trucks.
2239. It would not involve you in any extra expense? No.
2240. You would keep the wool for North Shore in separate trucks? Yes.
2241. So that you would only have the shunting to do at Hornsby? That is all.
2242. There would be a little delay, and the employment of one or two more men; but you would rather go to that expense than punt the wool across from Darling Harbour? Yes.
2243. So far as the passenger traffic is concerned, would you split the trains coming from the north? No; we should have a junction there.
2244. Would you compel the passengers to change carriages there? Yes, but there would be very few.
2245. You would treat the line as a branch line? Yes.
2246. But if it is shorter, and would bring them to Sydney more quickly, would not people prefer to take it? Yes; but it is better for people coming to Sydney to go round by Strathfield, because then they are brought straight into the city, and can get a cab to take them to their hotel, or anywhere else, in a very few minutes. On the North Shore, however, they would have to take the steam ferry as well.
2247. Taking the saving in distance into account, and at the same time the waste of time, you think a traveller would get into Sydney more quickly by the North Shore line than by the other? No. Every passenger from the north will come to Sydney *via* Strathfield, unless he intends to go to North Shore.
2248. It will only be the local passengers who will change carriages, and for them you will have a branch service? Yes.
2249. You do not look upon this line as a very great help to your business for either the through goods or the passenger traffic? I do not, though I think that it will develop a local traffic to some extent, particularly a passenger traffic.
2250. Between Hornsby and Milson's Point? Yes. There may be a little development of through traffic, but not a great deal.
2251. You do not look upon the line as likely to facilitate the development of traffic in northern produce? No, except to such stores as Geddes & Co. or anyone else may put up there.
2252. At the present time you have not considered whether you will or will not extend the line to their North Shore premises? No.
2253. Has there been any request made to you to do so? I am not aware of any.
2254. No promise has been given by the Commissioners to encourage the erection of the building? No, not that I know of. It is the first time that I have heard it mentioned.
2255. If you have to have a branch train waiting on the northern train you cannot run it at a fixed hour? Yes, we could.
2256. The northern trains are very uncertain? Yes; but that is principally due to the state of the roadway. As soon as we get the roadway in good order we ought to be able to make the trains keep fair time.
2257. You do not anticipate any difficulty? Not in that direction.
2258. If you have a branch service for the use of the northern line you will always keep the branch trains waiting? Yes.
2259. So that the local passengers will have to subordinate their convenience to that of the northern passengers? Yes; but that would only be in the case of one or two trains a day. If the northern train was very late we should run an extra branch train.
2260. You would wait for half-an-hour, not more? Yes, about that. I do not anticipate any difficulty in the matter.
2261. You are expecting to take large ships to your wharves at Darling Harbour presently? I do not know that we shall be able to do much at Darling Harbour.
2262. You think that you will have small craft there principally, to take goods to the big ships? Yes; wool is generally sent down to the stores direct, or to the ships at Circular Quay.
2263. But other produce besides wool comes down? Yes; but the rates for other produce are so low that they could not possibly afford to bring it across in punts.
2264. Do you anticipate anything like a coal traffic springing up on this line? I do not, except for local purposes.
2265. You do not think that it will pay to send coal from Newcastle here? No. I may say that some coal has come from Newcastle for local consumption.
2266. By the railway? Yes.
2267. To manufactories at North Shore? Yes, to some of the brickworks.
2268. But simply for local consumption? Yes.
2269. What do you charge for that? Some has come from Wallsend, for which we charge 7s. a ton.
2270. What is the distance? Eighty-four miles.
2271. That is not quite so far as from Newcastle? Scarcely so far as from Newcastle.
2272. A penny a mile is the fixed rate? Yes.
2273. Do you have to find the trucks for that? Yes.
2274. Then you have begun to find trucks to a small extent for the northern coal trade? We always have done so, to some extent. It is principally to carry coal for shipment that the coal companies provide their own trucks.
2275. Have you brought coal down for the use of local coal merchants at the North Shore? I could not tell you. I only know that coal has been brought down there. We have brought it from Wallsend, Eskbank, Corrimal, and Bellambi.
2276. How do you get it round? *Via* Strathfield.
2277. Do you charge for the extra distance? Yes.
2278. But you have not shipped any coal in Sydney from any of these mines as yet? No.
2279. Do you think that the cranes at Darling Harbour are available for that purpose? They are available, but nobody will use them.
2280. What makes them useless? Their construction is awkward—the trucks cannot get under them. They will never be used for coal-shipping purposes.
- 2281.

D. Kirkcaldie,
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2281. Do you think that they are a waste of money? Yes, for those purposes.
2282. They would have to be removed? Yes.
2283. Have you made any arrangements for shipping coal? Arrangements are being made at Darling Island.
2284. You look upon that as your coal shipping-place? Yes.
2285. If coal comes to Sydney from the Illawarra or the Western line, that is where you will ship it? Yes.
2286. And you think that will be sufficient for all your purposes at present? I think so.
2287. If a northern coal trade should by any chance spring up, would it pay you better to take the coal round by Strathfield, and ship it at Darling Island, than to have a new wharf on the north side? We would rather bring the coal to Darling Island.
2288. Will you have room enough at Darling Island for all the shunting lines that you will want? Yes; we will be able to carry on a large traffic there.
2289. You have been to Newcastle, and you know the large space which is taken up there by the different lines? I do not anticipate that we shall do anything like the same amount of trade at Sydney.
2290. You will not be cramped for room at Darling Island? I do not think so. They have a very large trade at Newcastle.
2291. Even if a large trade springs up? I do not think that the trade will ever be so large that we cannot accommodate it at Darling Island.
2292. Do you think that if that is made a coal shipping-place, it will cause fine coal-dust to be blown over Sydney? I do not think so, to any appreciable extent.
2293. If the trade should outgrow your space at Darling Island, would you try to find more room on the south side, or would you erect a second wharf on the north side? We should concentrate it at one place as much as possible.
2294. Concentration means economy? Yes.
2295. You would rather not have the trade scattered if you could help it? Decidedly.
2296. The whole of your management will be directed towards preventing the splitting of your terminal traffic—you wish to concentrate? Yes.
2297. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do you anticipate any increase in the coal traffic in supplying the brick-making establishments at North Shore? I daresay there will be an increase, but not a very great one.
2298. Has not the brick-making business developed very considerably over there during the last three or four years? Oh, yes, and it will develop.
2299. Do you not think that as Sydney increases in size and population that business will develop considerably? Undoubtedly.
2300. I understood you to say that you have brought coal to North Shore from Wallsend at 7s. a ton. Supposing coal-mines were opened at Wyong, from which the distance is only 62 miles, I suppose you would bring coal for 5s. 2d. a ton? 5s. 3d.
2301. Would the people at North Shore not be more likely to get coal from Wyong than from Eskbank, and thus develop the coal trade on the railways? Yes; but they would not develop the trade to a very large extent. They would pay a little less for their coal, but I do not know that the volume of traffic would be increased very much.
2302. Would not they be able to make cheaper bricks? Yes; they could make their bricks more cheaply, and could therefore dispose of them more readily.
2303. As population on the North Shore increased there would be an increased demand for coal for domestic purposes? Yes. I look upon the line as one which will be a favourite suburban line for settlement.
2304. Do you think that there is any chance of the timber trade from Wyong being developed? Yes; there is a large timber trade there now. I think it very likely that that will be a very large trade.
2305. So you really anticipate having some goods traffic on this line if it is constructed? Yes; but, as I said before, I think it will only be a local traffic.
2306. What do you mean by a "local traffic"?—If they brought coal and timber from anywhere between Lake Macquarie and the North Shore, would you consider that local traffic? Yes; if it was for local use, and not for export.
2307. If timber was brought for local use, is it not likely that it would be also brought for export, supposing it were being sent to any of the other colonies? I do not think so, unless they got ships to go over there.
2308. Do you know any reason why ships should not go to Neutral Bay, supposing there were wharves there, and the railway were constructed to the place? Yes.
2309. Would not ships go there for timber or for coal, if they required either? They might; but I think that they would always be inclined rather to go to Newcastle or to Darling Island.
2310. Would it not be cheaper for a vessel, if she had discharged a large cargo at Sydney, to go over to Neutral Bay with a little stiffening than to go to Newcastle in ballast. If coal were brought from Wyong for 5s. 2d. a ton, by train, that would be very little more than the steamer's freight? But the ships themselves go to Newcastle as a rule.
2311. What have the Newcastle companies to pay to get their coal delivered to the wharves;—take Wallsend? For a distance of 10 miles, if they provide their own waggons, they are charged 1s. a ton.
2312. Including trainage? Yes.
2313. What if the railway find the waggons? We never do find waggons in the north for shipment coal—we have never been asked to do so. The rates are exceptionally low, to encourage a large export.
2314. Do you not find waggons for the Greta coal? No; the company provide their own waggons. All the companies there provide their own waggons.
2315. I suppose there is a reasonable amount of coal traffic from Greta to Newcastle? Yes.
2316. What is the distance? 33 miles.
2317. From Wyong to North Shore would be about 56 miles. Would the difference between 33 miles from Greta and 56 from Wyong stop all export from the latter mine to Sydney? The conditions are so very different. We could not afford to allow the same rates from Wyong to the North Shore, or to Darling Harbour, as we can from Greta to Newcastle.
2318. Why? Because we can take nearly three times the load from Greta to Newcastle that we can from Peat's Ferry to Hornsby. We could not possibly afford to give the same rates.
2319. What increased rates, proportionally, would you have to charge so as to make up for the difference in grade? I do not think that we could afford to charge less than we are charging at the present time—1d. per ton per mile.
2320. What do you charge the Greta Company per mile? I could not tell you at the present moment.

- D. Kirkcaldie, I know that they get a considerable reduction when they give us the coal in train-loads of thirty-five waggons. They do not get a reduction if they give it to us in less quantities.
- Esq.
- 16 July, 1890.
2321. *Mr. Garrard.*] That is your maximum train-load? I do not say that it is the maximum, but we bind them down to that.
2322. *Mr. Copeland.*] Does one engine take that? Yes.
2323. How many trucks would an engine take from Peat's Ferry to Hornsby? Not more than fifteen.
2324. The difference is caused simply by the grade? Yes.
2325. Are you in the habit of charging different rates according to the grades all over the country? We charge the same rates over all the lines, except at Newcastle, where the circumstances are quite exceptional. We are doing a large export trade there, and it is the rule all over the world to give low rates for export traffic.
2326. Would not that apply in the case of Wyong;—if you gave low rates between Wyong and the North Shore, is it not likely that mines would be opened up, and the coal traffic increased? Yes; but the Wyong traffic would still go to Newcastle, because it is only 40 miles, while it is 62 to Sydney.
2327. But it is necessary to bring a considerable quantity of coal to Sydney? Yes.
2328. Would it not be cheaper, instead of travelling 40 miles from Wyong to Newcastle, and then paying freight from Newcastle to Sydney by sea, to send direct to the North Shore? Undoubtedly it would, but then it is open to question whether the Wyong companies will be able to compete with the Metropolitan Coal Company, whose mine is only 28 miles from Sydney.
2329. *Mr. Garrard.*] There is a different class of coal? That is a matter I am not prepared to go into.
2330. *Mr. Copeland.*] You said that you were not sure whether you would deliver wool from the North Shore to Geddes' wool warehouses;—what difference in principle would there be between delivering it to them there and your practice on this side, supposing the railway were constructed to the North Shore? I do not suppose that there would be the same necessity at North Shore. We deliver wool in Sydney because the traffic is so large that if we allowed it to accumulate for one day we should be blocked up.
2331. Do you not do it as an inducement for people to send the wool to Sydney by railway instead of by steamer? No.
2332. Is it not partly an inducement? No; it has been done for many years, for the reason I say. If we allowed the consignees to take the delivery themselves we should be in a state of complete confusion in the busy season.
2333. Would it not be possible for you to insist on the people removing their wool immediately at their own cost? It is better for us to do it ourselves, and pay for it.
2334. If the railway were opened to North Shore, would not the same principle apply there as applies at Darling Harbour? Yes, only there would not be the same necessity, because there would not be the volume of traffic there.
2335. Is it not possible that the traffic might increase? It might. We do not do it at Newcastle, nor anywhere, except at Darling Harbour.
2336. *Chairman.*] Or at Morpeth? Or at Morpeth. We take it to the ship's side there.
2337. I suppose you hold to the opinion that the construction of the North Shore line would not in any way increase the general bulk of the railway goods traffic? Not of the through traffic, except if wool were consigned to stores on that side.
2338. It is not the case that the more line you construct the more traffic is brought to the railway? I do not think so.
2339. You think that this extension would develop a local passenger traffic, but not a goods traffic? Not to any great extent.
2340. You say that the rates would be the same for goods going to the North Shore as for goods going to Darling Harbour? Not for goods, though they would be for wool, because there are what we call arbitrary rates now to a very large extent.
2341. These arbitrary rates are fixed so as to compete with the steamers? They are to some extent.
2342. They are not for ordinary goods, but only for wool? We allow them for goods going to the country, but not goods coming from the country.
2343. In that case the northern people would have the advantage of 11 miles shorter distance if they sent their goods from the North Shore? Seven miles. It is 21 miles from Hornsby to Darling Harbour, and 14 miles from Hornsby to North Shore.
2344. To what part of North Shore? Milson's Point.
2345. They would have the advantage of 7 miles? Yes.
2346. Do you think that that would be a sufficient inducement to them to consign their goods to North Shore? I do not think so. I do not think that we should give them a cheaper rate.
2347. So that the northern people would get no benefit whatever from this large expenditure of public money? I do not think so—not from us.
2348. We may consider, then, that it will be made purely and simply in the interest of the North Shore people themselves? Yes, to a very large extent. It is very certain that the line will never do any good while it terminates where it does. The traffic is not likely to increase under present circumstances, though it would increase if the line were brought down to the water's edge.
2349. In estimating the possibility of the undertaking being payable, we have to confine ourselves to the prospect of the passenger traffic? Pretty well entirely.
2350. *Mr. Trickett.*] By a return recently laid on the table of the House it was stated that the working expenses of the railway for the first four months of this year amounted to £4,165. For a whole year that would come to £12,495. The probable cost of the extension proposed will be £262,000, the interest upon which will come to £11,420, so that the total cost during a year of interest and working expenses, if the line were carried to Milson's Point, would be about £24,000 per annum. What prospect do you see of its paying that amount? I do not think that it will pay that amount for a very considerable time; but, to my mind, the money that has been expended will practically be wasted unless we bring the railway to the centre of population.
2351. But do you see any probability of there being a considerable return for this additional large expenditure? I think the extension of the line to the shores of Port Jackson would certainly induce a large settlement of suburban residents, and from that a certain amount of goods traffic would naturally follow. In my opinion, the line goes through the best suburb around Sydney.
2352. That is between the heights of North Shore and Hornsby? Yes.
2353. But as to the returns—they, of course, are merely speculative? Yes.
2354. You think, at any rate, that it would be some time before they would be very great? I think so.

2355. Have you considered the question of the extension of the railway to Cremorne Point? No, I have not. D. Kirkcaldie, Esq.
2356. You have not considered that extension from a traffic point of view? No; that is in relation to the shipment of coal? 16 July, 1890.
2357. Yes? I cannot see why a shipment of coal is going to take place at Cremorne Point.
2358. You do not think that there would be any great advantage in the extension? I do not think so.
2359. So that whether the railway is brought to Milson's Point or to Cremorne Point the result, looking at the goods traffic, will be about the same? I think it would be better to bring the railway to Milson's Point than to Cremorne Point.
2360. Because then you would get the local goods traffic? Yes.
2361. Which you would not get if you went to Cremorne? Yes.
2362. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] I infer from your evidence that you do not anticipate much traffic from the northern districts to Milson's Point if the line is extended? Except with the exception of what may be sent to such wool-stores as it is reported Geddes & Co are going to put up.
2363. You simply look upon the extension as necessary to make the existing line valuable? That is what I mean.
2364. You also appear to think that the line, if extended, would, as a suburban line, eventually be remunerative? I do.
2365. Do you think that that would justify us in recommending a suburban line merely for one side of the North Shore? No; but I fancy that the other side is fairly well attended to with the tramway.
2366. The tram runs almost through the middle of North Shore, does it not? Yes.
2367. Then what about the eastern side, where there is a very large population? You cannot possibly go to both sides. I think the western side is the side which ought to be served.
2368. Do you think that the North Shore is of such importance as to require a circular railway? I do not.
2369. Do you think that if a bridge were made over the harbour, and a railway constructed to Cremorne, that it would become a shipping-place for wool? I do not think so.
2370. Do you think that there is enough accommodation for the wool traffic as it is? Yes.
2371. Therefore the Cremorne proposal does not enter into your consideration in advocating this extension? No.
2372. Have you examined Mr. Hamand's plan? I have not, though I read his evidence this morning.
2373. *Mr. Lee.*] Do you know the quantity of wool hauled to Newcastle by rail from the northern district? Roughly, about 100,000 or 150,000 bales.
2374. Can you say what proportion of that is hauled from Newcastle to Sydney by rail? I think that last year we had about 30,000 bales.
2375. Do you think that if the line were extended to Milson's Point a greater quantity of wool would be brought past Newcastle? I do not think so.
2376. Neither to Milson's Point nor to Darling Harbour? Yes. The quantity of wool brought to Sydney will always be regulated by the rates to a very large extent indeed.
2377. Do you know whether the line from Hornsby to St. Leonards is used for the conveyance of goods from Sydney to North Shore? No, it is not.
2378. Supposing the line were extended to Milson's Point, would goods to North Shore be sent that way, or would they continue to go across in the ferry? They would continue to go across in the ferry.
2379. Consequently you cannot look to the goods traffic to give you any revenue? Not to any large extent.
2380. If the passenger traffic is what you solely depend upon to maintain the line, do you think the route proposed is the proper one to obtain it? I think so. I fancy that a very large number of people would go from Sydney and live at North Shore if the line were extended.
2381. You think that increased facilities of communication would induce a greater number of people to settle on the heights of Gordon, Hornsby, and intermediate places? Yes.
2382. Taking the same length of line either on the Granville or the Illawarra suburban line, how long did it take to produce an amount of traffic sufficient to pay a return upon the line? There is scarcely any analogy between either of those lines and the North Shore line, because they go to the heart of the city of Sydney, while the other line only touches North Shore circuitously. The traffic on the line between Sydney and Hurstville developed more rapidly than that on any other line that we have had. At Tempe, in 1884, we got £137; in the following year, £1,118; in 1886, £1,885; in 1887, £1,934; and last year, £2,117. From Rockdale, in 1884, we got £271; and last year, £6,152. The passenger traffic at the latter station increased from £213 in 1884 to £4,184 in 1889.
2383. So that the great difference in the returns is owing chiefly to the passenger traffic? Yes.
2384. Has the goods traffic increased in the same proportion? No. The goods traffic at Rockdale, in 1884, yielded £58; and in 1889, £1,968.
2385. Would the passenger traffic alone on the line be sufficient to pay the ordinary expenses? No, not for a very long time to come.
2386. And you naturally look to any line to supply a certain amount of goods traffic as well as passenger traffic? Yes, a certain amount of goods traffic.
2387. I suppose you could form no estimate of the number of passengers likely to be carried daily upon this line? No.
2388. You have taken no means to ascertain the present traffic in vehicles? No.
2389. Your opinion is that the great source of revenue on the line will be the passenger traffic? Yes.
2390. But that has to grow? Yes.
2391. It is not there at present? It is not there at present.
2392. *Mr. Dowel.*] You have made yourself acquainted with the proposal to extend the line to Milson's Point;—do you think that is the best place for a terminus? Yes.
2393. You are acquainted with Lavender Bay? Yes.
2394. What is your reason for saying that Milson's Point is the best place to which we could bring the line? Because you have the largest population there, and the line would serve the greatest number of people at North Shore.
2395. Are you aware that there is deep water in Lavender Bay? Yes.
2396. And that when wharves are constructed there the largest ships that have come into Port Jackson will be able to go alongside them? Yes.
2397. Would it not be an advantage to shippers of produce from the north to be able to bring wool, wheat, and other produce direct to the ships, instead of transshipping? Transshipping where?
2398. At Darling Harbour? What kind of produce do you mean?
2399. What produce passes Newcastle and comes to Sydney? Wool, principally. 2400.

- D. Kirkcaldie,
E-q.
16 July, 1880.
2400. Wheat? To some extent.
2401. Hay? Yes; but not a very great deal of it.
2402. Chaff—maize—timber? Yes.
2403. All those things pass Newcastle, and come direct to Sydney? Yes.
2404. Yet you say that you do not think that there would be any advantage in being able to put that produce right into the ships? There has been none of it shipped.
2405. No wool? Yes, wool; but none of the other produce.
2406. Do you think that wheat will be grown in the northern districts for export? It may be.
2407. Is it not a fact that the traffic at Redfern is congested—that you scarcely have accommodation there for the Northern, Southern, and Western lines? Yes; but that is principally the passenger traffic. We have plenty of room for goods traffic at Darling Harbour.
2408. Would it not relieve the traffic at Redfern if the northern traffic were brought straight down to Milson's Point? It would to a little extent, but the benefit would not be very appreciable, because the whole of the produce that comes from the northern districts, except wool, is consumed in the city of Sydney and suburbs.
2409. Is it a usual thing in some parts of the world to take trains from one side of the river to the other on board steam punts? Yes; but it is very expensive.
2410. Can you see any insuperable difficulties in originating a service of that sort from Milson's Point to Circular Quay? The thing could be done. I have seen it done.
2411. Where? In Scotland. But they have got rid of the system there now by erecting the Forth and Tay Bridges.
2412. Nevertheless, in some parts of America, trains are carried across the water on steam punts? Yes.
2413. Supposing that service were carried on here, do you think that Circular Quay would be the best place to bring the trains to? I think so.
2414. And the passengers would be landed there without having to get out of the carriages? I have never seen passenger trains carried that way.
2415. Only goods? Goods waggons.
2416. Does the steam punt service in America not carry passenger trains, or only goods trains? I think only goods trains; but I would not be sure. I have never known passenger carriages to be conveyed that way.
2417. You have made no estimate from which you can inform the Committee what the probable receipts from goods and passenger traffic on this line will be? No; the traffic is purely speculative.
2418. Can you give the Committee any information as to the quantity of wheat, wool, hay, maize, chaff, and other produce which passes Newcastle on its way to Sydney? No, I cannot.
2419. You have not got those returns to hand? No.
2420. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Did you make any estimate for the Commissioners of the returns on this line from any kind of traffic? No.
2421. Do you know upon what grounds the Commissioners expect a goods traffic to assist in paying for its construction? I am not aware that they do expect a very large goods traffic.
2422. Do you know that the line has been placed before the Committee a second time with the express understanding that the Commissioners have altered their minds with regard to the goods traffic which would pay the working expenses and interest on the line? I have heard so indirectly.
2423. It is not because of any information that they have received from you that they have done so? No.
2424. Are there any other sources from which the Commissioners would derive this information besides yourself? I scarcely think so, but of course I cannot say.
2425. You say that the Commissioners are still of opinion that the goods traffic will be quite immaterial? Perhaps that is putting it a little too strongly—I do not mean to convey that impression; but I do not think that there will ever be a very large traffic.
2426. You have already said that the traffic will be purely local? Yes, except such as may come down to stores erected on the North Shore.
2427. Have you seen Mr. Hamand's estimate of the probable traffic returns? No; but I do not see how any man could prepare an estimate of a speculative traffic.
2428. Is it not possible to base it on the analogy between this line and some other suburban line where the facilities given to the residents are about the same? I do not think so, because all the other suburbs are in direct communication with Sydney. This line would merely be in communication with North Shore. Any figures that might be given would be utterly unreliable.
2429. *Mr. Copeland.*] Have not the Commissioners and the Department in all other instances in which railways have been submitted given estimates of the probable income? Yes.
2430. Why could they do it in those cases and not in this? Because this railway is only 2 or 3 miles long, and there would be no traffic from Sydney by it; besides, it is near the city.
2431. We had an estimate of the probable return from the Marrickville-to-Burwood Railway? Yes, but that line comes direct into Sydney. You cannot give any estimate of the traffic on the North Shore line because the passengers would, at the terminus, have to get out of the train into the steamer. It is not as if they went direct from Sydney to where they lived.
2432. *Mr. Tonkin.*] I should like to know if you agree with the following statement, made by Mr. Barling:—"The Department think it can be shown that there is a promise of considerable goods traffic in wool, meat, timber, and other merchandise, which it is anticipated can be dealt with in Lavender Bay, or by a branch line along the frontage of the harbour, between Milson's Point and the Admiralty House. It may also reasonably be anticipated that depôts will arise for the supply of all the northern districts (in the way of station supplies, &c.), and an advantageous feature of this is that it would tend to relieve the present congested street traffic to Darling Harbour"? I could not endorse it.
2433. Your idea is that if the extension is constructed the returns upon the line will be purely from local traffic? Yes.
2434. Caused by the present population, or by an anticipated population? By an anticipated population, to a large extent.
2435. Then it would take a few years before the return would be sufficient to pay working expenses? I think the line will pretty well develop as far as suburban passenger traffic is concerned.
2436. You do not expect much return from the coal traffic? No, I do not.
2437. *Mr. Humphery.*] When was the line between Hurstville and Sydney opened? I think it was opened towards the end of 1883.
2438. And it was open during the whole of 1884? I could not be sure.
- 2439.

2439. You gave the returns for 1884? That was either the year after the line was opened, or the year in which it was opened.
2440. Which are the first complete returns which you have? Those for 1885 would be complete.
2441. Did the earnings cover the working expenses during the first year that the line between Hurstville and Sydney was opened? Yes, I think they did; but I could not say positively.
2442. *Chairman.*] There is no doubt whatever, in your opinion, that the railway cannot be made to pay if it is left where it is, even on the present cost of construction? I am quite sure of that.
2443. Supposing it were connected with the tram system, would that make it pay? It would undoubtedly make it pay better.
2444. Do you think that it would make it pay as well as it could be made to pay by bringing it down to the deep water of the harbour, having regard to the additional cost of construction? I do not think so. Bringing it to the deep water is the only way of making it yield any return.
2445. You say that the line which the Government propose is the best that can be got? Yes.
2446. Do you know the North Shore very well? Fairly well.
2447. The proposed extension would not serve very much of the present population of the North Shore? No.
2448. There is no population between the Crow's Nest and Lavender Bay that would use the train under any circumstances? The only thing would be to get the people back further.
2449. Supposing the line were brought to Lavender Bay after it had taken a detour to the Military-road on the top of the hill, would it not then serve the people out towards Cremorne and Middle Harbour? Yes; but it would not take any additional passengers from Sydney to the new line.
2450. Could not a line such as that proposed by Mr. Hamand be connected by a tramway service at any of the places out there? To my mind people will not go by a steamer, and then take the tram, and subsequently the train.
2451. Do you think that people would take the train from Milson's Point to the heads of the bays and Middle Harbour? Yes, if you make the train to the foreshores.
2452. Do you know Willoughby Falls? Yes.
2453. Mr. Hamand proposes to take the line towards Middle Harbour, coming down by Willoughby Falls, past Neutral Bay, to Lavender Bay; would not that railway serve a large population, both present and prospective? I think it would. It is a matter to which I have given no consideration, because I have not seen his plan.
2454. Would not it serve the people living out towards Folly Point? Yes, it would.
2455. There is a great deal of vacant land out that way? Yes.
2456. Mr. Hamand's route would also serve the people out towards Cremorne and Middle Harbour generally? Yes.
2457. People living out there would take the railway to Milson's Point to get to their residences—do you think that the people living about the Crow's Nest would take it, supposing the tram were where it is now? I think they would still take the train.
2458. Which route do you think would serve the present population best? From your sketch and the appearance of that plan, Mr. Hamand's seems to serve the largest population.
2459. From your evidence it is desirable that the grades on the line should be lessened as much as possible? Yes.
2460. The first cost is the cheapest in the service for all time? Yes.
2461. I suppose that, with your experience, if you were building a railway you would not allow it to have a grade of more than 1 in 50? Not if I could help it—not if a few thousands a mile would give 1 in 100; and the line were likely to develop a large traffic.
2462. A heavy grade means an additional cost for all time? Yes.
2463. Mr. Hamand's route is a little less than a mile longer than Mr. Deane's, and his steepest grade is 1 in 70, as opposed to 1 in 50 on Mr. Deane's deviation;—would not the difference in grade be an enormous advantage? Yes.
2464. You say, first, that Mr. Hamand's line would serve a population which already exists, and, secondly, that, although it is a mile longer than the Government line, it could, because of its lesser grade, be worked better and more cheaply for the public? The grade is undoubtedly a most important element in the cost of working.
2465. Assuming that it would cost (say) £100,000 more than the Government line, do you think that it will be an advantage to construct it? Yes. Of course such a heavy expenditure will be a drag for a time, but before many years the great advantage of the lesser grade will be felt.
2466. Have not the grades between Sydney and Newcastle hampered the traffic enormously, and increased the cost of working? Yes.
2467. I think you told us just now that the concessions which are made to the Greta Colliery are made principally because of the levelness of the road? Yes.
2468. And that it would be impossible to make similar concessions for traffic between Newcastle and Sydney? Yes.
2469. You, of course, have had some experience in the traffic there;—is it a wise policy to construct a line with a stiff grade? Certainly not, if for a reasonable expenditure you can get a line with an easy grade.
2470. A railway is constructed either because it is a necessity, or because in a few years it will be remunerative, that is, pay interest and working expenses? Yes.
2471. A great element in the cost of working a railway is a stiff grade—so, therefore, you think that at any reasonable expense the grade should be reduced? Yes.
2472. And for all time those who have got to use the line will gain the benefit? Yes.

John Henry Geddes, Esq., woolbroker, sworn, and further examined:—

2473. *Chairman.*] What is it that you wish to tell the Committee? I have embodied the material part of the supplementary evidence which I wish to give under a few headings:—

Barging.—The most effectual method for relieving the streets of Sydney from the 400,000 bales passing through on their way to the warehouses and wharves—one which would also save the great cost of wear and maintenance of the streets, as well as relieve the great traffic strain during the five months of the wool season—would be to barge the wool from Darling

D. Kirkcaldie,
Esq.

16 July, 1890.

J. H. Geddes,
Esq.

16 July, 1890.

J. H. Geddes, Esq., Darling Harbour to the wool warehouses, almost all of which have either water-frontages, or are easily accessible from water. If this were adopted, the whole of the foreshores of Lavender Bay to Kirribilli Point and onward could be used as a receiving depôt for northern goods traffic, from whence the wool could be lightered to the respective warehouses or ships.

16 July, 1890. *Newcastle.*—With reference to wool coming to Darling Harbour from the north by rail, I find that 25,000 bales came last season, owing to owners' disinclination to have the wool interfered with after being placed on trucks—this being always an objection. The steamer rates during 1888 were in excess of the railway rates; last year, slightly under. The shipments from Newcastle to London show, I believe, a decrease last year upon the preceding year, while the sales and shipments from New South Wales generally have shown a steady increase during past years—as, for instance—

SALES.	
1887-1888	162,511
1888-1889	209,252
1889-1890	234,419

SHIPMENTS.	
1887-1888	396,419
1888-1889	452,042
1889-1890	471,484

That is from 30,000,000 sheep. We have 52,000,000 sheep in New South Wales; but through various causes a great deal of the wool goes to Melbourne and Adelaide. Until last year the wool shipment from Melbourne almost exceeded that from Sydney, although they have only 10,000,000 sheep. Now, however, owing to the extension of the railways, we are getting more wool year by year.

Proprietary.—In order to explain the exact constitution of the Pastoralists' Association, permit me to state that the objects are more for the co-operation of wool-growers generally than for the accumulation of funds, and our shareholders, 130—pastoralists—although only representing 22,000 shares, actually own upwards of 3,000,000 sheep, or, approximately, about one-third of the total number of sheep in Victoria, or one-fourth of that of Queensland, or one-fifth of that of New Zealand, whence 57,791,110 lb. of meat were exported during the past year. Yet, regardless of one share being applied for, the directorate purchased the land, and almost immediately afterwards accepted tenders. I explain this, Sir, to show that the Association is composed of wealthy, earnest men, who have the power within themselves of giving effect to their intention of erecting the warehouse.

"Beulah" has a frontage of 570 feet, and was purchased by the founders with the intention of erecting the warehouse, but owing to a lease it was not available, and "Theulda," with a frontage of 330 feet, was purchased in the interests of the company. However, I believe that the owners of "Beulah" and "Theulda" will give the land free for the purpose of a railway line.

Since my last evidence, a very large meat export company in Brisbane, with a capital of £1,000,000, has been formed, and the export of frozen meat from New Zealand during the last six months, as given in the latest returns compiled within the last few days, amounted to 57,791,101 lb. This quantity is given as far in excess of the amount exported during any entire year prior to 1888, while in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of this morning there is quoted an increase of 192,000 carcasses of frozen meat exported during the year ending March, as compared with the previous year.

The frozen meat trade, we anticipate, will constitute one of the most important branches of our business at Kirribilli Point, and, according to the Government Statistician's Report of 16th June, 1890, the available sheep for export throughout Australia is estimated at 3,996,000 in an average year, and the stock of sheep is considered inexhaustible.

I have very much pleasure in reading a letter received from Messrs. Balchin, Johnston, & Co., bearing upon this subject:—

Frozen Meat Export.

Dear Sir,

Commercial Chambers, Bond-street, Sydney.

In discussing with your co-directors the important question of providing tonnage for your requirements, it may be of assistance if we shortly recapitulate the main facts dealt with in our yesterday's conversation with you.

We are agents for the Tyser Line (Limited). As you are aware, the Tyser Line has been closely associated with the New Zealand frozen meat trade for some time past, and of late they have added no less than four new steamers to their fleet, with a carrying capacity of over 40,000 carcasses each, and fitted with the newest and most powerful machinery. These steamers have been wonderfully successful, and no damage has yet occurred to meat through breakdown of machinery.

The managers of the line are perfectly willing to enter into the New South Wales meat trade, and if sufficient inducements are offered—that is, regular shipments for a given period—we have no doubt a direct service could be established.

The great drawback to the development of the frozen meat trade in this country has been uncertainty of the seasons, and the difficulty of bringing the sheep to Sydney in times of drought, but we understand it is proposed to establish central slaughtering depôts in the different pastoral districts; and if this is done, and your warehouse connected with the main line, which we are pleased to see there is a prospect of your being able to do, you will doubtless surmount this difficulty.

When your proposed wharfage accommodation is ready—and your plans seem to us to be carefully and well thought out—there will be no difficulty whatever in placing the steamers alongside to receive the cargo direct from your stores. This is a very essential thing for the success of the enterprise. In a warm climate the meat should not be exposed to the heat of the sun, and if the cargo can be placed on board as you propose, loading can go on continuously from morning till night, without the slightest danger of any risk to the mutton. You will thus save the cost of lighterage and cartage, and also the heavy cost of night labour. If you cannot load the carcasses direct from the warehouse to the steamer, nightwork during the summer-time, at least, is absolutely necessary.

We, ourselves, have had a close personal connection with and experience of the frozen meat trade in New South Wales, and the Tyser Line has been instrumental in developing the New Zealand trade.

We shall be very pleased to place our experiences and services at your disposal.

Two steamers of the line, the "Maori King" and "Star of England" will be here next week, and we shall be very pleased if you and your co-directors will inspect the vessels.

We are, &c.,

BALCHIN, JOHNSTON, & CO.

I might point out that the agent of the Tyser Line, after a careful inspection, decided that there was not the slightest difficulty in hauling vessels across to North Shore. These ships are fitted up to carry 40,000 carcasses at a time.

2474. None of them come here? Simply because there is no direct meat export from here. The Orient boats simply provide accommodation for 5,000 carcasses. The meat has to be brought to the ships at night, and is shipped in the most primitive way. With our tremendous stock of sheep we must get an outlet, and the whole country is in a state of ferment about it. We took this into consideration when we secured the place at North Shore, because from no other place, unless we had a water-frontage at Darling Harbour—and the Government have secured all that frontage—could we give the northern pastoralists the accommodation they require for exporting meat. Our sheep now are principally merinos; but cross-breeds will grow as well here, and there is only a difference of a farthing a lb. between the price in England. A company has been shipping merino meat to England for two years, and they have monopolized all the trade here. [*Witness at this stage, referring to a map, pointed out the advantage of the site chosen by the Pastoralists' Company at North Shore for the business which they intended to carry on.*] In barging the wool you would save 3½d. a bale on what the Government now have to pay, while the Corporation would be saved an enormous amount of money in the maintenance of their streets, and the traffic would be relieved. The distance between a line drawn from Milson's Point to Kirribilli Point and the shore is 800 feet.

2475. Do you think that the people who have got the wool trade now will surrender it to you—Hill, J. H. Geddes, Clark, & Co., Mort & Co., and others? I mean to say that Mort & Co.'s wool, instead of being consigned to Darling Harbour, could come to North Shore, and be much more easily barged over from there than it could be brought from Darling Harbour, so that Lavender Bay would become the depôt for the whole of the northern wool, irrespective of the particular consignee. The depth of water between Milson's Point and Kirribilli Point ranges from 44 to 41 feet: it is 41 feet in front of "Theulda." 16 July, 1890.

2476. *Mr. Garrard.*] Are you sure that there are 800 feet between the shore and a line drawn from Milson's Point to Kirribilli Point? I obtained that information from a well-known firm of surveyors here, and I have plans with that exact number of feet marked on them. I wish to draw attention to this to show that our wharfs will not be in the fairway. No vessel would come inside Milson's Point. The whole of the northern wool consigned to any one but the Pastoralists' Association could be barged over from North Shore.

2477. Would it be convenient for Mort, Goldsborough, & Co. to have their wool brought to Darling Harbour or Milson's Point by punt;—would they not then have to carry it across the road? At the present time it is not a question of convenience, because the Government have to deliver the wool. It would be better for the Government to do this.

2478. It would be cheaper for the Government to punt the wool from Darling Harbour to the Circular Quay, and then to cart it across to the store, than to cart it direct to the store? They would not cart it direct to Goldsborough-Mort's store; they would simply truck it. This large firm has nothing intervening between their store and the water.

2479. Surely that means handling, and it is the handling that creates the expense? It does not mean any additional handling. At the present time if they are shipping wool from Goldsborough-Mort's to a vessel opposite they could run it across on trucks.

2480. Would it be no inconvenience to have 700 or 800 bales of wool lying at the Circular Quay? Not a greater inconvenience than there is at the present time. During the wool season there are many teams in front of the warehouses waiting to be unloaded. Besides, the wear and tear on the streets has to be considered.

The following letter was forwarded by Mr. Geddes, in explanation:—

Sir,

13 Phillip-street, Sydney, 17 July, 1890.

In my evidence yesterday before the Committee I stated that a line drawn from Kirribilli to Milson's Point would admit of a measurement of 800 feet between this line and the shore. This evidence bore upon the feasibility of berthing ships for reception of northern wools. After giving this matter serious consideration, I called on the surveyors who furnished the measurement (Messrs. Loxton and Bullock) at my request, and, after re-measurement, they discovered that it should be 600 feet instead of 800 feet.

Permit me to express my sincere regret at this unintentional mis-statement on my part, a statement which was based upon information received from well-known experienced surveyors, who inadvertently made an error in calculation.

I have, &c.,

J. H. GEDDES,

Managing Director, J. H. Geddes and Co.,
The Pastoralists' Association, Limited.

J. P. Abbott, Esq.,
Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

TUESDAY, 22 JULY, 1890.

Present:—

THE HON. JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

WILLIAM M'COURT, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

2481. *Dr. Garran.*] Since you were here last have you personally examined Mr. Hamand's route? Yes, I have walked over it.

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2482. Were you accompanied by any other surveyor or engineer? Mr. Wright went with me.

2483. He is the gentleman who made out the line at Kiama? Yes.

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2484. You went together over the greater part of Mr. Hamand's line? We walked over the whole of it, except just along Lavender Bay.

2485. Was the examination sufficient to enable you to form a fair estimate of its value? Yes, I believe quite sufficient.

2486. Could you tell the Committee the general conclusions at which you arrived? Yes; I find that the section of his line furnished by Mr. Hamand is not quite accurate, and I suppose that he did not take levels over the whole of it. There is one place in particular, just to the north of the Cammeray-road, where there is a remarkable hill which the line as shown on the plan goes through, while the section only represents a cutting of about 15 feet. I could not tell exactly what that cutting would be, not having taken any levels myself, but I should imagine that it must be at least 50 or 60 feet. If, as I have heard since, Mr. Hamand intends to go round the hill he would meet a corresponding depression with which he would have to deal in passing the creek, so that there would be very little difference either way.

- H. Deane, Esq.
22 July, 1890.
2487. You mean to say that the cost on that part of the line is under-estimated? I merely point this out to show that the section is not accurate; since if it were, the irregularities would be shown greater, and the cost would consequently be shown to be increased.
2488. Mr. Hamand must either have a deep cutting through the rock, or a bank when he gets round the point? Yes. In criticising his line I will commence from the Milson's Point end. The first part of the line, it appears to me, would compete with the tramway, and would not be so useful as the tramway. The tramway for a short distance is very much more useful than a railway, because a tram can stop at the street crossings, and on the North Shore tram-line it has lately been arranged that the trams shall stop wherever required, and this, I believe, has greatly benefited the revenue. A railway comes to be useful when you have to get out 2 or 3 miles from the terminus. On Mr. Hamand's line the first station is between Careening Cove and Neutral Harbour, and the next above the head of Neutral Harbour.
2489. How far will the second station be from the tram-line? Nearly half a mile, I think.
2490. Then it would be a different centre for population? Yes; but Mr. Hamand says that the district to be served by his railway runs up to Miller-street, the street in which the present tramway is. It seems to me that his first station would be of no use whatever; because the people living near it, if they wanted to get across to Sydney, would very much prefer to come down and get into the boat at Milson's Point.
2491. They have been accustomed to taking the boat hitherto? Yes, and it would be far better to take the boat direct.
2492. They would otherwise have to pay the railway fare and then take the ferry at Milson's Point, and this you think they would not do? I am sure that they would not. Of course if they wanted to travel away from Sydney they would use the line; but you would scarcely make such a line merely to carry these people in that direction. The second station, near Bent-street, is right down in a hole, and could be used only by the residents in a few houses. The district which this station is supposed by Mr. Hamand to serve goes right up to Miller-street on one side, and to Shell Cove on the other; but Miller-street is nearly 200 feet above the level of the station, and it is absurd to think that people would climb up and down that height to take the train when they could take the tram, or, to suppose that people living on the high land about Shell Cove would make a similar journey when they could take the ferry boat from one of the wharfs of the Neutral Bay ferry. There is another reason why that station would be of no use to the district on the east side of it, and that is the ground there is so steep that hitherto it has not been possible to make a road there.
2493. I suppose the large reserve to the north-west could not be built upon? No. It follows from what I have said that as far as the end of the tunnel—that is 2 miles from Milson's Point—the line is practically useless, or, at least, the expense of making the line would be far greater than the small amount of traffic that would be obtained on it would repay. From this point—
2494. You are now on the north side of the tunnel? Yes, there is a small population; but between Cammeray-road and Miller-street there is no population, though a population might spring up in the future. I do not object to the line because of there being no population here, since a portion of the Government line goes through land where there is now no population, but where it is expected population will spring up. A good deal has been made out of the station at the North Sydney-road. Anyone standing on the high ground nearly opposite where the tramway bridge over Long Cove is being erected sees a considerable population springing up on the North Sydney-road, and it has been said that one of the advantages of Mr. Hamand's line is that the line will provide a station for the use of this population; but in a straight line this population is quite as near to the present St. Leonards' Station as it will be to Mr. Hamand's station on the North Sydney-road, so that there is a possibility of serving it to a very much greater extent by the Government line than by Mr. Hamand's line. It will be seen by looking at the new map of the municipality of Willoughby which is before the Committee that the population of North Sydney is situated almost opposite the $9\frac{1}{2}$ -mile peg on the Government line.
2495. How far from the St. Leonards' Station? About a mile.
2496. How near would it be to Mr. Hamand's proposed station? Roughly, very nearly a mile and a half.
2497. Then it is actually nearer to the present station? Yes. If it were required to serve that population it would be very much more convenient to them to make arrangements for a station at the $9\frac{1}{2}$ -mile peg, and this could be done by a slight alteration of grade and a bridge across the creek—which need not be expensive—could be constructed, so that a much better and more suitable station could be provided. The advantage of having a station at the North Sydney-road is absolutely nil, and therefore the reason for Mr. Hamand's line coming round as it does can only be to serve the population at present existing or likely to spring up in the neighbourhood of the further end of Miller-street and the head of Long Bay, or in the neighbourhood of Willoughby Falls.
2498. Would not the population of Miller-street be served by the private tramway which is now being constructed? Yes, the population of Miller-street is already served, or it will be served when the private tramway is constructed, so that there is not the slightest necessity for carrying a railway round there. Now, Mr. Hamand says that level crossings are inadmissible on a suburban line, and there is no doubt that they are very objectionable, but he does not show on his section how he would carry the line across one or two of the roads. On some of the roads, like the Cammeray-road, it may be possible to raise the approaches to the line, so as to have an overhead bridge, but in many cases with the lines as laid out that would be quite impracticable. I find, upon examining his section, that at M'Dougall-street, for instance, the line is in a cutting of 5 feet, so that the road would have to be raised about 15 feet to cross over it. At High-street it is in a cutting of 8 feet; and at William-street, just at the head of Neutral Bay, it is in a cutting of 17 feet, so that there the road would not have to be altered very much in level, although it is very much on the slope. At Alfred-street, which his line would affect, Mr. Hamand does not say how he would carry people across, or how he would accommodate the people whose houses front that street. At Bent-street, a little further on, where there is to be a station, the line is on a bank of 5 feet. Mr. Hamand says that he would deviate Bent-street slightly, but a slight deviation would not convert a 5 feet bank into a cutting of 20 feet, which it would be necessary to have to be able to carry the road over the line. At Cammeray-street the line is in a cutting of about 7 feet, so the road would have to be raised, and that no doubt could be done, though it would cost money. At Miller-street the line is in a cutting of 16 feet, and on the North Sydney-road it is in a cutting of 15 feet, so that both of these roads would have to be raised considerably. Then between Cammeray-street and Miller-street, and also between Miller-street and the North Sydney-road, you will see on the plan several crossings at which the section does
not

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not show such a depth of cutting as would enable one to carry the road over the line without considerably altering the road-level. I know that in laying out a line it is impossible to deal with all the streets; and I point these things out to show that this matter of road-crossing cannot be treated in the off-hand manner in which the report deals with it. In a great many cases, in a country like this, the providing of crossings is very expensive, and considerable details have to be gone into before you can tell what the whole cost of the line will be. I have not the slightest doubt that the cost of these road-crossings would form a very important item in the whole estimate.

2499. The Government line goes very largely through the Berry Estate, where the streets are not yet formed? Yes. In the Berry Estate we only cross one road—Edwards'-road—and there we have a tunnel.

2500. Then you make the line first, and the streets will have to adjust themselves to it? Yes.

2501. But if, in an adjustment of those streets, the municipality has to go to great expense for bridges or banks, will they not come to the Department? No; the owners of the land will cut it up.

2502. But is it not a common thing for people to apply to the Commissioners for an overhead or an underground road-crossing? We could make a crossing at Edwards'-road.

2503. But we shall have to face the expense of making these cross-roads sooner or later? Yes.

2504. So that it is only postponed on the Government line? Yes; but there you can choose your own crossings.

2505. You have more latitude in choosing the crossings? Yes.

2506. Still the railway authorities will have to pay part of the expense? Possibly; but that will not be anything as compared with the cost of altering the levels of the existing streets.

2507. It is much cheaper to adapt the street-crossings to the railway than the railway to the street-crossings? Very much.

2508. Still you do not entirely get rid of the expense—it will have to come in, bit by bit? I do not know about bit by bit. I do not know that any more cost would be incurred than has been shown, because when the estate is laid out there will, no doubt, be roads on each side of the line parallel to it, and from them cross-roads would branch off.

2509. You do not anticipate any further requests for cross-streets beyond those? No; it is not like an old standing right.

2510. But is it not a fact that the Commissioners are repeatedly applied to between Sydney and Parramatta to make fresh crossings? I do not think that there is any case similar to this between Sydney and Parramatta.

2511. The lay of the ground here is so ridgy that you cannot cross the line except at intervals? I do not think that the cases are parallel.

2512. You have to contemplate the fact that the construction of the line will lead to a population being settled upon the land through which it passes, and that if there is population there must be streets;—will not many more crossings be required than the two for which you have provided? No; I do not think so. If you had an overhead bridge at Edwards'-road, an underground bridge in the bank beyond, we will say, and an overhead bridge again at the next cutting, that would be quite sufficient to serve all purposes. It is in cases where the roads have been laid out before the railway that you have the trouble. I have made an estimate of the cost of Mr. Hamand's line from his section, not allowing for any inaccuracies in it, or for the heavy cost of making the road approaches which I have just mentioned. I have taken the same prices as are made use of in the estimate of the cost of the Government line, and I find that Mr. Hamand's line comes to £221,000 for works alone—about £100,000 more than the estimate for the Government line. The cost of land will be serious, and I do not suppose it will be less than £200,000, since only a very small portion of the land through which the line will pass is unimproved. Of course, I have not reckoned the land through which the tunnel passes; but there is a good deal of valuable property between where the line cuts into Alfred-street and the head of Lavender Bay, but its value could best be estimated by a land valuer. Now for Mr. Hamand's section: Mr. Hamand gives 600 feet of level at the end of Milson's Point, and starts his grade immediately from there. The other day I pointed out that on the Government scheme, platforms 400 feet in length would be provided, and that another 100 feet was allowed at the end of the platform, so that a total length of 600 feet would only allow a margin of 100 feet for shunting purposes, unless you went up on the grade, which would be a most undesirable thing to do. You ought to have a station yard practically on the level, and to show how inadequate a length of 100 feet would be to branch off from the station, I may mention that every cross-over road takes from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 chains—that is, close upon 200 feet; so, therefore, the branching out of a number of lines would require a very much greater length than that. Then Mr. Hamand's line does not utilize the frontage to Lavender Bay at all; he simply comes down on the grade all the way, and cuts off the frontages—spoils it in fact.

2513. You could shunt back on that line when you once got to the level? It is a most undesirable thing to carry on shunting operations on a steep grade. For shunting operations, a grade of 1 in 60 or 1 in 70 is very steep.

2514. But when you get to the level? But Mr. Hamand has only 600 feet of level. The relative advantage of the two lines are these. The Government line is one which will cost, including land, except that which is tunnelled through, but which was included in the first estimate, about £220,000, as compared with Mr. Hamand's line, which, reckoning on the same prices, will cost £420,000. I consider that the Government line will serve the population a great deal better than Mr. Hamand's line, because, as I have shown, his line will only serve a very small population, and that a long distance out—only the population about Willoughby Falls. The rest of the population which might use his line is accommodated either by steamer or by tram. The ruling grade on the Government line—that is, on the deviation—is 1 in 50, which I maintain is quite good enough, because the ruling grade on the section beyond the present St. Leonards Station is 1 in 50. There are two stretches of 1 in 50 on that line—one rising up to Chatswood, and the other at Gordon. You cannot get over them, so it is no good to try to get a better grade on this line. It is certainly not worth while to go to an extra expense of £200,000 to get a grade of 1 in 70, destroying the frontage to Lavender Bay which I have already referred to.

2515. What do you say is the difference in length between the Government line and Mr. Hamand's line? One mile 25 chains apparently—a little over $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

2516. Since you were here last, have you examined your 1 in 50 line more minutely? No.

2517. Nothing has been done to it? No.

2518. Are the Committee to understand that you present it as an improvement on the 1 in 40 line? Yes.

2519.

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2519. The comparison which you have made is between your new line and Mr. Hamand's? Yes. The difference in length between Mr. Hamand's line and the line submitted to the Committee by the Government would be greater; but I recommend the extra length so as to give a grade of 1 in 50.
2520. Seeing that you have nothing worse than 1 in 50 between Hornsby and St. Leonards Station, you admit that it is important to have nothing worse than that down to Milson's Point? Yes.
2521. You think that it was a defect in your first line to have a grade of 1 in 40? I remember that when the first line was laid out it was supposed that there was an objection to having curves sharper than 15 chains, but after consideration it was shown that it would be far better to have much sharper curves and flatter grades.
2522. Of the two evils, a sharp curve is better to be faced than a steep grade? Very much.
2523. Is that theoretically or practically? Both theoretically and practically.
2524. On both sides? Yes.
2525. As you must have a grade of 1 in 50 in the whole line, there is no special object in fighting for a grade of 1 in 75 on this particular part? No.
2526. If you had a grade of 1 in 75 between Hornsby and St. Leonards, would you make a great fight to continue the line down to the water at that grade? Yes, I should.
2527. Where you are dealing with passenger traffic and very frequent stations, a steep grade is still more objectionable than on a line where the stations are fewer? I do not know that it is.
2528. If you were going to stop every three-quarters of a mile each way, would not a grade of 1 in 40 be very objectionable? You would have to use the brakes a good deal.
2529. Would not there be more risk of over-running and of accident with a steep grade? I think not so with the Westinghouse brake.
2530. You would not mind dealing with any amount of passenger traffic coming into a city with grades of 1 in 40? No.
2531. You think that it would be perfectly safe and easy? Yes.
2532. You think that on the whole Mr. Hamand's line for the first two stations will only accommodate people who are already sufficiently accommodated? Yes.
2533. And that beyond the second station the population has to be created? I intended to convey the impression that the people living round the first station were already accommodated, and that those living round the second station were also accommodated, while the second station is in such a hole that the people whom Mr. Hamand says would be accommodated by it would not go to it.
2534. It could not be very accessible? No; very inaccessible.
2535. And beyond the big tunnel, round the next two stations, there is not very much population at present? No.
2536. While the people round the fifth station are either sufficiently accommodated already, or could be accommodated by a special arrangement of your line? Yes; they could be accommodated on the old line.
2537. You think there is nothing to justify the increased expense which Mr. Hamand's line would cost? No, nothing whatever. The only new district is that crossed by the Cammeray-road.
2538. We are dealing with a line to which the great objection is the very large amount of money it will cost; that being the case, is it not specially important that we should keep down the capital expense? Decidedly.
2539. You think that is an additional reason why we should not, for imaginary advantages or small positive advantages, face a very large extra expense? Yes.
2540. To adopt Mr. Hamand's line would practically be to increase the cost by one-third? I reckon that it would increase it by as much again.
2541. Then you make a further objection to his line, that it will not come down to the wharf level at the head of Lavender Bay, and that it will therefore waste a large and valuable water frontage for goods purposes which you would utilize? Yes. If Mr. Hamand brought his line down to the head of Lavender Bay it would lengthen his tunnels, and very much increase its cost.
2542. His object in rising at once is to shorten the tunnels, and to get an elevation as quickly as possible? Yes.
2543. To do that he must forfeit the advantage of the water frontage? Yes.
2544. At the same time, does not his line bring Neutral Bay into play, and this your line does not do? I do not see the advantage of going into Neutral Bay.
2545. We had a captain here who said that Neutral Bay was immensely superior for handling ships to Lavender Bay—that it had a better get-away, and prevented the shipping being crowded in narrow waters? But Mr. Hamand does not go down to Neutral Bay, he only skirts it.
2546. But he goes to a point from which it is very easy to descend to Neutral Bay? You mean his proposed station?
2547. Yes? I do not know. His station is at the head of Careening Cove, and there is a ridge between Careening Cove and Neutral Bay. The next station at the head of Neutral Bay is a long way above the bay. I fail to see that the line serves Neutral Bay at all.
2548. Supposing goods traffic ever should spring up, and we should want either Neutral Bay or Cremorne, your proposed extension would make those places accessible? Yes; and my proposal is the best way of doing that.
2549. Your extension would be less expensive than a branch from Mr. Hamand's line? Yes; it would not be easy to start from his line and run round there.
2550. You could get to Neutral Bay from the head of Lavender Bay for about £60,000 or £80,000? Yes, easily.
2551. You could get there for that, including resumption of land and works? I believe so.
2552. That would be your answer to the statement that Neutral Bay is made more accessible by Mr. Hamand's plan? Yes.
2553. You have been obliged to go as far westward as you do go to avoid immense cutting and tunnelling;—you could not have come more eastward with your line? No; we simply followed the contour of the ground.
2554. You follow the curve of the ridges as they descend towards the water? Yes.
2555. It is only a tramway which could climb that ridge, I suppose? That is all.

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2556. You think North Sydney would be best served by a tramway climbing the ridges, such as the present tramway, and by a railway skirting the coast? Yes.
2557. That is the best way of getting to the top? Yes.
2558. The two routes will give accommodation to the present and prospective population? Yes. The Government route keeps altogether out of the way of the tramway, and opens up fresh country for settlement.
2559. And the Government tramway, together with the private tramway which is being constructed, will sufficiently meet the wants of the people on the ground? Quite.
2560. And branch tramways can be taken off from it if required? Yes; there is a proposal now to run a branch tramway along the Military-road.
2561. You think that tramways are the best means of dealing with the ridges on North Shore? Without giving the matter further consideration, I am inclined to think that they are.
2562. Your line skirts the high ground at North Shore on the west, and Mr. Hamand's on the east? Yes.
2563. You neither of you accommodate the central portions of the high ground? No; because it is absurd to think that people will climb up and down a couple of hundred feet to get to the railway. I believe that a tramway is the best means of serving the heights.
2564. The alternative, then, really lies between skirting the high ground on the east and on the west? Yes.
2565. For the reasons that you have given, you prefer skirting it on the west? Yes; because such a line will be cheaper, shorter, and will serve the district better than the eastern route.
2566. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Which line, in your opinion—the Government's or Mr. Hamand's—would serve the largest population, present and prospective? The Government line.
2567. Can you tell us the cost of resumption upon the Government line? That has all been in evidence. In an appendix to my evidence in the last inquiry into this work, I show how the estimate of cost could be reduced by cutting out £21,000 for the land on the Berry Estate. That would make the cost £87,000; but leaving out only half the amount mentioned, the total cost of land would be £97,500, exclusive of the land over the tunnel. I have not taken that land into consideration on either line, because we are not obliged to resume it. To the £97,500 would be added £5,700 as the extra cost of land on the deviation of 1 in 50, making £103,000 for the total cost of land on the Government route.
2568. What is your rough estimate of the cost of the land on Mr. Hamand's line? I put down £200,000; I do not think you can reckon on less than that.
2569. So that the cost of land on his line would be almost double that of the Government line? You would have the most expensive land—that at Lavender Bay—on either line; and on Mr. Hamand's line you have to resume the land from Alfred-street up to the head of Neutral Bay—at any rate up to Bent-street.
2570. In the event of a line being sanctioned between Milson's Point and Manly, would not a large portion of Mr. Hamand's line be utilized for it? I doubt it.
2571. Is it not laid out with that intention? I cannot tell why Mr. Hamand laid it out in the way which he has done. He mentioned that the line would come in for an extension to Manly, but I am very doubtful as to whether this would be the proper way to take it.
2572. Have you had a survey made of any line between Milson's Point and Manly? No.
2573. Where do you think a line would branch off from North Shore to go to Manly? At the present moment, I am inclined to think that Manly does not require a railway at all; but if connection was necessary I believe that a tramway would answer every purpose. It would be a very costly line to make, unless you made it as a tram-line. I believe that Mr. Hamand said that he has not examined the country beyond Middle Harbour; but any one who had examined it would know that it would be frightfully expensive to carry a line round the shores of Middle Harbour in the way Mr. Hamand suggests. You must have a swing-bridge over Middle Harbour, or else rise up to a height and get a high-level bridge at the Spit.
2574. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Considering the position of the two lines, would they serve the population on the high land in the centre pretty well? As suburban lines they would not serve it at all.
2575. Neither of them? Neither of them. I consider that the centre of St. Leonards, as a suburb of Sydney, is well served by the tramway.
2576. Neither line is proposed for the purpose of serving the existing population of the North Shore? Not as centred in the neighbourhood of the reserve or the Government offices.
2577. If that is so, will you tell us what amount of population you have on the western side of the Government line, in comparison with the population on the eastern side of Mr. Hamand's line;—is there any population on the western side of the proposed Government line? A good deal of it is still in the future.
2578. There is no population there at present? There is some population on the other side of the tunnel, near Blue's Point, but I cannot tell you what it is. There is a thicker population there than there is on Mr. Hamand's line, beyond his tunnel.
2579. On the eastern side of Mr. Hamand's proposed line, is there not a very much larger population than on the western side of the Government proposed line? There is no population on the eastern side of Mr. Hamand's line which could use his line at all. On the eastern side of Neutral Bay there is a regular barrier of steep slopes.
2580. But where the streets are marked? That is over the tunnel on the top. Those people would not be served; they would not use the line.
2581. Beyond that again, at the head of Long Cove, is there any population of importance? There is a population springing up between the end of Miller-street and the North Sydney-road.
2582. Would that be served by Mr. Hamand's line? Yes; but it will be better served by the private tramway.
2583. Do you think that the private tramway is likely to be constructed? I could not say; they have lately got an amended Bill through Parliament.
2584. I think you mentioned that the population on the North Sydney-road is something like a mile and a half from Mr. Hamand's nearest station;—is the country between that population and Mr. Hamand's proposed station likely to be built upon—is it available for settlement? Yes; but it would also be served by the existing line.
2585. How far is Mr. Hamand's station from the existing line? About half a mile, I should say.
2586. Is it situated where there is likely to be much population? Yes; the land there has been cut up, and is pretty good land for building purposes.

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2587. Would not the people living there be the best served if Mr. Hamand's line were constructed? I expect they would, because the line would go close along their houses, but then the question arises—is it worth while to incur an extra expense to go round that way and give them a slight advantage.
2588. Do you think that it is any advantage to have Mr. Hamand's line going so far towards a line that might be constructed to Manly? I do not believe that it is.
2589. Mr. Hamand's line would be so many miles on the way? I do not believe that it would. I am not at all persuaded that this is the best way of getting to Manly. I think the level would be the wrong one.
2590. Do you think that if a line should be constructed to Manly any of Mr. Hamand's line would be likely to be used for the purpose? No.
2591. Suppose it were not constructed, but that it was decided to carry a line to Manly, would such a line be likely to go anywhere near where Mr. Hamand proposes to go? I am very doubtful about it.
2592. Do you see any objection to that portion of Mr. Hamand's line from Milson's Point to where the junction is shown, supposing a line were to be constructed to Manly? You mean would there be any objection to adopting that portion of the line and making a junction from it?
2593. Yes? Possibly that might be considered, but I believe that it would turn out to be a very expensive route—the coast-line along there being very rugged.
2594. But do you think that there is a better route? I am sure that the question could be solved in a better manner than by going that way.
2595. Putting the question of cost on one side altogether, do you think that the Government line would serve more population, not only at present, but also in the future than the line proposed by Mr. Hamand? I am certain that if the whole country on each route were thickly populated, and the two lines cost exactly the same, the Government line would be better than Mr. Hamand's line.
2596. *Mr. Douel.*] Have you made a very careful examination of Mr. Hamand's proposal? Yes; I have been right over it.
2597. You have examined it sufficiently to justify you in giving an estimate of cost to the Committee? I have had the quantities taken out.
2598. What is the cost of construction on the Government line? The original estimate was £127,000, to which £16,000 have to be added for the deviation, making altogether £143,000, giving the total cost of the line, including land resumption, £246,200.
2599. Then you give the Committee to understand that the additional cost of Mr. Hamand's line would be £175,000? That is it, I think.
2600. Have you made yourself acquainted with the tunnel on Mr. Hamand's line? I know where it is to be.
2601. What do you estimate will be the cost of the tunnel? I put down the cost of the tunnel at £70 a yard. I have taken it as a double tunnel throughout, with the same construction as has usually been adopted on the Government lines here. Mr. Hamand, I believe, recommends two single tunnels, which would be more costly than one tunnel, though I have not calculated the cost of two single tunnels. For the sake of comparison I have taken the cost of one double-line tunnel.
2602. You claim for the Government proposal a very considerable advantage in its utilizing more of the Lavender Bay frontage than Mr. Hamand's line does? Yes, and I think that that is a very material advantage.
2603. The Government line would give a large amount of wharfage space, and a much greater length of level to work upon, than Mr. Hamand's line would give? Yes.
2604. You consider it a great advantage at any station to have a considerable length of level running? You must, to do the shunting properly.
2605. It would be dangerous to shunt on a grade? It would be excessively inconvenient.
2606. And dangerous also—trucks would be liable to run away, and all sorts of things might occur. You referred just now to a grade of 1 in 50 at Chatswood; what is the length of that grade? I do not remember exactly, but I believe about three quarters of a mile.
2607. Would it be possible to cut that grade out and make an easier grade there? I don't think it could be done.
2608. It could be done, but at a considerable cost? You can do nearly anything by paying for it.
2609. Would it be very expensive to cut that grade out? It would.
2610. And no corresponding gain would be made, because on the main northern line there are grades of 1 in 40 that would have to be overcome? Yes.
2611. If the line were continued across the harbour, would not the station which Mr. Hamand proposes at Careening Cove be very useful? I do not see how it would come in at all. If there were a bridge across the harbour, it would have to come in at some point on the Government line.
2612. Mr. Hamand's station then would be of no use for the purpose of connecting with the bridge across the harbour? No—it would be too low down, for one thing.
2613. Having very carefully examined Mr. Hamand's proposal, and the Government proposal, are you of the same opinion as you were when you gave evidence here last time, that the Government proposal is infinitely superior in every respect to Mr. Hamand's proposal? Yes.
2614. On the score of cost, and because of the advantages to the public generally? Yes.
2615. *Mr. Lee.*] You have a copy of Mr. Hamand's estimate of cost before you? Yes. I see that, by an extraordinary coincidence, Mr. Hamand's estimate almost agrees with mine, but he has taken the cost of land and compensation at £130,000, while I have put it down at £200,000. His estimate for works is £220,677, while mine was £221,000.
2616. You estimated the cost of Mr. Hamand's line at £421,000, so that there is a difference between your estimate for his line and his own estimate of £70,323? Yes, and that is entirely due to the item "land and compensation."
2617. Do you think the amount allowed by Mr. Hamand for roads and bridges, &c.—£13,000—is sufficient? No. I mentioned that my estimate for his line did not include these very costly road approaches, deviations, and so on. It would be impossible to make a full estimate of this without taking levels and seeing how the different streets could be dealt with.
2618. But Mr. Hamand includes them in his estimate? Yes; and so far he differs from me, because, if a careful estimate were made of these works, I think the total cost would have to be increased by a pretty large sum.
2619. You make Mr. Hamand's proposal cost £174,800 more than the Government proposal? Yes.

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2620. Is your estimate of Mr. Hamand's proposal a correct one? I think that it is as likely to be correct as Mr. Hamand's is.
2621. If your estimate is right Mr. Hamand's must be wrong? The difference is entirely due to the estimate of land and compensation.
2622. Suppose the bulk of the traffic of the line was beyond St. Leonards Station, would it be an insuperable difficulty that Mr. Hamand's line was a mile and a quarter longer than the Government line? In going down the grade it would take longer to cover the extra distance, but in going up hill I dare say you would notice the difference less, because the trains would proceed more slowly up the steeper grade.
2623. But, remembering that so many people reside along the Illawarra line as far as Kogarah, and along the main line as far as Homebush, would this 1 mile 25 chains of extra length be likely to discourage settlement on the North Shore line? I do not say that it would discourage settlement, but people would have the extra distance to travel. People $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles out on Mr. Hamand's line would only have about 6 miles to come by the Government line.
2624. Is there not more probability of there being an intermediate traffic from the upper portion of Mr. Hamand's line than from the upper portion of the Government line—that is about St. Leonards Station? I am certain that there would not be a greater traffic.
2625. Does not the population lie between St. Leonards Station and Lavender Bay? Yes.
2626. Consequently, the line as it got lower down, would influence the traffic more than it would higher up? The Government line would induce settlement and gain revenue on its whole length, from the other side of Blue's Point-road up to the present St. Leonards Station, while I reckon that Mr. Hamand's line would not serve the district through which it passes, until it got to the other side of the tunnel on the Middle Harbour slope.
2627. You stated in reply to Mr. Tonkin, that you thought the point at which Mr. Hamand showed that a line might be taken to Manly Beach, was in your opinion, a wrong one? I believe it to be the wrong one.
2628. Which point do you think would be the best to take it from on to Manly Beach? I am not in a position to say at present.
2629. Suppose the Government line were made to Milson's Point, and it was the desire of the Government to extend it to Manly Beach, could it be brought round along the route now submitted by Mr. Hamand as far as the big tunnel? My impression is that if it were necessary to take the line to Manly, it would be far better to get it at a higher level—nearly at the top of the ridge, because the nearer you get to the top of these ridges the easier the work is.
2630. Supposing Mr. Hamand's line were constructed, could it be used in any way to connect with the bridge across the harbour? I do not consider that it could.
2631. Are you of opinion that such a bridge must go from the highest points? That is the least costly way of making it, and the cost is always a consideration.
2632. The highest points are considerably above Milson's Point and Lavender Bay? If the bridge had to be constructed, the nearest high point to the southern side of the harbour is M'Mahon's Point.
2633. If a bridge were at any time constructed from the high point across the harbour, could the railway line be extended from Milson's Point to cross it? No; it would not be made from Milson's Point; but it could be made to start from the Government line, about three-quarters of a mile back.
2634. Could the bridge be approached more easily from the Government line than from Mr. Hamand's line? Yes. I do not consider that the bridge could be approached from Mr. Hamand's line, except at very great cost.
2635. Could it be approached from the Government line without any extra cost? Yes; other than the cost of the approach to the bridge.
2636. Why? Because the levels suit.
2637. *Mr. Copeland.*] Can you tell the Committee what is about the average cost for wear and tear per mile of running on a grade of 1 in 50? I have not any particulars here.
2638. I suppose we may understand that it would be greater on a grade of 1 in 50 than on a grade of 1 in 70? Not considerably greater. I do not see that it would affect the matter very much.
2639. Has not a computation been made of what it costs by wear and tear on the rails and wheels to bring up a train? Going down hill, of course, there is more wear and tear, because of the action of the brake.
2640. Would there not be more wear and tear in bringing up a train on a grade of 1 in 50 than on a grade of 1 in 70? Yes.
2641. There would be more friction from the brakes? Yes, naturally. You would have to allow a longer distance for stopping in, and the brakes would have to be put on earlier.
2642. And going up the grade there would be more waste of steam-power in starting? No; there is nothing lost there. You have the same height to mount up, and the same work is done in each case.
2643. Does it not require a greater expenditure of power to take a train up a 1 in 50 grade than to take it up a 1 in 70 grade? Of course it does; but then the distance on the heavier grade is shorter, and the work done is exactly the same, unless the engine is overtaxed, but we are not assuming that.
2644. How is that you would have the same height to mount in both cases? Supposing you have to go up 350 feet—
2645. But that is supposing that both routes are the same? No; but they both have fairly level grades. Mr. Hamand's grade is 1 in 70 for nearly the whole distance, while the Government grade is 1 in 50. There are no reverse grades, and you are mounting all the way. The work done in each case is exactly the same. Mr. Hamand does it more easily, but he has a longer distance to go.
2646. In going from A to B, although the ultimate level to be obtained would be the same, might there not be a number of routes differing greatly in grade, rising at some points and descending at others; would there not be a greater waste of power if you went up a rise of 50 feet and then down again, than if you took a more level route with a grade of 1 in 70? Decidedly; but you are assuming that in one case you lose in some places whatever height you gain in others, but on the Government line we do not do that. Every inch in height we gain we keep.
2647. But I am not comparing the different grades on the same route. Here we have two routes, and there may not be the same declivities on Mr. Hamand's route that there are on yours? No; but we are mounting all the time.
2648. But you may mount and descend, and mount and descend again? But we do not do that, although Mr. Hamand really does. He has to rise to a slightly higher point than we do in the Government route.
2649. Mr. Hamand's section shows that the steepest grade on his line is 1 in 70, and that the grade varies from

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- from 1 in 70 to 1 in 290. Would it not be much cheaper per running mile to work a railway with these grades than to work the Government line with a grade of 1 in 50? Yes, certainly, per mile.
2650. It would be cheaper per mile to work Mr. Hamand's railway than to work the Government railway? To a slight extent.
2651. Would not the additional 1 mile 25 chains on Mr. Hamand's line bring in more revenue to the Government. Would not the Government charge for that extra length? Yes; they would.
2652. They would receive more revenue by way of fares? The fares would be increased, but there is a point in connection with this, which did not strike me before, and it is this, that a place 7 miles distant from the terminus on the Government line is further out, and in better country than a place 7 miles out on Mr. Hamand's line, so that the Government would get the advantage of settlement further out, and in a better and more favoured district, by their scheme than by Mr. Hamand's. Strathfield is 7 miles from Sydney—taking it as the natural limit of the thick population which will spring up, 7 miles along the Government line would be nearly $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles on Mr. Hamand's line, and if the population is limited by the 7 miles distance, the district which is likely to be populated, is shortened in length by Mr. Hamand's line, and there would be less revenue forthcoming.
2653. Why fix 7 miles? You could take 10 miles, if you liked; the comparison would be the same.
2654. Do I understand you to take up the position that there is a greater population on the Government line than on Mr. Hamand's line? I am considering the future population. The shorter you can make the journey to the high land, say at Gordon, the better for the Government and the railway revenue.
2655. But what warrant have we for assuming that population will increase at a greater ratio on the Government line than on Mr. Hamand's line? I do not say that it will. I say that by shortening this portion of the line you render greater the length of district available for traffic purposes. I think that the population will increase very much between St. Leonards and Milson's Point; but I also believe that there will be a very large population going out to Gordon, on account of its height above the sea.
2656. I suppose you will not dispute the fact that at the present time there is more population on Mr. Hamand's route than on the Government route? I dispute the fact that Mr. Hamand's route would serve even now the larger population, because it is my opinion that it would not serve a large portion of the district through which it passes.
2657. Are there not more people settled on Mr. Hamand's route? There may be, but I do not consider that that has anything whatever to do with it. The thickest population on Mr. Hamand's line is over the tunnel, but those people are not served by the railway. There is also a thick population near the second station, but the people there would not be served by the line, because the station is in a hole, while the people further down are not served, because they can walk to Milson's Point more easily than they can take the train.
2658. Without railways or tramways, we find that the people have settled in larger numbers on the route that Mr. Hamand has chosen? Yes; that shows that the railway is not necessary—that the people there are already sufficiently accommodated.
2659. It must be admitted that the people have, without the convenience of a railway or tramway, settled in greater numbers along Mr. Hamand's route than along the Government route. Is not that a good reason why we should believe that in future they will settle along there to a much greater extent if they get the railway? That is not my opinion.
2660. What grounds have you for believing that people will settle in greater numbers on the western line? Because there is a greater length available. I say that the length available for settlement on Mr. Hamand's line only commences when you get to Willoughby Falls.
2661. At the present time there is virtually no population on the Government route—very little population? There is a little population on the other side of Blue's Point.
2662. Is not a stern chase a long chase. Will it not take some time with the population on the Berry's Bay route to catch up to the existing population on Mr. Hamand's route? No; I am not at all sure about it; but I am inclined to think that an estimate of the population on both routes, excluding that part of the population on Mr. Hamand's route, which I say would not be served by his line at all, would be greater than on the Government line.
2663. Let us consider the Government line. In the first place, on the western side of that line there is no population, while, on the eastern side, you can only count upon the population to within half way of the tramway, because those nearer to the tramway would be likely to use it? Yes; most probably.
2664. Half of the people living between the tramway and the Government line would use the tramway, and the other half would use the railway? Yes; something of that sort, I daresay.
2665. So that on the western side of the Government line you have no population, and on the eastern side you have only half the population between the railway and the tramway? I daresay that there is not very much population at present, but there is plenty of room for population on the western side, and surely we have to consider the future population on this line quite as much as the present population.
2666. Would not that apply to Mr. Hamand's line as well? No; I do not think it would.
2667. What is your reason for that opinion? I have been endeavouring to give it to you. I have shown that I consider that the first part of Mr. Hamand's line would not serve the district through which it goes. His first station is situated in a locality which is already admirably served by steamer and tram; his second station at the head of the creek at Neutral Harbour, and before the entrance to the tunnel, is right down in a hole, and would not serve the surrounding population, which is for the most part situated nearly 200 feet higher; his line, therefore, would not serve any population until you get to the further end of the tunnel; beyond that point there is a considerable length of line before you come to the station. At Cammeray-road there is very little population, though there is plenty of room for it. I admit that it would be a good thing, if it was not too costly, to make a railway for the future population about Miller-street, if they had no tramway; but they have one which will serve them better than the railway. Then again, although there is a population on the North Sydney-road, Mr. Hamand's railway would not serve it, because a new station at $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles on the Government line would be nearer to them.
2668. Now will you commence on the Government railway. Starting from Milson's Point, at the head of Lavender Bay, I suppose no one would be likely to make use of the railway? No. But the Government line provides wharfage, which Mr. Hamand's line does not.
2669. But we are speaking now of population. There is no regular steam trade to Berry's Bay at the present time? No.
2670. Simply because there is no population. But if the population which we anticipate in the future were settled there, would there not be a steam ferry running in competition with the railway, just as there

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there is a steam ferry from Neutral Bay, which would run in competition with Mr. Hamand's route? Why has the steam ferry not been started then.

2671. I suppose because there is no population. Do you not think that if the population which you have predicted were to settle at Berry's Bay, there would be a ferry service from there to Sydney? No one runs a ferry there now, because there is no population, and if we bring a railway there the population will increase.

2672. And is it not reasonable to suppose that as soon as the population increases a ferry will come into existence? Even if it did it would not make very much difference.

2673. Would not such a steam ferry be running in competition with the Government railway, just as the Neutral Bay ferry would run in competition with Mr. Hamand's railway? There might be, under these circumstances, some competition, but I do not know that there is anything to lead one to suppose that where once you have established a railway a second means of conveyance will enter into competition with it. The population about the 12-mile peg would sooner go the shorter distance to the train than to the water.

2674. What is the distance from Gore's Creek to your railway station? It is not very far, but the height from the water there is considerable, and the people would not like to run up and down to catch steamers.

2675. Would not the people between your line and the water be more likely to go down hill to a steam ferry than up hill to a railway? It is all high land round Ball's Head, and I am certain that the people living about there would very much prefer going to the railway to going to the water.

2676. Until you get to the 11-mile peg, the distance of the Government scheme from navigable water varies from 1 chain to a quarter of a mile. Would not the people living on that land be more likely to travel by steam ferry to Sydney than to patronize the Government railway? I am very doubtful of it. If they could run down in the train to the North Shore, and go across in the ferry, it would be quicker and easier for them than to go down to the water's edge on foot.

2677. Starting from Milson's Point, for several miles your route runs parallel to the navigable waters, whereas Mr. Hamand's route goes away from them and runs inland, where there is, and can be, no ferry competition? But you are forgetting the fact that Mr. Hamand's line, although it goes away from the water for the first 2 miles, picks up no traffic.

2678. But is your line likely to pick up much traffic for the first 2 miles? Yes; I believe a great deal of traffic.

2679. The people will prefer to travel by railway rather than to travel by ferry boat? Yes. The end of the 2 miles is about three quarters of a mile from the St. Leonards Station.

2680. For a great part of the way people would actually have to leave the water's side to get to your railway—it would not be more than a chain away from the water? I would leave that part out of consideration, and still, beyond doubt, there would be a greater population served by the Government line. People living half way between the Bay-road and the Lane Cove-road would certainly prefer to go down to the railway.

2681. Are they not served by the present tramway? It would be easier for them to go to the railway than to go to the tramway. Further along the line the ground is very high.

2682. Considering the number of trams that there are running and the small number of trains that there would be, is it not more likely that people would prefer to take the chance of catching a tram before that of catching a train? I do not think so.

2683. Taking Mr. Hamand's estimate of £350,677 for his line, I understand that the difference in cost between the two proposals is £95,523? I do not acknowledge Mr. Hamand's estimate.

2684. But you have already stated that your estimate is very near his, less the cost of land resumption? Yes.

2685. Would we not be justified in looking upon that as an evidence of Mr. Hamand's capabilities of forming an accurate estimate? I do not object to Mr. Hamand's estimate; it tallies in a remarkable manner with mine, though I pointed out in the first place that there are inaccuracies on the section, which, if corrected, would increase the cost of work, and in the second place there is the question of approaches for roads, which I have not been able to estimate, and which I have not included, but which, if a reliable estimate had to be made, should be properly worked out.

2686. I understood you to say that you had not gone into a careful estimate so as to be able to check Mr. Hamand's estimate with regard to the land resumptions? Yes; I have simply taken the old estimate as a basis.

2687. Might we not as fairly consider that Mr. Hamand's estimate is correct as that yours is? No.

2688. For what reason—if Mr. Hamand has gone over the ground, and if he has the same data as you have, is he not competent to form an estimate? The Land Valuer's estimate of the value of the land on the Government line, with certain deductions which I have mentioned, is £103,200, and Mr. Hamand only reckons £130,000 for the land along his route—that is to say, he only allows £27,000 for the difference in distance and in the quality of the land through which he passes—I say that that is not enough.

2689. But all land is not of equal value? No, it is not. There is one advantage in the Government line—it does not destroy any house property—while Mr. Hamand's line goes through a lot of houses. Even supposing the land were not valuable, these houses would have to be paid for, but the land on Mr. Hamand's route is much more valuable than the land on any portion of the Government line west of Lavender Bay.

2690. Would not the land in the Government line be of much greater value, seeing that it has mostly water frontage, than the land on Mr. Hamand's line? The land on the Government line is not close to the water. We should not take any water frontages, except at Lavender Bay.

2691. But you would not be more than 1 or 2 chains away from the water? We should not be very far away; but even if we did take the land we should have the water frontage. I have not valued the land—the Land Valuer has done it.

2692. At any rate, taking your estimate for the Government proposal as £246,100, and Mr. Hamand's estimate as £350,677, we have a difference in the estimated cost of the two routes of £95,523? But you have no right to take Mr. Hamand's estimate of his line and mine for my line—you must go on the same basis for both. The difference lies chiefly in the estimated cost of the land, because I have not taken into account the errors in the section, which may amount to a good deal, or the road approaches, which are most important. I am most distinctly of opinion that Mr. Hamand's estimate of £130,000 for land resumption is certainly not more than two-thirds of what it should be. I am convinced of that.

WEDNESDAY, 23 JULY, 1890.

Present:—

THE HON. JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

WILLIAM M' COURT, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Arthur Samuel Hamand, Esq., sworn, and further examined:—

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2693. *Vice-Chairman.*] You have come to give evidence upon the alteration in the route from Lavender Bay, at St. Leonards Station, suggested by you? Yes; but before you go into that question I should like to say that it has been suggested that somebody prompted me as to this particular route—somebody who might be interested in it. In answer to that, I wish to say that I do not know anybody on the North Shore who is interested in the route.

2694. *Mr. Garrard.*] Has any member of the Committee made that suggestion? I do not think I need tell you exactly who it was made the suggestion, but nobody has moved me in the matter. I have acted solely upon my own judgment with the desire to obtain a route which would best serve the interests of the public.

2695. *Mr. Copeland.*] I think that if any member of the Committee made the suggestion it would be a desirable thing for you to say so? No member of the Committee made the suggestion.

2695½. *Vice-Chairman.*] Have you been very long engaged in the examination of the route which you propose? Not very long. I know the North Shore very well.

2696. You would not call yours a complete survey? I should call it a trial survey. I know very well that when the line comes to be staked out I can reduce the cost. When I sent my estimate into the Committee I asked particularly that it should not be forwarded to the Works Department, because I had already some experience of how the Works Department dealt with my figures and statements, and I very much preferred that they should have made an independent estimate. They had the section and the plan and description, and they could go over the country, so that they were just as well able to make an estimate as I was myself.

2697. You do not regard your estimate as a conclusive one? I am quite sure that it is too liberal. Now, as to the question of land. So far as the works are concerned, Mr. Deane admitted yesterday that his estimate and mine were identical—that the only difference was in the estimate of land. Now, if you will look for a moment at Mr. Deane's figures, you will see that he estimates the value of land on my line to be £200,000, while I put it at £130,000. Mr. Deane did not tell you how he was going to make up his £200,000, and, in fact, he would have had some difficulty in doing so; but I will tell you how I made up my £130,000, and then I will apply the valuation which he puts upon the land on his line to the land upon my line, and you will see that his estimate of £200,000 is all nonsense. He said, yesterday, that those figures were not final, that he had not been into the matter, and all that kind of thing; but it is nonsense to give an estimate unless you have something approximate to go on. I know that £130,000 is a liberal figure, and I will show you exactly how I arrived at it. I put down £55,000 for the foreshores of Lavender Bay, from Milson's Point to the Alfred-street tunnel, and the balance, £75,000, I spread over 3½ miles of line, so that you will see that that 3½ miles of line would cost about £23,000 a mile. Now, if you will take the Government line, you will see that they occupy in Lavender Bay a frontage of 52 chains, while I only occupy 35 chains there—that is to say, the Government line takes up half as much again in length of frontage in Lavender Bay as my line does. I put a valuation of £55,000 upon the 35 chains which I take up. If you add 50 per cent. to that, it comes to £82,500, which, I believe, is below the figure Mr. Deane gave you as the cost of the resumption of the land around Lavender Bay on the Government route.

2698. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Mr. Deane's estimate of the cost of resumption on the eastern shore of Lavender Bay is something over £37,000? Yes, and then there is the land at the head of Lavender Bay to add to that. You see that I have absorbed, at Lavender Bay, £82,000 out of the £103,000 which Mr. Deane has allowed for land and resumption on the whole of the Government route. £82,000 subtracted from £103,400 leaves £21,000, and the last amount has to be spread over 1 mile 70 chains on the Government route, which works out about £12,000 a mile. Now, I think that those gentlemen who have been over the route will have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that if £12,000 a mile for land is enough between Blues Point-road and St. Leonards Station, £23,000 a mile is certainly enough for land between Alfred-street, round the Middle Harbour shores, to Miller-street, North Sydney-road, and so on. £23,000 a mile is a great deal more than enough for it, and I put it to you as a matter of common sense if it is not so. You will not find any two land agents likely to agree on this subject. When two land agents go into court, one generally says double what the other says, according to whichever side he is on. Again, if you consider the acreage resumed on each route, you will find that the resumptions upon the Government route, apart from the Lavender Bay land—upon the mile and 70 chains—come to £1,500 and £1,600 an acre, while the land upon my line is estimated to be worth on the average over £2,000 an acre.*

2699. *Mr. Humphery.*] What area of land do you allow to a mile of railway? 10 acres to the mile. I have taken the same acreage to the mile in each case. I hope I have made it pretty clear to you that the estimate for land upon my route is amply sufficient. At any rate you may see from the figures which I have quoted that my estimate for land on the route which I recommend is more liberal than Mr. Deane's estimate for the Berry's Bay route. There is one other point upon which I wish to say something. The station in what was not very euphoniously called the "Hole"—we will call it the Valley—the station near Bent-street, was said to be of no use whatever, because the summit of the ridge was 200 feet above it. The summit of the ridge is 200 feet above it, but that is only one street. The streets come down to the level of the line, and go 100 feet below it, so that it is ridiculous to talk about the height of the ground preventing

* NOTE (on revision).—The figures per acre should be £1,200 per acre on the Government route, and £2,300 per acre on my route, if ten acres per mile are reckoned in both cases.

preventing people from coming down to the railway station—they have to come down now to the ferry. At Lavender Bay people go up and down a couple of hundred feet without thinking much about it, and if they will do that to get to a ferry they would do it to get to a railway. But if the traffic justified it, there would not be the slightest difficulty in putting in a hydraulic lift at this place. Such lifts are in operation upon the Mersey railway, where the line descends under the river, and where the stations are only 80 or 100 feet below the surface.

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2700. *Mr. Copeland.*] Have you any interest on the North Shore at all? Not the slightest.
2701. Are you interested in any way, directly or indirectly, in either route? Not in the slightest.
2702. So you have no personal motive to serve in advocating this route? Not the slightest.
2703. Are you likely to receive, or have you been promised, any consideration in connection with the matter? I do not like the question at all, but I would not advise anybody to try that on with me.
2704. You have not been promised anything by the Committee in the way of remuneration;—you have not been engaged by the Committee? No; this is all pure philanthropy.
2705. All voluntary on your part? Perfectly. My reason for proposing the route was simply this: I knew that the Committee had decided against the Government route before, as not being a suitable one, or, at any rate, as not being required in that direction; and I was surprised to see that the Department endeavoured to force the line down your throats by submitting it again without any material alteration. Then I observed that you were going to Cremorne and other places looking for routes, and it came into my mind that I knew the route which would serve the country best, and I therefore sent you a sketch of it.
2706. The trouble you have taken is purely and simply in the public interest? Entirely.
2707. In order to see what you considered the best line constructed? That is it.
2708. I suppose it is not part of an engineer's profession to value land for resumption? No; but I have very often bought land myself for railway purposes. An engineer can vary the cost of land considerably. He can vary the cost materially if he goes hand in hand with the land agent and arranges the route. The slightest variation sometimes affects the price at which you are going to buy land very materially. In cases of this sort, where the land is valuable, I never allow a line to be staked out until the land-owners have all been consulted.
2709. Still, in making the estimate of the total amount to be paid for land resumptions, I suppose you must have gone pretty well by the rule of thumb—you had no valuations to guide you—you have not had the assistance of a land agent? I do not think that a land agent is very much assistance generally. He cannot tell you much more than you can find out without him. Very often a land agent is used as a cloak for responsibility.
2710. I suppose in this case you have adopted the rule generally adopted by engineers in furnishing a report to the Department—you have simply made a rough estimate of the cost of the land? I do not think that it is very rough; I think I could buy the land for that price to-morrow, and for a good deal less.
2711. You consider that you have allowed a liberal estimate? I have never had a case where my estimate has been exceeded, either for land or works.
2712. You have had similar cases to this? I have had similar cases to this.
2713. This is not the first railway that you have laid out? Not by a great number. I have not only acted as an engineer, but I have also acted as a contractor. I have carried out works myself, and know their value down to a 6d.
2714. Are you a member of the Engineering Association? I was made a member of the institution of Civil Engineers in 1870—twenty years ago.
2715. So that your scientific training is quite sufficient to qualify you for making an independent survey like this, and for forming estimates similar to that with which you have furnished the Committee? Yes. I do not believe in engineering which is merely technical; I think it ought to be commercial as well. I have endeavoured to put this matter before you in a common sense—commercial way—not merely from an engineering point of view, so that you could form a judgment for yourselves.
2716. *Dr. Garran.*] Starting from Milson's Point, I understand that you only keep the wharf level for a sufficient length for a passenger station? I am very glad you asked me this question, because I wanted to make an explanation in reference to this matter. I show the line as being constructed somewhat out in the water. The water at this place is shallow—the ground runs out flat; and if you want to build a wharf there, you must either put it well out in the water or dredge and excavate so that vessels may be brought alongside the land. Although I show the middle line well out in the water, it is really only a small distance out, and if it were determined that it would be better to have the line on the land instead of on the water it would be perfectly easy to make the alteration; but my idea was to construct the line where I show it. You will observe on the section that the line at one point is some 20 feet above the Quay level. There will be no difficulty in running the railway over head at that point and using the bottom level for wharf purposes. Then something was said yesterday, and very much was attempted to be made out of it, about my having only 600 feet for a station. I wish here to remark that the bulk of Mr. Deane's figures were extremely elastic, and sometimes they were pulled one way and sometimes the other. This 600 feet is, as a matter of fact, more nearly 700 feet, and the length is plainly shown on the section to be 660 feet, which is just twice the length of the longest platform which you have in the colony, and it is the length of the longest train which you could run on the line, whether for goods or passengers. It is just long enough to do the shunting comfortably. You will not have a great quantity of goods there; but, if you did, it would be perfectly easy to work the traffic. The whole of the goods sidings will be led up to one junction with the main line for the purpose of having the proper interlocking apparatus and signals, so as to close the main line to all goods shunting and that sort of thing; but if you preferred a longer length of level, you would only have to raise the station, making it 12 feet above the water instead of 8 feet, and you could have double the length of level, though it would be of no use to you.
2717. If you make the passenger station 12 feet above the wharf level, all the passengers will have to go up steps to the station, and will have to carry their luggage up? They may go up steps, or up a slight slope.
2718. Do you think that that is an advantage? Do you know the present level of the Quay above water level?
2719. We put the wharf level at 6 feet above high-water mark? Well, suppose your line of rails is 12 feet above it, there would not be much inconvenience.

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2720. But where you meet a steam ferry, is it not best to bring the line of rails in at the wharf level? I think you will find that the present tram terminus is somewhere about 12 feet above water level? I dare say you will remember that the passage through the arch is all on the rise.

2721. But the tram passengers are purely suburban passengers, who do not carry any luggage; with the train we should have passengers coming from a longer distance? You will never get passengers from a long distance here.

2722. You are proceeding on the assumption that Milson's Point will never be anything but a suburban passenger station? That it will never be anything but a suburban passenger station.

2723. And having the railway platform 12 or more feet above the water level will be no greater inconvenience than it is to have the tram terminus that height above the water level? Not in the least.

2724. You have between 600 and 700 feet of station level? Yes.

2725. You go on the assumption that more than that length will not be wanted, because there will be no heavy goods traffic requiring a longer wharfage space here? If there were you could not possibly stand it on the main line; you must bring it to the terminus and shunt back.

2726. Would you bring the trucks into the passenger station and shunt them back along the level? Certainly. It is not necessary to bring them on the actual lines of rails occupied by the passenger trains; there may be other lines of rails.

2727. But you must come to that level? Yes.

2728. You must push your goods trains to the end of the station before you shunt back? Yes.

2729. Is it a good arrangement to bring goods under the passenger shed and then take them back again? They would be outside the passenger station on another set of rails.

2730. Parallel with it? Yes.

2731. But practically in the same yard? That is so everywhere; it is so at Redfern.

2732. Is it not a most awkward arrangement at Redfern to have the goods lines splitting across the passenger lines? You must have that at some point; you must bring all your traffic on one line of rails, and there must be some point where they diverge. As long as you have interlocking apparatus and a system of signals there is no more danger in these trains crossing than there is in running them upon the main line.

2733. At Lavender Bay, according to the Government scheme, the goods are taken along the water's edge while the passengers will go inside, near the cliff, without crossing the goods line? No; you must surely cross. The only difference is that on the Government route it is proposed to do it at the head of Lavender Bay, instead of at Milson's Point, as in my proposal.

734. They diverge there? They must cross.

2735. The up and down goods must? You are simply transferring the point of junction from Milson's Point to the head of Lavender Bay.

2736. But making it far more convenient, I imagine? It might be so if you were actually going to convert the whole of the Lavender Bay frontage into a wharf.

2737. That is the Government scheme. It is proposed to have the goods traffic along the edge of the bay, and the passenger traffic behind that, so that on the wharf level the two kinds of trains do not cross one another. The only point at which they would cross would be after starting upon a journey. No shunting of goods would ever come upon the passenger lines? Not after you reach the head of Lavender Bay, but there you would have the same thing to do as you would have to do at Milson's Point with my scheme.

2738. But there would be no shunting on the passenger flat? Nor would there be in my case. If you wanted to get to the wharves, you would simply back the train.

2739. Your plan is to give 600 feet of space at Milson's Point, and, if a goods traffic is to be provided for, to shunt back along the water's edge? The local goods station would be close to Milson's Point—that is, the station for goods required between Sydney and Hornsby.

2740. A suburban goods wharf? Yes. There is no more difficulty about working trains down to Milson's Point and back again than there is about working from Lavender Bay. It is a mere question of convenience.

2741. After you pass your 600 feet you rise at once with a gradient? Certainly.

2742. In order to shorten the tunnels and to get your elevation as quickly as possible, you have no other possible route open to you than to go to the head of Lavender Bay, and by a short tunnel into the valley of Neutral Bay;—there is no other route practically available? No, I think not. I think that is the best way of taking the line.

2743. When you once get into the Neutral Bay valley you have nothing to do but to follow it up until you come to the tunnel under Military-road? I do not know whether it is worth mentioning, but there are two valleys in Neutral Bay—one at the head of Careening Cove.

2744. That is a small subsidiary one? Yes. From that point you may go round Neutral Bay, Kirribilli Point, or anywhere you like.

2745. But if you want to go to St. Leonards Station, you have practically nothing to do, when you get into the valley at Neutral Bay, but to tunnel up and come out at the other side;—the line is marked out by nature? Yes; the valley seems to be made for the line to go up it.

2746. When you come out on the other side your course is equally marked out. Yes.

2747. You have heard what Mr. Deane said about the rock cutting? No, unfortunately I did not hear it, as I was not here then; but I see by the newspapers that Mr. Deane talks about a hill there. I have laid out the line to avoid that hill, and Mr. Deane cannot have looked over the plan very carefully or he would have seen that I avoid it.

2748. You go a little more round than is marked on the map, because Mr. Deane says you must have a deep cutting? I see that somebody has sketched out an imaginary hill upon the map. The hill does not go out as far as it is shown to do, and the line just skirts the end of it. But we will assume for the moment that Mr. Deane is right: then all I can say is, that it would be very easy to push the line out a little bit.

2749. As a matter of fact, you go round the hill? Yes.

2750. Mr. Deane told us that if you do go round the hill you will have an embankment at the head of Willoughby Bay which will be quite as expensive as the cutting? That sounds very pretty, but it does not happen to be true.

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2751. If you escape Scylla do you not encounter Charybdis; if you get rid of the cutting will you not have a corresponding difficulty in the way of an embankment? No, certainly not. Mr. Deane's idea is that the line is not shown so close to the Falls as I intend it to go, and that if I bring the line out further I shall be into the Falls. Now the line is some 3 or 4 chains away from the Falls, so that it is quite possible to bring it much closer to them; and, in fact, I intend it to do that.
2752. *Mr. Garrard.*] It amounts to this, that the diagram before the Committee does not correctly represent your plan? No; one is on a very large scale, and the other on a very small one.
2753. *Dr. Garran.*] After you pass the cutting, you sweep round by the base of the hill to the private bridge? Yes, round the slope of the hill.
2754. Crossing the street where they descend to the suspension bridge, and from there you go on and join the St. Leonards Station? Yes.
2755. I understand you to admit that your line will cost about £100,000 more than the Government line will cost? Let us say £90,000.
2756. You told us on a previous occasion that you had been a director of a railway company—can you tell us what there is in your route to justify an increased outlay of £90,000? You open up a district which is certainly a better district for building in, since it commands magnificent prospects and is more likely to be rapidly developed than the district through which the Government line goes.
2757. Do you think that the extra traffic likely to be brought on to your line would pay the interest on the extra capital? I think that the first 4 miles of line will earn more than all the rest put together.
2758. You mean as far as the Bent-street station? As far as St. Leonards Station.
2759. Do you think that the larger investment in your line would be more productive than the smaller investment on the Government line? Yes. Throughout this inquiry I have treated you, gentlemen, as the board of directors of a commercial company, and have advised you precisely as if you were that.
2760. I asked Mr. Deane yesterday whether your scheme made Neutral Bay accessible, and he seemed to think that you would have some difficulty in getting down to Neutral Bay to utilize the shore line there? I have a much greater opinion of Mr. Deane's ability than to suppose that he could not get to Neutral Bay, or Cremorne, or anywhere else, if he choose, from my line.
2761. From what point in your line would you branch off to use the two sides of Neutral Bay, leaving Careening Cove out to begin with? Then it is very easy to come down round the head of the bay. The upper part of the bay will be reclaimed.
2762. Would you follow the red line marked on the plan? It would be too straight; my line would be a little more curved than that. There are various ways of coming down to the water—you might come down on either side of the promontory between Careening Cove and Neutral Bay, or you might come down through the middle of that promontory, and cut off the head of Neutral Bay and reclaim it.
2763. If you come down the middle of the promontory do I understand that you would shunt back to the coast line? You would come through in short cuttings, or with the tunnel.
2764. Anyway, you could utilize Neutral Bay from your line? There is not the slightest difficulty about it. The members of the Committee have seen the whole country, and they can see for themselves that there is no difficulty about it.
2765. Are you able to form any opinion as to which would be the better bay for big ships—Lavender Bay or Neutral Bay? There is no comparison between the two—Neutral Bay, of course. The depth of water in Lavender Bay is not sufficient to allow big-sized vessels to turn round.
2766. If we are to contemplate big shipping at the North Shore we had better direct our attention to Neutral Bay than to Lavender Bay? Yes; and besides, all the ships coming to Lavender Bay would have to cross the narrow part of the harbour where the ferries are.
2767. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You said just now that you expected that the line from Milson's Point to St. Leonards would earn more than all the rest of the line from Hornsby. I presume that in saying that you had an eye to the future? Yes.
2768. Do you know the number of houses on the first mile of your line from the St. Leonards Station? No, I do not, but there are a great number dotted about—many more than you think.
2769. I understand that there are only thirty-four? Within what distance of the line on either side.
2770. Along the proposed line? That is all nonsense.
2771. I am given to understand that there are thirty-four houses on the first mile and seventy-six on the second? You must inquire what width on either side of the line was taken. There are houses dotted about here and here. [*Referring to the map.*]
2772. At the present time there is not a very large population any way? There is not likely to be, because they cannot get to town.
2773. Do you think that rocky land can compete with the good land on the western side, which is admirably suited for residential purposes? I am not sure that I understand the drift of your question.
2774. On your line, near North Sydney, where the suspension bridge is being constructed, and all about that locality, the land is very rocky, is it not;—do you think that that land is likely to compete as a residential suburb with the land between Lavender Bay and the St. Leonards Station, on the Government route? I do not think that people would consider that much. They would not go in for market gardening or anything of that sort, when they put up their houses. Besides, numbers of people prefer rocks.
2775. People who build in the suburbs like to have gardens;—do you not think that they would prefer to build in a country where the soil is good before building on sandstone? You will find that all this country is covered with soil except where the line goes.
2776. You are aware that the tramway runs up the side of the reserve opposite where your line goes, and must certainly command the traffic from the high part of the land there? My experience of traffic is this: that the man who goes by tramway does so until he has got a railway, when he deserts the tramway and somebody else takes his place in it. But tramways and steam-boats are very useful factors in developing a district, and if I own a railway I never object to a tramway or steam-boat or omnibus alongside of it. They all help to develop the district, and, although for a time they detract from the receipts of the railway, yet in the course of a year or two, by multiplying the number of passengers in the district, they increase the traffic, and bring back to the railway more than they took away from it.
2777. You think that this tramway will act more as a feeder to than as a sucker from the railway? Yes. If I owned the railway and had power to take up the tramway, and abolish the steam-boats, I would not do it.

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2778. Mr. Deane, yesterday, was of opinion that your line could not be utilized as a portion of a line going to Manly? He did say so. He said that it could not be part of a line to Manly, and then he went on to say that he had not considered the matter, and by-and-bye he landed himself in this fix, that he admitted that he thought that Manly had better not have a railway at all—that it had better be content with a tramway. My idea is that, ultimately, Manly, Pittwater, and those places, will be placed on a new line of railway to the Hawkesbury Bridge, and that that will wipe out the usefulness of the Northern line for through traffic.

2779. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you think that your line would give as much convenience to the people on the table-land in the middle as the Government line would do? I think that my line would be of more use to them, because it is more up to their level.

2780. Do you know anything of the country to the west of the Government line? Yes; I know that country well. I know all those bays to the north.

2781. Is there much population there? None whatever at present.

2782. Is that country as likely to be populated as is the country to the eastward of your line? There is already a large population to the eastward of my line, but I still think that the whole of that country will develop, both east and west. I think it will all fill up.

2783. Do you know the exact difference in the length of the two lines—that is, between the length of your proposed line and of the dotted line with a grade of 1 in 50? Yes.

2784. What is the exact difference? One mile $22\frac{1}{2}$ chains, which is as near as possible one mile and a quarter. Upon that I should like to say that, if you look at the Railway Commissioners' returns for June, 1889, you will see that the average fare per passenger per mile over the whole of the suburban railways is $\cdot 64$ of a penny, that is, including first-class, second-class, workmen's, and season tickets. So that one mile and a quarter at North Shore would affect everybody living to the north of St. Leonards Station, to the extent of $\cdot 80$ of a penny, that is, four-fifths of a penny. Everybody living to the north of St. Leonards Station, or who might live there in the future, would have to pay on the average about four-fifths of a penny extra to be brought down the easier gradients to Milson's Point. But I think that that four-fifths of a penny may be looked upon as an insurance premium against accidents, for, with your 1 in 40 and 1 in 50 gradients, you may any day repeat the Peat's Ferry accident.

2785. But those passengers would already have gone over a 1 in 50 gradient to Chatswood? There is a very short length—about three quarters of a mile—of 1 in 50 at Chatswood, but that could be altered to a grade of 1 in 70 by lowering the top end 11 feet, and raising the bottom end 11 feet. I have looked at the section, and I see that, by an expenditure of £4,000 or £5,000, you could wipe out that particular piece of 1 in 50.

2786. *Mr. Garrard.*] Is not there another grade of one in fifty near Gordon—could it be wiped out? I have not looked at that for this reason—I consider this line as very much in the same position as the Illawarra or Parramatta line. If there is to be any traffic over it, you will want trains to run every half hour. If you have a 1 in 50 grade, you can only take up four coaches at a time, while if you have a 1 in 70 grade you can take up six coaches—that is, six long coaches, which is about the length of a train which you would require for working the traffic generally. The bulk of the trains, as you will see by the traffic estimate which I have prepared for you, would stop at Gordon, and that station would correspond with Homebush and Hurstville. If a train went further than Gordon you could take off a coach there, because the traffic would by that time have dropped off. You could get over the 1 in 50 grade beyond Gordon by leaving part of the train there, and picking it up on the way back.

2787. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Do you consider that it is a dangerous thing to have a 1 in 40 grade coming up to a short level at a station? Not only is it dangerous but it is also wasteful.

2788. But do you consider it dangerous? Yes.

2789. Would a 1 in 50 grade be dangerous? It would be better than a 1 in 40 grade.

2790. Still, would it be dangerous? Yes. Every day I see the main line trains running with two engines. The trains from the north come in with two engines and four coaches, and it is the same on the southern line. They find that they cannot keep time unless they put on two engines.

2791. That is on account of the grade? Yes.

2792. Do you not think that it is a great advantage on your line to be able to branch from it on the way to Manly? I think it would save you £150,000 when you came to make a line to Manly, which you will do presently.

2793. Do you think that if the Government decided to construct a line to Manly they would go by any other route, or that a much better route would be discovered than the one which you have suggested? There is no other route which they could take, unless they chose to wind along the face of Neutral Bay, Cremorne, and those places, or have a succession of tunnels through the spurs.

2794. Do you think that it would be preferable to go from St. Leonards Station to Manly, across by Bantry Bay? Such a line would be very much further round to begin with, and would involve a very expensive crossing—perhaps two crossings—at Middle Harbour.

2795. You think that if the line which you recommend were constructed it could actually be the first mile—? Two miles.

2796. On the road to Manly? Yes, and that would be the shortest route to Manly.

2797. And you think the best? Yes. All that back land—the land fronting Middle Harbour—must, some day or other, be accommodated with a railway. You may make a line up the front of Neutral Bay by winding about or tunnelling, but the steamers already go there, while at Middle Harbour they could never compete with the railway.

2798. Your line offers equal, if not superior, advantages to the present population to those offered by the Government line? I think so.

2799. *Mr. Dowel.*] In answer to a question just now you informed the Committee that you had laid out several railways. Will you inform the Committee where they were situated, and what was the number of them? It would take a long while to enumerate the whole lot as I have been doing it all my life—for thirty years.

2800. The list is so long that you could not make it up, I suppose? I certainly could make it up, if you wish to have it. I have not only laid out railways myself, but I have also gone over the routes of other engineers, and revised them, sometimes at their own request, and sometimes at the request of financial houses.

2801. Will you be good enough to name one or two railways which you have laid out, and to tell us where they are? Yes. I laid out 20 miles of line in very difficult country in North Yorkshire. The line was called

called the Whitby, Redcar, and Middlesborough Union Railway. As a matter of fact, the Committee have all this evidence already in the report on the Crookwell line. There I gave a sort of *résumé* of what I had done. In the line to which I have just referred there were cliffs 600 feet high staring me straight in the face.

2802. You have also informed the Committee that you have contracted and carried out railways;—will you name them, and give us the number of them? I built a suburban line near Birmingham entirely through the corporation streets, and going through building land the whole distance; that is one example of a railway.

2803. You also informed the Committee that you have had considerable experience in the management and working of railways? Yes; for the last fifteen years I have spent a great portion of my time in assisting small railway companies in their struggles with the great ones.

2804. You have been director of a railway? Yes; chairman for some time, and I take particular interest in the working of lines and traffic.

2805. Going back to the proposal before the Committee, have you been carefully over your proposed route, and estimated the number of buildings that will have to be removed or resumed? There are five houses, the rent of which varies from 14s. to about 30s. a week. There is one, I think, of which the rent would be about 30s. a week.

2806. Then the land through which your railway would pass has very few buildings upon it;—there would be no expensive resumptions? It simply means that there do not happen to be many houses on the route, though they closely adjoin it.

2807. What were your reasons for saying that there would be no through traffic at Milson's Point? Because I know perfectly well that the line must go to Redfern and Darling Harbour, because the through trains will always run that way.

2808. Is not the line from Hornsby to Milson's Point shorter than the line from Hornsby round by Strathfield? I have already explained to the Committee, and I think the Committee know full well, that it is not always the shortest mileage that is the quickest.

2809. Would it not be an advantage to bring the goods and passengers straight to the deep waters? I do not think there is any advantage in doing that.

2810. Your only reason for supposing that there will be no through traffic to Milson's Point is that you think the Commissioners will not alter their present mode of dealing with the traffic? The Commissioners, in a very wise economy, will concentrate their goods traffic and their fast passenger traffic as much as possible, otherwise they will not understand their business. They are sure to do it.

2811. Would not a shorter distance effect a saving of time? No.

2812. You would run the extra distance of 11 miles from Hornsby to Redfern in the same time as you could run from Hornsby to Milson's Point? In the first place, I think the extra distance is reduced to 10 miles. What does that amount to in time?—ten minutes.

2813. That is not the pace we travel at the present time—60 miles an hour? I did not suggest that you should do such a thing. I would rather be out of the train when you attempted it.

2814. Did you not say that there was only a saving of ten minutes? No; I will put it at half an hour, if you like. Half an hour with a goods train is nothing—they often wait hours to go on.

2815. But it is a considerable time when passengers are concerned? It would not make that difference in the passenger service.

2816. Still you must admit that there would be a considerable saving in time? No, I do not think so.

2817. Travelling 10 miles more would not make a difference in time? It would so far as Milson's Point is concerned, but how many people require to be dragged there. Most of the passengers, after they got to Milson's Point, would have to take the ferry, which they might have to wait five or ten minutes for, to Circular Quay, and then a cab to their destinations. There are hardly enough passengers now to fill an ordinary train to Redfern, and there would never be enough to fill two trains—to make it worth while to run two expresses to Sydney—one by the north shore, and the other by the south shore.

2818. Your opinion about the management of the Northern line is vastly different from that of other people. They are of opinion that eventually there will be a direct traffic to the North Shore, while you think that that will never take place? I see that my opinion coincides with the opinion of the Commissioners, and with that of Mr. Kirkcaldie, which is worth quite as much. I am sure any practical man will agree with me that no express trains will go to Milson's Point.

2819. How did you arrive at the value which you put on your land—did you make any inquiries, locally? Yes.

2820. As to the value of the property through which your line would pass? Yes.

2821. Do you think that you obtained reliable information? They did not know what I wanted it for, so therefore I do not know why it should not be reliable; besides—and I hope you will excuse me saying it—I do not think I am a fool, and when I ask questions I can always add the grain of salt, if I do not like the answers.

2822. And the persons you asked were able to furnish the information you gave the Committee? They had no object in telling me anything but the truth.

2823. You stated just now that there was not enough depth of water in Lavender Bay for the purpose of swinging large ships? I said that you could not turn a large ship round. I ought to have said at the head of Lavender Bay.

2824. Are you aware that the water there is as deep as the water at Sydney Cove, and that the largest ships come into Sydney Cove? There is some difficulty in turning round occasionally.

2825. Nevertheless they come in? They do, of course—they have to back in. But the depth of water over the whole area of Sydney Cove would, on the average, be very much greater than the depth of water in Lavender Bay.

2826. Are you quite sure of your figures? I think so.

2827. Looking at your estimate, I see that you have allowed £10,000 for twelve road bridges? Yes.

2828. What description of bridge do you propose to erect? That depends entirely upon the street or road over which I build the bridge.

2829. Of what material do you propose to construct the bridges? That will vary; sometimes masonry, sometimes concrete, sometimes brickwork, sometimes ironwork, and in some cases, perhaps, timber. I think you may take it that that estimate is sufficient.

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2830. £800 a bridge? I should be very glad to construct the line for £20,000 or £30,000 less than my estimate, and then I should make £50,000 out of it.
2831. In your estimate of £800 for a bridge, have you included any approaches? If the approaches are earthwork, they are included in my estimate for earthwork; but there are very few approaches really.
2832. You consider £800 a bridge ample? On the average—yes.
2833. Have you made an estimate of what would be the additional cost per annum of working your line, as compared with the Government line? No, I have not. I do not quite know what you mean. Of course, if you have an additional mileage to work, you also have an additional mileage to earn interest.
2834. I am asking if you made an estimate of the additional cost of working your line, compared with the working of the Government lines? No, I have not; but I will give it to you, if you wish—I will send it to you. You must understand that you do not incur the additional working expenses unless you get the additional earnings.
2835. In your estimate you have not given the working expenses of this particular line at all? No; I have endeavoured to put the matter before you in such a way that you can verify my statements for yourselves. I have simply taken figures of the past working expenses of similar lines, and I have endeavoured to apply them to this line—you can use your own judgment in taking them. There is no question in my mind that 9 miles of line on the North Shore will develop certainly as fast, if not faster, than 9 miles on the Illawarra line did. The only thing you can say is that the Illawarra line, as far as Hurstville, carries a certain amount of pleasure traffic to the shores of Botany Bay and to National Park, but I have Middle Harbour to balance that, and, in addition, a settled population on North Shore already.
2836. Do you consider it necessary to bring the railway from St. Leonards Station to Milson's Point, either by the Government line, or by your proposal? I have no doubt about it.
2837. And Lavender Bay is the best place to bring it for all interests concerned, either by your route, or by the Government route? Yes.
2838. *Mr. Lee.*] When you submitted your estimate of cost to the Committee the length of your route was stated to be 4 miles 25 chains, and the cost, £350,677 10s.? Yes.
2839. Is the route which you now submit the same length, or a less length? It is a less length.
2840. Is it not now more than 4 miles and 5 chains? Exactly 4 miles 2½ chains.
2841. Approximately, 4 miles 5 chains? Yes.
2842. Have you reduced the cost of construction, as well as the length of the line? No; but I stated in the letter which accompanied my memorandum that the cost would be £8,000 less. In any case it would be less, you may depend on it.
2843. Then the approximate cost per mile, as then submitted by you (£82,000) would not now be correct? Very nearly.
2844. The shorter distance would increase the cost per mile? Slightly.
2845. The actual distance now is about 4 miles 5 chains, and you adhere to your original estimate, approximately? Yes.
2846. The only alteration would be the cost per mile? You will find that that would vary very little.
2847. The Government proposal is 2 miles 60 chains, and would cost £246,200, or £89,520 a mile, while the cost of your line would be about £86,320 a mile, and in the aggregate would cost £104,477 more than the Government proposal? That is so.
2848. There is a difference between you and the Acting Engineer-in-Chief as to the value of the land upon your line? Yes.
2849. That difference is £70,000? Yes.
2850. If the Acting Engineer-in-Chief's estimate is correct the cost of your line would be increased by £17,000 a mile? Possibly.
2851. That would bring it up to £103,520 per mile? I am not following the figures, but I take it that they are correct. You must remember that Mr. Deane does not vouch for his estimate of the value of the land—he is very chary of doing that.
2852. Your route would have a grade of 1 in 70? Yes; that would be the maximum grade.
2853. You have heard Mr. Deane give his reasons why he is content with a grade of 1 in 50? Because he has a grade of 1 in 50 elsewhere.
2854. If you were to plan out your route with a grade of 1 in 50, would it make any difference in the cost? I should like to consider that before I told you. Of course it would make some difference, but I cannot tell you how much the difference would be.
2855. Do you think that it would be considerable? Yes, it would be very considerable.
2856. Would you consider that the line from Milson's Point to St. Leonards could be safely worked with a grade of 1 in 50? I should not recommend it.
2857. If it could be worked with that grade on the Government route, could it not be safely worked with the same grade on your route? No doubt if there is safety in one 1 in 50 grade, there is safety in another 1 in 50 grade. Safety is a relative term. Safety and risk are in the two opposite scale-pans, and if one goes up the other goes down—there is always a certain amount of risk.
2858. Suppose the grade on the existing line north of Hornsby must be retained, would there be any great advantage in having a grade of 1 in 70 on your line? An engine could only take four carriages up a grade of 1 in 50 at the same speed as it could take six carriages up a grade of 1 in 70.
2859. Do you know Blue's Point and Ball's Head? Yes.
2860. Those are the high points on the North Shore? Yes.
2861. Supposing at any time it was determined to take a bridge from either of those points to Sydney, could your line be extended to connect with it? Of course it could, very easily.
2862. In what direction? Instead of descending to Neutral Bay, you would go straight across.
2863. What would be about the distance? Perhaps it would be half a mile.
2864. Through the most densely-populated portion of North Shore? Yes; but you would have the advantage of a station on the route, and you could take traffic from there. But you will never make a bridge; it will cost too much money.
2865. Supposing it may be necessary to make a bridge of some kind, and to connect the railway with it, I want you to show the Committee how a branch could be taken from your line to the bridge? Very easily.
2866. Will you name the point where you would leave the Neutral Bay Valley line? I should probably leave the line at Alfred-street.

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2867. And go in as straight a line as possible to where? You would have to go with a curve. The line would go under the tramway at the end of Walker-street, and come out alongside the Blue's Point-road. But I do not think that it is fair to talk about that bridge unless you also talk about the possibilities of the tunnel. It seems to me that the tunnel would be much cheaper, and that you have no more right to consider the possibility of a bridge than you have to consider the possibility of a tunnel.

2868. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you think that a good and efficient steam punt service could be worked from Milson's Point to Circular Quay, obviating the construction of a bridge? Would you mind explaining a little more.

2869. Is it desirable or practicable to have a steam ferry service between the terminus of the railway at Milson's Point and any part of Circular Quay, or thereabouts? Do I understand that you mean for transporting trains?

2870. Yes? And the passengers in the trains?

2871. Yes? I think that would be very inadvisable; in fact I think that the passengers would all get out.

2872. For what reason? They would not sit in the train to be transhipped that short distance.

2873. Would not the carriages be put right on to the punt? That takes time.

2874. What time? Seven or eight minutes at the very shortest. I have had something to do with transshipping vehicles and that sort of thing on to a steamer carrying rails.

2875. Is it not the custom to do this in certain parts of America? Yes; in the middle of a long through route, but they do not do it in New York.

2876. Is there a delay of 7 or 8 minutes at any place you know of in America? I have never been in America, so I cannot tell you; but I have seen this done at home. We have steamers carrying goods traffic to the Isle of Wight.

2877. Is there any reason why the transshipping of passengers without the carriages should occupy 7 or 8 minutes? No. You have seventy passengers in 18 tons of coach; that is, about four or five times the weight of live traffic. It would never pay to bring the carriages across.

Thomas Allright Dibbs, Esq., General Manager, Commercial Banking Company, Sydney, sworn, and examined:—

2878. *Mr. Copeland.*] What business are you in? I am the General Manager of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney. T. A. Dibbs,
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2879. You have occupied that position for a number of years? I have been in the bank for the last forty-three years, and I have been manager for twenty-three years. 23 July, 1890.

2880. Where do you reside? At St. Leonards.

2881. What part of St. Leonards? The place is called "Graythwaite," and adjoins Holterman's Towers, on the heights.

2882. How long have you resided on the North Shore? I have lived on the North Shore for two periods of ten years each.

2883. I suppose you are thoroughly well acquainted with the whole of the North Shore? Yes, I have known the North Shore for the last fifty years.

2884. Do you know the route proposed by the Government for bringing the railway from St. Leonards Station to Milson's Point? I have not seen the plans, but I have heard that it goes past Mrs. Old's residence, and from Berry's Bay to the south of Union-street, in front of my residence, by a tunnel through to Lavender Bay, but I have not seen any plans.

2885. You are well acquainted with the locality through which the line would go? Yes.

2886. Is it your opinion that it would be desirable in the public interest to construct that short distance of line at a cost of £246,200? I think the railway should be conducted to the water's side. My idea is, that coal traffic and traffic in other produce should be taken to the deep waters of Ball's Head Bay by a branch line, but I do not think that it would be more than 200 or 300 yards long. There the coal could be received into the ships at the smallest expense by gravitation, since the coast is bold. I think the Government should resume the whole of that water frontage. They will be receiving from the Berry estate something like £60,000 for probate shortly, which they might wisely spend in resuming the water frontage.

2887. I think you are connected with the exportation of coal? No, I am not interested in coal.

2888. I thought you were interested in a mine at Newcastle? No more than by being a mortgagee of a coalmine there.

2889. Is it your opinion that Ball's Head Bay would be a better place to ship coal from than Neutral Bay? Infinitely better; the coal could be received into the ships at the minimum expense by gravitation. The water is deep, and the place is sheltered, while the shipping would not be congested as it would be at Milson's Point.

2890. The question I asked you was: Would Ball's Head Bay be a more suitable place than Neutral Bay? Yes, I think it would.

2891. On account of its being nearer to St. Leonards? Speaking from memory, I think you could strike the water in 200 or 300 yards from Mrs. Old's house.

2892. You think it would be an advantage to be able to ship coal by gravitation—I suppose you mean by shoots? Yes, there would be no lifting; no haulage power would be required.

2893. Do you think that there would be sufficient passenger accommodation to warrant the expenditure of this large sum of money—local passenger traffic? In plain English, I do not think the line is wanted at all, but as you have already constructed part of it, you are bound to continue it to the water. In taking it to the water, I think you should take it to Milson's Point for passenger traffic, and to Ball's Head Bay for coal and heavy traffic. At Milson's Point the harbour is very narrow, and any day, in crossing, you may see eight or ten steamers in front of you. The horse ferry is often delayed there by steamers passing. In my opinion the less you congest the traffic the better.

2894. Do you not think that if the tram were connected with the railway at St. Leonards that would give sufficient accommodation for the passenger traffic that is likely to be developed in the future? I think that for the present that would do.

2895. But for the future? For the future you must continue the railway to the harbour.

2896. You consider Milson's Point the most suitable position for a passenger station? Yes, for passengers only—not for goods traffic.

- T. A. Dibbs, Esq.
23 July, 1890.
2897. Will it not be more desirable to construct the railway now, while the land is of comparatively little value, than to wait until North Shore becomes densely populated, and then have to pay much more for land resumption? I say, in answer to that, that at present, and for some time to come, the passenger traffic will, in my opinion, be very light indeed. If it were put to me I should say, connect with Milson's Point for passenger traffic, and with Ball's Head Bay for any heavy traffic which you may have. I am very indifferent about the matter. I am not interested one way or the other. I am not a volunteer witness, but I give you my opinion for what it is worth.
2898. Do you think that there is likely to be any coal traffic on the Northern line from any place between Gosford and Newcastle? They have yet to find the coal at Gosford.
2899. I mean north of Gosford, between it and Newcastle? I believe that the coal will come by sea, and not by railway at all, for the simple reason that it must be brought beyond any terminus on the North Shore to the ships, and it is cheaper to bring it by water than by land.
2900. Then you do not anticipate any coal traffic on this line? No.
2901. Do you anticipate any other traffic—say wool? No, I do not think any wool will come that way.
2902. You think that wool will continue to be sent to Darling Harbour? No; I think that the wool will go to Newcastle.
2903. But you know that a considerable quantity of wool comes every year past Newcastle to Darling Harbour? Possibly it may.
2904. If the railway were constructed would it continue to go to Darling Harbour, or would it be likely to go to the North Shore? I do not see any advantage in sending it to the North Shore. If you send it there, I should say send it to Ball's Head Bay.
2905. You do not anticipate a goods traffic at all on the proposed line? I believe that the railway will be a failure for the next twenty years.
2906. Would it not be making it a still greater failure to continue it? Sooner or later it must be continued.
2907. I understand that there is a loss upon the line now of about £11,000 a year. Do you think that by expending an additional £246,000 we should add to the failure, or diminish it? My opinion is that there would be a still greater loss for years to come.
2908. Do you think it likely that there will be any through passengers from the north—say, from Newcastle or from the New England districts, to North Shore; would the passengers go to North Shore instead of to Redfern? I should say that they would go to Redfern to avoid crossing the water.
2909. You only contemplate a passenger traffic from the residents of St. Leonards? The only passenger traffic is that which may be developed by people building along the line.
2910. Do you anticipate, judging by the present population, that the railway fares would be anything like sufficient to cover the interest on £246,000? No. As I said before, I think that this would be a non-paying line for years to come. It was a mistake in the commencement to bring the line where it is, but having done so it must, sooner or later, be extended to Milson's Point.
2911. Would you advocate the construction of a line for passengers? For passengers—yes; although it may be a non-paying line.
2912. Rather than adopt a connection with the tram system? A connection with the tram might do for the present, but, finally, the line will have to go to Milson's Point for passenger traffic, although it may not pay.
2913. I suppose you would not care to invest a few thousand pounds in this undertaking if a private company were going to carry it out? Certainly not, if I expected any return from my capital.
2914. Looking at the proposal from the standpoint that the Government are the permanent holders, do you see a sufficiently good prospect to warrant the Government in going to this expense and laying out of their money for a number of years, with the knowledge that in the future they will be recompensed? I can only repeat that I think the tram system, if connected, would be sufficient at present. If you connect the line with Milson's Point it will not pay for years to come.
2915. For how many years? Twenty years. I have known the North Shore for fifty years, and I have watched its progress.
2916. I suppose you do not anticipate a northern city growing up there? There is no doubt that North Shore is the most rising of the suburbs, and it will increase.
2917. Which of the two lines—Mr. Hamand's or the Government line—would be likely to serve the larger number of people? Apparently, Mr. Hamand's line would accommodate more people.
2918. Taking everything into consideration, do you think that his line would be the more profitable line to construct? For passengers only?
2919. For passengers only? It would require some consideration. No doubt a great deal of the population about here would be served by the tram, and although there are very few people living out to the north, that country may be built upon. But Mr. Hamand's line would not serve the Lane Cove-road people, because it is such a long way round.
2920. It is 1 mile 5 chains longer than the Government route, and the steepest grade upon it is 1 in 70, as against 1 in 50 upon the Government route? Upon reconsideration, I should not say that Mr. Hamand's line was as good as the Government line.
2921. In coming to that conclusion, do you notice that the Government line for a great portion of its length is in close proximity to deep water, and therefore would have to compete with the ferry boats? I would not give an answer to that without consideration. When I saw Mr. Hamand's line first I thought it went very much more to the south than it is shown to do.
2922. I suppose you anticipate that if the Government line were constructed the Berry Estate would be cut up and the population there would increase considerably? There is no doubt about it.
2923. Supposing that to be the case, do you not think it likely that steam ferries will be established there as they are to Neutral Bay, and other bays in the harbour? There is no doubt that the nearer you take the railway to the water the greater is the chance of competition with ferry boats; but knowing the country so well, I think, because of its hilly nature, a person on the heights would prefer to travel by rail rather than by steamer.
2924. Notwithstanding the fact that he would still have a water journey? If he were going to the back parts of the Berry Estate he would not go by water, he would go by rail.
2925. Supposing you were residing near Berry's Bay or Ball's Head Bay, and wished to go to Sydney, would

would you be likely to take the railway to Milson's Point, and then cross the harbour at Circular Quay by the ferry, in preference to taking the steamer direct? I think you would take the steamer direct if you were close to the water, but if you were on the high ground in the Berry Estate you would take the rail.

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2926. You know that there is a public agitation in favour of a railway to Manly and Pittwater; do you consider that project feasible? I consider it all humbug. Such a line would never pay. I know the road well. I would consider it the grossest piece of extravagance if ever a railway was taken from Manly to Newport.

2927. Supposing the proposal was to connect the proposed railway with Manly, do you think it would be feasible? I cannot see that there is any good country to start with. If carried out, I think it would be one of the grossest jobs ever perpetrated. I know the route as well as I know my own residence. Four years ago there was scarcely a soul to be seen along it.

2928. Then you would not look more favourably upon Mr. Hamand's line on account of its being 2 miles in the direction of Manly from Milson's Point? No; because, in my opinion, there never should be a railway to Manly Beach, or from Manly Beach to Newport.

2929. Do you think that in the future the suburbs on this line will be densely populated by the working classes, or by people holding tolerably large areas of land? I am under the impression that the land along the Lane Cove-road would be taken up by people who could afford to pay as much as the people who live at Burwood. The working classes would hang more about the water, and would avail themselves of the steamers.

2930. From what you know of the district out towards Hornsby, is there much cultivation going on in the shape of orchards? I know that orchards only pay the working men out there—that you or I could not make them pay. A German, working twenty hours a day, could make a fortune out of an orchard there, but to have men working eight hours a day would not bring you in a profit.

2931. You would not anticipate a large amount of traffic from orchards? No, I think the country is not suitable for orangeries now: I think you must go further out. I know that people have gone to a great deal of trouble in draining and sub-soiling, but they cannot make it pay, because they are not working men.

2932. Do you note much increase in the cultivation? I have not been along the Stoney Creek-road lately, but I do not think that Lane Cove is as suitable as other districts for orchards. The climate is altering.

2933. You do not anticipate a fruit trade on this line? There may be some fruit.

2934. Not sufficient to be a consideration in its paying capabilities? No.

2935. *Mr. Garrard.*] You are intimately acquainted with the country between Newport and Brooklyn, on the southern side of the Hawkesbury River, including Cowan Creek and other places? Yes.

2936. Do you think it would be very easy to make a railway from Newport to the Hawkesbury bridge? You can make any line you like, but you would have to cross Cowan Creek, which would take you twenty minutes to pull across.

2937. In your opinion there is nothing to justify a railway to Newport? Nothing whatever.

2938. To make a railway from Newport to the present Hawkesbury Bridge would be very expensive and unjustifiable? Yes, and it would go through country that would not keep a rat, except for a little way on the shores of Pittwater. Opposite Scotland Island there are one or two farms.

2939. Do you know that there is a large population between Sydney and Hurstville? I think so.

2940. Do you attribute that to the convenience of railway communication or to other causes? Partly, and partly to the land boom.

2941. Land booms usually result in a large amount of vacant land? The land there is being occupied, but it is a different class of country to this—it is more level. You go through populous suburbs to start with, but in this place there are few houses.

2942. Is it better country than that between Milson's Point and Hornsby? The country between Milson's Point and Hornsby is a thousand times superior to that between Pittwater and Brooklyn.

2943. I want to compare the country between Sydney and Hurstville with that between Milson's Point and Hornsby? It is a matter of taste. I consider the North Shore and the Lane Cove country a thousand times superior to the Hurstville country for residential purposes—the latter is the land of mosquitoes, while in the former you have some comfort, and you are higher.

2944. If population has followed so rapidly upon a railway to Hurstville, would not a population follow more rapidly upon a railway to Hornsby. Might we not naturally expect a much larger increase? For residential purposes; yes.

2945. *Mr. Trickett.*] You know the land to the east of the park, between the tram line and Mr. Hamand's proposed line? Yes; it commands beautiful views of the city, and is very valuable.

2946. Then, to the north again, is the land suitable for residential purposes? It is all being built upon now. Land having a view of the city would command £10 or £15 a foot here.

2947. Do you think that if better means of communication were provided there would be a considerable population there? The tram is close to there.

2948. Does the tram serve that district at present? The tram serves it as far as the reserve.

2949. Do you think a railway in that direction would be of any benefit to the locality? No doubt it would be a benefit at the Government expense. To the north of the reserve it is all poor land. There are acres of land there without a house upon them.

2950. Would that land be good for residential sites? Not so good as what I call the backbone of the North Shore—the country on the Lane Cove-road. I consider that there are some of the best residential sites there that you could find in the world.

2951. You are aware, I believe, that this line was rejected by the Committee some time ago? I saw it in the newspaper.

2952. Are you also aware that the line has been referred back to the Committee on the ground that there would be a considerable goods traffic upon it? Yes.

2953. From your knowledge of the country, can you hold out any hope of there being a goods traffic upon the line? I have no hope that there will be any goods traffic that would pay at all. The district will grow into a residential suburb.

2954. And that is all? That is all.

2955. *Mr. Dowel.*] Is it not a fact that there are a large number of brickyards in the neighbourhood of the present railway? Yes; there are some.

2956.

- T. A. Dibbs, Esq.
23 July, 1890.
2956. Do you not think that those brickyards would provide traffic and revenue to the railway in the carriage of coal and bricks. Do they not bring bricks down to Milson's Point in large numbers now? Yes, they do.
2957. Do you not think that that would create a traffic? There are too many brickworks there now—none of them pay.
2958. We have had evidence that the brick works cannot keep pace with the demand for bricks? If you go out to the brickyards, you will find them filled with bricks, and I know of one that came to grief there. No doubt the railway would benefit them at the Government expense—they would get their coal by it.
2959. Would not they be the means of providing traffic? Of course they would help the traffic.
2960. Both by bricks and coal? No doubt, if the Railway Commissioners charged them a low freight for running bricks into the city.
2961. From your knowledge do you think that they would give any considerable amount of revenue to the railway? No. They will supply the North Shore demands, but they will not have occasion to use the railway, except to bring coal from the water.
2962. Is it not a fact that they send large numbers of bricks to Sydney at the present time? I do not believe it. Occasionally you see bricks coming over.
2963. *Mr. Trickett.*] If they did send bricks over to Sydney they would first have to put them into the railway, and then transfer them into carts to take them across the water? Yes.
2964. *Mr. Lee.*] Did you observe on Mr. Hamand's line the tunnel near Neutral Bay, half a mile in length, so that although that locality may be thickly populated, people would have to go to one end or other of the tunnel to get the train? Certainly.
2965. Consequently, in some places, they would be half a mile from a station? Yes.
2966. Would not that be as far as they are from the present tram terminus? No. Anyone living near the line would take the train.
2967. But there would be no great inducement to go to the railway station as against the tramway? The people living nearest to the railway would use it, while those living nearer to the tramway would use the tram.
2968. The Government line is 2 miles 60 chains long, which is less than Mr. Hamand's line;—will it be of more advantage to construct it than to construct his line? I should certainly recommend the Government line, for two reasons—first, that the line is better, and second, that it goes through a better class of country.

THURSDAY, 24 JULY, 1890.

Present:—

THE HON. JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

WILLIAM MCCOURT, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

- H. Deane, Esq.
24 July, 1890.
2969. *Vice-Chairman.*] A letter written by you to the Committee with reference to the evidence which you gave on Tuesday, has been read by the Secretary (*Vide Appendix*); are you prepared to swear that the statements it contains are true? Yes; they are.
2970. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you done the utmost in the way of reducing the grade upon your deviation? I believe so.
2971. Do you agree with Mr. Hamand that you could reduce the gradient at Chatswood to 1 in 70, at a cost of £5,000? No, I do not; it is quite impossible for anyone to make a correct statement in a matter of this kind without careful consideration.
2972. Taking the line as it is, do you think any object is to be gained by improving the gradient on the extension, to 1 in 70? No.

Charles Cyrus Bullock, Esq., surveyor, sworn, and further examined:—

- C. C. Bullock, Esq.
24 July, 1890.
2973. *Dr. Garran.*] I understand that you have prepared a statement which you wish to read to the Committee? Yes; but before reading it, I should like to make my pecuniary position in relation to this railway clear. I distinctly state that I have not a single inch of land on the extension, although I have interests higher up on the line, some 5 miles from Milson's Point, and I am therefore interested in getting the line down to the water's edge, just as the Government is; but whether the line is taken to Ball's Head or Lavender Bay, whether by the Government or Mr. Hamand's route, will not affect me. My partner, Mr. Loxton, who is a vigorous opponent of Mr. Hamand's line, and an advocate of the Government line, would be largely benefited if Mr. Hamand's line were constructed. My statement is as follows:—

The district of North Shore, as generally spoken of, comprises the Boroughs of St. Leonards, East St. Leonards, and Victoria, and its population is 16,395. Its mean length, extending from Gore Bay to Middle Head, is about 4 miles, while its width, extending from Port Jackson to Middle Harbour, is about 2 miles. With the exception of its north-western boundary it is bounded by the deep waters of Port Jackson and Middle Harbour.

The population of the Borough of St. Leonards is 7,270, that of East St. Leonards 5,655, and that of Victoria, 3,470. The Borough of St. Leonards is subdivided into the following wards,—Belmore Ward with a population of 3,845, Albert Ward with 1,660, Warringa Ward with 905, and Mossman's Ward with 860. East St. Leonards is also subdivided into the following wards,—South Ward with a population of 780, West Ward with 2,670, North Ward with 1,450, and East Ward with 755. The Borough of Victoria is not subdivided into wards. My object in giving these figures, is to show to the Committee the disposition and the location of the population.

With regard to the increase in population on North Shore, I find that in 1881, the population of the Borough of St. Leonards was 2,647, of East St. Leonards 2,320, and Victoria 2,182; a total of 7,149. These figures show that the population

population of the Borough of St. Leonards has increased by 175 per cent., that of East St. Leonards by 144 per cent., and that of Victoria by 59 per cent., the increase of the combined boroughs being 129 per cent. They also show, since the population of Warringa and Mossman's Bay Wards is only 1,765, that the greatest increase has taken place where the means of transit are good. A further proof of this fact is shown with regard to the increase in the population of the Borough of Willoughby where the means of transit are bad. In 1881 the population was 1,411, while in 1889 it was only 1,828, being an increase in eight years of only 29 per cent. Moreover, the increase has taken place principally at Greenwich and Longueville in proximity to the steamers running there.

C. C. Bullock,
Esq.

24 July, 1890.

In the Borough of Victoria there are two public wharves to which ferry steamers run—one at M'Mahon's Point, the other at the head of Lavender Bay—while the cable tram passes through the north-eastern portion of it. Of the 3,470 inhabitants of that borough not one of them is situated more than half a mile from a ferry or a tram.

In the Borough of East St. Leonards there are four public wharves to which ferry steamers run—one at the head of Lavender Bay, one at Milson's Point, one at High-street, Careening Cove, and one at Hayes'-street, Neutral Bay, while the cable tramway passes through Western Ward. Of the 5,655 inhabitants of that borough few, if any, are situated more than half a mile from a ferry, while, of the 4,900 inhabitants of North, South, and West Wards, few, if any, are situated more than half a mile from the cable tram.

The water frontage portion of the Borough of St. Leonards which lies to the west of Berry's Bay belongs to the Berry Estate, and as there are no public wharves upon it, consequently there are no ferry steamers running there. In the eastern portion of the borough there are two public wharves, at Mossman's Bay, to which ferry steamers run—one at Curraghbeena Point, the other at the head of the bay—while the cable tram passes along Miller-street, the common boundary of Albert and Belmore Wards. The wharves in Mossman's Bay serve the greater number of the 860 inhabitants of Mossman's Ward, the remainder travel by 'bus to the tram terminus. Warringa Ward has no frontage to the harbour; but as the greater number of the 905 inhabitants of that ward reside between the Military-road and Neutral Harbour, the greater number is served by the ferry at Hayes'-street. The remainder travel by 'bus to the tram terminus. Albert Ward has no frontage to the harbour; but with few, if any exceptions, the 1,660 inhabitants of that ward are situated within half mile of Miller-street, and are accommodated by the tramway in that street. Belmore Ward has a frontage to the harbour between Berry's Bay and Gore Bay, but I have already stated that there are as yet no ferries running in that direction. Between the Lane Cove-road and that part of the harbour the land is principally the Berry Estate, and of the 3,845 inhabitants of that ward but few reside on the south-western side of that road. The bulk resides between that road and Miller-street, and consequently the cable tram provides the necessary accommodation.

It is therefore seen, that out of a total population of 16,395, the 14,630 inhabitants of the Boroughs of Victoria and East St. Leonards, and of Belmore and Albert Wards of the Borough of St. Leonards, are within half a mile of the tramway, or of the proposed extension of the tramway, in Miller-street, or of one of the ferries alluded to. So far, therefore, as the 14,630 inhabitants are concerned, no railway accommodation is required by them. Of the remaining 1,765 it is also seen that the majority of them are located within three-quarters of a mile of the ferries in Neutral and Mossman's Bays. It may also be stated that while the 1,765 inhabitants are located upon about 4 square miles, the 14,630 are located upon only about 2 square miles.

Now I contend that a railway cannot be constructed to serve the whole of North Shore, or even a small portion of it, any more than a railway can be constructed to serve the whole of the colony, since its population is scattered over a large area and located at high and varying altitudes. A glance at a map of the district will show that a line running in an easterly or westerly direction would be going away from, instead of to, the ferries. If a line were constructed through the centre of population, that is where the cable tram is constructed, the line for the greater portion of it would be in tunnel, and therefore of no service. The altitude of the plateau upon which the bulk of the population is located precludes the feasibility of a railway being taken over that plateau and continued to a suitable water terminus. If a line follow the Middle Harbour watershed, as proposed by Mr. Hamand, then the bulk of the population is located to the south and west of it. If a line follow the Parramatta River watershed, as proposed by the Government, then the bulk of the present population is located to the east of it. Moreover, both lines are below the present population.

I have stated, and I state again, that in my opinion, the Government scheme, with the modification of grade proposed by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, is the best scheme that has been, or can be, proposed. I say the best scheme that can be proposed, because I am perfectly familiar with every portion of the district, having resided at North Shore for nine years, and carried out more surveys there than any living surveyor. I have minutely examined the Government schemes to Ball's Head, to Blue's Point, to Milson's Point, and to Cremorne. Not only that, but my partner, Mr. Loxton, and myself took levels over two years ago, and before the line to Milson's Point was surveyed, in connection with the same route almost that Mr. Hamand has placed before the Committee. We also worked out another route, which left the present line at about 10 miles from Hornsby and traversed the plateau north of the St. Leonards' recreation reserve, where we located a central station; thence it crossed under the Military-road by tunnel, and traversed the valley of Neutral Bay, and on to the business centre of the township of St. Leonards, where we placed a station, not in a hole, but at an elevation of 120 feet, in order that it could be approached; thence it traversed the Neutral Harbour slope, passed near Kirribilli Point, and on to Milson's Point, where it terminated. Mr. Whitton, the late Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, was aware of our actions in this matter, and permitted us to take copies of the sections of the routes surveyed by the Department. After carefully investigating the merits of those routes, as well as our own route, we came to the conclusion that the Government route to Milson's Point was the best, and informed Mr. Whitton to that effect.

When I stated in evidence a few days ago that Mr. Hamand's line possessed the merit of following the natural features of the Middle Harbour watershed, I was under the impression that the line contoured the Flat Rock Creek Valley from where he leaves the Government line to where he intersects the North Sydney Tramway Investment Company's tramway at Miller-street. The level of that point being only 20 feet lower than the point where he leaves the railway, a gradual descent between the two points could have been obtained by following that valley. Instead of following that valley, however, Mr. Hamand has chosen to pierce the plateau between the North Sydney-road and the railway, in order to follow the valley of the creek leading from Chandos-street to Long Bay. In consequence of following that route Mr. Hamand's section shows that, at 65 chains from the railway, he is 23 feet higher than his starting point, and at 1 mile 15 chains he is only on the same level. Moreover, he has a 40-foot cutting at 60 chains from the existing railway. Apart from these facts, it may be stated that the Flat Rock Valley route to Miller-street would be a quarter of a mile shorter than the Chandos-street Valley route. Moreover, a station on the North Sydney-road would serve the residents of Central Township and North Sydney much better than a station at Chandos-street.

Of Mr. Hamand's alternate proposal it is somewhat difficult to speak. In connecting two points on opposite sides of a dividing range by a railway it is generally considered advisable to cross that range but once. By his alternate proposal, however, he would cross the range three times; once at the lowest point in the range, where the Government line is constructed, then, completely turning round in the opposite direction to his objective point, Milson's Point, he crosses the range a second time at one of the highest points on the range; and here again, instead of his line constantly falling, as the Government line does, it rises for about 22 chains, at which point there is a cutting of about 35 feet. The third crossing I have already alluded to is in tunnel at about 160 feet below the summit of the range. The distance to Miller-street by Mr. Hamand's alternate proposal would be three-quarters of a mile longer from Hornsby than the Flat Rock Valley line, while the dividing range would be crossed only once by the latter route.

According to Mr. Hamand's section his original proposal is 4 miles 25 chains, and his alternate proposal 4 miles and 3 chains in length, while the Government amended proposal is only 2 miles 51 chains. Thus it is seen that Mr. Hamand's original proposal is 1 mile 54 chains, and his alternative proposal is 1 mile and 32 chains longer than the Government amended proposal. These figures are strictly accurate, and therefore other figures are inaccurate. In comparing Mr. Hamand's line with the Government amended line, either as regards length, cost, or accommodation provided in Lavender Bay for wharfage or for station purposes, it must be clearly remembered that it is necessary, first of all, to reduce each line to a common basis. Regarding accommodation for wharfage and station purposes, I will fully explain myself. On Mr. Hamand's line only 660 feet of a level run in Lavender Bay is provided, while those stations at the head of Careening Cove and Neutral Bay are placed on grades of 1 in 220 for a length of only 5 chains. On the Government line 1,848 feet of a level run is provided at Lavender Bay, while the stations thereon are placed on grades of 1 in 400 for a length of 10 chains.

Now, I will assume that a level run of 1,848 feet in Lavender Bay has been provided, and that each station at the head of Careening Cove and Neutral Bay is placed on a grade of 1 in 400 for a length of 10 chains, then it follows that the run between Milson's Point and the proposed station at Willoughby Falls must be increased by 30 chains. The three points which govern the grading of the line are the water level at Milson's Point, the lowest land at Willoughby Falls, and the

C. C. Bullock, the present railway. Now, the bed of the creek at Willoughby Waterfalls is 130 feet above sea level; but, as all the surrounding land is higher, it is necessary to place the station at a higher level. That level has been fixed by Mr Hamand at 152 feet above sea level. Now, the southern end of that proposed station is distant 2 miles $7\frac{1}{2}$ chains from Milson's Point, but that distance would be increased to 2 miles $37\frac{1}{2}$ chains if the extra accommodation referred to were provided. Thus, instead of Mr Hamand's original proposal being 1 mile 54 chains longer than the Government amended line, it would actually be 2 miles and 4 chains longer; and instead of Mr Hamand's alternate proposal being 1 mile and 32 chains longer than the Government amended proposal, it would actually be 1 mile and 62 chains longer.

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If Mr. Hamand did provide the same accommodation as that which is provided for on the Government amended line, and did not increase the length of his run, then, instead of the station at Willoughby Falls being 22 feet above the bed of the creek, it would be actually 6 feet below it, and the station rendered practically useless. To place that station at the elevation assigned to it by Mr. Hamand, and to provide the same accommodation as that provided for on the Government amended line, it would be necessary to increase the length of Mr Hamand's line by those 30 chains. Now, the same arguments apply to the proposed stations at the head of Careening Cove and Neutral Bay, and, therefore, either those stations must be lowered or the length of run between them be increased. But, since the line between the station at Willoughby Waterfalls and Lavender Bay is either in tunnel or on escarpment, it will be readily seen that it would be enormously expensive to obtain the requisite length, since nearly the entire length would be in tunnel. But, assuming the extra length obtained, it follows that the length of Mr Hamand's original proposal to be constructed would be increased from 4 miles 25 chains to 4 miles 53 chains, and the alternative proposal from 4 miles 3 chains to 4 miles 33 chains. It may suit Mr. Hamand to say that 660 feet at Milson's Point is sufficient for local goods and passenger traffic; but I desire that it shall be clearly understood not only that it is not feasible to provide the same accommodation the Government scheme provides in Lavender Bay, but that it is scarcely feasible to increase the accommodation at all.

In reducing the estimated cost to the same basis, I shall assume, for the present, that Mr Hamand's estimate of the cost of his line is correct. A correction, however, must be made for the 30 chains, the difference in length arising from the difference in the accommodation provided.

The original estimate of the Government proposal before the Committee is £262,000, but from that sum have to be deducted the following items:—£23,000 for properties situated over the tunnel, which need not be resumed, but which are included in the above estimate; and £21,000 for the resumption of the Berry Estate, which, according to what has been stated in Committee, need not, under a provision in the Public Resumption Act, be paid for. These deductions, amounting to £49,000, reduce the estimate to £213,000. This amount, however, has to be increased by £21,700 to affect the alteration in grade, thereby bringing up the official estimated cost of the scheme before the Committee, with the modification in the grade proposed by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, to £234,700. Now, in estimating the cost of construction and resumption of the additional 30 chains on Mr. Hamand's line at £40,000, I have made a very reasonable allowance, since I have allowed for only half the distance in tunnel and half the distance for resumptions. Assuming Mr. Hamand's estimate of £350,000 to be correct, then the total cost of Mr. Hamand's line, reduced to the basis of the Government line, would be £390,000, or £155,300 more than the Government amended line.

It must also be remembered that the Government line utilizes the whole of the constructed portion of the line, while Mr. Hamand's original proposal would render 78 chains, and his alternative proposal about 14 chains, of it useless. Neither of those portions could be utilized in continuing a line to the water level at Ball's Head, since the distance thereto is altogether too short to obtain a grade of 1 in 40; nor could it be utilized for the purpose of a line to accommodate the population that may reside on the eastern side of the Lane Cove River. Apparently, Mr. Hamand is unacquainted with those portions of the district.

It may, I think, be taken for granted that, sooner or later, a high-level bridge will be built to connect North Shore with Sydney, and that the proper site for it is that between M'Mahon's and Dawes' Points. Now, while the Government amended line would follow the route to the bridge to the 12 miles' point from Hornsby, Mr. Hamand's original proposal would leave the route to the bridge at 9 miles 53 chains therefrom, and his alternate proposal at 10 miles 37 chains. For the purpose of comparison, I will assume the bridge connection at 12 miles. Now, to carry out Mr. Hamand's original proposal to Milson's Point, and to continue the railway to the bridge connection, the amount of capital that would be sunk in the work would be £390,000 to Milson's Point, and (say) £80,000 to the bridge connection, being a total of £470,000. But the Government amended line, as I have already pointed out, follows the line to the bridge connection; and thus it is seen that, so far as taking the line to Milson's Point and to the bridge connection is concerned, the Government amended line would fulfil those conditions at a cost of £205,300 less than Mr. Hamand's original proposal, and about £195,000 less than his alternative proposal. And here I may remark that, while Mr. Hamand's proposals are disadvantageous to a bridge connection, the Government proposals are advantageous to a spiral tunnel connection, as proposed by Mr. Hamand, since they terminate at the same point at which Mr. Hamand's proposals terminate.

Among other advantages claimed by Mr. Hamand for his scheme, is one to the effect that it would save 2 miles of the route to Cremorne. The value of this argument will be readily seen from the following figures. According to the evidence of the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, the estimated cost of construction and resumptions to extend the railway from the head of Lavender Bay to Cremorne is £115,000, and, as the estimated cost of the line to Milson's Point is £234,700, it necessarily follows that the total cost of continuing the Government amended line to the extremity of Milson's Point and to Cremorne itself is £349,700, or £40,300 less than the estimated cost, to take Mr. Hamand's line, reduced to the basis of the Government line, to Milson's Point only. Not only, therefore, is it no argument to say that Mr. Hamand's line saves 2 miles of the route to Cremorne, because, even if it saved the whole length of it instead of only a portion of it, it would still be cheaper by £40,300 to reach Cremorne by the Government route.

A further advantage claimed by Mr. Hamand is, that his line would form the first 2 miles of a line to Manly. That would be true if a line thereto branched off his line at 2 miles from Milson's Point; but I challenge Mr. Hamand to prove that those 2 miles would follow the proper route. The proper route, and the shorter route, to Manly would be by tunnel from the head of Lavender Bay to Neutral Bay, which would be crossed by a bridge about 50 feet above sea level; thence the line would continue through the Cooper leaseholds between the Military road and Mossman's Bay; it would then continue through the Rangers' Estate, and passing under the Military-road would descend the spur leading to the Spit, which, in my opinion, should be crossed by a bridge at least 100 or 120 feet in height. Now, the distance from Milson's Point to the Spit, *via* Mr. Hamand's line, and a continuation thereof along the Middle Harbour watershed, would be about 5 miles, while by the route I suggest it would be only 4½ miles. If Mr. Hamand's line, instead of mine, were adopted, there would be a saving of a ¼ mile of construction; but it must not be forgotten that the estimated cost of Mr. Hamand's line to Milson's Point exceeds that of the Government line by £155,300. With this £155,300 it may fairly be assumed that it would construct 2 miles of my proposed line to Manly; hence it follows that for the same cost that Mr. Hamand can take his line to Milson's Point, the Government line can be extended to that Point, and to a point three-quarters of a mile nearer to Manly than Mr. Hamand's line takes it. In other words, if £390,000, the estimated cost of Mr. Hamand's line to Milson's Point, were expended in carrying out the Government amended line, and in constructing a railway towards Manly by the route I suggest, then instead of there being 3 miles to construct, as there would be to reach the Spit from Mr. Hamand's line, there would be only 2¼ miles to construct to reach the Spit from the point of my suggested line at which the £390,000 was exhausted. These figures show unmistakably that Mr. Hamand's line does not afford any advantages to reach Manly over those of the Government line, but that, in reality, the reverse is the case. Nor should it be forgotten that a considerable length of the route I propose to Manly could be utilized for the extension to Cremorne. Moreover, it follows Mr. Hamand's line until it reaches the western side of Neutral Bay, and thus, if necessary, which I contend it is not, a station could be placed between Willoughby and M'Dougall-streets, at the head of Careening Cove, as proposed by Mr. Hamand. Again, a station placed on the opposite side of Neutral Bay would serve the population there and at Shell Cove infinitely better than a station on Mr. Hamand's line, at the head of Neutral Bay gorge, and on the western side of it. Mr. Hamand urges as an objection to the Government line to Milson's Point, that it is a one-sided line for collecting traffic. If that be so, then I contend that Mr. Hamand's proposed extension to Manly, as far as the Spit is concerned, is unmistakably a one-sided line, since for nearly its whole length it is not more than 10 or 20 chains from Long Bay. On the other hand, the Military-road is about 30 chains, the nearest part of Port Jackson about a mile, and Bradley's, Chowder, George's and Middle Heads are about 1½ or 2 miles from it. The route I propose would pass through the centre of the district, and, moreover, there is a much larger area of land on the Port Jackson watershed than on the Long Bay watershed; and, in addition thereto, the latter watershed has a north-westerly aspect which is very objectionable for residential purposes.

When

When Mr. Hamand speaks of the stations on his line serving the various portions of the district referred to by him, C. C. Bullock, Esq. he must evidently intend to carry the traffic direct to Sydney, otherwise, as I shall presently show, but little traffic would be served by those stations. Mr. Hamand's proposal to cross the harbour by an iron tube laid at the bottom thereof, and to descend thereto and ascend therefrom by a helical tunnel, is possible, and may be feasible; but I do not think it is the proper means to adopt to cross the harbour. In my opinion, the harbour should be crossed by a high-level bridge, not by tunnels, helical or inclined. A connection across the harbour should provide for railway, vehicular, and foot traffic, and this cannot be provided for by tunnelling. Of what use to North Shore for vehicular or foot traffic would an incline tunnel across the harbour be? The tunnel proposed by Mr. Eddy would disappear at King-street, in Sydney, and re-appear at Bay-road Station at North Shore, a distance of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and its grade, I understand, would probably be 1 in 30. Nor would Mr. Hamand's tunnel be of service except for railway purposes. Its minimum length would be over 2 miles, and the distance to travel between Milson's Point and Circular Quay would be $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, as against $\frac{3}{4}$ mile by ferry. Probably the $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles could be travelled as quickly as the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, but it is a well-known fact that tunnels are objectionable on suburban passenger lines, and should be avoided as much as possible. Now, if Mr. Hamand's connection across the harbour were made, there would be nearly 3 miles of tunnel between the northern side of the Military-road and Circular Quay, while, if the Government line were adopted, and the bridge connection were made, there would be no tunnel between Hornsby and Wynyard-square. Moreover, while the distance from Hornsby, by Mr. Hamand's original proposal, to Milson's Point, and by tunnel to Circular Quay, would be $16\frac{1}{2}$ miles, the distance from Hornsby by the Government line and by bridge would be only $13\frac{3}{4}$ miles, and Wynyard-square is more central than Circular Quay. Besides, while Mr. Hamand's tube would be placed 60 feet below the water, the bridge would be erected 160 feet above it.

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With reference to Mr. Hamand's line being continued beyond Milson's Point and under the harbour by a helical tunnel, since the radius of the sharpest curve in Mr. Hamand's line is 12 chains, I presume the curve of the tunnel would be no sharper, more especially as that radius would give the requisite fall for a grade of 1 in 70. Now, a 12 chains' curve from the end of Milson's Point would take in the whole of the water frontage between the extremity of Milson's Point and the south-western boundary of The Pastoralists' Association's property. What the cost of resumption of those frontages would be I would not like to say; but I think Mr. Hamand will agree with me that some other point of departure must be adopted. If a point in the line in Lavender Bay be adopted so that the southern portion of the curve lie under Campbell-street, then about 10 chains of the line to Milson's Point would be unnecessary for that particular purpose. If a station were placed at that point, and a level run provided between it and the head of the bay, then, as I have already pointed out, it would be enormously expensive to obtain the necessary run to obtain a 1 in 70 grade to the station at Willoughby Waterfalls. The other alternative is to run the curve in the opposite direction; but that arrangement would be objectionable since shunting would have to be resorted to at Milson's Point.

Mr. Hamand states that his line would provide better accommodation to the district than the Government line; but I shall endeavour to prove that neither in the collection of passenger traffic, nor for the distribution of a local goods traffic, is Mr. Hamand's line superior to the Government line.

Regarding the distribution of goods for the local population, it is quite evident that but little, if any, goods would be carried by the railway from Milson's Point for distribution between that Point and St. Leonards Station. Goods going from Milson's Point in that direction would probably be carted, as at present. Undoubtedly the bulk of the goods for local distribution would come from the north. Now, I contend that, for a central distributing station for the upper portion of St. Leonards, no point is more central or convenient for that purpose than St. Leonards Station itself. Within a radius of a mile of this station, Central Township, the proposed stations on Mr. Hamand's line at North Sydney-road and at Miller-street, near the bridge in course of construction at Long Bay, nearly the whole of the plateau overlooking Long Bay, a portion of the recreation reserve in Falcon-street, St. Thomas' Church, near the Crow's Nest, a large portion of the villages of Greenwich and Longueville, and the various brickyards at Gore Hill, are embraced. In fact, the most distant point on the visible portion of Mr. Hamand's line on the northern side of the Military-road is not $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile from St. Leonards Station. Moreover, it should be remembered that St. Leonards Station is higher than any proposed station on Mr. Hamand's line, while it is 85 feet higher than the proposed station near the Willoughby Waterfalls. I again assert, in the most emphatic manner, that no better position could be chosen for a central distributing station than St. Leonards Station, and that that station already affords the fullest accommodation for the upper portions of the district. Moreover, as the passenger traffic in that portion of the district will be fully provided for when the tramway is extended to the North Sydney Tramway and Investment Company's bridge, it must be admitted, without reservation, that at least that portion of Mr. Hamand's line extending from the present line to the mouth of the tunnel on the southern side of the Military-road, either for goods or passengers, is absolutely unnecessary.

As regards the carriage of goods from the north to St. Leonards Station it should be very clearly remembered that the question of superiority of grades does not enter. From the point where Mr. Hamand's line junctions with the present railway, the distance to St. Leonards Station is about a mile. Of this length $\frac{3}{4}$ mile is practically level, while the other quarter is built on a grade of 1 in 66, which is practically the same as 1 in 70. It may be here mentioned that the nearest 1 in 50 grade to St. Leonards Station commences at 8 miles 60 chains and terminates at 9 miles 41 chains from Hornsby; and it should not be forgotten that all goods from the north would have to be hauled over the 1 in 50 grades to reach any station in Mr. Hamand's line.

Now, I have shown that for the distribution of goods for the upper portion of the district, ample accommodation has been provided by the construction of St. Leonards Station, but I would point out that the Government line provides for another conveniently situated distributing station at Bay-road. Within a radius of a mile from that station, half of the recreation reserve in Falcon-street, nearly the whole length of Mr. Hamand's line on the southern side of the Military-road, the head of Neutral Bay, the whole of Blue's Point, and Ball's Head, would be embraced. Now, I contend that no station could be placed on Mr. Hamand's line, in the Neutral Bay Valley, that could be compared with the station in Bay-road. From the latter there is an excellent approach to the township, but from the former it would be an expensive undertaking to provide for an approach at all. The bulk of the population is in Alfred-street and to the west of that street; but, the difference in the levels of that street and the railway varies from 100 to 150 feet, and in a distance of about 10 or 12 chains only. Any approach from a station in that gorge to the township must be, of necessity, a circuitous one. Neither that station nor the station proposed to be placed at the head of Careening Cove in Mr. Hamand's line would be of much use either for goods or passenger traffic.

To sum up the question of the local distribution of goods, I contend that the upper portion of the district is already served, and that the Government scheme provides greater facilities for the lower portions than Mr. Hamand's scheme provides. Moreover, it may be mentioned that the Government amended scheme is located within a mile of nine-tenths of the whole population of the Shore.

Now, I contend that neither Mr. Hamand's line nor the Government line, nor the two lines combined, would serve any great number of the local population of the three boroughs, yet I contend that the Government scheme would serve the greater number. And it should be clearly remembered that it is not a question as to whether the Government line would serve the people in this locality or whether Mr. Hamand's line would serve the people in that locality; but, since neither line would serve the people in both localities, the question is which line would serve the greater number of people. While the Government line passes through the three boroughs already alluded to, and which have a population of 16,395, Mr. Hamand's line passes through only two boroughs, which have a population of only 12,925. In dealing with the local passenger traffic, it should be borne in mind that the bulk of the population is located along the water-line and within walking distance of the ferry. Then, the cable tramway runs right through the most populated part of the district, and when it is extended to Long Bay, about 14,630 out of the 16,395 inhabitants of the Shore will be amply provided for. When it is remembered that Mr. Hamand's line is located only $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the east of the tramway it can be readily understood that it is not required. What earthly use would a station be in the Neutral Bay Valley? The residents of the few houses on the top of it might use it, but no one else would, because the bulk of the population there could reach a ferry or the tram in less time than they could reach the station. Then again, who would use a station near Willoughby-street? Within a few yards of that street, ferries and the tram are in close proximity. But little consideration is required to show that the line from the Military-road to Milson's Point could not be patronized to any appreciable extent, for the simple reason that the most ample accommodation in the shape of ferries and the tram is available. If stations would be made use of on Mr. Hamand's line at Willoughby-street, and in the Neutral Bay Gully, then I should contend that stations on the Government line at Walker-street, at the head of Lavender Bay, and Union-street, near the head of Berry's Bay, would also be made use of. Notwithstanding that there are over 3,000 inhabitants between these points and Blue's Point, and that ferry steamers do not run to Berry's Bay, yet I contend that very few would patronize the railway, even if stations were located at the places mentioned. A reference to a map will show that the whole of the 1,765 inhabitants of the two eastern wards

of

C. C. Bullock, Esq.
24 July, 1890.

of the Borough of St. Leonards are situated to the east of, and located about 150 feet above, Mr. Hamand's line, showing that his line could not be used by them. The inhabitants in these wards, now or in the future, can be accommodated only by a system of tramways, or by the line to Manly to which I have referred. With the exception of the population, which may in the future reside between the Willoughby Waterfalls and Willoughby or Cammeray Point, I fail to see that Mr. Hamand's line will accommodate any other portion of the district; even Willoughby Point, in Middle Harbour itself, is only three quarters of a mile from the North Sydney Tramway and Investment Company's bridge over which their tram will run. But, whatever traffic Mr. Hamand's line would collect, I doubt whether it would be sufficient to pay working expenses of the extension, let alone the interest on £155,300, the difference of cost of his scheme and the Government scheme which, at 3½ per cent. would represent an annual payment of £5,435. The only portion of the district that I contend the Government scheme will accommodate is that between the Lane Cove-road, Bay-road, and Carr-street to the head of Berry's Bay; thence by that bay, Ball's Head Bay, and Gore Bay, and by Berry's Creek to the Lane Cove-road again. Nearly the whole of that space is the Berry Estate, and it will carry a large population. Its area is over 400 acres, while the area of the borough of Victoria is only 290 acres, and it has now a population of 3,470. It may be here mentioned that, at the head of Ball's Head Bay, and within 300 or 400 yards of Bay-road Station, the manufacture of neokratine is carried on. Although, I understand, there are now only twenty hands employed, it is confidently hoped, when the works are in full swing, that the number will be increased to 100. But, while all the stations on Mr. Hamand's line are within a half mile of a tram, a ferry, or the railway, it should be distinctly understood that the two stations on the Government line are nearly twice the distance from the tramway or a ferry. Now I consider that I have shown not only that Mr. Hamand's line is unnecessary for a local goods line, but, that it is practically useless as a passenger line.

The chief advantage claimed by Mr. Hamand for his line is that it possesses a better grade than the Government line, that while the grade of the Government line is 1 in 50 the grade on his line is 1 in 70. The advantage, at first sight, would appear greater than it really is. Therefore, it is of the very greatest importance to remember that, of the 10 miles 51 chains of the railway already constructed, the ruling grade is not 1 in 70, but 1 in 50. Why, then, should the remaining short portion of the line be constructed on a grade other than that of the ruling grade, more especially when it would necessitate the line being taken in a circuitous route, and at an enormous expenditure. From the foregoing remarks it is clearly seen that, whatever advantages Mr. Hamand may claim on the score of grades, those advantages apply, not to the entire length of the branch line, but to his extension only. Outside his extension no advantages can be claimed, since a 1 in 50 grade is encountered within a few chains after leaving it. If, therefore, a fully laden train left Milson's Point and travelled up Mr. Hamand's line, so soon as it arrived at the Government line so soon would it stop. To get over the difficulty either 33 per cent. of the load would have to be left behind or additional power be applied, and that could be applied equally as well, if not better, at Milson's Point. If it were probable that a large goods traffic would be carried on the extension between Milson's Point and St. Leonards Station for local distribution, then a grade of 1 in 70 would be an advantage; but it has been shown that there is little likelihood of more traffic being carried on the extension than on the other portion of the line, therefore a grade superior to that of the ruling grade is hardly necessary for the extension. With regard to haulage down the Milson's Point grade, if a load that can be taken up the ruling grade of 1 in 50 from Milson's Point can be safely taken down the ruling grade of 1 in 40 to the Hawkesbury River, it follows of necessity that a load that can be taken up the Hawkesbury River grade can be more safely taken down the Milson's Point grade. On the Milson's Point grade the smaller load would be taken down the flatter grade, while upon the Hawkesbury River grade the larger load would be taken down upon the steeper grade. Moreover, as the traffic from the North to Milson's Point will be heavier than the traffic from Milson's Point thereto, it will be readily seen that the load to be taken down the Milson's Point grade will be measured by the load hauled up the Hawkesbury grade. Now, if it be dangerous to take down a grade of 1 in 50 that which can be hauled up a grade of 1 in 40, how much more dangerous would it be to take down a grade of 1 in 40 that which could be taken up a grade of 1 in 70. As with haulage, so with speed. Any advantages claimed on the score of speed apply not to the entire branch railway, but to the extension only; and, although a train would travel up a grade of 1 in 70, half as fast again as it would travel up a grade of 1 in 50, the difference in speed would affect a distance of only 2 miles, and against that advantage the extra length of Mr. Hamand's line would have to be debited. It may, therefore, be stated that Mr. Hamand's extension could be travelled as quickly as the Government extension by through trains; but since there would be five stations on Mr. Hamand's line as against three stations on the Government line, it would necessarily follow that Mr. Hamand's extension could not be travelled as quickly as the Government extension by slow trains. With regard to the advantages of a 1 in 70 grade over a 1 in 50 grade as regards locomotive expenses, which are directly affected by grades, I find, according to the Railway Commissioner's Report for 1887, that the average working expenses per train mile were 54·05d. of which 16·61d. were due to locomotive power and repairing expenses. Now, I have already pointed out that only 2 miles of the extension is on a 1 in 50 grade, and against this Mr. Hamand's original proposal is over a mile longer than the Government line. For the purpose of my calculations I shall assume that fifty trains depart from and arrive at Milson's Point daily. That would give a train mileage of 200. Now, assume that the locomotive expenses of a 1 in 50 grade are in inverse ratio to the haulage capacity, and we have £15 a day on the 1 in 50 grade and £10 a day on the 1 in 70 grade, a difference in favour of the better grade of £5 per day. But, against that advantage we have to deduct 100 train miles run on the extra mile in length on Mr. Hamand's line, which, at only 12d. per train mile is equal to £5 per day, and consequently the locomotive expenses on both lines are equal. In other words, the lower cost of locomotive power on the flatter grade is compensated for by the shorter run on the steeper grade.

Seeing, therefore, that the Government line is superior to Mr. Hamand's line as regards the distribution of goods to the local population and the collection of local passenger traffic, and seeing also that no advantage would be gained by adopting Mr. Hamand's line as regards grade, I am forced to the opinion that there is nothing to warrant the construction of Mr. Hamand's line in preference to the Government line.

A serious objection to Mr. Hamand's line is the fact that he has made insufficient provision for the goods traffic that will reach Lavender Bay. It has been suggested that even when the railway reaches the water, the large goods traffic expected to gradually develop will be throttled by the Department to force all such traffic to Darling Harbour. If undue compulsion were attempted, which is not likely, it would certainly not be long successful. A railway coming to a central position on a splendid and busy harbour will sow its own goods traffic. Industries will arise where water and rail communication junction, and will demand the necessary railway carriage of their incoming land-borne goods, and of their outward land-borne productions. Not only so, but the specially local industries which now exist between Hornsby and Milson's Point will develop and increase, others will be originated, and they must use the railway for a harbour outlet. Then the very means of communication a railway supplies will cause the North Sydney population to grow even much more rapidly than in the past, and the goods requirements of that population, with the usual wharfage and commercial needs of a large city will, not only find ample paying goods traffic for a railway, but will make the most powerful means of goods conveyance on land—that is a railway—an absolute necessity.

According to Mr. Hamand's section, only 660 feet of level run at Milson's Point is provided. The line then ascends on a grade of 1 in 70, and leaves Lavender Bay at 34 chains therefrom, and at an elevation of 30 feet above high-water mark, thus rendering the greater portion of the frontage useless for shipping purposes. To make the line available for wharfage purposes it would be necessary to extend the railway on a level bench to near the head of Lavender Bay, as is the case with the Government line, but, as I have already pointed out on several occasions, it would not be feasible to do that and obtain a 1 in 70 grade on Mr. Hamand's line. A 1 in 70 grade can be obtained only by sacrificing wharfage accommodation, and wharfage accommodation can be obtained only by sacrificing the grade, or by enormously increasing the cost of construction.

Another objection is the fact that Mr. Hamand's scheme does not offer the same facilities as the Government line for extension to the various bays of the harbour. Suppose, for instance, it were necessary to extend Mr. Hamand's line to Cremorne. To do so from the northern side of the Military-road would necessitate a run of about 2½ miles, the greater portion of which would be in tunnel, and, necessarily, the cost of construction would be enormous. If it were extended thereto from the station at the head of the Neutral Bay Valley, a run of 1½ mile would be necessary, while the cost of resumptions along the route would be considerable. Nor could Mr. Hamand's line be extended to Kurraba Point, in Neutral Harbour, except by shunting from Milson's Point. Moreover, the proposed reclaimed lands at the heads of Careening and Neutral Bays could not be tapped from Mr. Hamand's line except by shunting from Milson's Point. Those reclaimed lands would serve for the erection thereon of a locomotive depot, while if there were no locomotive depot, all engines would have to be sent to Eveleigh to be cleaned or repaired. If it were necessary to connect the western side of Neutral Harbour with Mr. Hamand's line, a run of 50 chains would be necessary to reach the water level, thus rendering useless for shipping purposes, since the line would be away from and too high above the water, the best portion of the water frontages. Now,

the Government line can be extended from the head of Lavender Bay to the proposed reclaimed lands at Careening and Neutral Bays and on to Cremorne, and, moreover, it can be extended thereto in the future practically at the same cost as at present, since nearly the whole of its length is in tunnel, thereby necessitating but little expenditure in resumption. From this extension branches can be run to Kurraba Point, on the eastern side, or Kirribilli Point, on the western side of Neutral Harbour. And while these extensions would be perfectly level the extensions from Mr. Hamand's line would be on a grade.

Now, I contend it should not be lost sight of for a moment, that it is absolutely necessary that the eastern side of Lavender Bay shall be made available for shipping purposes. That frontage is the most valuable asset in connection with the railway, because it cannot be denied that within five years of the opening of the line that asset alone will be worth as much as the whole branch line of railway cost. In spite of anything that has been said to the contrary, evidence has been given which conclusively proves that wool, wood, coal, bricks, fruit, and other merchandise will be carried, and it would be preposterous to suppose that 600 feet, as allowed by Mr. Hamand, is sufficient to accommodate both the passenger and the goods traffic that would go there. Mr. Hamand's line, as a matter of fact, makes no provision for goods traffic, and, what is more, it cannot make provision for it in Lavender Bay. I challenge Mr. Hamand to show that he can strike the water-level at the head of Lavender Bay, and retain a grade of 1 in 70, except at a prohibitive cost.

I have stated that North Shore should eventually be connected with Sydney by a high-level bridge, and that it should be located between Dawes' Point and M'Mahon's Point. Although the water distance between Dawes' Point and Milson's Point is shorter than that between Dawes' Point and M'Mahon's Point, yet it must be remembered that the land in the vicinity of Milson's Point is low in comparison with that at M'Mahon's Point, while the approaches to the bridge at the latter point would be very much shorter than the approaches to it at Milson's Point. Moreover it is more direct to St. Leonards Station, and to the cable tramway in Miller-street, which doubtless would be taken across the bridge if it were constructed. Besides the bridge should be placed as far west as possible, and placing it at M'Mahon's Point would leave Lavender Bay entirely open to incoming vessels. I have assumed the height of the bridge at 160 feet, and from that elevation a grade of 1 in 50 could be obtained on the Sydney side by commencing to rise at Charlotte-place. On the North Shore side a connection could be made on a 1 in 80 grade at 12 miles from Hornsby.

If it be asked if the bridge would do away with the necessity of extending the railway from the bridge connection to Milson's Point I say no, because the line must be continued to the water for the purpose of utilizing the water frontages for goods traffic, and in the meantime, since the construction of the bridge would occupy some years to bring the present constructed portion of the line into profitable operation.

Mr. Hamand claims that his line will earn more than the Government line since its length is over 1 mile greater and since all passenger fares are based upon mileage. When it is remembered, however, that this extra mile is obtained at an expenditure of over £150,000 it will be readily seen that advantages, other than that of taxing the people for all time to pay interest on that sum, a doubtful advantage certainly, should be proved. If the State possessed more capital than it could profitably employ then it might, with some degree of justification, purposely increase the length of railways to extract higher fares from the pockets of those who used them. There is a great difference, however, between a few individuals constructing a railway for the public, and the public constructing a railway for themselves. The principle which guides private individuals in constructing railways is graphically described by A. M. Wellington M.I.C.E., one of the best American authorities on railways, who states as follows:—"Spending money to shorten one's own line for through business, therefore, must, except under peculiar circumstances, be classed among those charitable actions for which a reward may possibly be hoped for in the next world, but hardly in this. The only important exceptions are: First, when a road reaches all important points over its own lines, as the Pennsylvania; or secondly, when it is built for other reasons than direct profit to the investors, as the Cincinnati Southern Railway, or lines built by the State." I may here remark that Mr. Hamand's tunnel under the harbour would sufficiently increase the mileage between Hornsby and Sydney without adding another mile to it, as he proposes. Mr. Hamand may compel passengers to pay the extra fare on the mile between Hornsby and Milson's Point, but I venture to assert that he would carry few passengers by his tunnel between Milson's Point and Circular Quay if mileage rates were charged. People would not pay fares for nearly 3 miles of railway under the harbour when they could travel by steamer on the top of the harbour by paying a penny fare.

With regard to the cost of resumptions on Mr. Hamand's line I find, since writing the above, that Mr. Hamand's estimate is only £130,000. I have made a careful valuation of the land and houses outside Lavender Bay, and the tunnels, and I estimate the cost at £126,568. Now, Mr. Hamand's line necessitates the resumption of all the water frontage on the eastern side of Lavender Bay, and this is valued by the Government Valuator at £67,760, bringing up the total sum to £194,328, or £64,328 more than Mr. Hamand's estimate. Taking the cost of the line at £220,000, as estimated by Mr. Deane and Mr. Hamand, and we have the total cost of Mr. Hamand's line at £414,328. But reducing Mr. Hamand's line to the basis of the Government amended line brings up the total cost to £454,328, or £219,628 more than the cost of the Government line.

In my previous calculations I assumed that the cost of Mr. Hamand's scheme exceeded the cost of the Government scheme by only £155,300, so that the capital that would be sunk in continuing the railway to Milson's Point and to the bridge connection would be £299,618, instead of £225,300. And instead of the difference in cost of the two schemes constructing the Manly line three-quarters of a mile nearer that place than Mr. Hamand's line would carry it, it would in reality carry it about 1½ mile nearer.

With regard to Mr. Hamand's line collecting more traffic, or effecting a saving in working expenses, it must be clearly remembered that Mr. Hamand's line would have to earn annually £7,686 in interest on the additional capital (£219,628), and (say) £750 for working expenses for the additional mile, a total of £8,436 more than the Government line. That sum is sufficient to pay all working expenses of 11 miles of the railway.

I would respectfully point out to the members of the Committee, that in dealing with this line they have to consider not only the present but the future. In that respect it is very different from a country line passing through a district which in twenty years time will not be sufficiently populated to seriously interfere with the course of a railway. The extension of the North Shore Line has to pass through lands which are only vacant because they have been locked up. Immediately they are opened they will be settled. Settlement and building will so increase the cost of resumption that even were it decided the line would only be required twenty years hence, it would be a great saving to resume now, allowing for compound interest on the present resumption value. The population of the boroughs of North Shore is now 16,395, it having increased 129 per cent. in the last eight years, in spite of many portions having inferior communication. If we take a similar increase in the future, and as the communication is improved, especially by a railway, the area for settlement being thus immensely widened, the ratio of increase should be greater, a very large population will be settled on the Shore in twenty years' time. Thus if we reckon the present population of the boroughs as 16,000 instead of 16,395, and the increase in eight years as only 125 per cent., instead of 129 per cent., we may calculate the population of twenty years hence as about 130,000. It is, perhaps, natural for a person who has watched the growth of the North Shore population from small beginnings for fifty years past to think it only amounts to so much per year, and that is not a great deal, but the increase of the population of Sydney itself would look very small viewed in that light. Such an estimate omits altogether the effect of the compound increase, and the Shore has now a sufficient population to make the compound increase tell enormously every year. Therefore it is not even the present considerable population this railway has to reckon with but the vastly increased population of the immediate future. Those who believe, as surely all must, that Sydney will, not so many years hence, rival the present one million population of New York, will believe also that North Shore will be its Brooklyn, with at least one-half the population of Sydney. This means a great city with wide-spread suburbs, and although the proposed extension of the railway promises, in my opinion, at a comparatively early date, a highly remunerative return, the proposal deals also with the resumption now at a comparatively slight cost of the ground for a railway, which by future development will yield a rich harvest on the original outlay. If it be said in answer to this that with the prospects of such a future Milson's Point does not offer sufficient accommodation, I would draw attention to the fact that the promontory on which Milson's Point is situated, extending as it does from Milson's to Kirribilli Point, is by far the widest promontory on the north side of the harbour, and thus affords a greater expanse for all future developments than any other situation.

In conclusion, I say that Mr. Hamand's scheme should not be constructed in preference to the Government scheme, because it would cost nearly £220,000 more; because it would be over 1 mile longer; because it would necessitate the additional construction of a large portion of the Government proposed line to connect with a high-level bridge; because it does not offer the same facilities for extensions to the various bays on the northern side of the harbour; because it would not serve as great a local population; because it does not afford the same accommodation for distribution of goods; because it does not possess advantages to reach Manly; because it makes inadequate provision for a goods traffic; and because it renders practically useless the most valuable asset on the line—that is, the water frontage on the eastern side of Lavender Bay.

TUESDAY, 29 JULY, 1890.

Present:—

The HONORABLE JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

WILLIAM McCOURT, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Charles Cyrus Bullock, Esq., surveyor, sworn, and further examined:—

C. C. Bullock, Esq. 29 July, 1890. 2974. *Dr. Garran.*] Taking your figures as to the position of the population on the North Shore, I should like to follow up the two proposed lines of railway from the start, to see if you can give me an approximate estimate of the area which each station on each of the two lines would serve, together with the present population. Starting from Milson's Point—that would not be a collecting station for traffic on the way to Sydney, but simply a discharging station? Yes.

2975. Therefore we cannot credit it with any business on its own account as a station? Exactly so.

2976. It is not proposed by the Government to have a station at the head of Lavender Bay, but if there were such a station there would be no traffic there, because no one would take the train for such a short distance in order to reach the ferry at Milson's Point? Just so.

2977. Therefore, the first collecting station on the Government line would be Bay-street? Yes.

2978. What area, of course taking into account the drainage of the traffic by the tramway, would that station serve? Do you mean in acreage?

2979. Yes. Could you give me a rough estimate? I think about 200 acres. I reckon that the two stations would serve 400 acres, and that each of them would serve half that area.

2980. Have you any idea what the present resident population is which the Bay-street Station would serve? No; and any statement I could make would not be worth having. I might say that there is not very much there at present.

2981. Can you form any idea as to what the prospective population might be? Yes. In the Borough of Victoria, the area of which is about the same as the area which this station would serve, there are 3,470 residents, and I think that this space round the station is quite as capable, or more capable, of carrying that population than the Borough of Victoria is.

2982. Judging by the population on a similar area, you conclude that this 200 acres will be able to carry the population which you have mentioned? Yes. It would be capable of carrying more. The Borough of Victoria could carry 6,470 people.

2983. I am thinking of the traffic six years hence;—would the area to which we are referring be capable of carrying 4,000 people without being overcrowded? Quite.

2984. Are the whole 200 acres fairly suitable for building purposes? Yes; the greater portion of this area is very suitable for building—every part of the country from Bay-road Station to Ball's Head, and from the station to the Lane Cove-road. I do not include any of the population on the Lane Cove-road, because that would filter to the tramway.

2985. I presume that you have drawn an imaginary line of demarcation? The Lane Cove-road forms the boundary. The people to the north-east of it would go to the tramway, while those to the south-west would go to the railway station.

2986. Are you crediting this station with the whole of the people who reside at Ball's Head? Yes; I should do so.

2987. Irrespective of the possibility of a steam ferry service there? Yes; because at the Head the ground is very abrupt, and people could not get down.

2988. How far is it from this station to Ball's Head? About 3,500 feet—1,200 yards.

2989. Roughly, two-thirds of a mile? Yes.

2990. Now take the next station, at Edwards'-road—what area do you consider it would drain? About the same area as before—200 acres.

2991. Are those 200 acres fairly good for building purposes? Yes. Some of the land down the creeks is a little rough, but generally speaking it is suitable for residential purposes.

2992. Do you think that in five or ten years' time this area will carry 4,000 people? It is capable of doing so.

2993. The next station is the St. Leonards Station, which is common to both routes? Yes.

2994. Now take the other line—the first collecting station on that line would be that at Careening Cove? Yes.

2995. What area will it drain, remembering the steam-boat competition? I cannot see that the station there would serve any people at all, except a few houses right on the top.

2996. Would not the country to the north drain down to this station? There is no portion of that country half-a-mile from the ferry. Careening Cove Station is only 1,800 feet—600 yards—from the ferry at the bottom of High-street.

2997. If you were living within a quarter of a mile to the north of this station, would you pass it to come to the steamer? No. This station is in a valley, and if you lived a quarter of a mile away from it, you would be close to the tramway. The trams and steamers bristle here.

2998. You think the competition of trams and steamers would destroy the value of this station as a collecting station? I think so.

2999. What is the next station—Bent-street? Yes.

3000. What drainage area would it give you? Only a few houses immediately situated——

3001. I asked for the area? I think 10 or 20 acres at the very outside. I do not think that it would serve as much as that.

3002. Those 20 acres comprise steep slopes and valleys? I suppose this is the worst part of the North Shore for building purposes. 3003.

3003. You would not credit it with the possibility of carrying a large population? I should not. If there were a large population there, the people would travel by the steamers. C. C. Bullock,
Esq.
29 July, 1890.
3004. What would you put as the maximum population which would drain to this station? My statement is very much a guess, and I do not see that it has much value—say 200 people.
3005. What is the next station? That at Willoughby Falls.
3006. What area will it drain? You must understand that the same arguments apply again as to lines of communication.
3007. You are not to credit it with any traffic that would go to the tramway;—I asked for the area that will drain to the station, assuming that the railway is constructed? Before I answer that question, I might point out that the space coloured green on the map is a reserve for public recreation. It contains about 40 acres, and could not be cut up for building sites. About 40 acres probably.
3008. What do you consider would be the population on that area—some of it is good building ground is it not? Some of it, on the ridge.
3009. On the flat of the spur there is good building ground? Oh yes, you could build there.
3010. Both north and south of Willoughby Falls there is good building ground? The tunnel, you must remember, is only 6 chains from the station.
3011. But I presume that there would be a road of access? The road would come down here. (*Referring to the map*).
3012. At what do you put the population? Probably 500.
3013. *Mr. Garrard.*] Present or future? The future population.
3014. *Dr. Garran.*] Now take the Miller-street Station—there is a private tramway to compete with the railway, and the traffic from the area surrounding the station will therefore be common to both tram and train. What do you suppose would be the proportion of the people who would patronise the railway? It is very difficult to make a guess, but the people coming from Amherst-street would not travel by the railway.
3015. They would not go north to take the railway? I will tell you why.
3016. It would be a competition of time and fares, would it not? I will give you the exact distances. By Mr. Hamand's route the distance from Miller-street to Milson's Point would be 2 miles 67 chains.
3017. With three stoppings on the road? Yes; and the distance by the tramway from Amherst-street would be 2 miles.
3018. With how many stopping-places? As many as you like. A person travelling from Amherst-street would have to go a quarter of a mile to the railway, and then travel $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles by train, while a person going by tram would only have to travel 2 miles.
3019. Which person would get down the quicker? I do not think that there would be much difference in time, but the tramway would be better for enabling people to get to their homes, because it is on the same level. In Amherst-street you have to fall about 70 feet.
3020. Still, I want you to guess at the population which would patronise the Miller-street station? Three hundred or 400 people.
3021. What is the next station? That at the North Sydney-road.
3022. What area would that drain—of course remembering the competition with the trams? I should not say more than 500 people.
3023. I have now mentioned all the stations on Mr. Hamand's line, have I not? Yes.
3024. According to your statement the prospective population on the Government line would be about 8,000 people, and on Mr. Hamand's line about 1,600 people? Yes; I think that the Government line would serve five times as much population as Mr. Hamand's line would serve. I think that is about the population that would be carried, reasoning by analogy.
3025. You make out that the population that would feed the Government line is very much larger than any probable population that would feed Mr. Hamand's line? There cannot be two opinions about it.
3026. Will Mr. Hamand's line have more, or less, competition from the tramway than the Government line? More, most distinctly, because Mr. Hamand's line would run parallel with the tramway.
3027. How far would it be from the tramway at the furthest point? Thirty-six chains, and lower down 18 chains, and then it crosses it. The Government line at the Bay-road Station would be nearly a mile from the tram-line—it would be 42 chains crossing the cliffs, but by road the distance would be greater.
3028. North Shore has been settled, in the first instance, through the agency of the steam-boats? Yes.
3029. You say that experience has shown that people settle to within half a mile or three-quarters of a mile of transit facilities? Yes.
3030. Beyond that the population is hardly ever dense, until fresh facilities are provided? That is so. Of course, you must clearly understand that the reason why population has not gone westward is that the Berry Estate has blocked it.
3031. Since people will not go more than three-quarters of a mile back from transit facilities, new ferry stations have been established along the shores of the harbour? Yes.
3032. Population liking to be within half a mile of transit facilities? Yes. When, I was surveying down at Mossman's Bay, about ten years ago, there was no ferry, and now I think there are about 860 people living round there.
3033. The population on the North Shore has never been concentrated at more than three-quarters of a mile from transit facilities? Generally speaking, that is so.
3034. Does that seem to indicate that, if we wish to provide the suburbs with population, we must have transit facilities within three-quarters of a mile of where we want that population to be, either by railway, tramway, or steamer? Yes.
3035. Which of the proposed lines meets this condition of things best, Mr. Hamand's or the Government line, multiplying the centres? The Government line, because it is more direct, and goes a longer distance in a much shorter time. I contend that Mr. Hamand's line, from Willoughby Falls' Station, would serve practically nobody at all.
3036. If the Government line is made will there be any part between it and the tramway more than three-quarters of a mile distant from transit facilities? Not until you come down to the Bay-road Station, where it is about half a mile across the cliffs, but to walk it it would be over that.
3037. You do not answer my question; would there be any part between the Government line and the tramline more than three-quarters of a mile from transit facilities? No. That would necessitate $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile between the railway and the tramway.

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3038. Then the tramline and the Government railway line would adequately meet the wants of the whole of the district between them? Yes; and where Mr. Hamand's line is located the population is already served by the tramway, since it is less than half a mile from it.
3039. But the country to the east is not served by the tramway? Nor is it by Mr. Hamand's line, because his line is 160 feet below it.
3040. You mean to say that the population to the west of Mr. Hamand's line is already accommodated by the railway, and that the population to the east of it would not be accommodated by it? It would not, but most of the population to the east of his line is accommodated by the wharf at Hayes'-street. That wharf is only half-a-mile from the Military-road, and you walk down the spur, as it were, to it. You must, in dealing with the passenger traffic at the North Shore, take into consideration the physical features of the country.
3041. *Mr. Tonkin.*] But the people going to the ferry would have to walk up hill when going home? Yes, and so they would from any of the stations on Mr. Hamand's line.
3042. *Dr. Garran.*] Mr. Hamand estimates the extra expense of his line at £92,000, although you estimate that it would be very much larger. Supposing Mr. Hamand's figures to be correct, do you think that it is worth that extra money? I do not.
3043. Suppose Mr. Hamand's line could be constructed for the same price as the Government line, do you think it would be preferable to it? I do not.
3044. You would rather have the Government line than Mr. Hamand's line, even if the cost of the two were the same? I should.
3045. You have seen from the figures before the Committee that the estimate of the cost of the Government line, from the head of Lavender Bay to Milson's Point, is £98,760? Yes.
3046. You have said that property in Lavender Bay is worth buying to have as a national asset, its estimated cost being £67,760;—do you think it would be sound policy on the part of the Government to buy the land at this price now, even if it may not be wanted? Most decidedly.
3047. You think it better to buy it now, so as to prevent an increase in value, suppose we wished to buy it hereafter? Yes.
3048. You feel certain that if the line were brought to the head of Lavender Bay, it would have to be extended to Milson's Point? Yes.
3049. And that it is better to incur an unproductive outlay at present than to have to pay an increased amount for land hereafter? Yes.
3050. You say that the profit from the land will be worth the cost of the line;—do you mean that it will nominally be worth it, estimated per foot, or that it would bring in that return? I have been told by business men that they could pay the Government a rent equal to paying £200 a foot for the land.
3051. It could only bring the Government a return by being used for wharfage purposes or factory sites? Yes. I have been told by business men that this land could be leased, if the Government did not want to use it for the railway, at a figure that would pay interest on the outlay.
3052. You mean to say that the value of the land for business purposes would be such that it could be leased at as much as would pay the Government interest on the railway work? Yes.
3053. You think it would be a good thing to buy the land now? Yes; apart from the policy of continuing the line to Milson's Point.
3054. You are aware that a modified project has been submitted to the Committee, stopping short at the head of the bay, and making a saving of £52,760? Yes.
3055. Would you recommend that that project should be carried out? I would not.
3056. You think it would be better to expend the money in extending the line? Yes.
3057. Suppose the Government were to buy the land, but merely made a station at the place which Mr. Deane has suggested as a temporary station, would that be wise? No; because the works are estimated at only £31,000.
3058. And we should only save out of that perhaps half by not going to Milson's Point? You would save £31,000 I understand.
3059. There would be a saving of £10,000 in works? I should certainly advise you to take the line on to Milson's Point.
3060. You do not think it would be worth while to save £10,000 by making a temporary station between the head of the bay and Milson's Point, it would be better to go on? Yes. An advantage of the extra half-mile would be that you would be taking your passengers nearer to Sydney, which Mr. Hamand's extra distance does not do, and you could therefore legitimately charge a fare for the longer distance.
3061. Suppose the Government line went right on to Milson's Point at once, you do not think that it would be necessary to use all the frontage for wharfage purposes directly—only enough wharves should be erected to accommodate the passenger traffic? Yes.
3062. We could add to the wharfage bit by bit? Yes.
3063. So there is no necessity to go to the expense of constructing wharves along the whole of the eastern side of Lavender Bay? Yes.
3064. You think that the traffic would increase gradually? Yes, but there would be a large traffic.
3065. The estimated cost of the route submitted to the Committee was £262,000, to which has been added £21,700 as the extra cost for an alteration of grade, making the total cost £283,700? That includes many things which have to be accounted for. £262,000 is not what the railway will cost, because £28,000 must be deducted as the value of properties situated over the tunnel which need not be paid for, and £21,000 for the land in the Berry Estate which need not be paid for, under the provisions of the Public Works Act.
3066. *Mr. Garrard.*] That is a matter of opinion? In that case the figures would only be wrong by £10,000, because the trustees of the Berry Estate offered to let the Government have the land for £10,000.
3067. *Dr. Garran.*] What would that bring the cost down to? £213,000. Then the Department estimate that the cost of the 30 chains additional length, which is necessary to reduce the grade to 1 in 50, will be £16,000.
3068. No; it is estimated altogether at £21,700. If we allowed a reasonable margin for contingencies, the cost of the line would be £250,000? That should be allowed with Mr. Hamand's line also.
3069. Do you think the line will pay interest on that amount? I do not look upon this as a separate line, but as the completion of an existing line.

3070. But should we get back the interest on that £250,000? If you spent this £250,000 I contend that within two years the Department would get a large return from the line sufficient to pay the interest on the capital spent between Hornsby and Milson's Point.

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3071. And you have no doubt about that being done within five years? Not the slightest doubt.

3072. Do you mean interest after paying working expenses of the line? Yes.

3073. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You claim for the Government line that it will serve a larger prospective population than Mr. Hamand's line is likely to serve? Yes.

3074. Have you made due allowance in that comparison for the excursion traffic to Middle Harbour? I think the excursion traffic on Mr. Hamand's line will be infinitesimal. The people would have to walk down to the harbour from Folly Point, about $\frac{5}{8}$ ths of a mile, and descend 150 feet.

3075. But would not the line give access to the back portions of Middle Harbour? Very little more than the private tram-line does. From Miller-street to Folly Point would be very slightly more than a mile from the tramway. Passengers going to Middle Harbour would go in the tramway as far as Falcon-street, and walk the rest of the distance, which would be a mile, so that the railway would only have the advantage of half a mile at the most.

3076. You take the view that this will be a passenger line only? I do not. I think there will be a goods traffic.

3077. Where do you expect the goods will come from? You have had evidence already that wool will come down to The Pastoralists' Association's stores at Milson's Point, and that there will be a return of something like £2,000 or £3,000 a year from bricks. Then there is the produce which a large population like that at North Shore would consume; while, if coal were found at Wyong—though I cannot see that any coal would come from Newcastle—I think it would find its way to Milson's Point or Ball's Head. From Milson's Point to Wyong the distance is 5½ miles, while it is 40 miles from Wyong to Newcastle; so that there is only a difference of 14 miles.

3078. *Mr. Garrard.*] There is a difference in grade? Yes.

3079. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] The evidence of the Department is against the idea of much traffic in coal? Yes. If there were a coal traffic, provision could be made for it by an extension of the line to Ball's Head. This extension of the line has not been put before you by the Department, but it is possible to extend the line to Ball's Head. Such an extension would leave the Government line, and shunt back round by the head of Berry's Bay to Ball's Head, where it would be about 25 feet up—about the same height as the Newcastle shoots are. You would have there about 2,500 feet of frontage.

3080. You estimate that the Government line will serve a prospective population of 8,000? That the area through which it runs would carry a population of 8,000.

3081. Does not the greater portion of the line go through the Berry Estate, at Crow's Nest? Yes; half of it goes through the Berry Estate.

3082. Why are the proprietors of the Berry Estate not ready to cut their land up? The land belonged to Mr. Berry, and he would not cut up any of it; but he is dead now, and it is decreed by his will that the land shall be sold, so that the trustees are compelled to sell it.

3083. You claim that the Government line will serve a better kind of land—land more fitted for residential areas—than Mr. Hamand's line will serve? Most decidedly. It is first-class land for residential purposes, while the land on Mr. Hamand's line is all sandstone.

3084. I gathered from your evidence that you did not think that Mr. Hamand's line, if carried out, would serve as part of a line to Manly? My idea is that Mr. Hamand's line does not follow the right route to Manly. If you asked Mr. Hamand to survey a line of railway from Milson's Point to Manly, I venture to say that he would tell you that the proper route was on the southern side of the Military-road, that is to say, on the Port Jackson watershed—not on the Middle Harbour watershed.

3085. You do not think, then, that 2 miles of his line could be utilized for a line to Manly? If Mr. Hamand's railway were constructed, and Mr. Hamand wanted to get to Manly by it, 2 miles of it could be utilized, but that would not be the right route to Manly.

3086. But if it were so, the saving of 2 miles would be an advantage in Mr. Hamand's line? I do not think so. I think that I show by my figures that you can carry the Government line nearer towards Manly than Mr. Hamand's line goes by the extra distance, and that that line would be on the right watershed, and serve more people than Mr. Hamand's line, while it would in every other way be better than it.

3087. The money you would save by carrying out the Government line, as compared with Mr. Hamand's line, would enable you to carry the line 2 miles on towards Manly? It would take a line nearer to Manly than Mr. Hamand's line would go.

3088. Following a better route? Yes, in every way.

3089. *Mr. Tonkin.*] In estimating the amount of population which the Government line would serve—8,000 people—did you take into consideration the whole of the land from the railway line west to the water frontage? Yes.

3090. Do you think that there would be no ferry-boats to compete for the traffic from that land? No; they cannot compete there in the same way as they can compete at Neutral Harbour, because the land is much more bold. You must also bear in mind that the distance from the Circular Quay to Ball's Head Bay and to Gore Bay is considerably longer than the distance from Circular Quay to Milson's Point or High-street.

3091. Is not the whole of the line constructed on ground falling towards the water—is it not a long way below the plateau? Yes; but still some portions of it are very high. Bay-road is about 120 feet above high-water mark.

3092. Do you think that under these circumstances, if the Berry Estate were sold, the people who had built lower down towards the water would travel up to the railway line, supposing they could get a ferry steamer? I think very few would travel by the ferry steamers, because the land at the water's edge is very abrupt. You could not subdivide the land immediately at the water's edge into allotments 100 feet in depth.

3093. Is the land at the head of these bays more abrupt than the land in the bays to which the steamboats ply? It is very much more abrupt in the bays to the west than it is in the bays to the east. Here [*referring to the map*] it simply slides up.

3094. How far is the Edwards'-road Station from the water? It is 2½ miles by ferry from Circular Quay.

3095. But how far would it be from navigable water? About 10 chains. By steamer it would be about 2½ miles from Circular Quay.

3096.

C. C. Bullock, Esq.,
29 July, 1890. 3096. It would be as far from Milson's Point as from Circular Quay? But you must compare that, not with the distance by railway, but with the distance by ferry. High-street would be a mile and three-eighths from the Circular Quay.

3097. I do not want to compare the two routes; I merely want to find out, if possible, what proportion of the prospective population would be served by ferry-boats? We will take it in another way. There are 400 acres of land, the population upon which I say will be served by the railway; but suppose, for the sake of argument, that no one to the south-west of the line will travel by train, that will leave 300 acres to the north-east of the line, the population of which will use it.

3098. What do you estimate would be the population per acre? I think it is about ten people.

3099. If the population of 4,000 acres comes to 8,000 people, that is nearly twenty people to an acre? Yes.

3100. If you allow ten people to the acre, that will reduce your estimate from 8,000 to 4,000? Suppose I threw out 100 acres, which is altogether outside what could possibly be thrown out, there would be a population of 6,000 people to the north-east of the line who would use it, and 2,000 to the south-west who would not use it.

3101. Allowing twenty people to the acre? Yes.

3102. Do you think that North Shore will be populated by a class of people who would live as closely together as that? I think so. This area is adjacent to an area which at the present time carries twenty people to the acre, and which is by no means over-populated.

3103. Are the present outskirts of North Shore populated to that extent? Three-fourths of the Borough of Victoria is on the water-line—on the outskirts. In that borough a very large area is taken up by large houses—Mr. Dibbs' house, for example, and "The Towers."

3104. But are there not business streets which are very thickly populated? There are some business streets there, but not such as to make any great difference. The Borough of Victoria could carry double the number that it does carry.

3105. In your estimate, have you given the tram-line a fair proportion of the traffic—that is, have you estimated the traffic that would gravitate to the tram-line apart from that which would gravitate to the railway line? Yes, it is very clearly defined. I calculated that the people living on the Lane Cove-road would use the tramway, and the area which the railway would serve would not go as far as the Lane Cove-road, but only to within 4 or 5 chains of it.

3106. How far is the nearest point on the Lane Cove-road from the present tramway? From the North Sydney-road it is 24 chains, and from the Crow's Nest 10 chains.

3107. Would not the people a long way to the west of 10 chains be served by the tramway? From the tramway to the railway is only 48 chains, and my line is about a quarter of a mile from each. I made a very fair allowance.

3107½. You have no doubt that the Government would be justified in the expenditure of £250,000 in the construction of the proposed line? Most decidedly—to bring the whole line into use.

3108. You believe that the line would return working expenses, together with the interest on the capital? Yes; and if I may be permitted to give a reason for that I should like to do so. I find that at Burwood Station the inward and outward traffic is £28,500, which is sufficient to pay something like 6 per cent. on the working expenses of the Government line, and surely we could plant a population equal to that going to and from the Burwood Station between Hornsby and Milson's Point.

3109. Do you not think that the fact of having to leave Sydney by water to get to the railway would militate against the traffic on the line? I do not. I think it is far better to cross the water than to travel by the trams. You have to walk nearly a quarter of a mile from George-street to get to the tram which takes you to the Railway Station, and you will find that the bulk of the people in Sydney are situated nearer to the Circular Quay than to the trams.

3110. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you mean to say that £28,000 represents the annual takings at the Burwood Station? Yes; I have the Commissioners' book with me, which shows that.

3111. That represents the returns from Burwood Station alone for one year? Yes—the inward and outward traffic. There have been several gentlemen who have given you wrong measurements with regard to the depth of water in, and the areas of, various bays. I have the correct information here about this, and should like to put it on record.

3112. *Vice-Chairman.*] Could you give it to us as a return? Yes, as an appendix to my evidence.

Charles Augustus Goodchap, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

C. A. Goodchap, Esq., M.P.,
29 July, 1890. 3113. *Vice-Chairman.*] You were for a long time connected with the railway work of this country? Yes.

3114. You were for several years, I think, Commissioner for Railways? Yes.

3115. And you have a tolerably accurate knowledge of railway management? Yes.

3116. You have had a good deal to do with railway projects? Yes.

3117. Were you in office when the railway was constructed from Hornsby to the Crow's Nest? When it was projected and partly carried out.

3118. You know where that line terminates at the present time? Yes.

3119. Do you think that it is a suitable place to meet the traffic of that suburb? Well, I do not think that it is. I think passengers should have additional accommodation, and be brought down to the foreshores.

3120. Have you thought what description of accommodation would be the best to meet the emergency? I think it would be an unreasonable and extravagant policy to extend the railway from its present terminus to the foreshores at Milson's Point, or any other point, at the present time. My opinion is that the extension of the tramway from its terminus to the railway station at St. Leonards would meet all the just requirements of the case.

3121. You think that that would be sufficient for all the passenger traffic? For all the traffic that is in prospect for a great number of years.

3122. In giving this opinion, have you considered the favourable terms under which the trustees of the Berry Estate offer their land to the Government, if the Government will construct the line at the present time? Yes; and, notwithstanding that, I think it would be a most extravagant policy to extend the railway from its present terminus to Milson's Point. I think that an expenditure of £214,000, which, I believe, is the lowest estimate of the cost of the railway, would in no way be justified. 3123.

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3123. We have it in evidence that the lowest estimate for the construction of the railway would be about £250,000—the Government estimate is beyond that? The expense would be still more unjustifiable.
3124. As far as you have given attention to the proposed extension, do you think it likely that the railway will at some subsequent time be brought to the shores of the harbour? Not within the next ten years, if the true interests of the country are considered.
3125. Do you know the suburb pretty well, and the line between St. Leonards and Hornsby? Yes.
3126. Is it the case that the land along the line offers unusual inducements for settlement, from its healthy situation, for suburban residences? There is no doubt that it will be a fine country for residential purposes, but I think the obstructions towards that are so great that a large residential traffic will not be taken there.
3127. *Mr. Garrard.*] What are these obstructions? The obstruction is the necessity of crossing the water.
3128. *Vice-Chairman.*] And the tram? I do not apprehend that there would be very much obstruction there. I do not think that it would be a serious inconvenience to go from Milson's Point to St. Leonards Station by tramway. I think that too much importance is attached to the suggested difficulty and inconvenience of changing from tram to train.
3129. You are acquainted with the circumstances under which cable trams are worked at North Shore? Yes.
3130. Do you think that they are working successfully? They ought to work successfully, I think that, as population increases, that will be a reproductive line.
3131. Supposing the suburban traffic at the North Shore became as much as the suburban traffic is now to Ashfield or Burwood, Waverley, and Kogarah, a cable tramway would be sufficient to work with the railway in order to bring passengers to, and take them from the North Shore? Yes; quite sufficient.
3132. Do you think that there is likely to be a large industrial occupation there. We have it in evidence that there are large brickworks at North Shore? Yes. I think that pottery works and brickworks will extend in that direction.
3133. Do you think that the line is likely to serve a large fruit-producing area between St. Leonards and Hornsby? I believe that all the available spots are already occupied by orchards; but there is no prospect of the produce of the orchards being brought down by the railway. The inconvenience of handling fruit cases at so many places would prevent that.
3134. But if the railway were continued to Milson's Point, would not that lessen the objections considerably? I think not. I do not think that any fruit cases, with immaterial exceptions, would be brought by the railway even if it were extended to Milson's Point.
3135. You think that the producers would still bring their fruit to market by means of carts? I am quite sure they would—they would find it more economical to do so.
3136. Is there any other industrial occupation, which you think would spring up between St. Leonards and Hornsby? I think that the industries there would be confined to brickworks and pottery works. I do not know of any other industry which would prosper there.
3137. Do you think that this district generally, the whole of the North Shore and the country between St. Leonards and Hornsby, will become a favourite suburb, in the course of years? Yes.
3138. If it becomes a favourite suburb, the population must necessarily increase very largely? It would, no doubt, but not to an extent which would justify the construction of the railway. In reading over the evidence, I see that one of the witnesses, Mr. D. Thompson, estimates that shortly after the construction of the line 3,000 people would be going into Sydney from this locality and going back, daily. That gentleman must surely have arrived at his conclusion on very insecure grounds. He says, further, that these would be season ticket holders. Now 3,000 people travelling backwards and forwards daily would make 2,000,000 journeys in a year, and when it is known that the whole of the season ticket holders in the colony, including those on the Parramatta line, the Illawarra line, the line to Ryde, and the line between Newcastle and Maitland, do not make 6,000,000 journeys in the year, it must appear incredible that one-third of that number of journeys would represent the traffic on the nine or ten miles of country between Milson's Point and Pearce's Corner.
3139. You think that the passenger traffic is not likely to be anything like that estimated? I am quite sure that to produce such a traffic the population must increase from its present number to about 25,000.
3140. Does your experience lead you to think that the population of many of our suburbs has increased very largely by the creation of tramway or railway communication? Undoubtedly.
3141. That applies to most of the suburbs that have this communication? To those which have direct communication without the intervention of ferries.
3142. You think that the ferry service would always act as an impediment to a similar increase of population on the North Shore? I have no doubt about it.
3143. You are aware that if the population on North Shore increased as rapidly as it is anticipated the local consumption would give rise to a good deal of goods traffic? Yes; but I think that that goods traffic would be much better distributed from the present terminus of the line than from Milson's Point.
3144. The present terminus would be more central than Milson's Point? Undoubtedly, for the local trade.
3145. Do you think that a traffic in produce or coal is likely to spring from this extension? I think it very improbable.
3146. Do you think that Sydney is still likely to remain the centre for the northern goods traffic? Yes.
3147. There is now a considerable goods traffic from the northern districts by railway? Yes.
3148. You do not think that much of that would be diverted to the North Shore extension? I do not.
3149. Do you think that any wool traffic is likely to be developed on that line? I think not. I believe that there is a proposal to erect large wool stores at North Shore, but I think it will be found more convenient to take the wool intended for these stores to Darling Harbour, and send it over in punts, than to take it down to Milson's Point by railway.
3150. Have you given any attention to Mr. Hamand's alternative proposal? I have not given much attention to it, but I know its general direction. It reaches the same point by a different route.
3151. And it is something like a mile longer than the Government line? Yes.
3152. Evidence has been given to show that it would accommodate more traffic than the Government line? I understand that it would cost £80,000 more than the Government line.
3153. About £100,000 more? I think it would not be justified. I think that if the railway is taken down to Milson's Point it should be taken by the route proposed by the Government. 3154.

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3154. Are you aware that there will be a large prospective settlement at North Sydney? At Willoughby—yes.
3155. Do you think that there is a probability of a large population there which would justify the proposed route? The deviation. No, I do not think it would be sufficiently large to justify it.
3156. You are aware that there is a project in connection with the development of this new settlement to construct a tramway from there to St. Leonards, in fact the tramway is constructed? Yes, there is a private line.
3157. Do you think that that would be sufficient to give accommodation to the people travelling from that locality to the water? I am quite sure that it would. The population at this place could never equal the population at Waverley, and the tramway from Waverley to Sydney is found to do all that is required. No doubt a railway would be preferred by some, but I am quite sure that a tramway would be more convenient.
3158. The tramway answers all present purposes? Yes.
3159. Do you think that the favourable terms on which land at Milson's Point could be resumed at present, compared with what we should have to pay in ten or twelve years hence, should act as an inducement to the Government to construct this proposed line? I do not think that there will be much difference in the value of the land at Milson's Point. I think it will be just as cheap, or equally dear, in fifteen years' time as it is at the present moment, or that the difference in price will be immaterial.
3160. You think, viewing the proposed extension from all surroundings, that it would not be desirable to carry it out at the present time? It would not be desirable.
3161. *Mr. Trickett.*] A return laid on the table of the House recently, showed that for the first four months of this year the working expenses and interest on the line from Hornsby to St. Leonards were £4,165 and the earnings £464;—can you suggest any way by which that state of things could be improved? I do not think that it would be greatly improved even if the tramway were extended to St. Leonards Station, and I feel quite certain that the loss would be largely increased by the extension of the railway—that is to say, interest would have to be paid on a larger amount of borrowed money, which would make the returns more disproportioned to the expenses than they are at present.
3162. Seeing that the line is such a loss at the present time, is it worth while to spend £250,000 in making it available? I think it would be throwing good money after bad.
3163. If the railway were extended to the deep waters, the distance to Sydney from the Northern line, *via* Milson's Point, would be 8 miles less than by way of Ryde? Yes.
3164. Do you think that passengers to Sydney would save that 8 miles, or would they go right round to Redfern Station? The difference in time, which is the essential consideration, would be so immaterial that they would come straight on to Sydney. They would not put themselves to the inconvenience of changing trains—which is some inconvenience, though it is not very great—in order to save 10 minutes. The difference in time between coming from the Northern line to the General Post Office by way of Strathfield, and by way of Milson's Point, I have calculated would not be more than 10 minutes.
3165. If the railway were extended to the deep waters, do you think that there would be any large traffic in the shape of coal? I am quite sure that coal will never be brought along this line for export.
3166. Will it come by rail or by steamer? From Newcastle it would come by steamer.
3167. Or by sailing vessel? Or by sailing vessel.
3168. Is it your experience that it is cheaper to carry coal by sailing vessel or by steamer than by railway? The steep grades on the railway line, which only allow light loads to be taken, would make the charge for coal so high as to put it out of comparison with the steamer charge.
3169. Therefore you think that no large traffic in coal would spring up if the railway were brought to Milson's Point? Certainly not.
3170. *Mr. Hamand's* line has a grade of 1 in 70 as against a grade of 1 in 50 on the Government line to get to the same point, would that be a great advantage? You would have to take into consideration the ruling grade on the whole line. The ruling grade between Pearce's Corner and St. Leonards is 1 in 40, and if that cannot be improved there is no object to be served in getting a line from St. Leonards to the water's side with a grade of 1 in 70. The distance would be very short, and it would not be desirable to break up the trains because of it. The trains brought to St. Leonards would be taken on to Milson's Point, whether the grade was 1 in 70 or 1 in 40. Unless you make the ruling grade throughout 1 in 70 it is no use to have a grade of 1 in 70 just to finish the line.
3171. Have you considered at all the question of wharfage at North Shore. Various places have been suggested for wharfage sites, such as Ball's Head and Cremorne Point? Directly Ball's Head was suggested as a site for a coaling wharf, I brought under the attention of the Government the superior advantages of Long Nose Point as a coaling station. It was always doubtful whether coal would be brought along the Northern railway, but Long Nose Point would serve the coal traffic from the north, if there were any, and from the western collieries at Lithgow, and the southern collieries, on the Illawarra line. It would be a general coaling port, serving all the coal mining industries in the colony.
3172. It has come under the consideration of the Committee that the line might go to the head of Lavender Bay, and then tunnel out towards Cremorne Point, working in the whole of Cremorne Point for wharfage purpose? The scheme is altogether indefensible—it is inexpedient, undesirable, and certainly unnecessary.
3173. You do not think that it should weigh in taking a practical view of the line? I do not.
3174. We have had a good deal of evidence as to the population that would grow up upon the North Shore heights. From your knowledge of the growth of population in other suburbs, do you think that this would be a thick population;—would it be a working population, or a superior class of population? I think it would be a population composed chiefly of the leisure class, or the class above the working class. I am quite certain that if the working men whose avocations are carried on in Sydney were to contemplate residing on these heights, they would find that the cost of getting to their work would be too great for them. I have estimated that a working man would have to pay £12 10s. a year at least, for going to and from this place, and that, added to his rent, would be a sufficient obstacle to prevent him from contemplating settling on the North Shore.
3175. You say "from this place";—will you say what limit you would allow? About 6 miles from Milson's Point. The season-ticket rate would be about the same as the season-ticket rate from Burwood to Sydney, and to it would be added the cost of the ferry journey. I presume that a working man would walk from the Circular Quay to his destination, though he might not do so. He might have to take the tram, and at any rate the cost of transit would prevent him from living at such a distance.

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3176. Would the class of population be similar to that which grew up so rapidly between Redfern Station and 6 miles out along the Illawarra line? No, I think the population would be of a different class.
3177. It would not be so numerous? It would certainly not be so numerous, and it would not be of the same description. I do not think that business men whose occupation required them to come into the city daily would seize upon that locality as a suitable place for a residence. I think the class of people who would go out there would be those who had more leisure, whose business would not require them to come to Sydney, and who would use the place more as a sanatorium; but that class is far from numerous.
3178. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Can you tell us approximately what amount of population the tramway, supposing it were extended to the present St. Leonards Station, would serve? I should say that it would serve nearly the whole of the population of St. Leonards.
3179. That is the present population? Yes, and any population that might grow up. There is a considerable population along the route that the tramway would take. Ridge-street, I think, is one of the streets and Falcon-street another along which the tramway would go. At the junction of the Lane Cove-road with North Sydney-road a large population would be served, and many people who would not be passengers by the railway would be benefited largely by the extension of the tramway.
3180. Do you think that if the tramway were connected with the railway it would be quite sufficient to meet the requirements of the population likely to be located there for some years? I am sure the tramway would be equal to the requirements of a population of from 30,000 to 35,000 people.
3181. Do you know what would be the distance from Milson's Point to St. Leonards by the tramway, supposing it were continued? About $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles.
3182. How would it show in comparison with the Sydney tramways. What paying tramway line have we of that length. Would the Waverley tram compare with it? No, that is about 5 miles long. I think that the tramway to Enmore would compare with it—of course the distance to Marrickville is longer.
3183. Do you think Enmore is fairly served by the tramway? Yes.
3184. Is it probable that North Shore will be more thickly populated than is the country between here and Enmore? No, not so thickly.
3185. Do you know whether the Enmore line pays? Yes, it is that portion of the line which pays so well.
3186. Then there could be no great objection to people travelling the same distance by tram at the North Shore? I think not. I think they should be very glad to get such a mode of conveyance.
3187. Could you give the Committee an approximate estimate of the cost of continuing the tram line from its present terminus to the St. Leonards Station? I think the work could be done for about £25,000, assuming that the winding machinery already in use is sufficient for the extension. If additional engine power were required, the cost would in some degree be increased.
3188. Supposing the tram did not offer sufficient convenience to the population to the east and west of the present line, would there be any great difficulty in constructing a cross line on the plateau, so as to meet their requirements? No difficulty whatever, except that the population might be too small to support the tramway. There would be no engineering difficulties.
3189. Suppose the extension of the line were to cost £50,000—suppose the Government did not think the existing machinery strong enough, would you recommend the expenditure of £250,000 upon the extension of the railway in preference to the expenditure of £50,000 upon a tramway? I should not.
3190. Do you think that the tram line would really meet all the necessary requirements of the population, present and prospective? Fully.
3191. And that the Committee would not be justified, under the circumstances, in recommending the extension of the railway? I should be very sorry indeed if I thought it possible that the Committee would recommend the extension of this line. I know, of course, that they have already refused to recommend this extension, and I think they did a great service to the country in voting against an extravagant outlay of money upon such an unprofitable and altogether unreasonable work.
3192. You have stated that you do not think there would be much return from goods traffic if the line were constructed? No, I do not.
3193. If the Committee have had evidence from several reliable witnesses that this line would be constructed merely for the local passenger traffic, would you consider them justified in recommending it? Certainly not.
3194. Would the tramway, as suggested by you, meet all the requirements of the local passenger traffic? Certainly.
3195. Without any doubt it would meet all the requirements of the passenger traffic? All the reasonable requirements.
3196. At any rate, for the next few years to come? I should say for the next twenty years.
3197. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you think that a tramway would create a traffic that would be the means eventually of making the railway pay, and as speedily as the extension of the line to Milson's Point would do? I think the line is an undesirable and disadvantageous line—a white elephant line, and, although the extension of the tramway will in some degree lessen the disadvantages, it will not make it a reproductive line. In my opinion it must always be a losing line.
3198. What do you think will most speedily create a traffic for the railway—its extension to Milson's Point, or the extension of the tramway to St. Leonards Station? I do not think that there will be very much difference. I do not think that the extension of the railway will bring a greater traffic than the extension of the tramway. I think that the tramway extension would answer all purposes just as well as the railway extension.
3199. How long do you think it would take to travel between St. Leonards Station and Milson's Point by rail, at the ordinary suburban rate? The grades are very severe, and if the train-loads were anything like those leaving Redfern for the suburbs it would take from 18 to 20 minutes.
3200. For $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles? I think it is 2 miles 78 chains—within 2 chains of 3 miles. I do not think that they would travel up that grade with a full load at a greater speed than 12 miles an hour. That is the regulation speed of trains going up such grades. The trams would go at the rate of 8 miles an hour.
3201. That would be less than 15 minutes for 2 miles 60 chains? But I understand that there are to be stoppages.
3202. Two stoppages? They would take up about 6 minutes. The lessening of speed and the regaining of speed at each station may be estimated to take 3 minutes, though the dead stop would not be so long.
3203. You are speaking now of trains leaving Milson's Point for Hornsby? Yes; or for St. Leonards.

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3204. What would be the time occupied in coming from Hornsby to Milson's Point? The trains take 40 minutes to get from Hornsby to St. Leonards, and it might fairly take them 18 to 20 minutes to do the rest of the distance. The grades between the two points are very severe.

3205. Do you think the whole distance between Milson's Point and Hornsby would, in course of time, yield a traffic equal to that at Burwood Station? I certainly do not.

3206. Not even taking into consideration the traffic that would probably be created by the railway? No.

3207. You think that the returns from Burwood Station will be greater than the whole of the traffic which we must anticipate from the line between Milson's Point and Hornsby? Certainly. If 3,000 people were brought in and taken out daily on the line, instead of four trains now running, you would require twenty trains; and the working expenses, instead of being £6,000 would be £30,000.

3208. I am speaking of the earnings—the gross earnings, not the net earnings? I do not think that the gross earnings would amount to anything like that. No doubt, if there were 3,000 people travelling in and out on the line, the gross earnings would be £30,000 a year; but a traffic of that kind would necessarily entail a large increase in the working expenses.

3209. Is it more costly to carry passengers by tram than by train? No; it is cheaper.

3210. Is not the cost of maintaining a railway more than that of maintaining a tram-line? I have seen evidence given on the subject, but it seemed to me that those who inquired and those who gave evidence did not understand what they were talking about. It was said that railways cost £800 a mile to work, while tramways cost £4,000 a mile; but it all depends upon the volume of traffic. The line between Sydney and Parramatta costs £9,000 per mile to work, and the tramway at North Shore costs £4,000 a mile to work. The line of railway between Narrandera and Hay and Jerilderie costs £240 a mile to work; and, though I am not quite sure of the figures, the tramways in Melbourne cost from £11,000 to £12,000, £13,000, or £14,000 a mile to work. The working expenses depend entirely upon the traffic on the line. If you run five trains a day, the working expenses will probably not be more than £400 or £500; but if you run 100 trains a day, the working expenses will increase proportionately. While the average working expenses on our railways might not be more than £800 a mile, they vary from £240 to £9,000 a mile.

3211. Your evidence would indicate that tramways may be worked as cheaply as railways? I am certain of it; more cheaply, if you take it by train mile. You will find that the cost per train mile on the tramways is less than on the railways.

3212. Then the evidence that the Committee has already had upon the subject is not quite accurate? It is entirely fallacious.

3213. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You admitted just now that the line from Pearce's Corner to St. Leonards is what may be called a white elephant? Yes, if we are allowed to use Eastern imagery.

3214. Bearing in mind that fact, and remembering the probability that the North Shore will some day grow into a Brooklyn or Birkenhead, do you not think it is advisable to bring the line down to the waters of Port Jackson somewhere? No, I do not. I think that if you really wished to make the line reproductive, and immediately, you should construct a bridge across the harbour, and bring it to Wynyard-square or somewhere in that neighbourhood.

3215. If we have a city railway station, it will very likely be on the line towards the proposed bridge, and in that case this line of railway would be a direct line from Newcastle to the city? I think it would be availed of, if it came direct into Sydney.

3216. Then you think that the necessity for the line depends on the construction of a bridge? I do not see any necessity for bringing the line to the foreshores of St. Leonards. I could see very great advantage, lessened considerably by the fact that the railway has already been constructed from Pearce's Corner by way of Ryde to Strathfield, in carrying out the original idea proposed, when the construction of a bridge over the harbour was first mooted, about 1880, of bringing the Northern line down to St. Leonards and across the harbour. If the line to Strathfield had not been constructed this line would have been of great advantage to the country.

3217. Putting aside the bridge matter for the present, and treating the proposal as it is sent to us, I understand that you do not think it desirable to bring the line from St. Leonards down to Milson's Point? I do not.

3218. Do you think it would be desirable to bring the line down to the head of Lavender Bay as the first section of the circular railway to serve the whole of North Shore, and to make part of the line to Manly and Pittwater? This strikes me as a new aspect of the case altogether, and I am not prepared to give an opinion right away. I never thought of it in connection with a line from St. Leonards, over Middle Harbour, to Pittwater.

3219. In the future, some such line must be carried out to serve the population of North Shore? I would certainly not extend the railway at present.

3220. Do you think it would be better to run the tram to it for passengers? Yes.

3221. You do not anticipate any goods traffic? No; and if any came for distribution to St. Leonards, the present terminus of the line is admirable, and very much better suited for a terminal station than Milson's Point would be.

3222. If a bridge were carried across the harbour, do you think that the train might be run from St. Leonards Station to a central station about Wynyard-square? Yes.

3223. *Mr. M'Court.*] Were you in office when it was proposed to construct the line from Hornsby to St. Leonards? Yes.

3224. Were you in favour of it? No.

3225. Did you oppose it? Yes; it was proposed to construct the line to Ball's Head, to meet the coal traffic, and I at once projected, in opposition to that, a scheme for the construction of a railway to Long-nose Point.

3226. *Vice-Chairman.*] You have been connected with the railways, as Commissioner, for a number of years, and you have had many opportunities of judging of the merits of the different lines projected? Yes.

3227. Had the system of cable tramways come into vogue during your tenure of office? Yes; the cable tramway at North Shore was carried out under my directions.

3228. You were in office during the initiation of the present steam-motor system? Yes.

3229. You have seen the cable system as carried out in Melbourne? Yes.

3230. Are you of opinion that it could be worked as successfully here? Not as successfully; but I think more successfully than the present motor system.

3231,

3231. When you say successfully, do you mean as giving convenience to the public, or commercially? The return would be greater, and the system would meet the convenience of the public, though not quite as well as the motor trams do, apart from their cumbersomeness and unadaptability to the streets.

3232. It is the case that cable trams stop at any point where passengers wish to get in or out? Yes, in Victoria they do. It is quite an omnibus service.

3233. You regard that as an additional convenience? Yes.

3234. How about the cables themselves;—are they found to be a source of great expense in Victoria? I suppose the working expenses of the system are affected by the life of the cables. They are not a source of greater expense in Melbourne than they are elsewhere; I should say not as much.

3235. Are the streets in Melbourne more level than they are in Sydney? That does not affect the life of the cable. It does not matter whether the line is level, or whether the grade is severe.

3236. It is at the corners that the friction comes in? There is great friction when rounding curves.

3237. The Melbourne system of trams does not approach so closely to a railway system as ours does? No.

3238. They have suburban railways? Yes.

3239. Have you thought of our tramways as being semi-railways after all? They are, in some degree.

3240. Do you think the cable lines could do the same amount of traffic with equal success? You would have to increase the number of routes; you could not take the traffic by cable along Elizabeth-street as you can with motors, because there would be a continuous succession of cars. There would have to be two or three outlets for the traffic.

3241. You think the cable service could not come up to the requirements of the traffic from the different localities? It would not be found equal to the requirements, if the present routes had to be followed.

3242. If the tramway system were to be resorted to at North Shore, would you recommend the use of steam-motors, or cables? I would certainly recommend the cable system.

3243. You think it would do the whole service? Yes.

3244. After the consideration you have given it, you think it would be a most undesirable thing for the Government to take the railway from St. Leonards to Milson's Point? I am convinced of it.

3245. Either by the Government route, or by an alternative line by way of North Sydney and Miller-street? Yes. I think that a cable tram would more than meet all present requirements, and would meet all future requirements.

3246. Is it the case that considerable inconvenience to traffic has been found to result through the parting of cables? That is an inconvenience.

3247. Do you know if it has frequently happened? No; not on our line.

3248. On the Victorian line? No.

3249. But it has happened? Then they have changed from one cable to the other. They have two cables. The splicing of the broken cable occupies very little time. The system does not break down in any way, except through the parting of a cable occasionally.

3250. The cable works underneath a slot? Yes.

3251. And, if it parts, it is connected again by mechanical means? Yes.

3252. In that case the traffic is not delayed for any considerable time? No.

3253. How long would it be delayed—a quarter of an hour? Not more.

3254. The whole of the traffic would be delayed? The whole of the traffic on one line would be delayed.

3255. *Dr. Garran.*] You say that a cable tram is not equal to doing the work which our motors do on a single line? I think that a cable tram can do quite as much as a motor tram.

3256. But I understood you to say that the procession of cars would be so rapid that there would be no getting between them? The cable system would not do so well if the traffic were concentrated on one line.

3257. A cable tram from Milson's Point to St. Leonards would have to bring down the concentrated traffic from Hornsby? Yes.

3258. Do you think a tramway is capable of carrying the number of passengers which a railway would bring to it? I am not of opinion that the traffic would be very great. I think that the population in that part of the country will never be so great as to necessitate a greater number than 150 people being brought down in one train, and two or three cable cars, together with the dummies, could convey that number.

3259. You do not anticipate that the traffic between St. Leonards and Hornsby will ever outgrow the capacity of two cable cars? Say, at the outside, three cars with the dummies.

3260. For the next twenty years? It may increase more than that in twenty years.

3261. Supposing it does? You could have twenty cable cars on the same line without duplicating it. They follow in quick succession in Melbourne. There is not an interval of ten seconds there between the trams sometimes.

3262. Have you room at Milson's Point to manœuvre twenty cable cars, one after another? We should have to get an additional space to do that.

3263. Where are you going to get it? There is plenty of land at Milson's Point belonging to the Tramway Department. You could put the cars on what is called the gridiron, bringing them out by a loop line.

3264. Let us suppose that you have under-estimated the traffic, and that it does outgrow any possibility of the cable line, what would you do then? I think I should build another cable line.

3265. You would prefer that to going in for a railway? I should, as it would be cheaper. I can see no justification for such an outlay as is proposed for the railway.

3266. Suppose it to be necessary to continue the railway to Milson's Point, would it not be dearer to resume land that was built upon than it would be to run through the Berry Estate as it is? In my opinion there would be no requirements to bring the line down there for twenty years.

3267. But will not the resumption of land be twice as expensive twenty years hence as it is now? I do not think that it would be twice as expensive, and the interest that would be saved would pay for it if it were.

3268. You would rather face an extra expenditure twenty years hence than an expenditure now, which would be unprofitable for ten or twenty years to come? I would, for the reason given.

C. A.
Goodchap,
Esq., M.P.
29 July, 1890.

WEDNESDAY, 30 JULY, 1890.

Present:

THE HON. JOHN LACKEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

WILLIAM McCOURT, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

William Theodore Foxlee, Esq., M. Inst. C.E., Deputy Engineer for Existing Lines, Railway Department, sworn, and examined:—

W. T.
Foxlee, Esq.,
M.Inst.C.E.

30 July, 1890.

3269. *Mr. Trickett.*] You are Deputy Engineer for Existing Lines in the Railway Department? Yes.

3270. Are you well acquainted with the Government proposal to connect Milson's Point with the St. Leonards Railway? Yes.

3271. Is that from a personal survey of the line? Yes; I have been over both routes.

3272. Over the Government route and the route suggested by Mr. Hamand? Yes.

3273. Have you a paper which you wish to read? I have made up some notes for my guidance. Do you wish me to read my statement, or will you choose to elicit the information you require by means of question and answer?

3274. I think it would be convenient for you to read your summary of convictions, and we might ask you some questions about them afterwards, but, before going further, I would like to know if your evidence will be from an engineering point of view? Wholly so.

3275. And will have no regard to the probable traffic on the line? No; it will be solely from an engineering point of view.

3276. What has been your experience as an engineer? I have had twenty-four years' experience as an engineer. Before I came to the colony I was engineer to the Great Eastern Railway Company for a system of new railways in the county of Essex. I was four years with that Company, but previously I had been with the London and North Western Railway Company for twelve or thirteen years, and had been connected more or less with all their large works. Before I left them they offered to me the charge of the Northern Section of their Railway—in fact, they proposed to put under my charge all the lines north of the Mersey—the maintenance of the main trunk road to Scotland, and all the branches; but I preferred construction to maintenance work. Before I went to the North Western Company I had been engaged for some years with the London and South Western Railway Company, and had the run over the whole of their system; and before that, again, I had been with an engineer in Westminster, with whom I served my articles, who had foreign as well as a general engineering practice. I am a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers of London, so that you will see that I ought to know something about railway work.

3277. How long have you been in the colonies? Since the end of February.

3278. 1890? Of this year.

3279. Since that time —? I have been engaged by the Railway Commissioners here in connection with the Existing Lines. They instructed me to look at the two schemes now before the Committee, and the first thing I did was to ascertain the cost of each. I found that the cost of the Government scheme to Milson's Point was for works £143,000, and for land resumptions £103,200—making a total of £246,200; and that the cost of Mr. Hamand's scheme was estimated at £350,677 10s. I then went over the two lines, and had sections taken. The result of my calculations is this: That the works on Mr. Hamand's scheme would cost £289,200—that is only approximate, but near enough for all practical purposes. Having prepared a rough plan, I asked the Government Valuator for a rough estimate of the cost of land resumption, which he made out to be £166,000, bringing the total cost of the line up to £455,200. I have looked carefully into the whole matter, and it appears to me that the Government scheme, which is cheaper and shorter than Mr. Hamand's scheme, would accommodate the present population better than Mr. Hamand's line would do. The statement which I have written out is as follows—

It will be seen that there is a difference of more than £200,000 between the two schemes; and unless it can be shown that Mr. Hamand's line would be more useful than the Government line, I submit that this additional expenditure should not be incurred. Let us examine Mr. Hamand's scheme. The station at North Sydney-road is not required, as the present station at St. Leonards serves the district. If, however, the population to the north should require further accommodation, a small station could, without difficulty, be constructed on the present line. This would be much nearer.

With regard to the station at Miller-street, the proposed tramway will serve the population much better than the line, this is, therefore, quite unnecessary.

At Willoughby Falls, Mr. Hamand's station is only 152 feet above sea level, whereas the bulk of the population reside on the plateau at a much higher level, and are much more conveniently accommodated by the tramway. This station could only be of use in the event of a population springing up in the future in the valley. As regards Bent-street, the population on the high ground to the west would continue to travel by the tramway to Milson's Point, whilst those residing below the station would use the steamer from the adjacent bay. No traffic could be expected from the high ground on the eastern side of Neutral Bay, as the station could not be reached from that side, owing to the precipitous nature of the ground. It is proposed to provide accommodation for goods here, but the approach to the yard would be very awkward, as the station would be at a very low level.

The station at High-street would certainly be useless, as those on the high ground, who have the tramway practically at their doors, would certainly continue to use it in preference to taking the train to Milson's Point; and those between the railway and the bay would undoubtedly take the steamer direct to Circular Quay. At Milson's Point, Mr. Hamand suggests a station about 600 feet long on the level, but this, I think, would not be found adequate to the requirements of a terminal station. Referring to the section, it appears that he is compelled to start his gradient of 1 in 70 much nearer Milson's Point than in the Government scheme, otherwise the length of tunnel would be very largely increased. But by commencing to rise so soon he practically cuts off the greater portion of the valuable frontage to Lavender Bay, which would have to be resumed. No one knows better than Mr. Hamand that this would be most disadvantageous. In the Government scheme there would be a length of about 2,360 feet of water frontage on the level.

I have prepared a section of Mr. Hamand's line on such a scale as will enable the Committee to realize the very heavy character of the earthwork. It will be seen that the cuttings on Mr. Hamand's scheme are really very much heavier than would appear at first, and I make the total quantity of excavation double as much as Mr. Hamand says it would be, and very much larger than the excavation on the Government line. Further, the cuttings are not such as could be got at and worked expeditiously

expeditiously. Some of them are long, and would take a long time to excavate, whereas in the Government scheme we could work at the little cuttings at each end, and pitch the excavation into the hollows, so that the work would be done in half the time.

It will be seen that much of the line is in far heavier cutting than shown upon Mr. Hamand's section, which is drawn to a very small scale. You cannot take out quantities by a section drawn to a scale of 100 feet vertical. I can only think that Mr. Hamand has prepared a larger section to enable him to take out his quantities, because any engineer knows that you could not estimate quantities accurately from a section drawn to a scale like this, where a thickness of a pencil line might make a difference of a foot in depth. (The section exhibited to the Committee is on a scale of 4 chains to an inch horizontal and 40 feet vertical, which is quite small enough.) This is especially the case between North Sydney-road Station and Willoughby Falls, and may be to some small extent due to the modifications suggested by Mr. Hamand since his first plan was submitted to the Committee, but not wholly so, especially that portion of the railway between Miller-street and the Willoughby Falls Stations, where it traverses the high ground between the Chinese gardens and Long Bay.

It may here be pointed out that there is a discrepancy of 10 feet between the figured and scaled heights in Mr. Hamand's section between Milson's Point and Bent-street; but this appears to be a clerical error, and I have assumed that he intends his line to be carried out as drawn, and not as figured. I have indicated this modification in blue colour on the section. I would further remark that there appears to be a considerable error in the positions of the streets on the south side of Long Bay marked upon Mr. Hamand's tracing. They are shown about 8 chains further north than they really are. This would, of course, considerably alter the centre line between Miller-street and Willoughby Falls' Station, and may to some extent account for the astonishing increase of cutting between those points. With regard to Mr. Hamand's suggestion, that his line would form part of an extension to Manly, and could be continued thence from Willoughby Falls' Station, I am not quite sure that this is the correct route for a branch to Manly, and it should be pointed out that by continuing Mr. Hamand's line it would involve the construction of a long tunnel under the high ground traversed by the Military-road, and consequently the line would be quite inaccessible for a considerable distance to the adjacent population; and further, the junction which is shown upon plan in tunnel would be most dangerous.

Mr. Hamand states that the increased distance trains would have to travel over his line would be more than met by the augmented speed due to the flatter grades. I have asked the Traffic Superintendent to prepare a time-table for the alternative routes, from which it will be seen that the journey from Milson's Point to St. Leonards, *via* the Government line would only occupy thirteen minutes, as against eighteen minutes by Mr. Hamand's route, thus effecting a saving of five minutes in favour of the former.

The following is a time-table which I have had prepared to show the time which it would take to run over the proposed extension of the Hornsby and St. Leonards line to Milson's Point:—

<i>Government Line.</i>				<i>Mr. Hamand's Line.</i>			
Milson's Point to St. Leonards, 2 miles 73 chains.				Milson's Point to St. Leonards, 4 miles 1 chain.			
M.	ch.		Noon.	M.	ch.		Noon.
0	00	Milson's Point, depart	12 0	0	00	Milson's Point, depart	12 0
1	42	Bay-road	12 6	0	55	High-street	12 3
2	16	Edwards'-road	12 10	1	32	Bent-street	12 6
2	73	St. Leonards, arrive	12 13	2	12	Cammeray-road	12 10
				2	64	Miller-street	12 13
				3	35	North Sydney-rd.	12 16
				4	1	St. Leonards, arrive	12 18

Speed for above time-table 20 miles per hour, allowing 1½ minutes for a stop.

Speed for above time-table 25 miles an hour, allowing 1½ minutes for a stop.

Mr. Hamand says in his evidence that the 1 in 50 gradient at Chatswood could be cut out for £4,000 or £5,000. It is by no means an easy matter, as Mr. Hamand must well know, to alter the gradient of an existing line whilst the trains are running, especially when that line happens to be a single one; and I am of opinion that this could not be done in the present instance for less than double the amount named by Mr. Hamand; and, supposing it were altered, what about the remaining gradients sharper than 1 in 70? To alter all these would be most difficult and costly, but, unless this were done, I fail to see the advantage to be gained by adopting Mr. Hamand's proposal in preference to the cheaper line suggested by the Government.

There are one or two other points to which I would wish to draw attention—one, that there will be about half a million yards surplus of excavation on Mr. Hamand's line. It would be interesting to know how he proposes to deal with the redundancy of excavation, in view of the high value of land on the North Shore. Also, that whereas Mr. Hamand's line could only be adapted to form a junction with a tunnel, the Government scheme could be utilized for either a bridge or a tunnel across the harbour.

With regard to the time required to complete the work—a glance at the sections will show at once that the Government line could be completed in a much shorter time than Mr. Hamand's, on account of the earthwork being situated in a number of short cuttings, divided by embankments; these cuttings, it is obvious, could be worked from the ends, whereas in Mr. Hamand's line, with its long cutting and tunnel, the progress could only be very slow.

These are my impartial views. I have taken a good deal of trouble in the matter, and have tried to find out all I could about it. This is all I have to say about the question from an engineering aspect, on which alone I feel myself confident to speak.

3280. You have stated that on the Government line the trains would travel at the rate of 20 miles an hour, and on Mr. Hamand's extension at the rate of 25 miles an hour? Yes.

3281. Why is that? That is the rate at which we work our trains over similar grades on the existing lines. I went to the Traffic Superintendent, Mr. Richardson, and asked him to prepare a time-table for these lines, assuming that he had to work trains over them, and asked him to let me know exactly the speed at which the trains would travel, and the time they would take to travel over the alternative routes. What I have given you is the speed at which we could travel over these grades.

3282. I presume that the difference in speed is caused by its being safer to travel fast over an easy grade than over a steep grade? It is a question of engine power. You cannot go up a steep grade as quickly as you can go up a flat grade.

3283. But is it not also a matter of safety? I do not think that that enters into the calculation.

3284. If the grade were reduced to 1 in 20, you could go as quickly down it as you could down a grade of 1 in 100? I am speaking of the up grade, and I say that the loads being the same, the grade rules the speed when you are travelling up-hill.

3285. Let us consider that we are going down hill. Is there any difference in safety between travelling down a grade of 1 in 50 and down a grade of 1 in 70, remembering that you are finishing up with a terminus at the water's edge? I think there is really very little difference. You could travel at a good speed down either grade with safety.

3286. At the same speed? Practically at the same speed.

3287. Suppose the grade got steeper? Of course, a line could be drawn. If you ask me if a train can travel 60 miles an hour down a 1 in 20 grade as safely as down 1 in 70 grade—I say no.

3288. But in going down hill you can travel over a grade of 1 in 50 and 1 in 70 at the same speed with the same degree of safety? Yes, practically.

3289. Would there be any difference on these particular lines? I do not think so.

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3290. You stated that your estimate of Mr. Hamand's proposed line was £289,200 for works—have you arrived at that after a pretty fair calculation? I have made a very careful calculation—as careful as one can make with a preliminary survey of this kind, and I have no doubt in my mind that my estimate is somewhere near the mark. I have not the slightest objection to giving you the details of it.

3291. I only wish to know if you have based your calculations on the same basis as the Government proposal is based on? I have, practically. I have adopted in some instances Mr. Hamand's own figures, and in other instances I have put the prices lower than he has, where I think he has rather over-done it. I may say that there is a very large excess of excavation on his line—a much larger quantity than appears in Mr. Hamand's estimate, I think.

3292. Do you think your estimate is very fair? I think it is as fair an estimate as an engineer can make under the circumstances.

3293. You also state that Mr. Hamand has only provided about 600 feet for station purposes on the level at Milson's Point, and that that would be quite insufficient for the traffic;—would you mind explaining that answer a little? The space in which a station can be put at Milson's Point is very narrow, and from what I have seen of the place it does not appear to me that you could get your goods and passenger stations alongside each other. Therefore it would be necessary to deal with the goods traffic at one end and the passenger traffic at the other; but they should all be on the level, not on a 1 in 70 grade.

3294. That is, if there is any goods traffic? If you are going to make any provision for goods traffic it appears to me that it must be dealt with not alongside the passenger station, but at one end of it.

3295. At which end? At whichever end you might decide, clear of the 1 in 70 grade. It does not appear to me that there is room between the water and the high ground to enable you to get your goods and passenger stations alongside. But the stations should be on the level, and by starting with a grade of 1 in 70 you cut off the possibility of extending the station lengthwise.

3296. That would be the case even if the goods traffic were very small? Certainly. If you were going to provide accommodation for goods traffic, it should be at one end or the other of the passenger station.

3297. You appear to have had large experience in the construction of railway lines and in railway matters generally;—how would a length of platform of 600 feet compare with the platforms which you know of at terminal stations? In a terminal station, the engine runs up to the buffer-stop at the end, and you must provide sufficient room for it to run round, and for a cross-over road, so that you have to allow more length than the actual length of the train. Further than that, you have to put up your station buildings, and so on, so that you would want more than the 600 feet.

3298. How would 600 feet compare with the length at Redfern? I cannot speak as to that without inquiry.

3299. Suppose the land at Milson's Point were widened, and more space made available for the line? If it were possible to widen it sufficiently—

3300. By building into the harbour or by cutting away the Government land? Even then you would lose by the 1 in 70 grade a great part of the water frontage, because you would be toiling up above the water, and thereby cutting off the approach to the frontage.

3301. When you come to your ultimate terminus you immediately begin to rise? Yes, and you are cutting off the approach to your water frontage.

3302. Mr. Hamand does not propose to rise before he gets clear of his 600 feet level? Exactly; but on leaving the end of the 600 feet he begins to mount up, and as soon as he does that he gets away from the water frontage, and you could not avail yourself of that frontage—although I take it you would have to resume it—because the line skirts the edge of the bay.

3303. Have you sufficient knowledge of the subject, from your short residence in Sydney, to be able to say whether 600 feet on the level at Milson's Point would or would not be sufficient for all the traffic which would be brought there by the railway? Judging by my experience of suburban lines at home, I think it would be very unwise to tie yourselves down to a level of 600 feet in a case like this.

3304. You could not undertake to say whether 600 feet would be sufficient for present requirements? From the experience which I have had, I should say that, in all probability, that space would not be sufficient.

3305. You know that it has cost a considerable amount of money to bring the railway to its present terminus at St. Leonards? I have heard so.

3306. Seeing that the proposed extension is to cost, in round figures, £250,000, what is your opinion as to its desirability? I am unable to form any opinion, as far as the probable traffic is concerned, although I should think there would be a good deal of traffic; but it appears to me that, having spent so large a sum of money in bringing the railway to St. Leonards, it would be a pity to leave it there without trying to make it pay. I should say, take the line on to Milson's Point.

3307. Even at the expense of £250,000? Most certainly; that is my conviction. But please understand that I am not in a position to speak as to the probable amount of traffic. Looking at the matter as an engineer, I should say that it would be folly to leave the line where it is.

3308. Have you considered the advisability of connecting the present tramway with the railway? I have heard that that connection has been suggested.

3309. What do you think of the idea? I do not think that it would answer, because you would then have a break in the journey, which you need not have, and which I am afraid would very seriously interfere with the prospects of the line. If people had to make a third change in the journey, it would prevent them from going to reside out on the line.

3310. Have you had much experience in tramway management or construction? I know something of tramway construction, but I have not had much experience in it. My experience has been chiefly in railway construction.

3311. If a tramway goes through a thickly-populated district, such as that at North Shore, between Milson's Point and St. Leonards Station, is it not more convenient than a railway? A tramway is all right for a short distance, but when you get beyond a limited distance, I think you are taxing people too much by it. The constant stoppages make the journey too wearisome, and I think I am right in saying that it has been found in practice that people prefer to travel by railway when the distance is beyond a mile and a half or two miles.

3312. Take the district between the present terminus of the railway and Milson's Point—do you not think that a tramway there would serve the people very well? The present tramway?

3313.

3313. Yes? It appears to serve them admirably.

3314. A tram stops more often than a railway? Certainly; but in this case people would have to go on a considerable distance by railway after leaving the tramway, and therefore they would not care to take a long journey by tram.

3315. A tramway would, perhaps, serve the people living out about 2 miles from Milson's Point better than a railway would serve them? Yes.

3316. But a railway would come in for people who lived at a greater distance out? Yes.

3317. The top plan which you exhibit shows a section of the Government proposed line? Yes, as far as Lavender Bay.

3318. From St. Leonards Station to the head of Lavender Bay? Yes. The level portion of the line on to Milson's Point is not shown there.

3319. There is some tunnelling on the line? There is one tunnel.

3320. Do I understand you to say that the line is a much easier line to construct than that proposed by Mr. Hamand? It would be constructed much more quickly. [*Witness then explained that since the cuttings on the Government line were small, they could be taken in hand simultaneously, and the earth excavated could be thrown into the valleys, whereas the long cuttings on Mr. Hamand's line could not be dealt with so expeditiously. The earthwork required to fill up the hollow on the right hand side of the line at Milson's Point, marked green on Mr. Hamand's section, would not come from the adjoining tunnel, but from the side cutting.*] *Continuing*:—What are you going to do with the 500,000 cubic yards of surplus excavation on Mr. Hamand's line?

3321. Could you not follow out the general route of Mr. Hamand's line, and get rid of that? I think I am right in saying that however you took it there would be a very large amount of surplus excavation.

3322. But could we, by going a little to the right or left, avoid it? I have come here to help the Committee, if I may say so, and to tell them what I think of the line; I do not think you could.

3323. You do not see any getting over this difficulty? Perhaps, by varying the line a little, you might have a little less cutting, but I do not think that you will get away from a very large surplus.

3324. You do not see your way to reduce this surplus to any material extent? I think you could not do so. You might cut it down by dropping into the valley a little, but then you would get into difficulties with your roads, and I do not think that it would make any material difference.

3325. Have you considered Mr. Hamand's extension, with a view to the extension of the line towards Manly Beach? I have looked at it, but the hill under which the tunnel runs is parallel to the gully towards Long Bay, and Mr. Hamand has shown a junction somewhere in the tunnel, I think. Unless I was very much pressed by circumstances, I should never dream of proposing such a thing. The line would have to pierce this hill, unless it wandered right away down along the arm and round the bay. As it is shown on the plan, it would apparently have to pierce the high ground, and then you would have a long tunnel, so that the residents above would not be able to avail themselves of the railway.

3326. Do you mean to say that if Mr. Hamand wanted to branch off to Manly Beach he would have to do so in the middle of a tunnel? He shows a junction somewhere in the tunnel, and then curves round.

3327. I should like you to be particular about this. It appears to me to be a very undesirable thing to branch off in the middle of a tunnel? I am quite certain that the tracing which was given to me shows a junction in the tunnel. Mr. Hamand's tunnel is under Grassmere-road. It extends from the red mark, which represents Willoughby Falls' Station, to somewhere about Bent-street, and the junction is shown between those two points.

3328. That would be the junction of the line branching off in a north-easterly direction to Manly? Yes.

3329. And it would be in the middle of the tunnel? Yes.

3330. You think that would be very undesirable? Most undesirable, and Mr. Hamand knows it as well as anybody else.

3331. Are you prepared to say that you think the Government scheme is unmistakably the best? I say, roundly, that the direction shown by the Government in their amended plan is, to my mind, the best. Probably it might be improved a little, but, speaking generally, I think that if you want to extend the Hornsby line to Milson's Point you must follow the direction indicated by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways.

3332. Does it follow the natural features of the country? Very largely. You would get the lightest, shortest, and cheapest line there, and the line that will pay the best, taking all things into consideration.

3333. You say that the route might possibly be slightly improved? I have seen the route marked by a dotted line on the map, and it corresponds with the section which I have here. It might be possible to vary it a chain or two, and so reduce the cutting, making it a little bit cheaper, but, speaking generally, the route appears to me to be the best that you could get.

3334. *Dr. Garran*.] As Engineer for Existing Lines it is, I presume, part of your duty to plan station accommodation? It is.

3335. In bringing the line down to Milson's Point you are bringing the traffic down to tranship it into a steam ferry? Yes.

3336. Would you have a double line of rails at your passenger station—one for a departure platform, and the other for an arrival platform? I understand that the line is intended to be a double one from St. Leonards to Milson's Point.

3337. In any case you would have a double line? In any case I should have a double line at the station. It would not be absolutely necessary, but I think that it would be desirable.

3338. Would your departure platform be on the wharf side? The departure platform would be on the bay side.

3339. And the arrival platform on the inner side? Yes.

3340. You would expect your passengers to go round the end of the line when they landed from the steamer? Undoubtedly.

3341. You said that you would require an additional length of line to enable the engines to cross from one set of rails to the other, and you would still make you passengers go right round the end of that? Undoubtedly; that is the usual way of constructing a platform.

3342. You could do it by making the departure platform a little further down the bay, and over-running it to come to the arrival platform, having them both on the same line? That would be possible, but not desirable. We find that it is better to have the platforms opposite.

3343. Would there be any advantage in a case like this in having them linear? I do not think there would,

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3344. For the immediate purposes of the passenger work, you would not want more than 600 feet? I do not think I said that.
3345. Would you want that for passenger traffic only? I think more would be desirable, inasmuch as you want a circulating area at the end of your station, and you should also have your buildings at the end.
3346. If you were asked to plan a station, how much more than 600 feet would you take for it? It would be desirable to have a somewhat longer length than that; but I am not prepared to say how much longer. If I had the plans before me I could draw out a station in 10 minutes; but I would rather not give an answer without having all the details at hand. Every circumstance—the approach to the steamer, and so on—would have to be considered, and I should be misleading you if I tied myself down by saying how many feet are desirable.
3347. You would rather have more than 600 feet than less than that length? Yes.
3348. You like to have plenty? Yes.
3349. It has been given in evidence that there is no likelihood of anything like heavy traffic on this line at present? I have understood so.
3350. As an engineer, you would not waste money in making more wharfage accommodation than was wanted? Certainly not.
3351. What is the maximum wharfage accommodation which you think would be required at the start? It is impossible to say. I should reserve all my foreshore, so as to be able to accommodate any amount of traffic. I should not acquire the foreshore along the eastern side of Lavender Bay, and then throw it away by taking the line on a gradient above the greater portion of it. If this were my own enterprise I would bring down the line as quickly as I could, and get it on the level, as Mr. Deane proposes to do, because then I should have a chance of dealing with any amount of traffic.
3352. I am assuming that the Government is going to buy the whole of that frontage; but I asked you, as an engineer, how much we should require for wharfage purposes immediately? I am unable to tell you, but I think you should lay the line out so as to be able to use the whole of the frontage if you wanted it.
3353. We should not want more than 1,000 feet at first? For goods?
3354. For suburban goods? It might be desirable to have a little more than that for approaches and so on.
3355. The estimate given to us includes the expense of making wharves along the whole of the frontage from where Mr. Deane's line touches the wharf level, which it does not do until it rounds the head of the bay;—what I want to know from you is, shall we want that length of frontage at the start? Certainly not.
3356. We might make a saving on that to some extent? You would not want that length of wharfage at the present time.
3357. You have criticised the length which Mr. Hamand allows as insufficient;—what I want to know is, what would be sufficient? My point is that you should not throw away a yard of the frontage.
3358. But you would not utilize it all immediately? No; but I should be in a position to do so.
3359. You would have it in readiness for use, but you would not go to the expense of putting down piles and building wharves all along? Certainly not, at first.
3360. This expenditure on wharves might be minimised in the first instance? If it includes the reclamation of land and the construction of wharves for goods purposes all along one side of the bay, you might take something off it.
3361. Do you think that for a short time a moderate quantity of goods traffic could be dealt with at the passenger station? You cannot deal with it at a passenger station.
3362. You must have a certain length of wharf for it, and you cannot say, without local study, what length that would be? I would rather not say.
3363. Do you think that a continuous wharf for a passenger terminus is better than a dock. We have had two plans—one showing a wharf and the other a dock? A terminal dock station?
3364. Yes? I should think a terminal dock station would be the best thing, with an arrival and departure platform, and a circulating area at the end.
3365. Would you put your arrival platform at one side and your departure platform at the other? Yes.
3366. Then your passengers would not want to go round at all—not on the north end? Not on the north end. I am afraid I do not fully understand your question. I have had in my mind a terminal dock station with a platform on either side, and a circulating area at the end, beyond which would be the booking offices.
3367. But I am speaking of a marine dock. We have had plans for a dock station of that kind put before us, and I asked you whether it would be better than a wharf? I think that a station such as I have described would be the best.
3368. Your recommendation is that the Government should possess itself of the whole frontage? If either scheme of railway were carried out, I take it that you would be bound to possess yourselves of the whole frontage.
3369. You think it will all be wanted before very long? I am not quite prepared to say that, but I think that having acquired the frontage it would be a pity to render it inaccessible by commencing the grade near Milson's Point.
3370. The Government has put before us an amended plan, showing a station in Lavender Bay, some distance short of Milson's Point, do you think that there would be sufficient advantage in saving the extra expenditure which it would cost to go on to Milson's Point by stopping short? I do not. Milson's Point seems to me to be the right place to have your terminus.
3371. You think it is the natural terminus? Certainly.
3372. Any railway would have to go there sooner or later? Either of these railways would have to be taken there sooner or later, I think, if they stopped short of it. It is the point towards which the traffic converges.
3373. You think it is important to make the water journey as short as possible? Certainly.
3374. It would not do to have the passenger traffic near the head of Lavender Bay and the goods traffic near Milson's Point? Certainly not. I would rather put the passenger station near Milson's Point and stop the goods traffic at the head of Lavender Bay, where you have more room.
3375. Supposing the tramway as it exists now were continued to St. Leonards Station, do you think it would be equal to the probable traffic of the railway? I say that if you wish to make full use of the line you have

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have already constructed, you cannot do better than bring it down to Milson's Point. I do not think that an extension of the tramway would meet the case.

3376. Supposing the line were your own property, would you borrow an extra £250,000 in order to continue it to the point, or would you content yourself with an expenditure of £50,000 in extending the tramway to the railway? I think I should continue the railway to the point, as I should then stand a better chance of getting a return for my outlay.

3377. You would have a better financial result, you think? I do, undoubtedly.

3378. Do you think that nine companies of directors out of ten, who were versed in the management of railways, would take the same view? I feel sure of it. I was never more astonished in my life than when I came to the colony and saw the railway stopping where it does. I asked why it did so, and I was told at once that there was a talk of continuing it down to the water, which is the natural thing to do with it. No railway company in England would ever think of stopping such a line at the top of a hill.

3379. We have stopped a line at the top of a hill for a number of years—at Redfern? That is rather a different matter.

3380. This is really a suburban line? Yes; and it is cut off from the city by the harbour, whereas the passenger station at Redfern is practically in the city.

3381. The city is the natural destination of the passenger traffic, and here we leave a gap? Yes; and by leaving the line where it is you throw your money away.

3382. You do not think that the cable line bridges the distance? I do not think it does a bit.

3383. If we spent £50,000 in going to St. Leonards with the tram, should we still have to continue the railway? Yes, eventually.

3384. It would only be putting off the construction of the railway for a few years? Yes; and it seems to me that you have at North Shore a better suburban district than any other round Sydney.

3385. You have seen some of the suburban lines round London? Yes.

3386. You recognise that the mere necessity for shifting into a steam punt at the point is a slight drawback to the North Shore Railway? Yes.

3387. Do you think that the double shift from the tram would increase the drawback? I feel sure of it.

3388. And would check people going out on the line? Yes.

3389. We had better facilitate traffic by giving the best convenience that we can? Certainly.

3390. You have been familiar with the suburban traffic of London;—what population ought we to have to work upon to make an expenditure of £250,000 profitable? That is a traffic matter upon which I do not feel competent to speak. I should rather attend to the engineering part of the question. What you really have to do is to spend more money in order to make a line pay which does not already pay. You have to induce people to go out on to the line. It is not the present population that you have to think of, but the population which you may induce to go out on to the line.

3391. You do not know of any instance exactly like this? Not quite analogous to this.

3392. *Mr. Tonkin.*] You stated just now that the trains could run at a speed of 20 miles an hour up and down the 1 in 50 grade; did you take into consideration the stations on the line, and the length of it? Yes. I should never attempt to lay a statement like that before the Committee without considering it thoroughly. I will give you the mileage of each station.

3393. I do not wish for the details, but I had no idea that such a pace could be got up between these short distances; the distance between one station and another is, I suppose, about three-quarters of a mile? On which line?

3394. On the Government line? The first station from Milson's Point on that line would be at Bay-road, a distance of 1 mile 42 chains.

3395. And from there to the next station? The next station is at 2 miles 16 chains from the point; nearly three quarters of a mile from the first station. The third station is at 2 miles 73 chains.

3396. A little over half a mile further on? Not quite three quarters of a mile.

3397. Taking into consideration the time it would take to draw up to and get away from a station, do you think trains could travel on that line at a rate of 20 miles an hour? I am quite sure of it. I have allowed one and a half minute for slowing down and getting up speed at each stopping-place.

3398. You are quite satisfied that the statement which you have made has been carefully considered, and is correct? Yes.

3399. Could you inform me whether the cuttings on Mr. Hamand's line are through solid ground, or are they side cuttings? They are through solid ground, undoubtedly, though part of the ground is sidelong.

3400. You could surely find some space for the surplus soil where there are side cuttings? It all depends. You may have a sidelong cutting, and still not cut out on either side, and in that case you have to get rid of your material. If you take a line along the surface, and the line is sidelong on one side, you have to bench it out, and on the other to throw down the soil; but the depth of cutting on the section is shown along the centre line, and there would be no slope that would clear it.

3401. There are none of these surface cuttings on the section? No; though I do not say that the ground is not sidelong somewhat. (*Witness here explained by sketching on the section.*)

3402. Have you had much experience with tramways? Not a large amount of experience with tramways.

3403. You could not, then, give us an idea of the amount of traffic which could be served by a tramway? No; it is a matter about which I would rather not speak.

3404. Then how can you form an opinion as to the advisability of expending £250,000 upon the construction of a railway, as against an expenditure of from £40,000 to £50,000 upon the extension of the already existing tram-line? You ask me as to the amount of traffic that a tramway would accommodate. That is quite another thing to asking me whether it would be a desirable thing to expend £50,000 in extending the tramway to St. Leonards. Since there must be a break in the journey, I know that that would be undesirable.

3405. This investigation is not into the possibility of constructing a railway—we want to know if, after the railway was constructed, it would pay;—what I want to get at is, would it be advisable under the circumstances of the case to lay out £250,000 in the construction of a railway, or would the extension of the present tramway to the terminus of the railway, at a cost of something like £40,000, meet all requirements? I have already said that I would rather not express an opinion on matters concerning traffic. I have come here to speak on engineering matters only, and, as an engineer, I say that it appears very undesirable to have an additional break in the means of conveyance to the higher portions of North

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Shore by extending the tram-line to St. Leonards, instead of bringing the railway down to Milson's Point. 3406. From the experience which you have had of tramways, have you come to any conclusion as to the advantages of a tramway system for a short journey in a thickly populated place, as compared with those of a railway, say, up to 2 miles? Up to 2 miles a tramway answers very nicely.

3407. Do you think that a tramway going through a township would be more advantageous to the local traffic than a railway? That depends upon a variety of circumstances—it depends upon where your railway is going to, together with other things.

3408. I am speaking only of the local traffic—that traffic to be served by $2\frac{1}{2}$ or $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of line;—do you think that a tramway stopping at every street would in that distance better serve the traffic than a railway, which would only stop at certain stations, would do? I should like to know all the circumstances before I expressed an opinion upon an imaginary case; but if you ask me whether the North Shore cable tram would not serve the population better than Mr. Hamand's line, I say, yes; while, if you ask me if it would be better than an extension of the railway to Milson's Point by the Government route, I say, no, I do not think it would.

3409. We have evidence to show that an extension of the railway would have to depend upon the local traffic for revenue;—I want to know whether you think that local traffic would not be better served by the present tramway line, or an extension of it, say, crossing Long Bay, and on to the railway, than by the extension of the railway? I think that the existing population adjoining the present tramway on its extension towards Miller-street, would undoubtedly be better served by such a tram-line than by a railway. The people on the plateau would be better served.

3410. Suppose there is a distance of a mile between the present tramway and the railway, do you think that the people living on half a mile of that country, if not on three-quarters of a mile of it, would be better served by a tramway than by the railway? I am not prepared to say; but, looking at the map, I should think that the tramway would serve the population as far as the Lane Cove-road very nicely, while the traffic on the west would naturally gravitate towards the railway. Speaking broadly, it would appear that a tramway would very nicely serve the population on the high ground, and that any future population which might spring up to the west of Lane Cove-road, would be served by the railway.

3411. Suppose the railway were constructed with stations about a mile apart, would not the greater part of the local traffic still gravitate to the tramway, since the trains would not run more than five or six times a day? Speaking generally, people will take advantage of the tramway where it is convenient, and where the distance is not too great; but where there are houses adjoining a railway station, you may depend upon it that people will take advantage of the trains, especially if they have any great distance to travel. They will arrange their time for starting to suit the departure of the trains.

3412. Your idea of the construction of the line is that it would serve the people on the slopes? Yes; to the west of Lane Cove-road; and that it should be constructed, more especially in view of the traffic beyond.

3413. Your idea is that the line should be constructed for the purpose of bringing people down to Port Jackson from beyond Hornsby? No; I am thinking of a suburban traffic—a residential traffic.

3414. Still you think that a railway would serve better than an extension of the tramway to the present railway terminus? That is my opinion.

3415. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you travelled over the Great Northern line to its connection with the Queensland line? I have not.

3416. How far up the Northern line have you been? I have not been on it at all; I have not had an opportunity of travelling on it, owing to the immense amount of business I have had to transact during the short time I have been in the colony.

3417. You are aware that it traverses a tract of country, nearly 400 miles in length? I believe that it does.

3418. Do you not think that it is desirable to connect a great line like that with the deep waters of a harbour, if practicable? If the main town were near the deep water, I should certainly extend it.

3419. If you had the opportunity of doing so, you would connect a great intercolonial line like that with the deep waters of a harbour? I would, speaking generally; but if I understand you correctly, this line is already connected with the deep waters of the harbour.

3420. It will be when this proposal is carried out? Is it not already at Darling Harbour?

3421. It may be to a certain extent. But the proposed extension would effect a saving of 10 or 11 miles in distance—would not that be a considerable advantage? It would appear to be, in distance.

3422. You have informed the Committee that there are some very considerable cuttings on Mr. Hamand's line—what are the depths of those cuttings? The section which I have prepared is only approximate; but, commencing at the Lane Cove-road, the cutting at the deepest place is nearly 40 feet. Then we get to the high ground between Cammeray-road and Miller-street, where the cutting is between 50 and 60 feet deep in the worst places. Following the line along, we get a cutting 30 or 40 feet deep, towards Neutral Bay.

3423. Knowing Mr. Hamand's route, are you of opinion that these deep cuttings would be objectionable as eye-sores and possible sources of danger to the residents of the district? I do not know how they could be sources of danger.

3424. Would not they be in the immediate vicinity of residences? Of course the line would have to be properly fenced. They could only be a source of danger if the batters were not properly trimmed, so that pieces of rock tumbled down and upset the trains.

3425. But they would be an eye-sore? Well; they would not improve the appearance of the country.

3426. In your opinion, would the traffic be safer on the Government line, where there is a level run of 2,360 feet, than on Mr. Hamand's line, which has a grade of 1 in 70, and a level run of 600 feet? If, when a train got to the foot of the grade, the brakes would not act, you would have a better chance of pulling it up in 2,360 feet of level, than in 600 feet.

3427. So that the Government line would be practically the safer? In an instance of that kind it probably would.

3428. In your experience as a railway engineer, you are aware that wherever passenger traffic exists, a considerable goods traffic springs up? Where a population exists there will be goods traffic.

3429. You are of opinion that the Government should have a greater length of level than 600 feet for wharfage purposes? What I said was that, assuming that the Government are compelled to acquire

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- 2,360 feet of wharfage frontage, it would be desirable to reserve it for goods purposes should it be required, and not to throw it away by mounting the line upon a steep grade, along the greater portion of it.
3430. You have made no inquiries at all as to the goods traffic on this particular line? I have made none.
3431. Can you see any objectionable gradients or curves on the Government proposal, or are you aware of any defect in the scheme? As far as I can see, the Government line would be perfectly safe.
3432. You consider that it has a considerable advantage over Mr. Hamand's line in consequence of being shorter? In consequence of being considerably cheaper.
3433. And in consequence of being shorter? Yes; you would have the advantage of a shorter journey.
3434. And I understand that it would be constructed at a less cost of £209,000? Yes, roughly; those, of course, are only approximate figures.
3435. In round figures you consider that the Government proposal could be carried out for less than what Mr. Hamand's line would cost, by about £200,000? Yes.
3436. You have satisfied yourself that the North Shore people would be better served by the extension of the tramway, than by the construction of Mr. Hamand's line? By the proposed extension to Miller-street. You are not referring to the extension of the tramway to St. Leonards. I think the population on the plateau can be better served by the extension of the present tramway than by the construction of Mr. Hamand's line.
3437. You are clearly of opinion that the Government proposal is the best that has been submitted to the Committee? I am not aware of any other line which has been submitted to the Committee, with the exception of that proposed by the Government and that proposed by Mr. Hamand.
3438. Comparing the Government line with Mr. Hamand's? Comparing the two, I have no hesitation in saying that the Government line is by far the better.
3439. And, as an engineer, you have no hesitation in saying that it is necessary and desirable that the line should be brought from St. Leonards to Milson's Point? As an engineer it appears to me absurd to leave the line where it is, having already spent so much money.
3440. Even if the extension would cost £250,000? Yes.
3441. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Your chief reason in favour of the extension is that you desire to utilize the line between St. Leonards and Pearce's Corner? That is the main reason.
3442. By bringing the line down to the foreshores of Port Jackson? Yes.
3443. Would you not reach the foreshores by the Government modification at Lavender Bay? You would; but you would also increase the length of the trip across the harbour.
3444. But you would shorten the land trip? Somewhat, undoubtedly.
3445. Most of the passengers who would go by this line would be people residing in the new residential suburbs, on the western side of the North Shore? Yes.
3446. Therefore, a couple of hundred yards' increase of journey on a well-appointed steamer would not be a very great hardship to them? Possibly not.
3447. While at the same time the land journey would be shortened? Yes.
3448. Why should we spend £52,900 in bringing the line from its terminus on the Government modification to Milson's Point? You must have a certain amount of level, but I understand that it is quite possible to provide station accommodation in Lavender Bay, and it is for the Committee to decide whether it is better to stop at the head of the bay than to take the line on to Milson's Point. I should say, take the line on to Milson's Point.
3449. It was stated by Mr. Deane that we would save £52,000 by stopping at the modification;—the interest on that, at 4 per cent., would be £2,000 per annum;—why should we not save that amount every year when the line would give almost the same accommodation? There is something in that; but it is for the Committee to decide which scheme it would be desirable to carry out. I have not the slightest doubt that a station could be provided at the head of Lavender Bay giving the requisite amount of accommodation.
3450. *Mr. Lee.*] You are aware that the estimated cost of Mr. Hamand's line is £350,677? Yes, as estimated by him.
3451. Inclusive of land compensation? Yes.
3452. Do you know what Mr. Deane's estimate of the cost of Mr. Hamand's scheme was? I think I understood that he estimated Mr. Hamand's works at about the same amount as Mr. Hamand did, but that there was an increased price—I forget how much—for land resumption.
3453. The difference between his and Mr. Hamand's estimate was in the valuation of the land? Yes. I fancy that Mr. Deane did not have sections taken over his line; but I have had them taken and plotted to a good-sized scale, so that I can roughly estimate the quantities, and you can take my estimate as approximately correct.
3454. Mr. Deane's estimate for works on Mr. Hamand's line is the same as Mr. Hamand's? Yes.
3455. £221,000? Yes.
3456. Your estimate of the cost of Mr. Hamand's line is £455,200? Including land resumptions.
3457. You differ from Mr. Deane in the matter of compensation for land? No; I differ from Mr. Deane in the estimate of the cost of works.
3458. You differ from Mr. Deane in your estimate of the compensation for land on Mr. Hamand's line? The cost of the land is not my estimate; it has been supplied by the Government Valuator.
3459. You have given it as £166,000, whereas Mr. Deane's estimate was £200,000? The estimate, of £166,000 was supplied to me by the Government Valuator.
3460. You differ from Mr. Deane in the estimate of the cost of works, his estimate being £221,000, and yours £289,200? Yes.
3461. Have you taken the trouble to get out the quantities on the Government line? I have looked at Mr. Deane's estimate, and it would appear to be about correct.
3462. How did you get the figures to estimate the cost of Mr. Hamand's line? I have taken Mr. Hamand's own prices for earthwork. I made a section, and took out the quantities of the earthwork upon it.
3463. Did you do the same with the Government line? No; I have not analysed the Government proposal.
3464. You take the Government figures as submitted by the Engineer of the Department? Yes.
3465. If your estimate of Mr. Hamand's line is correct, there is a great discrepancy between it and Mr. Deane's estimate? For the works—yes; but, as I think I have explained,—
3466. I do not want you to explain; but there is a difference? Yes.

3467.

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3467. Is it probable that the estimate for works on the Government proposal is insufficient? I do not think so. Looking at the two things, I do not think so.
3468. You are not in a position to say whether the estimate of the works on the Government proposal is correct or not? I cannot swear that it is correct.
3469. Because you have not taken out the quantities? No; but, looking at them generally, I think they are correct.
3470. Have you taken any section? There is a section.
3471. You have not taken out the quantities? I have not taken out the quantities. Looking at Mr. Deane's prices, they appear to be right; but I have not checked them.
3472. Inasmuch as Mr. Deane and Mr. Hamand concur in their estimates of the cost of works on Mr. Hamand's line, and inasmuch as your estimate is £68,000 over and above either of their estimates, is it probable that a mistake has been made in calculating the cost of construction on the Government proposal? I should not think so, looking at the thing broadly.
3473. *Mr. Humphery.*] You are aware that the line between St. Leonards and Hornsby leaves a very large loss on the working? I have understood so.
3474. What is your opinion—and you appear to have had a great deal of experience—as to the best way of making that line give a return that will cover working expenses in a few years, and ultimately pay the interest on the outlay? Bring your line down to the deep waters of Port Jackson.
3475. Would you do that by an extension of the railway, or by a connection with the tramway? By bringing the railway down.
3476. Although it would mean an increase in the interest of £9,000 a year, as against £1,700, by extending the tramway? Certainly; because you will get a far better return for your money.
3477. Have you any doubt as to the extension of the railway to Milson's Point creating traffic for the portion of the line already constructed more readily than the extension of the tramway to St. Leonards Station would do? I have no doubt in my own mind.
3478. *Mr. Garrard.*] I understand that you have gone over both of these routes? I have.
3479. Do you think that the stations, as marked on either line, are in their proper positions? On Mr. Hamand's scheme you have stations as close together as they are upon the Metropolitan Railway in London.
3480. I understand that you think that they are unnecessarily close? For the most part; and, as I have tried to explain to the Committee, it does not appear to me that they would be very much used.
3481. Do you think that the stations on the Government line are in right positions, and that there are not too many? I do not think that there are too many stations there, and I think that they are situated in the right positions. It might be advantageous to have a third station lower down, nearer Lavender Bay.
3482. You spoke of the difference between going up a grade of 1 in 70 and of 1 in 50;—I suppose that going down the difference would be of very little moment; it would be a mere matter of brake-power? There is nothing in it.
3483. All that you consider is the pulling-power going up? Yes.
3484. Coming down it is a mere matter of brake-power? All you have to do is to keep the train under control.
3485. Do you make your grade the same as Mr. Hamand? There is a small clerical error in figuring the heights, but the grades are drawn as figured for the most part, with the exception of one at the top, and another at Lavender Bay, which is figured as 1 in 70, when it is really a little flatter.
3486. The grade in the tunnel is 1 in 70? Yes; as Mr. Hamand has figured it.

Charles Billyard, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

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3487. *Vice-Chairman.*] You know the locality in which it is proposed to take this railway extension? I know it well. I am a director of two companies who have invested half a million of money in property over there.
3488. Whereabouts? Partly on one side of where the bridge is marked on the map, and partly on the other side, at North Willoughby.
3489. That is the suspension bridge which is being built? Yes; one of the companies is building that suspension bridge at a cost of £34,000.
3490. Have they not also constructed a tramway? They have constructed a tramway to within a quarter of a mile of the bridge.
3491. To what point is it constructed? To Palmer-street, just at the top of the hill.
3492. How far is that from the present tramway? Very nearly three-quarters of a mile.
3493. Have you given much attention to the Government route, and to Mr. Hamand's scheme? Yes.
3494. What is your opinion with reference to them? My opinion is that the estimate of the cost of land to be resumed on Mr. Hamand's line is very much higher than it should be.
3495. You think the line should be constructed at altogether a less cost than is estimated? As far as the estimate for land is concerned.
3496. *Mr. Garrard.*] On what estimate are you going? I am not speaking about any estimate which I have seen.
3497. *Vice-Chairman.*] Your idea is that the land could be purchased for less than Mr. Hamand's estimate? Yes; because many of the owners there would take a small sum for their land. I have ascertained that from them.
3498. Can you say how much less the land could be obtained for? I estimate the cost of the land at £124,000. I will tell you how I arrived at that estimate, if you like.
3499. That is unnecessary. In constructing the tramway from your land down Miller-street, you considered that it would afford ample accommodation for the locality you are interested in? I thought it would for a time, but I believe that we shall have a very large population over there by-and-bye.
3500. Suppose that the population increased to the extent you anticipate, do you think the tramway would be sufficient? No; I think we should require a railway then for the goods traffic.
3501. Supposing a railway were to be constructed, do you think it would be desirable to carry out Mr. Hamand's proposal? Yes. If that were done, I think that instead of running the tramway we should run

run a light railway over the bridge, and through our property to meet the Government line. We are going to put up a number of buildings over there.

3502. It is part of your project to build on this ground? Very largely.

3503. Have you given any attention to the Government proposal? I have given some attention to it. I have estimated the value of land upon that route.

3504. Do you think that the Government estimate is within the proper limit? I estimate the value of the land there at £148,960.

3505. You have had a good deal to do with land purchases in and about Sydney? Yes; more so than anybody.

3506. You think you are correct in the estimates you have given? I know I am.

3507. From every point of view, you think Mr. Hamand's line would be more desirable than the Government line? I think so. I think we should have a large goods traffic, and a grade of 1 in 70 would be better than a grade of 1 in 50 for it, while it would take less time to come up the flatter grade.

3508. Do you know the country between St. Leonards and Hornsby? I know it fairly well. I have often been along the road, and I was often out there during the construction of the railway line.

3509. Does it offer great inducements for suburban settlement? Yes; but I think the big settlement will be near Middle Harbour.

3510. Is Hornsby regarded as a favourite situation for residents on account of its altitude? No better than Middle Harbour.

3511. What is the height of the land at Middle Harbour? From 300 to 350 feet.

3512. Which do you call the Middle Harbour land? Land on the other side of the bridge; it is about 300 feet high there, and in places higher.

3513. Higher than Hornsby? No; but it is far nearer Sydney.

3514. What is the height of Hornsby? I could not say, but I think about 500 feet. Hornsby is 14 or 15 miles from Sydney Post Office, while the bridge is only 3 miles from the Post Office.

3515. What area do your companies hold? One holds 1,000 acres, and the other 670.

3516. It is contemplated to improve that land and make it suitable for residential purposes? One company are building a bridge, and are going to form a building society in connection with their property.

3517. Do you think that these sites are likely to be held in great favour for residential purposes? Yes; and I should think it will be a favourite place for excursionists. On a fine Sunday, hundreds of people go out to see the bridge. It is the third biggest suspension bridge in the world, and handsomer than the Clifton Bridge—the Brooklyn Bridge being the first. I look upon Middle Harbour as the recreation ground of Sydney.

3518. Do you think that having to cross the harbour will be an impediment to the increase of population there? I am in hopes that they will be able to bring the railway across the harbour in a steam ferry.

3519. You think, at all events, that the railway should be extended to the harbour? Yes; to open up Middle Harbour.

3520. Of the two schemes, do you think that Mr. Hamand's is the better? I think his the better to get the suburban traffic, and also, on account of its grade, for the goods traffic.

3521. *Mr. Dowel.*] How many acres to the mile have you allowed for land resumption? Sixteen.

3522. Did your company ask the Government to extend the cable tramway to the bridge? We had the right to lay a tramway from the present terminus on this side of the reserve, and the Government wished us to give up part of that right, and allow them to extend their tramway a quarter of a mile to the other end of the reserve. We tried to make the bargain that if we gave up that right they should construct the tramway to the bridge, and negotiations went on for some time, when we found that, since our bridge would cost £34,000 instead of £15,000, and would take longer to construct because of the bad weather, we saw that it would be necessary to ask the Government to let us have a Bill extending our time. The Government, seeing our difficulty, said, "If you do not give up your right to a quarter of a mile of tram we shall stop your Bill; and, on that threat, we had to give up our right, and it was no good asking them to construct the tramway to the bridge."

3523. You consider that the land owned by the company is very valuable, and that there will be a large residential population there soon? Yes.

3524. In your prospectus, did you tell the London investors that the land cost your company over £500 an acre? We did not issue any shares in London. There are very few London shareholders. I do not think that 10 per cent. of the shareholders are English.

3525. You issued debentures? Yes.

3526. Did you make the statement that the land cost the company over £500 an acre, and that therefore you considered it very advantageous for residential purposes? Yes.

3527. You anticipate a large population there in a short time? Yes; and we are going to build in anticipation of it. The Government have reserves at Middle Harbour, and we think that people would go down in our tram on holidays. We are going to build an hotel down there. An immense number of people go out there boating on Saturdays and Sundays.

3528. Quite independent of that, you think the Government is justified in constructing a railway to the deep waters of Port Jackson? Yes; it is no good where it is. I also think that they would be justified in taking the line to Middle Harbour.

3529. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is the best portion of your land to the north of the bridge? Some of it is on this side of the bridge, but most of it is on the other side.

3530. What distance is it from Milson's Point? The bridge is 3 miles from the Sydney Post Office.

3531. *Mr. Garrard.*] As the crow flies? The cable tramway is pretty correct.

3532. *Mr. Humphery.*] What is the distance from Milson's Point to your bridge? I think it is a little over 2 miles.

3533. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Can you form any estimation as to the probable population on your ground? I believe that the increase in population there would be as great as in the railway suburbs from 1869 to 1877.

3534. On what railway? If Mr. Hamand's railway is carried out, I believe that the increase of population about Middle Harbour will be as great as the increase was on the Southern line between 1869 and 1877.

3535. Do you not think that the inconvenience of water traffic would militate against that? I do not think so. At the present time, if you live on the Southern line, you have to change into a tram at Redfern, and in the summer time it is more pleasant to go across the harbour by boat than to travel by tram.

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3536. Do you think that the land to the north of the bridge will be availed of equally with the land beyond St. Leonards terminus, towards Chatswood? I think so, because the water frontage will have a great attraction. There are many Government reserves there, and people could build on a road opposite the Government reserve; so that those who had not a water frontage, could have access through a reserve to the water.

3537. Would not the altitude of one district give it the preference? I do not think there will be much difference in altitude at Chatswood. The difference comes in when you get to Hornsby, where the altitude rises to 500 feet.

3538. You believe that if Mr. Hamand's line were constructed, it would, in a short time, pay for the construction and working expenses? I believe that it would. Its construction would have this effect upon us—that we should immediately put up a very large number of houses—very many more than we expected to do at once.

3539. If the line were constructed, it would induce you to build more largely than you would otherwise do? Certainly; and it would save us the expense of making the tram to the bridge, first of all.

3540. *Mr. Garrard.*] Is your estimate of the value of this land from a seller's or from a buyer's point of view? From a seller's. I have asked several owners what they would sell for, provided the railway went through their land. The line would go through some of our company's land, and we would sell at £400 an acre.

3541. When it cost £500? Yes. Caird, Maxwell, & Co. would take £400 an acre for their land; Jones would take £400 an acre for his land; Paling and the Assets Co. would take £100 an acre for their land, which is leasehold, having ninety years to run, and a ground rent of £7 10s. an acre, making it equal to £250 an acre; and Mr. Solomons, through whose land the tunnel goes, would take £100 an acre for tunnelling rights.

3542. How did you arrive at the estimate of the value of the land on the Government line—from personal inquiry, as on Mr. Hamand's line? First of all, the big Government resumption is along Lavender Bay, and, from Mr. Deane's evidence, I understand the Government would have to resume 52 chains in Lavender Bay, which, at £30 a foot, would come to about £102,960. Mr. Hamand's line would take 35 chains of frontage in Lavender Bay, and that, at £30 a foot —

3543. You are not charging Mr. Hamand with all the water frontage? With all that he takes.

3544. Mr. Hamand goes to Milson's Point? He only takes 35 chains of frontage in Lavender Bay, while the Government take 52 chains.

3545. Are you sure of that? Mr. Hamand says, "Mr. Deane took up twice as much again. He (Mr. Hamand) had about 35 —"

3546. What are you quoting from? From the report of the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

3547. I should not advise you to rely upon newspaper reports? —

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

APPENDIX.

A.

[To Evidence of H. Deane, Esq.]

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Sydney, 8 July, 1890.

MINUTE PAPER.

Subject:—North Shore Railway Extension to the Waters of Port Jackson.

In accordance with your request, I have the honor to forward herewith a summary of Estimates of the proposals to connect the North Shore Railway with the waters of Port Jackson, furnished in my evidence before the Committee.

H. DEANE,

Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

The Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

NORTH SHORE RAILWAY.

Extension to waters of Port Jackson.

Summary of Estimates furnished in evidence of Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

Extra cost through alteration of grade from 1 in 40 to 1 in 50 between present station and Lavender Bay—	£
Works	16,000
Land	5,700
	<hr/>
	£21,700
From head of Lavender Bay to Milson's Point, as per estimate of line submitted—	
Works	31,000
Land	67,760
	<hr/>
	£98,760
From head of Lavender Bay to passenger station, near head of bay—	
Works	21,000
Land	25,000
	<hr/>
	£46,000
From head of Lavender Bay, tunnelling under Alfred-street, heading Careening Cove, Neutral Bay, and Shell Cove, to Robertson's Point—	
Works	90,000
Land	22,830
	<hr/>
	£112,830
Cost of providing 3,500 feet frontage for goods at Cremorne, as above	£112,830
Cost of providing 1,560 feet frontage for goods in Lavender Bay— £98,760, less £46,000.....	£52,760
Loop round Kirribilli Point, not including resumption to the Point (say).....	18,000
Beyond	22,000
	<hr/>
	£40,000
Branch to M'Mahon's Point, not including resumption.....	£20,000

H.D., 8/7/90.

B.

PLAN PROPOSED BY A. S. HAMAND, ESQ.

North Shore Railway.

Croydon, Sydney, 21 June, 1890.

Gentlemen,

I beg leave to submit herewith a plan showing in red a route for the completion of the Hornsby line to Milson's Point, which possesses the following advantages:—

1. Better accommodation for the district.
2. Saving of 2 miles of the route to Cremorne.
3. Maximum grade 1 in 70, and it may, if wished, be made generally 1 in 80.
4. Middle Harbour can be opened up by steamer in connection.
5. It would form the first 2 miles of a railway to Manly.

The one disadvantage is that of 1 mile increased length to Hornsby, which is more than compensated for by increased speed of trains up the easier grade. Distances are measured by time rather than mileage in these days.

The Berry's Bay route is a one-sided line for collecting traffic, and even for that a water route will compete.

The cost, including land, of the line marked red, would be about £350,000; some portions of the route are remarkably easy, the only heavy work being half-a-mile of tunnel between 12 miles and 12½ miles.

I have, &c.,

ARTHUR S. HAMAND.

To the Chairman and Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

B 1.

B1.

DESCRIPTION OF LINE PROPOSED BY A. S. HAMAND, Esq.

North Shore Railway.

Extension to Milson's Point.

Sir,

Croydon, 14 July, 1890.

I now beg leave to transmit to you herewith, for the information of your Committee, a plan, section, and estimate of cost of the route recommended by me for the completion of the North Shore Railway to Milson's Point; also a detailed description of the route, and an estimate of traffic earnings for the same.

It will be observed that the plan and section show an alternative line making a junction with the southern end of St. Leonards' Station. The mileage to be constructed would be a quarter of a mile less, and the cost reduced by about £8,000, and if the Committee see no objection to it I consider it would be the preferable one to adopt, as it utilises the existing line. The difference in length of the Middle Harbour route over the Berry's Bay route will involve an extra payment per journey of '96 of a penny for all passenger traffic from St. Leonards and stations north of that, to or from Milson's Point.

With regard to estimate of cost, in this case as in all previous cases of estimates furnished by me to the Committee, I have fortified myself by obtaining an independent estimate from one of the ablest and most experienced contractors in the colony, who has for many years been carrying out government and municipal works with credit to himself and his employers. I need only add that his estimate has invariably been less than mine, and that I have sent in the larger to the Committee.

I shall be pleased to supply any further information the Committee may desire upon the subject, and

I have, &c.,

ARTHUR S. HAMAND.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

Description of Route.

The line would commence at Milson's Point, near the steamer pier, which the platforms would adjoin. For three furlongs from Milson's Point Station the line would be built chiefly on land now covered with water. In order to avoid questions as to water frontage it is proposed to resume the frontage in Lavender Bay from Milson's Point to where the line leaves the Bay to pass into tunnel under Alfred-street. The surplus land so resumed would be available for resale, and would be, at any rate so far as the railway is concerned, an asset. A length of 600 feet to be retained, adjoining Milson's Point, would be ample for railway wharf purposes and local traffic.

The line would issue from the tunnel under Alfred-street into the valley at the head of Careening Cove, passing under McDougal-street and High-street. Between these two streets would be an embankment, on which would be placed a passenger station for the accommodation of the district between Walker-street and Neutral Bay, which is pretty well covered with houses.

The line would thence proceed by tunnel under the eastern end of Whaling-road, and then, emerging, would follow a rising contour round the western side of the head of Neutral Bay, crossing two or three minor roads, then passing under William-street, and occupying the site of the lower half of Alfred-street until it turns at right angles to the east, which part of Alfred-street would be diverted. Bent-street would be slightly diverted, and passed by bridge over the line. From Bent-street the line pursues the Valley until it enters the tunnel through the ridge. Between Bent-street and the tunnel would be a goods and passenger station, which would serve, on the west side of the line, the district lying between Berry-street, Miller-street, and Falcon-street, and on the eastern side of the line between Military-road, Shell Cove, and Neutral Bay. These districts are fairly well populated.

On the north side of the ridge the line emerges in the valley between Grasmere-road and Cammeray-road, with a station near Willoughby Falls, on the land now occupied by Chinese market gardens. The station here would be for goods and passengers, accommodating the district between Falcon-street, Miller-street, and the south arm of Long Bay. South of this station there is already considerable population. It would also be much used for pleasure traffic on Middle Harbour.

Leaving this station the line proceeds by bridge under Cammeray-road; thence skirting the slopes overlooking the northern arm of Long Bay, and passes under the northern extremity of Miller-street by a bridge. A station for goods and passengers is proposed here, which, adjoining the suspension bridge of the North Sydney Tramway and Investment Company, giving access to their land on the north side of Long Bay, and being fed by their private tramway, is destined to soon become one of the most important stations on the North Shore Railway.

From Miller-street the line proceeds with easy work to the North Sydney-road, which the railway passes under by a bridge. A station is proposed here to accommodate the district around, already partially built on. Within a mile to the north on this North Sydney-road is North Willoughby, with its attractive gardens, &c. Some estimate of the value of the traffic to North Willoughby may be made from the fact that between Milson's Point and North Willoughby there is an omnibus service—on week days ten times, and on Sundays seven times a day in each direction—which is always well patronised.

From the North Sydney-road the line proceeds to join the completed Hornsby and St. Leonards' Railway, the total length of line remaining to be constructed being a little over 4 miles.

No level crossings are proposed, being inadmissible on suburban railways. The sharpest curve is 12 chains radius, and the steepest grade 1 in 70.

Estimate of Cost.

4 miles 25 chains of double line.

Description.	Quantity.	Price.	Amount.
Excavation—			
Soft, 40,000 cub. yds., @ 2s.....	4,000	0 0	
Rock, 250,000 cub. yds., @ 3s. 9d.	46,875	0 0	
			50,875 0 0
Public Roads Bridges	No. 12	.....	10,000 0 0
Road approaches and diversions.....		.....	3,000 0 0
Culverts and drains .....		.....	4,000 0 0
Tunnels	1,125 yds.	90	101,250 0 0
Permanent-way, ballast and fencing	4 ml. 25 chn.	5,000	21,552 10 0
Stations, including sidings and signals .....		.....	30,000 0 0
Land and compensation .....		.....	130,000 0 0
Total.....		.....	350,677 10 0
Approximate cost per mile .....		.....	82,000 0 0

N.B.—Credit land not required for railways, £45,000,

Estimate

Estimate of Traffic Earnings.

Where traffic does not exist at the time of an estimate being made the most reliable method is to arrive at it by analogy with some similar existing line.

The Illawarra Line seems to afford a fair basis for making a calculation of traffic earnings. Between Sydney and Hurstville 32 trains run in each direction daily of which number 29 stop at all stations.

On the North Shore Railway, within five years from its completion, it may safely be assumed that not less than 20 stopping trains in each direction will be required between Milson's Point and Gordon (9 miles, *via* Middle Harbour) and between Gordon and Hornsby, 10 trains a day each way.

The Railway Commissioners' Report for June, 1889, gives the average net earnings per passenger train mile over all the lines of the colony as being 28·38 pence. The net earnings of suburban trains would, generally speaking, be higher than the average, and those of the Sydney-Hurstville section are, probably, at least 31 pence per train mile. The Commissioners can supply the actual figure; but, taking the average as safe, the traffic figures would give:—

	Train Miles.
Milson's Point to Gordon—	
9 miles x 40 trains x 340 days	=122·400
Gordon to Hornsby—	
5 miles x 20 trains x 340 days	= 34·000
	156·400 train miles per annum.
156·400 train miles x 28·38 pence	£18,494 6 0
Goods and minerals, net earnings	5,605 14 0
	£24,000 0 0

This amount of £24,000 is the net product available for interest after payment of working expenses and may be reasonably expected to accrue within five years from the completion of the line when the district served has had fair time to develop. The capital upon which the £24,000 has to pay interest may be reckoned as follows:—

Hornsby to St. Leonards, single line	= £180,000 0 0
Do. allow for doubling	= 75,000 0 0
St. Leonards to Milson's Point	£350,000 0 0
Add for engineering contingencies	70,000 0 0
	£420,000 0 0
Deduct value of surplus land	45,000 0 0
	375,000 0 0
Rolling stock required	120,000 0 0
	£750,000 0 0

Upon this amount, £24,000 is equal to 3½ per cent.

ESTIMATE OF COST of connecting the Railway at Milson's Point with Circular Quay by tunnels in the rock on either side of the harbour, the length under the water being built in iron tubes bedded in the silt with their line of rails at about 60 feet below water level:—

Cost of tunnels in rock, length 1 mile 65 chains	£280,000
Tubular tunnels laid complete, length 27 chains	270,000
	£550,000

This would give for earning power 2 miles of railway, double line, at a cost of £275,000 per mile.

The above does not include the cost of stations at Dawes' Point and Circular Quay, which are provided for in the general scheme. The cost of these stations would be £35,000.

ARTHUR S. HAMAND.

Sydney, 14th July, 1890.

B 2.

[*To Evidence of A. S. Hamand, Esq.*]

North Shore Railway.

Sir,

Croydon, 28 July, 1890,

With reference to the difference in total length of line from Hornsby to Milson's Point by the two routes *via* Berry's Bay and *via* Middle Harbour, I wish to call the attention of the Committee to a point hitherto overlooked.

The Government line commences where the last contract ended, at 10 miles 51 chains. The Middle Harbour route begins at 10 miles 38 chains, so that the two routes are respectively 10 miles 51 chains added to 2 miles 60 chains, which is equal to 13 miles 31 chains; and 10 miles 38 chains added to 4 miles 2½ chains, which is equal to 14 miles 40½ chains, the difference between the aggregate length of both routes being 1 mile 9½ chains.

Consequently the whole difference of average fare per passenger to and from St. Leonards Station, and other places north of that point, will be only two-thirds of a penny.

I have, &c.,

ARTHUR S. HAMAND.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

B 3.*

North Shore Railway.

Sir,

Croydon, 28 July, 1890.

I beg leave to reply to Mr. Deane's letter, read to the Committee last Thursday.

Firstly: * * * * * If Mr. Deane did examine the correctness of the figures by scale, he is aware that the surface line, the gradient line, and the marking of the gradient, are all correctly shown.

Secondly: As to platforms, I am in the habit of reckoning the dimensions of platforms by their useful length, and of discarding that portion of their length which points, and crossings, and lines to other platforms render useless. With that qualification Mr. Deane will find my statement was not far wrong. The longest platform on the Hornsby-St. Leonards line is 300 feet in length; and in answer to question No. 221, on page 9 of the published report on this matter, Mr. Deane states the platform he designs at Milson's Point to be 300 feet long.

Thirdly:

* NOTE.—The asterisks in this letter represent certain eliminated statements of an objectionable character which the Committee do not consider it right should be published.

Thirdly : * * * Mr. Deane has * * * swelled his estimate of the cost of my line. That I anticipated, and therefore made mine needlessly liberal. * * * Now he talks vaguely about cost of road approaches, and his doubts as to the accuracy of the section. * * * If the Committee entertain doubts as to the substantial accuracy of my section and my estimate, I should be glad if they would have them checked by some independent, competent engineer.

Fourthly : Mr. Deane ventures to indulge in another statement as to "the impossible." * * * I * * * enclose herewith a plan showing several methods of access from the line proposed by me to Neutral Bay, and if these are not quite satisfactory I will devise a dozen other different methods.

I have, &c.,
ARTHUR S. HAMAND.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Wo

B4.*

North Shore Railway.

Sir,

Croydon, 4 August, 1890.

As I had no opportunity of replying, *viva voce*, to certain evidence given in this matter I ask leave to do so in writing.

Mr. Bullock's evidence, * * * was, no doubt, genuine. His engineering experience being evidently but slender, I will not comment on it. The chief point in his evidence was that the Government route would accommodate 8,000 persons, and the Middle Harbour route some very small proportion of that number—one-fifth, I think.

Taking an average width of $\frac{1}{4}$ mile only on each side of the centre line of each route, and omitting in both cases the first $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Milson's Point—that is to say, taking a length of $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles and $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles respectively, and a width on either side of 20 chains only, there would be 1,040 acres on the Middle Harbour route against 720 acres on the Government route, which areas, when covered with houses, would carry, at 15 to the acre, populations of 15,600 and 10,800 respectively. The Government route is so close to the water that for a considerable length the width of 20 chains, or even 10 chains, does not exist, so that the comparison is, if anything, unfair to the Middle Harbour route. The Middle Harbour route, also, has the Middle Harbour traffic in its favour, as well as the North Sydney Land Company's tramway or railway to feed it, also the North Willoughby traffic.

In respect of the latter, Mr. Deane made a statement that the traffic could be accommodated by a new station situated between St. Leonards and Chatswood Stations, and that it would be nearer to the traffic than a station on the North Sydney-road at Chandos-street. The answer to that statement is that any such station would be situated in the 1 in 50 grade, which is inadmissible, and that, if the station were feasible there, it would be equally distant from the traffic, and in a direction further from Sydney.

One other point to be noted in Mr. Bullock's statement is that, while he decried the land in the Middle Harbour route as inferior for building, his estimate of resumption cost was very high—£20,000 above the Government Valuer's figures, based on Mr. Foxlee's inflated quantities.

Mr. Goodchap, as a traffic manager of some experience, gave very disappointing evidence. To propose to continue a train service by tramway strikes me as being suicidal. A train of six carriages will seat 360 persons; a grip car and two attendant cars (the maximum number) will accommodate 60 people; so that six trains of tramcars would be necessary to carry an ordinary train load. The rush for the first dispatch may be imagined. There would be an unequal strain on the cable and machinery, resulting in frequent break-downs, which often take three or four hours to repair. The time on the journey, if the present rate of travel is maintained, would be 35 minutes, and the fare, at present rates, 5d. This method would be well calculated to prevent development on the Hornsby line. However, there is no accounting for the views of traffic managers. The Committee will, probably, be surprised to learn how few use the cable tramway, the average number per day each way being 1,200, or about 17 per single tram journey, while the number who drive or walk to the boats must be about five or six times that number.

The working expenses of the Sydney tram system are about 91 per cent. of the gross takings; the working expenses of the cable trams are 80 per cent. of gross takings; the difference being mainly due to the higher rate of fare charged on the North Shore—2d. per mile; while the railways, providing a service at $\frac{2}{3}$ of a penny per mile, are worked at 64 per cent. of the gross earnings. This is the answer to Mr. Goodchap's assertion that tramways are worked cheaper than railways.

I now come to Mr. Foxlee's evidence. * * * It is to be noted that the scale of the plan and section supplied by me to the Committee is larger than the scale generally used before Parliamentary Committees in London, and may, therefore, be considered sufficient for all practical purposes.

The ordinary quantity of excavation for a railway averages from 30,000 cubic yards per mile of soft material with flat slopes (which is considered a light line) to 100,000 cube yards, and upwards, per mile for a heavy line. In rock with steep slopes, as in this case, the quantities of excavation are respectively much less. In my estimate the quantities of excavation are given, and average 83,000 cube yards per mile, exclusive of tunnel work. My section does not, in fact, show so great a quantity, but I added an allowance to provide for work which would appear in cross section. That is one way of looking at it. Another method is this: My line, except where in tunnel, is not continuously crossing spurs and valleys, as on the Government route, but follows the natural contours of the slopes of the hills for three-fourths of its length. Being situated on the slopes, a movement of the centre line laterally 10 feet would cause a difference of nearly 10 feet in the section, making a cutting or embankment 10 feet deeper or shallower, or changing cutting into embankment or *vice versa* as the case may be.

Mr. Foxlee's quantities of excavation show a surplus, after providing for embankment, of half a million cube yards, or a surplus of nearly 150,000 cube yards per mile.

The

* NOTE.—The asterisks in this letter represent certain eliminated statements of an objectionable character which the Committee do not consider it right should be published.

The comparative time-table of the two routes given by Mr. Foxlee was * * * unfair, as the Lavender Bay Station stop was omitted from the Government route. Moreover, the closer stations are to each other, while it gives more accommodation to the public, it must, of necessity, prolong the journey by the greater number of stops; but, with trains not stopping at every station, the advantages must remain with the Middle Harbour route. Mr. Foxlee's time-table of the Government route differed very widely from that furnished by Mr. Goodchap, which was 12 miles an hour, with 3 minutes added for each station.

With reference to Mr. Foxlee's remarks on the cost of altering grade near Chatswood from 1 in 50 to 1 in 70 * * * the alteration of the grade would only be carried out by me at the time the line is duplicated; and the Committee must bear in mind that doubling the line to Gordon, if not to Hornsby, is a necessary corollary to the extension from St. Leonards to the harbour, if the suburban traffic is to be worked with punctuality. If the 1 in 50 grade up to Chatswood is altered when the line is being duplicated, it cannot cost more than £5,000, no matter how it is carried out. As I have had for some time past copies of the working plan, section, &c., of the Hornsby-St. Leonards line, I have every facility for making an exact estimate of the cost of this alteration.

In respect of the land resumption on the Middle Harbour route, as the Government Valuer's figures are based on quantities of land supplied to him by Mr. Foxlee * * * the estimate for land must be increased correspondingly to an undue extent also. If the Government Valuer obtained his data of requirements from me, he certainly would give an estimate below mine for land. The Committee have not had complete evidence on this point.

Some witnesses have appeared to think that stations on my route at High-street and Bent-street are unnecessary and useless. That only shows they take a short-sighted view of the traffic. The traffic is not all in the direction of Sydney. It would be as reasonable to omit Eveleigh, Macdonaldtown, and Erskineville on the lines south of Sydney; yet those three stations earned for the year ending June, 1889, from passenger traffic alone, £8,530. The tramway competes with the railway to Eveleigh, Macdonaldtown, Newtown, Marrickville, Stanmore, and Petersham; and yet those stations earn from passenger traffic per annum £31,208. This goes to prove that a railway accommodates a different set of persons in a district from those served by a tramway, and that both may pay very well when they run side by side, as they almost always do in London and English provincial cities and towns.

I was asked by Mr. Lee whether if 1 in 50 grades were used on the Middle Harbour route the cost would be diminished. After due consideration, I am of opinion that the use of 1 in 50 grades in lieu of 1 in 70 would not reduce the cost by £10,000, because the route of any line is selected to fit a 1 in 70 grade.

In response to Mr. Dowel's request that I would furnish an estimate of the comparative cost of working the different routes, I have much pleasure in giving it below.

North Shore Railway.

Estimate of gross earnings and working expenses, Milson's Point to Hornsby, *via* Middle Harbour :

	£	£
Maximum grade, Milson's Point to Gordon	1 in 70	
,, Gordon to Hornsby	1 in 50	
Gross receipts—		
Passenger trains with 360 seats—		
Milson's Point to Gordon—		
9 miles × 40 trains × 340 days × 80 pence per train mile =	40,800	
Goods, &c., traffic over 9 miles	11,750	
	52,550	
Deduct working expenses—62 per cent.	32,581	
	19,969	
Gordon to Hornsby—		
5 miles × 20 trains × 340 days × 80 pence per train mile	11,333	
Goods, &c., traffic over 5 miles	3,600	
	14,933	
Deduct working expenses—73 per cent.	10,900	
	4,033	
Total net earnings <i>via</i> Middle Harbour	£24,002	

Estimate of gross earnings and working expenses, Milson's Point to Hornsby, *via* Government route :

	£	£
Maximum grade, Milson's Point to Hornsby	1 in 50	
Gross receipts—		
Passenger trains with 240 seats—		
Milson's Point to Gordon—		
8 miles × 60 trains × 340 days × 53·3 pence per train mile =	36,267	
Goods, &c., traffic over 8 miles	10,445	
	46,712	
Deduct working expenses—73 per cent.	34,100	
	12,612	
Gordon to Hornsby—		
Add net earnings as in Middle Harbour route	4,033	
Total net earnings <i>via</i> Government route	16,645	
Net returns by Middle Harbour route	24,002	
,, Government route	16,645	
Difference in favour of Middle Harbour route	£7,357	

£7,357 per annum is equal to capital value, at 3½ per cent., of £210,189.

The capital involved in the Middle Harbour route would be £750,000, in which £24,002 net earnings are equal to 3·2 or 3½ per cent.

The capital involved in the Government route would be £650,000, on which £16,645 net earnings are equal to 2·56, or rather over 2½ per cent.

Although I have, for purposes of comparison of working cost, assumed the earnings of both lines to be the same per mile per annum, I am of opinion, having regard to the difference between the districts served, that the earnings from the Middle Harbour route will always be 50 per cent. greater than from the Government route.

I have shown the difference in net earnings by the two routes, mainly owing to the difference in grades, to be £7,357 per annum. That difference will vary with the number of trains run. If the same number run as on the Illawarra Line, then the difference will be increased to £11,035 per annum, or, capitalized, £315,283.

The first 2 miles can be utilized as part of the route to Manly, and the Manly Line can easily diverge with a junction well clear of the north end of the tunnel. I never proposed to junction in the tunnel. It is complete misrepresentation to say I proposed it by referring to a small scale sketch plan. I have never said it is the only route. I say it is in my judgment the best available.

I have considered the possibility of reducing the grades north of Gordon. From Gordon northwards the line rises continuously with 1 in 50 and 1 in 60 grades for 1½ miles, Pymble Station being situated on the grade, and in the middle of it; consequently it would be expensive and difficult to reduce the grades, and as the traffic between Gordon and Hornsby will

will probably never be so heavy as on the line south of Gordon, I do not feel sure that the alteration would be worth the outlay, although it is evident the line might originally have been located so as to avoid the severe grades without costing a penny more than it has done.

In conclusion, I feel sure that if the Committee reject the very serpentine Government route, the Public Works Department will then be able by following my route to put before the Committee plans, sections, and estimates, which will show the Middle Harbour route to be better and cheaper than I have exhibited it to be. It rests with the Committee to make a stand against having any more lines with severe grades thrust upon them and the colony.

I have, &c.,

ARTHUR S. HAMAND.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

C.

[To Evidence of H. Deane, Esq.]

MR. A. S. HAMAND'S PROPOSAL.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office,
Sydney, 24 July, 1890.

Sir,

I have the honor to request that you will kindly direct the attention of the Committee to the fact that Mr. Hamand's section, although presumably giving a grade of 1 in 70, does not in reality do so, as the levels and distances given by him between his Bent-street and Willoughby Falls' Stations gives only a grade of 1 in 56½.

With regard to Mr. Hamand's statement that 300 feet is the longest platform in use on the New South Wales railways, I should mention that there are many longer than that; and at the Redfern terminus the platforms vary from 400 feet to 630 feet, with the exception of one platform, 305 feet, which is very little used.

In reference to my estimate for the works on Mr. Hamand's line, I pointed out the fact that it is calculated from data supplied by his section, about the accuracy of which I had considerable doubt. If the true section were taken it would certainly be found that the earthworks would be increased to a considerable extent, and there would be a very large item to add for the cost of the road approaches, as I mentioned in my evidence.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate my statement that it will be impossible to get down from his line so as to utilise properly the frontage of Neutral Bay.

I have, &c.,

H. DEANE,

Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

D.

THE LAVENDER BAY PROPOSAL.

Department of Public Works, Railway Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office,
Sydney, 9 August, 1890.

MINUTE-PAPER.

Subject:—"Extension to Milson's Point."

I HAVE the honor to call attention to the report of the proceedings of the Public Works Committee in yesterday's *Sydney Morning Herald*, page 3, wherein the scheme for stopping short of the Point is attributed to me, and, consequently, appears to have some of the weight of a Departmental proposal.

I thought I had sufficiently explained that the plan for stopping near the head of the Bay was only submitted by me with a view to meet a suggestion already made by some of the members of the Committee to stop at the head of Lavender Bay, but that, notwithstanding that suggestion, I urged strongly the desirability of carrying the railway down to the Point; and it was shown in my evidence not only that Milson's Point was the most favourable terminus, in that it gave the shortest distance for the ferry, but that the steamers now running would serve the traffic for some time to come, while, if the station were further up the Bay, a new landing-place would be necessary, as the Lavender Bay jetty would not serve, and, consequently, special arrangements would have to be made with the Steam Ferry Company, who, at first, would probably require a subsidy.

H. DEANE,

Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

The Under Secretary for Works.

Submitted.—J.B., 12/8/90. Forward to Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.—B.S., 12/8/90.
Secretary to the Committee.—J.B., 12/8/90.

E.

[To Evidence of John Duff, Esq.]

REPORT of the Inspector of Forests upon the Timber Trees indigenous in the open and brush forests of the districts between Gosford and Newcastle, county of Northumberland, which timbers are growing in close proximity to the Great Northern Railway line, and with which an increasing trade may be expected to be maintained in future with Sydney, Singleton, Newcastle, Maitland, and other markets.

The above-named districts have always been noted for the large quantity and good quality of their timbers, and although a depression in the timber trade in these districts has existed for several years, this depression has been general throughout the colony, and the trade may be expected to increase in proportion to the revival in trade generally.

The districts referred to are better adapted naturally for the growth of timber than for most other purposes, the country generally being of an undulating and mountainous character, with usually only small areas of good level and sloping land suitable for agricultural, pastoral, and horticultural pursuits intervening; and as the districts referred to have been proved to be admirably adapted for the cultivation of fruit-trees, it is confidently expected that orchard culture will in future form another of their leading industries.

One of the causes of the recent depression in the timber trade may be partly attributed to the increased importation of cheap American softwoods, which, being more cheaply and easily wrought than our hardwoods, have therefore superseded them to a large extent, but for all purposes wherein strength and durability are required our hardwoods cannot be excelled, and rarely equalled, by any American timbers, so that the trade in the latter may only be expected to be continued for indoor and less substantial building purposes.

Some of the timber-getters complain that the high price charged for freight upon the Northern Railways precludes them from earning a comfortable living at cutting and forwarding timber to Sydney and other markets, and as the best of the timber in the most easily accessible parts of the forest reserves and Crown Lands, and in closest proximity to main and other roads, navigation, and railways, has already been cut, the timber cut for some time to come would chiefly be for fuel, fencing, and railway sleepers, &c., and for which purposes there is an abundant supply of timber to last for many years close to the railway line, so that if the freight be excessive it would be desirable, in the interests of the trade and revenue, that it be reduced.

Another matter worthy of considering in connection with the timber trade of the districts referred to, is that the distance from Newcastle and Gosford to Sydney, between the two former of which towns the best timber is growing, being much shorter (from 50 to 100 miles) than from Marulan, South Creek, and other places from which fuel is carried by rail to Sydney, if moderate freights are charged on the timber from the Northern districts, it would have the effect of creating a large trade for fuel, &c., and of reducing the cost thereof, which would probably ultimately lessen the demand for fuel, &c., from other more distant localities.

The

The leading useful timbers in the Northern districts are grey gum, blue gum, and turpentine, which grow most rapidly and abundantly in the rich moist brush forests; but the prevailing hardwoods in greatest quantity and most used in these districts are blackbutt and spotted gum, which inhabit the open forests.

Ironbarks, the strongest, most useful, and durable hardwoods, grow chiefly on the open forest ridges, and are now becoming scarce in these districts.

The largest, best, and most abundant supply of hardwoods obtainable in the Northern districts grow in the vicinity of Wyong, Wyee, and Cooranbong, from which localities the haulage of the timber to the railway stations, would range from about 2 to 7 miles.

The formation of a 24-acre plantation of timber trees at Wyong, during the present winter and ensuing spring, has been authorized, which area will contain about 29,000 trees, and it is proposed to continue the planting of red cedar and other timber trees annually on the Olney and other forest reserves on an extensive scale.

A plantation of over 3,000 trees was made two years ago on Hogan's Brush forest reserve, near Gosford, and the State Forest Nursery at Gosford will annually increase in usefulness and importance, where millions of young timber trees will be propagated yearly for planting in the forest reserves throughout the colony. It is also proposed to destroy the useless trees, saplings, and scrub on the forest reserves generally, so as to permit and facilitate the maturation of the useful trees and saplings left growing, and the germination or natural reproduction of useful species of timber trees.

The proposed railway line between Crow's Nest and Hornsby does not pass through any forest reserves, but is contiguous to many reserves which do not come under the Department to which I am attached. Some of these reserves contain timber of excellent quality, which will ultimately be greatly utilized by the residents on the north side of Port Jackson should this line be constructed to deep water or Milson's Point.

Timber being brought down the line as at present constructed would be very expensive, owing to the long distance it would require to be carted. Much valuable timber along the proposed line of railway is owned by private individuals. A glance at the map of the county of Cumberland will show the reserves near the proposed railway line.

Appended are lists of the Forest Reserves, with names, numbers, and areas of same in the district situated between Gosford and Newcastle; also of the hardwood and softwood timbers growing upon said reserves; and of revenue received for royalty and license fees for timber cut upon these reserves from the year 1883 up to 1889.

JOHN DUFF,
Inspector of Forests.

Forest Conservancy Branch, Colonial Secretary's Department, Sydney, 8/7/90.

Names, Numbers, and Areas of Forest Reserves situated between Gosford and Newcastle, county of Northumberland.

F. R. No.	Name	Area.	F. R. No.	Name	Area.
63.	Hogan's Brush	990 acres	207A.	No name	66 acres
128.	Eglinton and Narara	1,280 "	50A.	"	2,832½ "
143.	Extension	2,030 "	124.	"	4,160 "
69.	Mulbring and Teralba	6,400 "	136.	"	440 "
129.	Ourimbah	6,560 "	5,310.	"	970 "
70.	Olney State Forest	33,186 "	5,873.	"	40 "
46.	Coroboree and Congewai	16,000 "	6,720.	"	20 "
216.	No name	9,700 "	9,242.	"	700 "
217.	"	3,000 "			
			Total		88,374½ acres

NOTE.—The total area of Forest Reserves in the county of Northumberland, including State Forest Nursery, Gosford, but exclusive of Water, Mining, Camping, Travelling Stock, or other Reserves or Crown Lands, is 88,439½ acres.

Hardwood Timber Trees growing between Gosford and Newcastle, in county of Northumberland.

Blue Gum (<i>Eucalyptus botryoides</i>)	Peppermint (<i>Eucalyptus piperita</i>)
Grey Gum (<i>Eucalyptus saligna</i>)	Woollybutt (<i>Eucalyptus longifolia</i>)
Forest Mahogany (<i>Eucalyptus resinifera</i>)	Mountain Ash (<i>Eucalyptus virgata</i>)
Swamp Mahogany (<i>Eucalyptus robusta</i>)	Prickly-leaved Tea-tree (<i>Melaleuca styphelioides</i>)
Spotted Gum (<i>Eucalyptus maculata</i>)	White or Broad-leaved Tea-tree (<i>Melaleuca leucadendron</i>)
Red Ironbark (<i>Eucalyptus leucoxydon</i>)	Turpentine (<i>Syncarpia laurifolia</i>)
White Ironbark (<i>Eucalyptus crebra</i>)	Red Gum or Apple-tree (<i>Angophora intermedia</i>)
Messmate (<i>Eucalyptus amygdalina</i>)	Forest Oak (<i>Casuarina torulosa</i>)
Tallowwood (<i>Eucalyptus microcorys</i>)	Swamp Oak (<i>Casuarina stricta</i>)
Blackbutt (<i>Eucalyptus pilularis</i>)	Tea-tree (<i>Callistemon salignus</i>).
Stringybark (<i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i>)	
Bloodwood (<i>Eucalyptus corymbosa</i>)	

Softwood Timber Trees growing between Gosford and Newcastle, in the county of Northumberland.

Sassafras (<i>Doryphora sassafras</i>)	Elm, Rough Fig (<i>Trema aspera</i>)
Coachwood (<i>Ceratopetalum apetalum</i>)	Lilly Pilly (<i>Eugenia Smithii</i>)
Red Cedar (<i>Cedrela Toona</i>)	Brush Cherry (<i>Trochocarpa laurina</i>)
White Cedar (<i>Melia composita</i>)	Brush Cherry (<i>Eugenia myrtifolia</i>)
Black Apple (<i>Achras australis</i>)	Beefwood (<i>Stenocarpus salignus</i>)
Grey Plum (<i>Cargillia pentamera</i>)	Black Ash (<i>Cupania semiglaucula</i>)
Maiden's Blush (<i>Sloanea australis</i>)	Blackeye (<i>Rhodannia trinervia</i>)
Black Wattle (<i>Callicoma serratifolia</i>)	Blue Ash (<i>Elæodendron australe</i>)
Wattle (<i>Acacia lunata</i>)	Tea-tree (<i>Fabricia lævigata</i>)
Wattle (<i>Acacia elata</i>)	Brush Bloodwood (<i>Baloghia lucida</i>)
Green Wattle (<i>Acacia decurrens</i>)	Colonial Deal (<i>Podocarpus spinulosa</i>)
Black Wattle (<i>Acacia binervata</i>)	Corkwood (<i>Duboisia myoporoides</i>)
Hymenosporum flavum	Rosewood (<i>Synoum glandulosum</i>)
Scrub Myrtle (<i>Backhousia myrtifolia</i>)	Featherwood (<i>Polyosma Cunninghamii</i>)
Fig-tree (<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>)	Flindosa (<i>Cryptocarya obovata</i>)
Fig-tree (<i>Ficus aspera</i>)	Nettle-tree (<i>Laportea gigas</i>).
Water Gum (<i>Tristania laurina</i>)	

TOTAL Amount of Revenue for Timber Reserves in the county of Northumberland for Royalty and License Fees.

Year	£	s.	d.
During year 1883	22	15	0
" " 1884	69	1	6
" " 1885	62	14	3
" " 1886	3	3	3
" " 1887			
" " 1888	23	14	9
" " 1889	81	4	9
	<hr/>		
	£267	13	6

Wollombi—

Wollombi—Crown Lands and Class A Timber Reserves.

	£	s.	d.
During year 1883	14	0	0
„ „ 1884	7	10	0
„ „ 1885	2	15	0
„ „ 1886	0	5	0
„ „ 1887	3	5	0
„ „ 1888	1	0	0
„ „ 1889	9	10	0
	£38	5	0

Newcastle—Crown Lands and Class A Timber Reserves.

	£	s.	d.
During year 1883	10	0	0
„ „ 1884	5	10	0
„ „ 1885	3	0	0
„ „ 1886	9	5	0
„ „ 1887	8	10	0
„ „ 1888	11	15	0
„ „ 1889	44	10	0
	£92	10	0

Gosford—Crown Lands and Class A Timber Reserves.

	£	s.	d.
During year 1883	82	10	0
„ „ 1884	66	10	0
„ „ 1885	60	0	0
„ „ 1886	51	15	0
„ „ 1887	30	15	0
„ „ 1888	43	0	0
„ „ 1889	42	10	0
	£377	0	0

Cooranbong—Crown Lands and Class A Timber Reserves.

	£	s.	d.
During year 1883	74	10	0
„ „ 1884	118	10	0
„ „ 1885	84	10	0
„ „ 1886	91	10	0
„ „ 1887	73	0	0
„ „ 1888	88	0	0
„ „ 1889	171	15	0
	£701	15	0

Total Amount Revenue received £1,477 3 6

F.

COST OF CONSTRUCTING SUBURBAN RAILWAYS.

Government Railways of New South Wales, Secretary's Office, Sydney, 30 July, 1890.

Sir,

As requested in your letter of the 17th instant, I have the honor to inform you that the original cost of constructing the several suburban railway lines is as shown below, viz. :—

	£	s.	d.
Sydney to Parramatta, 13½ miles	566,716	8	8
Sydney to Hurstville, 9 miles	135,000	0	0
Strathfield to Hornsby, 14 miles	297,288	0	0
Hornsby to St. Leonards, 10½ miles	203,352	0	0

I am desired to point out that since the opening of the above lines the original and subsequent cost has been kept in sections, of which those referred to (except Hornsby to St. Leonards) only form a part.

I have, &c.,

H. M'LACHLAN,

Secretary.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

G.

[To Evidence of C. C. Bullock, Esq.]

AREA OF LAVENDER BAY.

130, Pitt-street, Sydney, 30 July, 1890.

Sir, In accordance with arrangement, I forward the following information in connection with the extension of the North Shore Railway to Milson's Point. It has been stated by several witnesses that the area of Circular Quay is greater than the area of Lavender Bay, yet the fact is that the former contains only 63 acres, as against 70 acres contained by the latter. Moreover, the area of Darling Harbour on the southern side of the Pyrmont Bridge is only 40 acres. The width of Lavender Bay ranges from 820 feet at its head, 1,100 feet opposite M'Mahon's Point, to 2,500 feet between Blue's and Milson's Points. The width of Circular Quay is 910 feet, from and south of the Orient Company's wharf, while the distance is 2,200 feet between Dawes Point and Fort Macquarie. The length of the wharfage that can be provided on the Government scheme in Lavender Bay is 2,360 feet, as against 2,700 feet on the western side of Darling Harbour. The area of the Darling Harbour terminus comprises 27 acres, while the area that could be readily obtained in Lavender Bay would be 12 acres. It has further been stated that the fairway between Milson's Point and Dawes Point is the narrowest in the harbour, yet, although more traffic passes through the fairway between Miller's Point and Balmain than through any other fairway, the former is 1,480 feet in width, as against 1,220 feet for the latter. And with regard to the depth of water in the various bays. The depth in Lavender Bay at low spring tides ranges from 20 feet at its head, 46 feet off M'Mahon's Point, to 50 feet between Blue's and Milson's Points. In Circular Quay the measurements are—20 feet at its head, 40 feet off the Orient Company's wharf, and 50 feet between Dawes Point and Fort Macquarie. In Darling Harbour the minimum depth is 12 feet, and its maximum depth 21 feet.

These figures prove that Lavender Bay is more capacious than Circular Quay or Darling Harbour above Pyrmont Bridge; that its depth of water is equal to, if not greater than, that of Circular Quay, while it is considerably greater than that of Darling Harbour; and that the Milson's Point fairway is not the narrowest in the harbour.

I would further point out that to connect Mr. Hamand's scheme, from the station in Neutral Bay valley with the high-level bridge at M'Mahon's Point, by the least expensive route, would cost, approximately, £170,000. To connect the Government amended scheme with the bridge would cost about £70,000. That by making a junction at 12 miles 25 chains from Hornsby, on the Government amended route, and by shunting back, a branch line to Ball's Head could be constructed, on the ruling grade of 1 in 50, at a cost of about £40,000. Its length would be about 5,000 feet, and it would provide about 2,500 feet of shipping accommodation for coal.

There is one matter I would not have alluded to, but that other witnesses have been questioned regarding it. They have been asked, "Would you put your money into such a railway?" I am now authorized to state that within an hour of the acceptance of the offer a marked cheque for £1,000 will be handed in to bind a further deposit of £10,000, as a guarantee of the purchase of the completed Government line for £450,000. This is a genuine offer.

I have, &c.,

C. C. BULLOCK.

To the Vice-Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

G 1.

Re North Shore Railway.

Sydney Chambers, 130 Pitt-street, Sydney, 7 August, 1890.

Sir, In my evidence on the 29th ultimo, I stated, in reply to Mr. Garrard, that there was a difference in grade between Wyong and Newcastle, meaning thereby that a 1 in 40 grade did not exist. I find, however, that there are nearly 5 miles of 1 in 40 grade between those places, and consequently if coal were found at Wyong it is fairly reasonable to suppose that it would find its way to North Shore, either for local consumption or for exportation.

I have, &c.,

C. C. BULLOCK.

The Vice-President, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

H.

H.

LAND REQUIRED FROM THE BERRY ESTATE FOR THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

Sir, Department of Public Works, Sydney 6 August, 1890.
 With reference to the question of the land required from your estate for the purposes of the North Shore Railway Extension, I am desired by Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith to ask whether you are prepared, in the general public interest, to give free of cost to the Government such land as may be required, as you have already done in the case of the Kiama-Nowra Railway.

I have, &c.,
 J. BARLING,
 Under Secretary.

John Hay, Esq., Crow's Nest, North Shore.

Sir, Crow's Nest, North Shore, 7 August, 1890.
 In reply to your letter of the 16th instant, *re* lands required from the estate for the purposes of the North Shore Railway Extension, I have, with the concurrence of my co-executor, Dr. Norton, agreed, "in the general public interest, to give free of cost to the Government such land as may be required," assuming that the "Pearce's Corner to Milson's Point" route is decided upon, and that the area of land so required—in addition to that already occupied—will be about 20 acres, and that the railway be constructed within two years.

This offer is made on the understanding that it will be accepted by Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith as in no way influencing the Committee in the direction or construction of the line.

I have, &c.,
 JOHN HAY.

The Under Secretary for Public Works

Seen.—B.S., 7/8/90. By direction of Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith, I forward this letter for the information of the Public Works Committee.—J. BARLING, 7/8/90.

AFTER the receipt of the above letter, Mr. Hay was asked in another letter from the Under Secretary for Public Works whether the offer to give the land required from the Berry Estate for the railway free of charge to the Government would hold good if the Committee approved of the extension of the line to Lavender Bay, and not to Milson's Point, and the following letter was received from Mr. Hay, in reply :—

My dear Mr. Barling,

Crow's Nest, North Shore, 12 August, 1890.

I have your letter of the 11th instant, and in reply thereto I see no reason to deviate in any way from the offer embodied in my letter to the Under Secretary of the 7th instant.

Yours, &c.,
 JOHN HAY,

J. Barling, Esq., Under Secretary for Works.

Submitted.—J.B., 12/8/90.
 Committee.—J.B., 12/8/90.

Forward to Public Works Committee.—B.S., B.C., 12/8/90.

Secretary to the

[Eight diagrams.]

APPENDIX TO SECOND REPORT.

1889.

(SECOND SESSION.)

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

FIRST REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDICES, AND PLANS,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

TO CONNECT THE

NORTH SHORE RAILWAY WITH PORT JACKSON,
AT MILSON'S POINT.

Presented to Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act,
51 Vic. No. 37, section 8.

SYDNEY: CHARLES POTTER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable JOHN LACKEY, Vice-Chairman.
 The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN.
 The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
 The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
 The Honorable GEORGE HENRY COX.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esquire, Chairman.
 JACOB GARRARD, Esquire.
 HENRY COPELAND, Esquire.
 JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esquire.
 WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esquire.
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esquire.
 JOHN HURLEY, Esquire.
 CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esquire.

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PLANS.

- Plan I.—Parliamentary Plan. Railway from North Shore to Milson's Point.
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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY TO CONNECT THE NORTH SHORE RAILWAY WITH PORT JACKSON, AT MILSON'S POINT.

FIRST REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the last Session of Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, and the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson at Milson's Point," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is not expedient the railway should be constructed; and, in accordance with the provision of sub-section IV, of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

1. The proposed railway represents an extension of 2 miles and 21 chains of the line, the construction of which is almost completed from Pearce's Corner, at Hornsby, to St. Leonards, commencing at the present terminal point of the Pearce's Corner Railway, at Gore Hill, or Crow's Nest, and ending at Milson's Point. In other words, it is a continuation of the Pearce's Corner Railway, with the object of connecting that line with the deep waters of Port Jackson. Short as the length of the extension is, the work of constructing it would be very costly. Some portions of the route would be traversed on the level, but others would require somewhat deep cuttings and difficult tunnelling, and the estimated cost of the extension is £262,000. Starting from the point at Gore Hill, or Crow's Nest, to which the Pearce's Corner Railway has been brought, the line would pass under what is known as Edwards' Road, then cross Bay Road and Carr-street on the level, and passing thence under Union-street, sweep round to the left, and, by means of a tunnel 430 yards in length, cross to the head of Lavender Bay, the eastern shore of which it would skirt, until it terminated at Milson's Point. The extension as proposed, represents a double line, and the estimated cost, £262,000, is made up of £127,000 for the construction of the railway, and £135,000 as the cost of land and compensation. This estimate is, to a certain extent, modified in a memorandum by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, which will be found in the Appendix, and which will be alluded to again further on, but the amount stated may be considered as that representing the estimated cost placed before the Committee when the proposed work was referred to them by the Legislative Assembly, and, as that, which in the end, would probably be found to be correct. It will be noticed in a report upon the proposed line by the Railway Commissioners that the estimated cost of its construction, exclusive of land and compensation, is set down at £106,000, but this, it is explained, refers to the cost of a single line. Since this report was written it has been considered desirable to substitute a double line, and this increases the estimate of the cost of construction, exclusive of land and compensation, to £127,000. It must increase also the amounts given in the Railway Commissioners' report to represent the annual cost in the shape of interest on capital and the expense of working the line when in operation.

2. Two routes have at times been advocated in opposition to the proposed line, but they have not been recommended by any witness before the Committee. One of these is a line with a terminus at Blue's Point, and the other a line terminating at Cremorne. Only one of these alternative routes enters in a direct form into the consideration

consideration which the Committee have given the question before them. Though no person has come before the Committee to advocate the construction of either a line to Blue's Point or one to Cremorne, it has been necessary for the Committee to regard each of these suggested lines as a subject for consideration in relation to the question generally of extending the North Shore Railway to the deep waters of Port Jackson, and in that way the suggested extension to Blue's Point becomes a matter of some importance.

Object of the proposed railway.

3. The object of the proposed extension to Milson's Point is principally to open up a new residential suburb between Pearce's Corner and Crow's Nest; Pearce's Corner being the starting point at Hornsby of the already constructed North Shore Railway, and Crow's Nest its present terminus. This object, which will be found distinctly stated throughout the evidence given by the witnesses examined before the Committee, it is important to bear in mind. There is no idea of meeting by the proposed extension any requirements of the population around Milson's Point, or of those to the eastward of the route of the proposed railway, or of the people between Milson's Point and the present terminus of the North Shore tramway, near the St. Leonards Reserve; though the great majority of the population of North Shore live in those localities. It is admitted that the tramway supplies the wants of a considerable number of the present population of North Shore. But, it is urged, the railway extension is required to enable people to settle upon the land beyond the present tramway terminus, and between Gore Hill, or Crow's Nest, and Hornsby, where there is an area of country so suitable for residence that the line will, in all probability, become in a few years a suburban railway, with as large a passenger traffic, and as profitably worked, as the suburban line to Hurstville, and to places between Hurstville and Sydney. The land, which it is said would be taken up, and upon which residences would be erected, is high, commanding in places attractive views, with a cool, health-giving temperature, and possessing on the whole satisfactory facilities for drainage. A more desirable locality for suburban residence could not, it is stated, be found anywhere within easy distance of Sydney. The construction of a little more than 2 miles of an extension of the railway now at Crow's Nest, at a cost of over a quarter of a million of money, so that persons deciding to take up their residence along this suburban line might enter a train at Milson's Point, instead of a tramcar, and travel uninterruptedly to their homes, would, it is maintained, bring into existence a suburb equal in extent and population to any along the suburban railways on the Sydney side of Port Jackson.

The land available for residences.

Little or no hope of a goods traffic.

4. Some witnesses have spoken of coal, bricks, and general merchandise being sent along the railway, but the idea that there would be anything of the kind, in any appreciable quantity, is at least very uncertain. The responsible officials of the Public Works Department do not expect it. One of the reasons for the proposal to extend the railway to Milson's Point, instead of to Blue's Point, or to Cremorne, is the probability of there being little or no heavy goods traffic; and the goods traffic which some of the witnesses examined anticipate is, as will be explained, exceedingly doubtful.

Through passenger traffic.

5. As for through passenger traffic, there is nothing at all to show conclusively, that, unless in the case of passengers resident at North Shore, anyone coming from places north of Hornsby will travel southwards by the North Shore Railway, and it appears just as improbable that anyone going to places north of Hornsby, unless a resident of North Shore, will start from Milson's Point rather than from Redfern.

How the proposed line should be regarded.

6. Regarded, then, as a short and very costly extension in connection with a suburban passenger line the proposed railway has to be dealt with, and in that light it is now necessary to consider it, in order to judge whether it ought or ought not to be constructed.

Evidence obtained, and visit of inspection made, by the Committee.

7. In the consideration of this proposed public work the Committee have endeavoured to obtain evidence from all sides, and all persons who, previous to the closing of the evidence, expressed a desire to be examined, and came forward in pursuance of that desire, have been heard. Furthermore, a visit has been made to North Shore by the Committee, and the route of the proposed railway, and that which would be taken by the tram line (if instead of the proposed railway extension being constructed the cable tramway were continued from its present terminus near the St. Leonards Reserve to Gore Hill, this possible continuation of the tramway being a matter incidental to the general inquiry) have been carefully inspected.

8. Twenty-two witnesses have given evidence before the Committee, the number consisting principally of residents of North Shore directly interested in the construction of the proposed line, and it will be well to state briefly what that evidence is, so that the nature of the testimony put forward may be understood, and afterwards its value fairly estimated. No person has attended to give evidence in direct opposition to the line, but this may be attributed to two circumstances,—one, that the proposed railway would not, as will be shown in another part of this report, serve the bulk of the present population of North Shore, who are consequently not particularly interested in it; and the other, that though the line would not meet any requirements on the part of these people, it would be to the general advantage of the district to have the money which the railway would cost spent there, and consequently, it would be impolitic for any resident of the suburb, unless he favoured some rival route, to come forward and oppose the proposal.

The witnesses examined.

9. The departmental witnesses, or those who attended before the Committee on behalf of the Department of Public Works, were Mr. Joseph Barling, Under Secretary for Public Works, and Mr. Henry Deane, Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways. The former made a statement in which appeared the following points:—

Nature of the evidence given by the departmental witnesses.

- (1) £173,221 16s. has been expended to date on 10 miles 51 chains of the North Shore Railway from Hornsby to Gore Hill, and that expenditure by the time the works on this length of railway are completed will probably have increased to £180,000.
- (2) Unless the proposed extension to Milson's Point be carried out, this large amount of money—£180,000—will lie absolutely idle.
- (3) The object of the proposed extension is not to serve the population settled around Milson's and other Points, but to open up a new suburb between Pearce's Corner and Gore Hill.
- (4) It is not at all likely that persons living in the vicinity of the harbour will use the railway.
- (5) There is no probability of any coal or heavy goods traffic on the line beyond what is required for local consumption, and the cost of conveying coal from Newcastle or its district by rail would be so much in excess of the rate at which it can be conveyed by water, that it is not likely it will ever pay to bring coal to Sydney harbour from the north by rail, and therefore it would be most unwise to expend money in making wharves for the shipment of coal which will never arrive.
- (6) There is not room at Milson's Point to make wharves, the harbour there being so narrow that wharves would be an obstruction to navigation, and, in any case, goods or coal and passenger traffic must be separated, so that the value of Milson's Point for the shipment of coal need not be considered.
- (7) If the North Shore Railway stopped where it is now, at Crow's Nest, and the communication between that terminus and Milson's Point were by tram, the change from train to tram, and from tram to steamer, would be fatal to the residential value of the district.
- (8) Ten or twelve miles of travelling would be saved passengers from the north if they came to Sydney by way of Milson's Point, instead of by way of Strathfield.

10. The principal features of the evidence given by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways may be summarized as follows:—

Evidence given by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways.

- (1) When the North Shore Railway was originally planned, the passenger traffic was to have its terminus at Crow's Nest, where it is at the present time, and there was to be a branch line to Ball's Head for goods traffic, as it was anticipated coal would be conveyed along the railway in considerable quantities for shipment.
- (2) The idea of having a passenger terminus at Milson's Point, or, in other words, a water terminus for passengers, is a Ministerial afterthought.

(3)

- (3) If coal were brought by the North Shore Railway to the harbour, Ball's Head would be the most suitable place to which to bring it.
- (4) The cost of extending the tramway from its present terminus, near the St. Leonards Reserve, to the terminus of the railway at Crow's Nest, would be something under £30,000, and the length of this extension of the tramway would be about $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile.
- (5) The height of the hill upon which the Government Observatory stands, on the Sydney side of the harbour, is about level with that of the locality of the present terminus of the North Shore Railway.

Synopsis of
the evidence
of other
witnesses.

11. Referring now to the evidence given by the other witnesses examined before the Committee, it will be seen that the chief grounds upon which witnesses directly interested in North Shore, and in the construction of the proposed line, advocate the proposed extension of the railway to Milson's Point, are the following :—

- (1) The land which would be served by the proposed railway extension and the North Shore Railway is elevated and salubrious, and, with the access from Sydney provided by this extension, would attract a large population.
- (2) The population would increase to an extent equal, if not greater, than has been the case along the suburban portion of the Illawarra Railway, and along the railways serving the western suburbs.
- (3) A not inconsiderable area of Crown land, partly the residue of past Crown land sales, lies within a convenient distance of the North Shore Railway, and, with the proposed railway facilities, would probably find purchasers at a largely increased value.
- (4) A through passenger traffic between Sydney and Newcastle would come into existence by this route.
- (5) With the railway to Milson's Point there would be, in addition to the passenger traffic, a goods traffic, brought about by the conveyance of fruit from orchards in the district, of bricks from the brick manufactories in the vicinity of Gore Hill, of coal for use at the brick manufactories, of household supplies to residents, and possibly of coal from mines in the north for shipment in Port Jackson, and produce from northern farms for sale at North Shore and Sydney.
- (6) Milson's Point could be made the terminus of the Great Northern Railway.
- (7) The land resumed under the proposal for extending the railway to Milson's Point would include 2,000 feet of deep water frontage to Lavender Bay, which could be utilised for wharfage purposes, and would greatly increase in value.
- (8) A tramway connection between Milson's Point and the present terminus of the North Shore Railway at Crow's Nest would not encourage settlement along the railway, or meet the requirements of travellers, as it would make the journey between places of residence and Milson's Point inconvenient and slow; it would be fatal to the prospects of a goods traffic; and it would repeat the difficulty apparent in connection with the stoppage of the railway at Redfern, and the efforts since made to bring that railway more into the city of Sydney.
- (9) Crown land adjacent to the North Shore Railway was purchased on the faith of a promise or statement made at the sale that the railway would be extended to Milson's Point, and land for the construction of the North Shore Railway was given to the Government free of cost, on the understanding that the railway would be extended to the deep waters of Port Jackson.
- (10) A postponement of the proposed extension of the railway to Milson's Point would result in the necessity for incurring greatly increased expense in the resumption of the land required for the extension, as this land must be constantly rising in value.

12. The foregoing synopsis will be found to contain the substance of the evidence given before the Committee; and the statements made, and opinions expressed in this evidence, have been as carefully considered as the points which primarily appeared to the Committee to be those that should in the course of the inquiry be kept in view.

13. The inquiry has been conducted with a desire to deal with the proposed railway extension in a comprehensive manner, and the Committee have sought information, and endeavoured to arrive at a sound judgment, in regard to the following questions :—

Manner in which the Committee have conducted the inquiry.

- (1) The details of the proposal, in respect of length of line, route, easiness or difficulty of construction, cost, interest, expense of maintenance, and reasons for proposing to construct the railway.
- (2) The exact relation in which the proposed connecting railway stands to the North Shore Railway already in course of construction and approaching completion.
- (3) The position in which the North Shore Railway would be without the connecting railway.
- (4) The extent to which the proposed connecting railway would meet the travelling requirements of the population of North Shore, and be likely to lead to an increase of population, and to a consequent larger railway passenger traffic.
- (5) The probability, or otherwise, of a goods traffic on the railway.
- (6) Whether, in view of the enormous cost of the proposed railway, the interest to be met, the expense of maintenance, the uncertainty of the receipts proving satisfactory for some time, and other circumstances, including an indication in the evidence that an extension of the tramway is regarded by the Department of Public Works as an alternative scheme to that of constructing the connecting railway, the existing North Shore Tramway, extended to the present terminus of the North Shore Railway, would be sufficient to meet public requirements for at least some years, and until the question of bringing the North Shore Railway to the waters of Port Jackson has been further and more minutely considered.

14. These principal points for investigation have included others which, though not so prominent, are essential to a right understanding of the various features of the proposal before the Committee, and have formed matters upon which witnesses have been examined, or which the Committee have duly considered.

Relative questions that have been considered.

The relative questions that in this way have been subjects of inquiry are :—

(1.) Details of the proposal :—

Details of the proposal.

- (a) Is the route for the connecting railway one that avoids as much as possible expensive works, in the form of cuttings, embankments, or tunnelling?
- (b) Has the route been so chosen as to escape the necessity for the payment of a large sum of money as compensation for land?
- (c) Does it appear that the estimate of cost in connection with the railway has been calculated with a proper degree of certainty.

(2 & 3.) The relation of the connecting railway to the present North Shore Railway, and the position in which the latter would be without the connecting extension :—

Relation of the connecting railway to the North Shore Railway.

- (a) Is it absolutely necessary, in order to make the North Shore Railway remunerative, to connect that railway, as proposed, with Milson's Point?

- (b) What were the objects in view when it was resolved to construct the North Shore Railway, and has there since transpired in connection with this railway anything to show that those objects were misconceived and therefore not now likely to be realised ?
- (c) Were the residents of North Shore satisfied with the intentions of the Government in regard to the North Shore Railway when its construction was decided upon, and are there now any circumstances in connection with the progress of North Shore to show that the requirements of the population, which it was intended to meet by means of the North Shore Railway, are greater than they were then estimated to be ?
- (d) To what extent will the North Shore Railway, as it is, meet requirements ?

Extent to which travelling requirements would be met, and population increase.

- (4.) The extent to which the travelling requirements of the population would be met by the proposed connecting railway, and that to which the population is likely to increase :—

- (a) Is the proposed connecting line wanted, or likely to be used by those whose places of residence are, or may be, between Milson's Point and the present terminus of the North Shore Railway, or by those who live, or may live, to the east of the route of the proposed line—by, in fact, two-thirds or more of the present and future total population of North Shore ?
- (b) What prospects are there of an increased population as a result of constructing the railway,—what are the grounds, if any, for thinking that the increase would be large ; whence would the additional population come, and what class of people would they probably be ?
- (c) The extent to which the line would be used by through passengers travelling to or from Sydney and stations on the Great Northern Railway north of Hornsby ?

Probability or otherwise of a goods traffic.

- (5.) The probability or otherwise of a goods traffic :—

- (a) What goods,—if in opposition to the expectations and intentions of the responsible officers of the Department of Public Works it is thought the proposed railway would promote a goods traffic,—is it said the railway would convey ?
- (b) The reasons for considering that the goods mentioned would be conveyed by the railway ?
- (c) Reasons why it is very unlikely there would be any appreciable goods traffic of the kind stated ?
- (d) Has this question of goods traffic been thoroughly and satisfactorily considered ?

Whether it would be sufficient to extend the tramway.

- (6.) Whether, in view of the enormous expenditure upon the proposed railway, the uncertainty for some time of the results, and other circumstances, it would be sufficient for the present to connect the North Shore Railway with Milson's Point by extending the cable tramway from its present terminus to the terminus of the railway at Crow's Nest :—

- (a) The interest upon the cost of construction, and the expense of maintaining the railway which would have to be annually met ?
- (b) Whether the probable traffic on the railway has been estimated with any degree of accuracy ?
- (c) The cost of extending and working the tramway ?
- (d) Whether the working of the tramway could be improved so that it should be satisfactory in point of speed and frequency of journeying ?

15. Taking these points in the inquiry in the order in which they are stated, and, afterwards, those which appear in the evidence of the witnesses who advocate the construction of the connecting railway, the Committee deal with the various questions that arise in a due consideration of the proposed public work in the following manner:—

How the questions stated in the plan of the inquiry are dealt with.

16. The proposed railway extension and its objects have been described with some fulness in what has already been said. It has further to be mentioned that the annual interest and cost of maintenance, which the complete branch railway would make it necessary to meet, would amount to £21,000—a sum which would represent the fares of an enormous number of passengers.

The proposed extension and its objects.

17. The route chosen for the proposed line, if it be admitted that the railway should be brought to Milson's Point, appears to be as good as any that could be adopted. The distance is short, and the locality over which the line must come is hilly and irregular. An expensive tunnel in the vicinity of Lavender Bay, is to a certain extent, the consequence of the idea that the shores of the bay may be utilised for wharfage purposes, but it does not seem probable that tunnelling of an expensive nature could be altogether avoided if any other route at all desirable were selected. But while it may be conceded that carefulness has been exercised in the choice of route, the necessity for the payment of a large sum of money as compensation for land exists. Almost the whole of the route passes through private property, and nearly half of it through the Berry Estate, which is about to be subdivided by the trustees of the late Mr. David Berry and sold. In a memorandum forwarded to the Committee by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways (published in the Appendix) it is stated that the land required for the purposes of the railway through the Berry Estate "would probably be given without charge in consideration of the enormous increase in value which would result from the construction of the railway"; but a reference to the evidence of Mr. John Hay, one of the trustees of the estate, who was examined on this point, will show that he does not consider the railway would materially increase the value of the land, and he is not prepared to give the land for nothing. Subsequent to giving his evidence, he informed the Committee by letter that he and his co-trustee would part with the land required for the railway at the rate of £500 per acre, a rate that might bring about some reduction in the total sum which it has been calculated the construction of the railway would make it necessary to expend in the purchase of land; but for all practical purposes in the consideration of the cost of the proposed railway, the amount for the purchase of land and compensation may be taken as estimated by the Department of Public Works, and placed by the Under Secretary of that Department before the Committee—£135,000.

Route of the proposed railway.

Compensation for land.

18. The estimate of the total cost of the proposed extension appears to have been fairly calculated, but in the memorandum from the Engineer-in-Chief, previously alluded to, a possible reduction to the extent of £28,000 is mentioned. It is there stated that the estimated cost of resuming the land over the tunnel near Lavender Bay, set down by the Land Valuer at £28,000, may, under the Lands for Public Purposes Acquisition Act, which gives power to the Government to make tunnels for railway purposes without resumption if the surface be uninjured, be saved, as the surface would be uninjured in this case. This would reduce the total estimated cost of the line to £234,000, a reduction of importance, not necessarily such as to induce a more favourable decision with regard to the line than that at which the Committee have arrived, but certainly one which might have been made known to the Committee at the commencement, instead of at almost the close, of their inquiry.

Estimate of cost.

19. The relation of the proposed connecting railway to the North Shore Railway is somewhat similar to that between the suggested City Railway extension and the railway terminus at Redfern. The distance at North Shore is rather longer, but, while there is that slight disadvantage, the population, present and prospective, which the North Shore Railway is expected to serve is infinitesimal compared with the population of the many suburbs the railways to which start from Redfern. For many years the residents of these suburbs were brought to the terminus at Redfern by rail, and there left to find their ways to the various parts of the city by omnibus or cab, or on foot. The connecting tramway which enabled the people after leaving the trains to travel by tram into or through the city is of recent date. North Shore

Relation of the proposed railway to the North Shore Railway.

Shore, more favoured, has a tram service which can be used in connection with the North Shore Railway from the time that railway is brought into operation. Consequently, the position which this railway would occupy without the proposed connecting line to Milson's Point, would be very much superior to that which the suburban railways on the Sydney side of the harbour occupied for a very long period, and it would be little or no different from that in which these suburban railways are now.

The North Shore tram service.

20. Whether the tram service at North Shore would prove as convenient and effective as that which connects with the railways at Redfern is a matter that will be referred to later on; but, judging from the success which has attended the connecting tram service at Redfern, and the probabilities of similar success at North Shore, it does not appear, if only for this reason alone, absolutely necessary, in order to make the North Shore Railway remunerative, to connect that railway as proposed with Milson's Point.

Intentions and ideas with regard to the North Shore Railway when that railway was proposed.

21. When it was originally proposed, and afterwards decided, to construct the North Shore Railway, there was no idea of bringing it to Milson's Point. It was considered by all concerned—Government, Government Officials, and North Shore people—quite sufficient for all passenger requirements to bring the line to its present terminus, and then, if provision were wanted for a goods traffic, to make a branch line from Chatswood to Ball's Head. It was at that time thought there might be considerable traffic in coal, and Ball's Head was regarded as the most suitable place for coal shipment. The proposal to have a railway terminus for passengers at the water's edge is admitted by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways to be a Ministerial afterthought. According to the original Departmental plan, the passenger traffic was to have its terminus at Crow's Nest, and there was not at that time any expectation that there would be a tramway down to the water. How then, it is necessary to inquire, has it come about that the original plan with regard to the North Shore Railway has been altered, and that it is now asserted that without the connecting extension, upon which must be expended the large sum of £262,000, the railway already constructed will be useless? The substance of the evidence of the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways on this point is that the idea of a goods traffic and coal shipment at Ball's Head has been abandoned, and that being so, it has been thought advisable to extend the passenger traffic to Milson's Point, in order, he says, to bring that part of the North Shore Railway "which has already been constructed into some use, and to make it serve one of the purposes for which it was originally intended." Originally, and until it was decided to alter the original plan, there does not appear to have been any doubt on the part of the authorities that the North Shore Railway could be brought into use for passengers, and meet requirements by having its terminus where it is at present; now it is said, apparently only because opinions seem to have changed with regard to a goods traffic, that the railway will be useless for passenger traffic unless it be brought to Milson's Point.

Original plan with regard to the North Shore Railway not shown to have been misconceived.

22. Apart from these circumstances, it does not appear that since the time when the construction of the North Shore Railway was determined upon anything of importance has transpired to prove that the opinions then entertained, in regard to passenger accommodation, were misconceived to the extent indicated by the present proposal to bring the passenger traffic to Milson's Point. No protest was raised by the residents of North Shore against the railway terminating, as far as related to passenger traffic, at Crow's Nest; apparently everybody was satisfied, and they appear to have remained so until the change in the opinions of the railway authorities, in respect to goods traffic, and until certain representations were made to the Minister for Works by residents of North Shore, alive to the advantage which the extension of the railway would be in the expenditure of a large amount of public money in the district, and the increased value which the complete line would give to property in its vicinity. Those circumstances appear to have given rise to an impression in the minds of some persons that, viewed locally, it would be better to have the extension than to be without it; in those of others, who had speculated in land along the route of the present railway, that the extension must be to them a cause of greatly increased profit: and in the minds of some who had taken up their residence along the route of the North Shore Railway, that at least it promised more convenience to them, when leaving the ferry steamer at Milson's Point, to be able to step into a railway carriage instead of into a tramcar. So it has come about that the extension

is

is advocated. Local advantages and private interests would not of themselves be sufficient to put forward in support of the proposal, but to these were added what are urged as public advantages—benefits that are, in the opinion of the Committee, at least very doubtful—and thus the extension to Milson's Point became a proposal for submission to Parliament.

23. Five years have elapsed since the construction of the North Shore Railway was proposed to Parliament; and though the population of North Shore has increased considerably during that period, and the general progress of the suburb has been very satisfactory, the advance has not been of that kind which would lead to the conclusion that the accommodation intended to be afforded by the North Shore Railway is likely to be insufficient for requirements. The bulk of the increase of population has not been in the direction of the railway; it has been in parts of the suburb which will not be served by either the North Shore Railway or by the proposed extension to Milson's Point. A few people have taken up their residence in the neighbourhood of the North Shore line, and others have purchased land which they desire to sell for the purposes of residence; there are orchards in the district which send annually to market a considerable quantity of fruit, and there are a few brick manufactories, some of which are doing a good business. But nothing of this is of the nature of the unexpected. Residence along the route, land speculation, the growth and sale of a considerable quantity of fruit in the district, and an extensive manufacture of bricks were as apparent five years ago as now. That the probability of a large number of people residing along the route of the railway was not lost sight of by those who recommended the construction of the line is clear from the fact that special arrangements were made with regard to a terminus for the passenger traffic. The growth and sale of fruit were a known certainty, inasmuch as the district is specially suitable for this industry, and large orchards have been in a thriving condition there for many years; and as for the manufacture of bricks, most people know that the existence of valuable kinds of clay at North Shore has not been a secret, and that good bricks were being made in the district in large quantities before the North Shore Railway was thought of. It, therefore, does not appear that the circumstances in relation to the North Shore Railway are now any different from what they were when that railway was proposed and its construction decided upon, and the probability of its meeting public requirements is the same at the present time as it was then.

Progress of North Shore not such as to indicate that the North Shore Railway is insufficient to meet requirements.

24. It is necessary now to consider the extent to which the travelling requirements of the population will be met by the proposed connecting railway, and that to which the population is likely to increase. First, is the proposed connecting line wanted or likely to be used by those whose places of residence are, or may be, between Milson's Point and the present terminus of the North Shore Railway, or by those who live, or may live, to the east of the route of the proposed line—by what constitute two-thirds or more of the present and future total population of North Shore. A reference to the evidence, and a careful consideration of the subject, will show that the proposed line is not wanted, and will not be used, by the bulk of the residents of the suburb. Most of the increase which has taken place in the population of North Shore is principally to be found to the east of the proposed line to Milson's Point, and in parts of the suburb which are served by the present tramway. This increase eastwards will continue, and as it proceeds so will the number of people to whom the proposed railway will be useless become larger. The witnesses examined by the Committee say that the people who are likely to patronise the railway are those who do now, or will in the future, reside within about 3 miles of Milson's Point, and in the neighbourhood of the present terminus of the North Shore Railway, and between that locality and Pearce's Corner. For this portion of the population only the railway is wanted, and most of this population is prospective. The railway is expected to bring the people; at present the residents who would be served by the line are few and scattered.

Extent to which travelling requirements will be met by the proposed railway, and to which population is likely to increase.

25. It is urged that with a railway from Milson's Point to Pearce's Corner the railway route would become as thickly populated as has been the case with the suburban railways radiating from Redfern, and the Illawarra line is alluded to specially. Setting aside the circumstance that the tramway connection between the city of Sydney and the Redfern terminus does not seem to have interfered with the progress of the suburbs on the southern side of the harbour, it is well to inquire as to the nature of the locality along the North Shore Railway as compared with that

Differences as regards population between the Milson's Point and North Shore Railways and the suburban railways starting from Redfern.

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of the suburbs—and particularly those along the Illawarra line—served by the railways starting from Redfern, in order to judge whether it is probable the one district will become as populous as the others. In the first place, the people who are expected to be accommodated by the North Shore Railway are, according to the evidence—and this is apparent to anyone who is acquainted with the locality—not likely to reside nearer to Milson's Point than some 3 miles. Yet a very large proportion of the residents of the suburbs served by the railways running from Redfern reside within this distance of 3 miles. On the Illawarra line the populous suburbs of Eveleigh, Erskineville, St. Peters, and Marrickville are within that distance; and on the line from Redfern to Parramatta there are within the same distance of Redfern the still more thickly populated suburbs of Macdonaldtown, Newtown, Stanmore, and Petersham,—with Summer Hill and part of Ashfield within another mile. Furthermore, the population along these suburban lines is not to be found in any appreciable number beyond a distance of 8 or 9 miles, that being the distance from Redfern at which Hurstville is situated on the Illawarra line, and Homebush, on the line to Parramatta; and as it is not likely to be any different in the case of the North Shore Railway, and the length of that railway being rather more than 13 miles, at least 6 miles of the line—the first three from Milson's Point, and the last three from the 10 miles distance to Pearce's Corner—will be destitute of population to any appreciable extent, and the traffic returns of the railway affected accordingly. But there is another point of difference between the North Shore Railway and the suburban lines on the other side of the harbour in respect of probable population along the route of the former. The people who have taken up their residences in the suburbs served by the railways to Hurstville and Parramatta are in the main of the working or labouring class. The proportion of well-to-do residents, in comparison with the large number of people of small means and humble life, is very small. The suburbs within a distance of 3 or 4 miles of Redfern, are crowded with working people, the well-to-do residents living further out. But in the case of the North Shore Railway, while there may be many well-to-do people, who would take up their residence along the line, it is not at all likely that the locality will be favoured by a working class population. The journey across the water, as compared with that by tram to Redfern, would not, associated with other circumstances, be attractive, and the fact that to reap any of the benefits from the high land and the healthful atmosphere, which are put forth as the attractions of the line, residence must be taken beyond the distance within which the suburb could be a convenience, would be fatal to working men of moderate means and busy lives living there.

Reasons why the proposed railway would not be used by through passengers.

26. Whether the line would be used by through passengers travelling to or from Sydney and stations on the Great Northern Railway north of Hornsby is a question which, in the light of probabilities, can very easily be answered. It is put forward by those who say the railway would be used by through passengers that by coming to Milson's Point such passengers would, after crossing the harbour by ferry steamer, be in a much more convenient position for reaching hotels or any other place of destination in the centre of Sydney than passengers are who travel through from the north to Redfern. In the first place, much of this alleged greater convenience would depend upon whether the Railway Commissioners worked the North Shore Railway as a branch railway or as a part of the trunk line, and it will be seen that the intention of the Commissioners is to work the railway as a branch line. There is nothing whatever in what has come before the Committee to indicate any intention to make the line part of the main Great Northern Railway. That being so, passengers travelling to Sydney by way of Milson's Point would have to change from one train to another at Pearce's Corner,—under present arrangements at a very early hour in the morning,—and the inconvenience of this would be increased if, as is the case with most through passengers, there were luggage to be looked after. Next, there would be the change from the train at Milson's Point to the ferry steamer, with a further inconvenience, similar to what was experienced at Peat's Ferry before the opening of the bridge over the Hawkesbury River; and then, having passed through all this, it would be necessary for passengers to carry their luggage ashore from the steamer on the Sydney side of the harbour, or find and pay someone else to do it—for it is hardly likely there would be railway porters stationed there—and proceed to look for cabs. Is it at all probable that anyone would go through such experiences in preference to travelling comfortably

comfortably round to Strathfield and Redfern, though the length of journey that way might be a few miles more, and being landed at Redfern, where luggage is expeditiously handled by railway porters, and cabs are conveniently obtained through officers of the Transit Commission? And having arrived at Redfern, where is the difference between reaching from that point any part of the city and reaching any part from Milson's Point? The time occupied in travelling in a cab would be almost the same, and the fare would be no more from one place than from the other. Only in the case of persons residing at North Shore would any through passenger be likely to come or go by the North Shore Railway. To such a person as that it would be an advantage to change from one train to another at Pearce's Corner rather than be taken round to Redfern, and have to cross the harbour to Milson's Point; to anyone else it would simply be the beginning of a period of intolerable discomfort.

27. The probability, or otherwise, of a goods traffic on the proposed railway is the question next to be considered. In dealing with this subject it might very well be dismissed by merely drawing attention to the contradictory nature of the evidence regarding it. Most of the North Shore residents who came before the Committee to advocate the construction of the railway, urged that the conveyance of goods would be a very material matter in connection with the railway—that the goods traffic would be large and important. The railway authorities, on the other hand, say there would be no goods traffic beyond that required in connection with local consumption, that the railway is not intended to carry a heavy goods traffic, that it is only a suburban passenger line, and that, therefore, the question of a goods traffic can be left out of consideration altogether. These statements, again, are contradicted by an extract from the speech of the Secretary for Public Works at the time the proposed connecting railway was referred by the Legislative Assembly to the Committee, in which it is argued by the Minister that a cargo traffic may spring up between Newcastle and Sydney along this proposed line, and that in view of this provision for ample wharfage accommodation is at hand in the frontage which will be secured at Lavender Bay. Judged merely in the light of these conflicting opinions it would be difficult to conclude whether a large and profitable goods traffic would or would not follow the construction of the proposed railway; but by a careful scrutiny of the evidence the question can be better understood and decided. The witnesses who declare that there would be a considerable goods traffic if the connecting railway were constructed say this goods traffic would principally consist of—

The question of a goods traffic considered.

What it is said a goods traffic would consist of.

- (1) Fruit.
- (2) Bricks.
- (3) Coal for local consumption—for the use of brick manufactories and residents.
- (4) Coal for shipment.
- (5) Agricultural produce from the north for distribution about North Shore and Sydney.

28. Taking the article fruit first into consideration, it should be remembered that fruit was grown in large quantities, and sent away from the orchards, before the North Shore Railway was proposed, and that the requirements of this fruit industry were not overlooked when the proposed construction of that railway was under consideration. Apparently there was no idea then that the North Shore Railway with its termination at Crow's Nest would not serve the interests of this industry, or rather there would appear to have been an indifference on the subject, as the requirements of most of the large fruit growers in the district are met by the railway from Hornsby to Strathfield and Darling Harbour. Many, if not most, of the fruit growers have their orchards in the neighbourhood, or within easy distance of Hornsby, and send their fruit by rail from Hornsby to Sydney. Some living nearer to Milson's Point might prefer sending their fruit to Sydney by the Milson's Point line—it is said they would—but the necessity for unloading the fruit from the train at Milson's Point, and its subsequent conveyance to market, would certainly militate against any advantage looked for from the more direct and shorter route from the orchards to the distributing centre in Sydney, which this proposed railway might be expected to afford, and make this traffic in fruit exceedingly doubtful. Something has been said of the shipment of fruit from North Shore, but this is uncertain, and being so is not a matter which need at the present time be seriously considered.

Fruit.

Conveyance
of bricks.

29. With reference to the conveyance of bricks it is said large quantities of bricks would be sent from the manufactories by the proposed railway; but here again—except in the case of one manufactory in connection with which a railway siding is talked of—there would be the loading of the bricks into carts, the unloading from the carts into railway trucks, the unloading from the trucks, and the loading into carts again, prior to crossing the harbour, in comparison with the far less laborious and quicker method of carting the bricks from the manufactories to the steamer, and taking the loaded carts in the steamer across to Sydney, or, in special cases, sending the bricks to Sydney by railway, *via* Hornsby and Strathfield. And the facilities for carting the bricks to Sydney by way of the Milson's Point Ferry would seem to be greater from the fact that the principal manufactories are at or close to Gore Hill, near where the present terminus of the North Shore Railway is situated.

Shipment of
bricks.

30. One witness stated that bricks would be sent by the railway for shipment from Milson's Point to coastal ports; but this statement also may be replied to by drawing attention to the short distance between the brick-yards and Milson's Point, and the expedition in carting the bricks that distance after they are once put in the drays, as compared with the trouble and delay of carting them to the railway, loading them in the railway trucks, and unloading them again for shipment into vessels.

Coal for local
consumption.

31. Coal for local consumption may be conveyed over the railway, but, if what is called mountain coal is used, only as far as the point at which the North Shore Railway now terminates, that point being central for both the brick-works and the houses of the bulk of the residents; and facilities for the conveyance of this coal exist without the extension of the line to Milson's Point. If Illawarra coal should be the article used for local consumption it would, it is said, be landed at Milson's Point from steamers, and sent along the railway from Milson's Point. But, with the exception of the evidence of the witness who is a director of a large brick manufactory, and who says that manufactory probably would use Illawarra coal if the Milson's Point extension were made, there is nothing to show that the residents of North Shore would prefer southern to western or other coal, and the fact that the railway authorities are totally against the construction of coal wharves at Milson's Point is decidedly against the probability of any coal being landed there.

Shipment of
coal.

32. The shipment of coal conveyed along the proposed line to Milson's Point is also a matter of some doubt. The Under Secretary for Public Works points out that the cost of conveyance of coal from Newcastle or its district would be so high as to make it very unprofitable to bring the coal to Sydney Harbour for shipment; that, therefore, it would be most unwise to make wharves for the shipment of coal which would never arrive; that, if it were necessary to make wharves, Milson's Point would not be chosen; and that, in any case, goods or coal and passenger traffic must be separated. So that the value of Milson's Point for coal shipment need not be considered. The evidence of the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways is equally emphatic against the Milson's Point extension being in any way regarded as a line which would be used for the conveyance of coal intended for shipment. It appears, however, to the Committee that coal raised, say at Wyong, may be conveyed along the North Shore Railway, and shipped in accordance with the original plan at Ball's Head or Blue's Point, conveyed thither by a branch line from Crow's Nest, and that, therefore, this question of the shipment of coal has not, in relation to the proposed work before the Committee, been satisfactorily disposed of by the evidence given upon it.

Agricultural
produce from
the north.

33. Respecting the next class of goods traffic which the proposed connecting line, it is urged, would encourage—the reception and distribution of agricultural produce from the north—the evidence bearing upon it has been given by Mr. M'Rae, M.P. This witness goes so far as to express the opinion that Milson's Point should be the terminus of the Great Northern Railway, and that a produce depôt at Milson's Point would be more convenient than such a depôt at Darling Harbour. That raises a large question, which it is not necessary to consider here; and with reference to the idea that, if the extension to Milson's Point were constructed, agricultural produce would be sent from the north, it does not seem necessary to do more than repeat what has already been said with regard to the ideas respecting the conveyance of other kinds

kinds of goods along the line—that, so far as North Shore is concerned, no distributing point more central and generally convenient than Crow's Nest could be found, and that it is most unlikely that produce of this kind would be sent over to Sydney from the railway terminus at Milson's Point, in view of the serious inconveniences inseparable from such a proceeding. For the foregoing reasons, it is very clear that the question of goods traffic on the proposed railway has not been thoroughly and satisfactorily considered.

34. As to the question whether it would be sufficient for the present to connect the North Shore Railway with Milson's Point, by extending the cable tramway from its present terminus to the terminus of the railway at Crow's Nest, there should first be borne in mind the reasons which have already been stated why the proposed extension is not required, and then a comparison should be made between the estimated cost of the proposed connecting railway and that of extending the present tramway so as to provide a tram connection. The cost of the proposed railway is set down at £262,000; the cost of the tram extension would be under £30,000. The annual interest and the expense of maintaining the railway would be very considerable; the interest on the cost of the tramway extension, and the expense of maintaining that short length of tramway, only $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile, would, in comparison, be very small. Some evidence given by the Secretary for Railways is to the effect that the cost per mile of working a railway is much less than that per mile of working a tramway; but it must not be overlooked that in the case of the North Shore tramway the unavoidable heavy grades upon it, and other special circumstances, have conduced to the cost of maintenance being high, and that from the present terminal point, near St. Leonards Reserve, to the present North Shore Railway terminus at Crow's Nest, the route would be entirely free from these grades or any other features which would be likely to make the maintenance of the extension costly. Moreover, the Secretary for Railways says that the longer the length of cable at North Shore is, the less proportionately per mile would be the cost at which it could be worked.

Question of connecting the North Shore Railway with Milson's Point by extending the tramway.

35. In dealing with this question of cost, it was necessary for the Committee to ascertain as far as possible the probable revenue that would be derived from the railway when open for traffic; and the indefiniteness upon this subject throughout the evidence is remarkable. Some of the witnesses were actually ignorant of what the railway would cost, and in almost every instance they were unable to say anything definite—even so far as producing a calculation or estimate of their own—as to the revenue return which might be expected from the line. To anyone who carefully examines the statements made by the different witnesses who came forward as residents of North Shore, and direct advocates of the proposed railway, it will be apparent that in most cases their testimony is of a general character, and that the success of the line, judged from their evidence, is a matter of speculation or inference. Even the Railway Commissioners do not state what the returns are likely to be. They say "there is no basis upon which an estimate of the probable revenue can be formed," but they recommend the proposed line because they consider that without it the present North Shore Railway "can prove of but limited commercial value, having no outlet."

Indefiniteness with regard to the probable revenue from the railway.

36. This outlet, in view of all the circumstances, a majority of the Committee consider may be provided by connecting the tramway with the railway. The tram extension would cost very little; there would be no more land resumption required than two small and inexpensive corners, and the working of the trams could be improved so as to meet the additional traffic satisfactorily. The tramway would not carry a goods traffic, but the necessity for immediate provision for a goods traffic has been shown to be doubtful. That it may be made to carry its present passenger traffic and the traffic which may follow the opening of the North Shore Railway must be clear upon any careful examination of the matter. It is indicated in the evidence of the Under Secretary for Public Works that there has been for some time a determination to extend the tram line to the Lane Cove Road, in the neighbourhood of Crow's Nest, though, pending the decision of the Committee regarding the proposed connecting railway, the extension of the tramway has been delayed, and this contemplated extension could be utilised in the connection which the tramway would make with the railway. Objections are to be found in the evidence to

Reasons in favour of extending the tramway.

the time which would have to be spent in the tram, as compared with the time of the journey in a train, and to the inconvenience of changing from tram to train; but if a well-devised system of through trams were brought into operation morning and evening, between certain hours, the time of the journey might be so materially reduced as to remove all inconvenience on that ground to residents going to their business or returning to their homes, and the inconvenience of stepping out of a tram into a train need be no greater than is experienced daily by many thousands more people than for many years can be expected to travel along the North Shore Railway. It would be better, other things being equal, to be without this inconvenience, but to be without it means, as matters in regard to the proposal under the consideration of the Committee stand, the expenditure of over a quarter of a million of money, with a very uncertain prospect of the expenditure being remunerative.

The statements in the evidence with reference to Crown land, and the resumption of land.

37. Two points which appear in the evidence of witnesses directly interested in North Shore, and, therefore, in the railway, remain to be dealt with. One is that Crown land along the route of the North Shore Railway would, with the proposed railway facilities, probably find purchasers at a largely increased value; another is, that Crown land was purchased on the faith of a promise that the North Shore Railway would be extended to Milson's Point, and that land for the construction of this railway was given, free of cost, to the Government, on the understanding that the line would be extended to the deep waters of Port Jackson. These points can be answered very completely in a few words. If the Crown land available for residence does not sell for a time, in consequence of the want of the Milson's Point extension, it will remain a valuable asset in the hands of the Government for future sale, and its value, under any circumstances, must increase. With regard to the second point it is absolutely denied by the officer of the Lands Department, who officially attended at the Crown land sales in the neighbourhood of the North Shore Railway, that any promise of the kind stated was made, and a similar denial is given by the Under Secretary for Works in reference to what is alleged as to land given for the construction of the railway.

How the proposed Railway is affected by the question of a bridge between Sydney and North Shore.

38. Finally there is the subject of a bridge connection between North Shore and Sydney. A bridge from some point on the Sydney side of the harbour to some point on the North Shore side, connecting the suburb with the city, may be erected within the next few years, and the question arises where the connection is likely to be, and whether it will be assisted or retarded by a railway to Milson's Point. Wherever the bridge may be erected it is certain to be so constructed as to be able to carry a railway, and for that railway to join easily and well with the railway at North Shore the junction must be somewhere on a high level. A connection at Milson's Point will not be suitable, nor anywhere on the low level upon which the proposed railway to Milson's Point would run. The junction of the line crossing the bridge must be on high land, so as not to obstruct the harbour traffic, and as, so constructed, it would carry the traffic both passenger and goods, from suburb to city, and city to suburb, in the face of any facilities a line from Crow's Nest to Milson's Point might offer, the line to Milson's Point would consequently be less used, and the vast expenditure incurred in its construction would be proportionately wasted.

Summary of conclusions at which the Committee have arrived.

39. Shortly stated the conclusions at which the Committee have arrived are :—

- (1) The proposed railway is enormously expensive, and being so, every precaution should be taken before the expenditure is authorized, to see that, if constructed, the line will prove remunerative.
- (2) The circumstances attending the construction of the present North Shore Railway, and the present condition and prospects of North Shore being such as to show that the original plan in regard to passenger traffic on this railway was not misconceived, there is nothing on those grounds to prove that this railway, assisted by adjuncts other than the proposed connecting line to Milson's Point, will not meet public requirements for at least some years.

(3)

- (3) The proposed railway, if constructed, would be useless to the great majority of the present and future population of North Shore, inasmuch as most of the settlement in the suburb is, and will continue to be, to the east of the proposed line.
- (4) The prospect of a large population along the North Shore Railway, travelling to and fro, similar to what is to be seen on the suburban railways starting from Redfern, is not free from considerable doubt.
- (5) A through passenger traffic is a matter of great uncertainty.
- (6) The evidence respecting the subject of a goods traffic is contradictory and inconclusive, and generally of such a nature as to show that the question of goods traffic has not been thoroughly and satisfactorily considered.
- (7) By extending the present tramway for a short distance, at very small cost compared with the estimated cost of the proposed railway, and making provision for improving the running of the trams, at certain times of the day, in point of speed and frequency of journeying, public requirements could be met, the North Shore Railway utilised, and the great expense of constructing the proposed railway avoided.
- (8) As a bridge to carry a railway may be constructed between Sydney and North Shore within the next few years, it is necessary to provide for a connection of the railway crossing the bridge with the railway at North Shore on a high level, and this requirement would not be met by the proposed extension to Milson's Point.

40. The evidence taken in the inquiry was considered by the Committee on Tuesday, 5 November, and the following extract from the minutes of the meeting will show the resolution which was passed :—

The resolution passed by the Committee.

Mr. Dowel moved,—“That the Committee consider it expedient that the proposed railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point, as referred to them by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out.”

Mr. Garrard seconded the motion.

The motion was negatived, after discussion, on the following division :—

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 8.
Dr. Garran,	Mr. Abbott,
Mr. Humphery,	Mr. Lackey,
Mr. Garrard,	Mr. Trickett,
Mr. Dowel,	Mr. Cox,
Mr. Hurley.	Mr. Copeland,
	Mr. Tonkin,
	Mr. O'Sullivan,
	Mr. Lee.

Mr. Trickett moved,—“That the Committee do not consider it expedient that the proposed railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point, as referred to them by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Lackey, and passed on the following division :—

Ayes, 8.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Abbott,	Dr. Garran,
Mr. Lackey,	Mr. Humphery,
Mr. Trickett,	Mr. Garrard,
Mr. Cox,	Mr. Dowel,
Mr. Copeland,	Mr. Hurley.
Mr. Tonkin,	
Mr. O'Sullivan,	
Mr. Lee.	

J. P. ABBOTT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 11 December, 1889.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY TO CONNECT THE NORTH SHORE RAILWAY WITH PORT JACKSON, AT MILSON'S POINT.

WEDNESDAY, 9 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY,

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Joseph Barling, Esq., Under Secretary for Public Works, sworn and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] You are the Under Secretary for Public Works? Yes.

2. What can you tell us about the proposal to connect the North Shore Railway with Port Jackson, at Milson's Point? I have a statement here which I shall read to the Committee:—The proposal before the Committee is for an extension of the railway from its present terminus at Gore Hill to Milson's Point. The length of line already carried out, viz., that from Hornsby to Gore Hill, is 10 miles 51 chains, of which the last 51 chains is not quite completed. The expenditure to date on this line is £173,221 16s., and when the works are finally completed the cost will probably be £180,000. The first section was completed in May last. I would here point out to the Committee that, unless the proposed extension is carried out, the large amount of money that has been already spent will lie absolutely idle. The proposed extension may be described as follows:—

LINE TO CONNECT THE NORTH SHORE RAILWAY WITH THE WATERS OF PORT JACKSON, AT MILSON'S POINT.

Length, 2 miles 21 chains.

Estimated cost, £127,000 for a double line, exclusive of cost of land and compensation; average per mile, £56,133.

The route recommended for the extension of the North Shore line has its terminus at Milson's Point.

This line commences at 10 miles 51 chains on the railway from Pearce's Corner to St. Leonards, and terminates at Milson's Point, being a length of 2 miles 21 chains.

The line passes under Edwards Road at 28 chains. Bay Road and Carr-street are crossed on the level. After passing under Union-street it sweeps round to the left, and by means of a tunnel crosses to the head of Lavender Bay; then skirts to the eastern shore of this bay, and terminates at Milson's Point.

A platform can be provided at the crossing of the Edwards Road, and another at Bay-street. A platform at Walker-street, at the head of Lavender Bay, can also be provided.

Very little valuable land is interfered with in the whole distance, nor are any important houses seriously damaged.

The terminus at this point will give every accommodation to the travelling public, as it will meet the steamers to and from Sydney, and be close to and on the same level as the cable tramway running through the centre of St. Leonards, and will also provide for the transference of horses and carriages between the railway and the horse-ferry steamers.

One tunnel, 430 yards in length, will be constructed.

The estimated cost of land and compensation is £135,000.

August, 1889.

The principal routes which have been advocated in opposition to the proposed line are—one to terminate at Blue's Point, and another at Cremorne. The first of these is impracticable, by reason of the distance being too short to admit of the descent being made to the water at Blue's Point with a grade of 1 in 40, which is the ruling grade in the line proposed, and also in the line to Cremorne. The objections against the Cremorne route may be summarized as follows:—In the first place, it will be 1 mile 30 chains longer than the Milson's Point route; secondly, it would cost a much larger sum of money, the estimated cost for the works (exclusive of land) being roughly estimated at £250,000, as against £127,000 for the Milson's Point line. The arguments urged in its favour are: (first) that it would serve a larger population, and (secondly) that it would be better for goods and coal traffic. With regard to the first argument, it is not at all likely that persons living in the vicinity of the harbour would use the railway at all, as they would probably make their way to the various ferries which would bring them nearer Sydney. The majority would, of course, use the present tram. The object of the line proposed is not to serve the population settled round Milson's and other points, but it is to open up a new suburb between Pearce's

J. Barling,
Esq.
9 Oct., 1889.

Corner and Gore's Hill. With regard to the coal and heavy goods traffic, this is likely to be little beyond that which is required for local consumption. The cost of conveyance of coal from Newcastle and district would be 7s. to 8s. per ton, as compared with that from the nearest point of the Illawarra coal-measures to Darling Harbour, which would be 3s. 1d. per ton only. By water the carriage from Newcastle would amount to (say) 4s. per ton, and, with rate from collieries to wharf—1s. 6d.—would make a total of 5s. 6d. per ton; so that it is not likely that it will ever pay to bring coal to Sydney Harbour from the north by rail, and therefore most unwise to expend large sums in making wharfs for the shipping of coal which will never arrive.

3. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you charged anything for cramage at this end? We have not gone into wharfage charges. If there were any charge, of course that would have to be added. One shilling and sixpence includes both the railway and cramage charges, so that the cramage alone at this end would not come to a large amount.

4. What would it be? It would be not more than 2d. or 3d. a ton. To continue my statement:—If it were necessary to make wharfs, Milson's Point would not be chosen, as there is not room there, and the narrowness of the harbour would help to cause obstruction to navigation. In any case, goods or coal, and passenger traffic must be separated, so that the value of Milson's Point for coal shipping need not be considered. Milson's Point has been selected principally for passenger traffic, and for that purpose it is undoubtedly superior to Cremorne. The principal traffic will be that of passengers travelling to and from Sydney. The Lane Cove Road district is one of the finest residential areas near Sydney, and a large suburban population may be expected to spring up. Were the Milson's Point line constructed, Gordon, 500 feet above high water, would be as accessible from Sydney as Strathfield is now; whereas, if the line stopped at the Crow's Nest, the double change from train to tram and from tram to steamer would be fatal to the residential value of the district; and if passengers had to proceed *via* Cremorne it would take them a quarter of a hour longer than *via* Milson's Point, the former point being $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Sydney as against $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile for the latter. Any one who wished to get from the Circular Quay to (say) Gore Hill would, by the Milson's Point route, require fifteen minutes only, including steamer; *via* Cremorne he would require thirty minutes. The ruling gradient is the same on both routes, but the earthworks on the Cremorne route would be heavier in proportion, as they would include three tunnels of an aggregate length of $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. The cost for double line of railway for the Cremorne and Milson's Point routes respectively would be £250,000 and £127,000. The Cremorne route would be altogether out of the way of the suggested bridge to connect North Shore with Sydney, whereas the Milson's Point route is the only one from which such a bridge could be approached. With the permission of the Committee I would like to quote from a speech made by the Minister when explaining the project to Parliament on the 7th August last. It is as follows:—

I think I have explained that the extension is not merely for the suburban population of North Shore, but that it is for the whole of the population of the Colony. Any one who has been to the north, or knows anything about the northern traffic, cannot, I think, help acknowledging that to save the whole of the northern population 11 miles travelling is sufficient justification for constructing this line. Honorable Members know that, in order to do cargo business, it certainly will have to come from the country south of Newcastle, otherwise it will go by the Newcastle boats to Sydney, as ships can always compete successfully with the trains. Suppose a cargo traffic were to spring up between Newcastle and Sydney on that line so as to require shipment in Sydney? I should like to explain that the £135,000 for resumption includes the whole of the eastern side of Lavender Bay, which gives wharfage frontage of 2,600 feet, or 900 feet more than that of Darling Island, for which we paid £135,000. Honorable Members will see, therefore, that the whole of the land along the proposed extension, together with this 2,600 feet frontage to Lavender Bay—which is exceedingly valuable, and is 1,000 feet in width from one side of the bay to the other—will be obtained for the same price as we gave for Darling Island, which purchase is now admitted to be one of the best that this Government or any previous Government has made.

I may mention that something like 10 or 12 miles of train travelling would be saved to the passengers from the north if they came down to Milson's Point. It might be said that they would rather do the extra distance than make a change; but at Redfern they would have to take tram, bus, or cab, to get to the city, whereas at Milson's Point they are brought direct to the heart of Sydney by the ferry. With regard to the district through which the line passes, I should, with the permission of the Committee, like to read a report, written by Dr. Ashburton Thompson. He was asked to report on the suitability of the district for suburban residence.

5. *Mr. Lackey.*] Does that report apply to the whole length of the line, or only to the length now proposed to be constructed? To the whole district. The report is as follows:—

August 5, 1889.

I UNDERSTAND that the proposed railway line from Milson's Point to Pearce's Corner follows a course which is practically the same as that taken by the Lane Cove Road. I have traversed the latter, and am acquainted with much of the country to which it gives access.

The course indicated is along a high ridge which falls rather abruptly towards the south-west to Lane Cove, and it falls on the north-east also, but much less abruptly. It has therefore great natural facilities for drainage. The most valuable feature of this tract under local circumstances, however, seems to be its height above the sea-level. Being about 10 or 12 miles long, a height of 200 feet above the sea is reached so near the Point as St. Leonards Reserve. Gore's Hill, which may be 3 miles away, stands at 250 feet; Chatswood, a little farther off, at 350; Gordon, about 7 miles away, at 500; and Pearce's Corner at 600. Now, while the dwellers in the existing suburbs seek freedom from the city's noise and a purer atmosphere than they find there, they desire also in this climate some reduction of temperature, and this cannot be had except by ascending. But, unfortunately, all existing lines out of Sydney pass for many miles through country which rises only to a quite insignificant height above sea-level, and only attain a height at which the temperature is sensibly affected at some distance too great to be traversed twice a day. Thus the Parramatta line rises only at one point to 100 feet. The Illawarra line remains at about the level of its starting point, or 64 feet, until at about 9 miles it attains to 217 feet only, and after falling again reaches 353 feet at a distance of 15 miles. The Southern line traverses 31 miles before it reached even the moderate elevation of 140 feet, and the Western line does not top 150 feet until Emu Plains is passed, 38 miles away from the city. The proposed line, therefore, if it were carried out, would bring within a very easy distance of the city a locality which is much higher, cooler, more airy, and by natural conformation much better drained on the whole than any other equally accessible region with which I am acquainted, and I have therefore no hesitation in expressing the opinion that it would constitute a very great improvement in the conditions of life at present possible.

J. ASHBURTON THOMPSON,
Deputy Medical Adviser.

6. *Mr. Cox.*] You said just now that the descent to the waters of the harbour from the high land would be very great at Blue's Point;—that is not an insuperable difficulty surely? It would be difficult to make a grade of 1 in 40 in that short distance.

7. Why could not a railway be made like Rigi in Switzerland to run down a grade of 1 in 14? Of course

course that could be done; but it is a point upon which the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways would be more competent to give information than I am. I may also state that I am authorized to tell the Committee that it is not the intention of the Secretary for Works to take any further steps in connection with the extension of the tramway to the Lane Cove Road pending the decision of the Committee on this railway extension. I should like to point out—and I think it is a very important point—the desirability of coming to a decision on this matter as quickly as possible, because I have been informed that it is the intention of the executors of the Berry Estate to cut up their land, through a large portion of which the proposed extension runs. I think nearly half of it runs through the Berry Estate, and if the land were cut up before we carried out the extension of the railway we should have to pay a larger price for it. Every month's delay in connection with the work will raise the price of the land upon us considerably. The following is the report of the Railway Commissioners upon the line:—

J. Barling,
Esq.,
9 Oct., 1889.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, January, 1889.

Proposed Line of Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Length of main line, 2 miles 72 chains.

In accordance with section 13 of the "Public Works Act, 1888," we beg to report as under:—

Cost of Construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief estimates the cost of constructing this line (exclusive of land and compensation) at £106,000

Annual Cost—

Interest at 3½ per cent. on capital 3,710
Expense of working line, including permanent-way and traffic department 2,775

Total annual cost..... £6,485

There is no basis upon which an estimate of the probable revenue can be formed. The construction of the line is however essential in connection with the line of railway from Hornsby to Pearce's Corner, now almost complete, as without the extension to the waters of Port Jackson the former line can prove of but limited commercial value, having no outlet.

The line from Pearce's Corner passes through country admirably adapted for residential purposes, and will probably, at no distant date, become, with the aid of railway communication, an attractive suburb, capable of furnishing a traffic which will make the line a profitable one.

The construction of this line is recommended.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners
of New South Wales has been hereunto
affixed by the Railway Commissioners in the
presence of—

E. M. G. EDDY,
Chief Commissioner.
W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.
CHARLES OLIVER,
Commissioner.

The amount £106,000, in this report of the Railway Commissioners, is for a single line. It was subsequently considered desirable to substitute a double line, which will cost £127,000. In referring to railway traffic having to be ferried across from Milson's Point, the Minister pointed out that New York is divided from Jersey City, where the terminal stations, with one exception, are, by twice the width of our harbour, and to this day all the traffic, vehicular and otherwise, is carried across in large ferry-boats which connect New York with the trains. The whole railway system of America, with one exception, is thus severed from New York. I would also desire to bring before the Committee a very important point, as showing the desirability of carrying out this extension as quickly as possible.

8. *Mr. Lackey.*] How long have you been Under Secretary for Public Works? About one year and five or six months.

9. Then I take it that this work was initiated before you became Under Secretary? Yes.

10. Are you acquainted with the initiation of the work in any way? I am not personally acquainted with it.

11. You are not aware how long it is since an agitation set in for the construction of a line from Pearce's Corner? I have no personal knowledge on the subject.

12. Have you any official information as to the opinion of the Department with reference to the line on its conception? I have the papers.

13. Are you aware whether Mr. Whitton concurred in the construction of the line? I would rather that question was asked of Mr. Deane. He is the personal representative of Mr. Whitton, and the information would come better from him.

14. It is not professional information; it is historical? I have not the early papers before me. I propose to send in a *précis* of the papers in connection with the line.

15. Are you aware that when the concurrence of Parliament was first asked for this line, it was argued, in support of it, that it would be a means of conveying coal from the Northern mines to Port Jackson? I could not answer that from my personal knowledge.

16. You do not recollect? I have some recollection of it; but not having anything to do with railways at that time I did not pay special attention to the matter.

17. You would not feel justified in saying that the principal reason why Parliament was asked to concur in the construction of this line, was that it would be a useful line for that purpose? No.

18. I think you say now that it would be quite useless for the purpose? Quite useless.

19. What is there to justify the construction of 10 miles of railway at a cost of about £18,000 a mile? I do not exactly feel in a position to justify the line as a whole, *i.e.*, if we had to face the question; but the position is, that a large part of it has been constructed, and my argument is that, as we have gone to that expense, it is essential that we should incur the further necessary expense to make it remunerative.

20. You are not aware that Mr. Whitton always opposed the construction of the line? I could not say from my personal knowledge.

21. From your own knowledge, do you think it was wise to build this railway for the immense amount which it will cost? Unless I had a return of the traffic which there is likely to be, I could not answer that question.

22. Did I understand you to say that the cost of the line now to be constructed would be something like a quarter of a million of money? It would cost £262,000.

23. That is for the construction and the purchase of land? For the construction and the purchase of land.

24.

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24. Do you think that the Committee would be justified in concurring in the construction of a line from that point, having in view the anticipated traffic? I think so, remembering, of course, that a very large expenditure has already been gone to which will probably be to a great extent useless unless we make the further extension.
25. The cost of this extension will be, in round numbers, about £130,000 a mile? Yes. A tunnel will have to be constructed, and the line goes principally through private property.
26. Are you aware what is the population of that suburb? I forget what it is now. I think I gave the information in connection with another inquiry, but I will get it for you.
27. You have no idea what the line will return? I cannot say what it will return—in fact, the Commissioners do not know themselves.
28. The Commissioners have recommended the line? Yes; on the same grounds as I do, I imagine—namely, that so much money having been spent, it will be folly not to carry the line further.
29. *Mr. Lee.*] Have the Commissioners reported upon the alternative route? I think I am right in saying that they have not. Under the Public Works Act it is not their function to report on alternative routes. They have merely to report on the route which is selected by the Government and is referred to them.
30. The other route has not been referred to them? Certainly not officially; but I may say that the Minister has been in frequent communication with them about it. It has been very thoroughly discussed, although there is no formal report on the subject to my knowledge.
31. Did I understand you to say that no estimate of the earnings of the line has been made? The Commissioners themselves say so. "There is no basis," to quote from their report, "upon which an estimate of the probable traffic can be formed. The construction of the line is, however, essential in connection with the line of railway from Hornsby to St. Leonards now almost complete, as without the extension to the waters of Port Jackson, the former line can prove of limited commercial value, having no outlet."
32. That leaves the quantity of traffic problematical? Yes.
33. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you know the cost of the land on the portion of the line already constructed? I can put in a return showing it; but I cannot speak from memory. If I remember rightly, the return of which I speak was laid on the table of the House some months ago.
34. Who formed the estimate of the probable cost of the land on this extension? Mr. Thomson, the land valuer.
35. Has he gone over the ground? I imagine that he has, over and over again; but he himself is available to give evidence on that point.
36. Is there not a proposal to extend the Government cable tram to the Crow's Nest? There is a proposal to take it up to Miller-street and Bridge-street, and along Falcon-street to its junction with the Lane Cove Road; but I explained before that it was not the intention of the Minister to carry that out.
37. But there has been a proposal to carry the tram on to connect with the present terminus of the railway. The Government did intend to carry it along Miller-street and some other street of which I forget the name; but a private company had certain rights under an Act, and they occupied the ground before we commenced. Another route has been proposed; but the Minister does not intend to make the extension, pending the decision of the Committee on the work before it.
38. Then I understand that the Department expect that this will only be another suburban line? Yes; and it will also save 10 or 11 miles for the through passenger traffic.
39. Is it at all likely that the people coming from the north will tranship to take the ferry, trams, and then cabs on this side? Those who would have to come would probably have to take cabs from Redfern as well.
40. Only passengers who wanted to reach North Shore or some point on the shores of the harbour would come from Pearce's Corner? That I could not say. Ten miles at any rate would be saved by coming that way.
41. *Dr. Garran.*] I gather that the elevation of the Crow's Nest, where the railway terminus is at present, is about 300 feet? Two hundred and fifty feet. Dr. Thompson puts it at that.
42. I understood you to say that this route is the best with a view to having a high-level bridge over the harbour in future;—that was stated in the paper which you read? No; I did not read that to the Committee.
43. I understood you to say, and I presume it is the Departmental argument, that the principal, and in fact the almost exclusive, use of the line would be as a suburban line? With the exception of through passengers, to whom it would save 10 or 11 miles by coming to Milson's Point.
44. But if you transmute the mileage saving into time saving it will not be so great as it now appears? That I could not say. It would be a traffic arrangement.
45. A passenger from the north would have to get into the ferry boat; he might have to wait some time for the boat to start, and then he would have to take a cab;—would he gain very much in time that way? It is possible that he might not, although I suppose that, as a matter of fact, when such a service became established, the ferry-boats would be timed to meet the trains, and the cabs would be in readiness at this end, so that probably there would be a saving.
46. Still, in any case, I understand this line to be recommended as a passenger line? Yes.
47. And that the traffic will consist of two kinds—through traffic from the north, and the local residents between Pearce's Corner and the Crow's Nest? Yes.
48. So far as the through passengers are concerned, it is a question of the saving of time as well as saving of distance? Yes.
49. Coming from Newcastle, something might depend upon whether this line is made part of the trunk line, or whether it is a branch line? Quite so.
50. If not much used, it would be a branch line? Quite so.
51. Supposing that the majority of the passengers preferred to go round by Strathfield, the main train would go that way, and a branch train would be provided for those who preferred to go down to Milson's Point? Quite so.
52. Supposing that the majority preferred to come by this line, they would have to get out at the junction? Yes.
53. That would make one change? Yes.
54. Then they would have to get out at the wharf at Milson's Point, and make another change, and then at the jetty at Circular Quay—that would make a third change? Yes.

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55. Those changes all take time? They do.
56. Therefore, the question as to whether there would be a saving of time is not so clear as the mere saving of distance would seem to make it out to be? That is, providing a minority of the passengers preferred to travel by the line.
57. Then the question as to the through passenger traffic would depend upon whether the through passengers preferred to take this line or the existing line? Quite so.
58. That is a matter of conjecture largely? Yes.
59. Then we have to deal with the local suburban traffic on the 10 miles between Pearce's Corner and North Shore? Yes.
60. That, you say, is an exceedingly healthy district? Yes.
61. Well adapted for suburban residence? Yes.
62. And capable of accommodating half the suburban population around Sydney? It is capable of accommodating a very large number.
63. But is there, at the present time, any such demand for suburban houses as would lead us to suppose that the making of this line would cause a dense population there? I think the exceptional advantages, such as elevation and beautiful scenery—for I believe the scenery there is the most beautiful that can be found about Sydney—would probably attract a very large number of people.
64. Do you happen to know whether there are any suburban houses vacant between Sydney and Parramatta? I believe that there are plenty.
65. At the present moment, then, the suburbs are overbuilt? I should think that in the majority of cases they are.
66. If we open this line in two or three years time for the purpose of creating a new suburban traffic, do you think that the exceptional advantages would be so great that, if the houses were built, people would leave the existing suburbs and go to North Shore? Of course the present is a very depressed time indeed. I should think that the land would be taken up by persons who wanted to build houses of their own. I think that is pretty well the case now in the suburbs that are further out. You find that nearly every one in those suburbs is the owner of the house in which he resides. I refer to such suburbs as Strathfield and Homebush.
67. What I am wishing to get at is this: is the recommendation of the Department to make this line based on the expectation that when the line is finished three years hence there will be a suburban population clustering round it that will make the beginning of a remunerative traffic? I think so. Without having any statistics before me, I think the history of the Illawarra line suburbs—Hurstville, Rockdale, Kogarah, and so on—would show that in a short time there would be a very large population congregated on the line.
68. Do you think we can repeat the Hurstville experiment every three years? I could not say for certain. As a matter of fact, I think that every new railway suburb that has been opened up has been very quickly populated.
69. I am asking you, as the departmental exponent, whether the calculation is based on a new suburban population, or on a migration from the existing suburbs? I suppose it would be made of both. The natural increase of the city and new comers would probably choose that as the most eligible place of residence, and there would also be a certain migration from the existing suburbs.
70. The scheme as put before us contemplates ultimately a high-level bridge? It is one of the possibilities of it, of course.
71. Do you think that in the absence of a high-level bridge, providing a continuous land journey, there would be the same disposition for suburban residents to choose North Shore as there would be if there were a bridge? I should think that if there were a bridge the locality would offer a greater attraction than if there were no bridge.
72. The scheme before us, I presume, is based upon the supposition that there would be no bridge at present, and it stands on its own recommendation, leaving the ferry traffic? Yes.
73. For some persons the ferry traffic is a disadvantage? It is a disadvantage; but I should think it would be of very little disadvantage in such a short trip. It would be a disadvantage for those going for a distance like Manly Beach probably; but the disadvantage would be very slight indeed in the short distance to Milson's Point.
74. But in any case it will not be so convenient to passengers to go to North Shore as to get on to the existing line from Sydney? I suppose that it would not be; the majority would not think so.
75. The trams, omnibuses, and cabs that exist on this side of the water furnish a far greater convenience for getting to the Redfern terminus and to any point along the line than would exist in going to North Shore, if this railway were carried out? That, to a large extent, would be a matter of opinion and choice. I think a good many people would prefer the ferry steamer to the tram. I know that I should myself. I would rather go by the ferry steamers, and I think a good many would be of my opinion.
76. You think a great many persons would just as readily take a tram to Circular Quay and cross in the ferry as take the tram to Redfern? I think a great many would.
77. You do not look upon the water passage as an inconvenience? At any rate, not as a very great one. I think that what I have quoted as to the American practice shows clearly enough that there is no great inconvenience.
78. You are familiar with our tram traffic at present? Yes, as an every-day traveller.
79. You do not take the tramway down to the water side—it is some distance now between the tram terminus and the ferry;—do the North Shore people find that an inconvenience? It would be an inconvenience to any one travelling with a family.
80. You think it would be better if the tram were brought to the water? Yes.
81. Do you think that the inconvenience that now exists because the terminus is some distance from the ferry is greater than the inconvenience would be in getting out of Crow's Nest from the railway, and going into the tramway carriage? I think it would be.
82. You would rather walk one-sixteenth of a mile in all weathers than get out of one carriage into another? I think I should. Of course, in very severe weather I should take the tram.
83. Looking at the fact that the traffic on the North Shore line will be suburban traffic, do you think that it will be materially diminished if people have to change at Crow's Nest from the railway to the tram? I think so, because they would have to take train, tram, and ferry, without counting the conveyance on this side.

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84. The existing experiment of connecting a tram with the railway at Redfern shows that the tram is very largely availed of? Yes.
85. They do not make any great difficulty of shifting from one to the other? No. In that case they are compelled to come to Sydney.
86. But the majority of the people years ago used to walk from Redfern? They did; but as facilities are offered, what at one time was considered a luxury becomes a necessity.
87. Thousands of passengers that used to walk ten or twelve years ago now take the tram? Yes.
88. Practically what I want to get at is this: The break between the tram and train service at Redfern has not made any serious diminution in the suburban traffic? I do not think that it has—that is to say; so far as the present population is concerned; but I think the fact of the break from train to tram at Redfern, involving as it does loss of time, and greater cost of conveyance, has decidedly a deterrent influence in the settlement of population in the western, southern, and northern suburbs.
89. You do not find people refusing to live at Ashfield, Burwood, and Homebush, because they have to shift from tram to train? I think a very great many would refuse to do it because of the break. My personal observation leads me to come to that conclusion.
90. I like as much as possible to gather up the fruits of experience. We have at Redfern the experience of a break;—has it been found destructive of suburban traffic? I do not think it has; but it is supposed, and I think with good reason, that with the railway to Sydney the traffic would increase.
91. If people are willing to get out of a railway carriage into the trams on the south side of the harbour, would they be less willing to do it on the north side? I do not think they would; but they would have the ferry travelling superadded.
92. You said that was an enjoyable break? I said that in connection with choosing North Shore as a place of residence.
93. You recommend this line to the Committee principally as a suburban passenger line, and the question is whether the existing tramway is sufficient for that suburban traffic. If the line connects with the tramway at the elevated point which it now reaches, we shall have a continuous line of rails all the way;—does the experience at Redfern show that the necessity of shifting from train to tram seriously damages the traffic? I do not think that it can be said that it does; but at North Shore there is a further change—there you have to get out of the tram into the ferry.
94. But we should have to get out of the train into the ferry? Yes; but then you will not have the change from the train to the tram.
95. Do you think that one shift more would neutralize the magnificent sanitary advantages which North Shore possesses? I do not think it would wholly; but I think that if any one were choosing where he should reside, it would be a serious objection to North Shore if he had to make so many changes.
96. If you were choosing a house for the first time, with all your knowledge of Sydney, and there were only a tram for part of the way to Hornsby, and a train for the other part, do you think that would deter you from choosing the North Shore? I do not know that it would in my individual case.
97. Now let us pass to the national point of view: I understand you to say that this line has cost £180,000 already, and that it will cost £262,000 to make the extension, making altogether £442,000;—do you think that the importance of making the rail communication from Crows' Nest by railway instead of partly by railway and partly by tramway is so great, and would have such an influence on the prospective traffic, as to be worth the expenditure of that amount? I think so. I think North Shore in time will become one of the most populous suburbs of Sydney, and I think that the construction of this line will hasten that time.
98. You think that it would be like spoiling the ship for a half-penny worth of tar not to put this £262,000 on the top of the other? I think so.
99. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you know what are the earnings of the tram at North Shore at the present time? I could not tell you that; we have nothing to do with it. The railway traffic officers could tell you.
100. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you tell us what is the amount of the contract entered into for the construction of 2 miles 21 chains? The expenditure to date on contract No. 1 is £168,092 17s. 7d. Contract No. 2 is for the short length of 51 chains, and the amount at the present time is £3,302 13s. 6d., and £1,326 4s. 11d. for repairs, making in all £173,221 16s., to complete the line, though the total amount will probably be increased to £180,000.
101. Can you tell us what the departmental estimate was previous to the contract being signed? I cannot say.
102. Do you know anything at all of the country between Newcastle and Milson's Point;—is any part of it, as far as you are aware, coal bearing? I have not been over it.
103. Have you any information on the subject? No, I have not; but I could obtain it from the Mines Department.
104. You have stated that you do not expect to get any coal traffic on this line? Yes. If coal-fields were opened up nearer to Sydney it would be a different thing; but I am only speaking of existing conditions.
105. Supposing coal were discovered half way between Newcastle and Milson's Point, do you think the line would carry a considerable amount of coal traffic? I dare say it would in that case.
106. You have estimated the freight of a ton of coal at 4s., which you think is a prohibitory rate in competition with water carriage? You are speaking of the water freight. The railway freight is 7s. or 8s.
107. If the freight were reduced by one-half, do you think any of the coal traffic would come this way? If it were reduced by one-half it would alter the existing conditions very materially.
108. If it were only a question of the cost of carriage, do you think a large amount of coal would be brought by this line? Of course the question then would be whether ships would take in their coal here, or go to Newcastle and take it in there. It is very much a shipping question. I may mention that the opinion of Mr. Powell—whom we have consulted in the matter—is that no coal under existing circumstances will be brought here.
109. You think then that no matter what the rates are you will not be able to get the coal traffic here? I do not say that. If the rates were reduced, so as to make the land carriage cheaper than the water carriage, of course it would alter the conditions entirely; but I do not know that there is any probability of that being considered. I question whether it would pay the Commissioners to reduce the rates.
110. What is the distance from Newcastle to Milson's Point? Ninety-four miles.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—NORTH SHORE RAILWAY.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn and examined:—

111. *Dr. Garran.*] In originally planning this line, the terminus at North Shore was, I understand, left practically an open question? When it was originally planned the terminus was to be at the Crow's Nest.
112. A water terminus on the North Shore was not part of the original scheme? There was to be a branch line from Chatswood down to Ball's Head for goods traffic; the passenger traffic was to have its terminus at the Crow's Nest.
113. That was the original departmental plan? Yes.
114. Was there at that time an expectation that there would be a tramway down to the water? I think not.
115. Then the idea of the Department was that the passengers would come down by omnibuses and cars? I do not quite know what you understand by the Department.
116. The Ministerial Department provided only for the goods terminus? Yes.
117. And that is all the engineers surveyed? Yes.
118. The Minister for the time being did not provide for any passenger terminus at the water's edge? No.
119. And the Department has now been called upon to supply the deficiency? Yes.
120. The scheme before us is what the Department recommends? Yes.
121. The idea of having a passenger terminus is, so to speak, a Ministerial afterthought? Yes; in that way it is to be understood as an afterthought.
122. As the plan stands now, I gather from the paper which Mr. Barling read to us that the anticipation is that the traffic will be a passenger and not a goods traffic? Yes—that is to say, that heavy goods traffic is not expected.
123. Not through goods traffic—no coal traffic or heavy traffic for loading of ships? No.
124. What I want to get at is this: that the original design is changed in this respect—that when you were first called upon you had to provide a water terminus for goods only, but now you are called upon to provide a water terminus for passengers only? Yes.
125. Therefore, instead of marking out the line to Ball's Head, which, in your judgment, would be the best place for the terminus of the goods traffic, you now intend to bring it from Milson's Point as the best place for the terminus of the passenger traffic? Yes.
126. That is the explanation of the change of the water terminus from Ball's Head to Milson's Point? One reason why the Ball's Head branch-line was abolished was that it was considered that that would not be the best place to bring the coal traffic. There would be very little coal traffic from the north; and if coaling facilities were to be given in the harbour at all they should be given on the other side, so as to permit the Illawarra and southern coal to be brought in.
127. The original idea of its being a coal shipping place has been abandoned? It has.
128. Supposing there were such a thing possible as coal traffic on this line, Ball's Head would be the most suitable place for the terminus? It is suitable in this way, that there is deep water there. It is an excellent place for loading.
129. Do you know whether the Department was free to choose its goods traffic water terminus? That I cannot say. I should think it is certain that Mr. Whitton was consulted in the matter, and he probably recommended that place.
130. You do not know whether he was requested to bring the line to Ball's Head, or whether he was left free? I could not say. I believe I was in the field at that time attending to the construction of works. I could not give you any further information on the subject.
131. What I want to know is, whether the original design represented the mature judgment of the engineers, or whether it represented the best they could do under their instructions? Given the condition that it was necessary to bring the coal to the northern shores of Port Jackson, it was certainly the deliberate judgment of the engineers at the time that Ball's Head was the best place to which to bring it.
132. That was their untrammelled judgment? There is no doubt about it.
133. You, as an engineer, hold that opinion still? I do not believe in bringing the coal down to the harbour.
134. But if it were to be brought down, you think that that would be the best place to which to bring it? I believe it would be.
135. I suppose further reflection has satisfied everybody that no coal would be brought over the range between the Hawkesbury and Sydney at a rate which would compete with the water carriage? It is not likely.
136. Do you know whether the idea existed when the line was first designed that it would be available for coal traffic? It was supposed that there would be a considerable coal traffic.
137. Have you anything to refer to to show that it entered into the original conception of the line that it would be a coal line? The Ball's Head line?
138. The North Shore line altogether? I expect there are some papers.
139. Your memory does not serve you at the moment? I do not remember having seen any; but I expect that they could be found.
140. Apart from papers, do you recollect at all whether that was the justification for the line in any degree? You mean it was part of the reason for constructing the line as a whole to bring the coal traffic down to the harbour?
141. Yes? I believe it was.
142. There was an idea that the wharfs on the North Shore would be coal shipping wharfs? Yes.
143. That idea you think is now generally abandoned? Yes.
144. And it is as a consequence of that abandonment that the line has been altered from Ball's Head to Milson's Point? I do not think that you can say that it has been altered from Ball's Head to Milson's Point. Ball's Head was purely intended for coal traffic; but that has been abandoned. The object of continuing the line to Milson's Point is to bring that part of it which has already been constructed into some use, and to make it serve one of the purposes for which it was originally intended.
145. I understand that the Ball's Head terminus is recognized by the engineers as a good coal terminus, but not as a good passenger terminus; and that Milson's Point is looked upon as a good passenger terminus, but not as a good coal terminus? Yes.
146. The idea of the line now is that it is rather a passenger line than a heavy traffic line? Yes.
147. And therefore a new terminus is provided for it as more suitable for its present destination? Yes.
148. We really have to consider this line now as a passenger line, wanting a suitable water terminus? Yes.

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149. That is the problem before the Committee: given the fact that the traffic is to be mainly passenger traffic, which is the more suitable terminus, and is it desirable that the money should be spent in bringing it to that terminus? That is the way I should look at it.
150. The question is, whether it is necessary to continue the line to Milson's Point, or to connect with the tramway? Yes; I think that is the main question.
151. Can you give me any idea what it will cost to extend the tram-line to the railway or the railway to the tram-line, so as to effect a junction between the two? It would cost something under £30,000 to carry the tramway up to the present railway station.
152. That is, supposing that the extension were wholly a tramway extension? Yes.
153. But it might be better to bring the railway a little nearer to the tram as well as to bring the tram a little nearer to the railway;—in your opinion, would the present terminus of the railway be the best place for the junction? That is assuming that that is all that is required to bring the two into conjunction?
154. Yes? The cheapest way would be to carry the tram-line on. I should certainly recommend that, if it were all that were necessary to form a connection.
155. If a connection between the two were adjudged to be sufficient, you would stop where you are with the railway and take the tram on? Yes.
156. The next point upon which I should like to get your opinion is whether, if we were to finish off the railway with a tramway, it would seriously interfere with the suburban traffic along the line? I think it would.
157. You think that a break would interfere with it? You see you have a double break from Sydney—a break at the ferry steamer, and again at the tram.
158. We have the one break in any case—the steamer break? Yes.
159. Assuming a passenger could be landed at Milson's Point, would the break further on at Crow's Nest discourage him from having a house upon the ridges? I am sure it would be a draw back.
160. There is just the same break at Redfern for the people who live at Burwood and have their offices in town? I consider that the ferry service across the harbour corresponds with the tram service from Redfern, and that if you made a journey on the other line, Milson's Point terminus would correspond to Redfern on this side.
161. Do you think that the inconvenience of the break between tramway and railway would so discourage the occupation of the North Shore for suburban residence purposes as to make it judicious, in the interests of the railway exchequer, to spend £262,000 upon continuing the railway to the water's edge? I believe that if the land along the Lane Cove Road belonged to the Government it would pay to make it, and that it would be far better to make it, because of the greater settlement that it would bring about, than to extend the tram.
162. You mean to say that if the Government were still the owners of the land to be built upon, and came in for the increment of value that the railway would create, you would have no hesitation in spending the money on the continuation of the line? Yes.
163. Under the present circumstances, where the Government has no land, but has to resume it to make the line, do you think that since the recoup would only be by the traffic, it would be worth while to put £262,000 on the top of £180,000 to continue it to Milson's Point? Is not that more a commercial than an engineering question?
164. Yes; but as an engineer you have had an opportunity of seeing the effect of these extensions? I believe in the extension of the line; but I think that it is a commercial question, and one that should be considered from a commercial point of view.
165. Still, as an engineer, you can say that there is no difficulty whatever in connecting the tramway with the railway? Yes.
166. The connection would be just as convenient at Crow's Nest as it is now at Redfern if you brought the two together—the break would not be greater? That is to say, supposing the business centre were at Milson's Point instead of in George-street or Pitt-street. If you merely wanted to get from Milson's Point to the Northern railway, it would be just as easy to do so as it is to get from Sydney to the railway at Redfern; but if you wanted to go from Sydney to the Lane Cove Road you would have a double break to consider.
167. You have seen a good deal of railway traffic in your time? Yes.
168. You have seen a good many branch lines worked? Yes.
169. Is it not the custom in a great many places for the passengers to get out of a through train into a branch train? Yes.
170. Have you ever known a case where the necessity of having to change has seriously diminished the amount of traffic on the branch line? On a suburban line I think it would be seriously affected.
171. Do you know of any suburban line that has been a branch? My experience of suburban lines is that if there are branches they are worked with through trains.
172. It is not for the convenience of working that they run through, but for the convenience of the passengers? Yes; and, of course, indirectly for the convenience of working.
173. Then your judgment is against having a break on the North Shore line? Yes.
174. *Mr. Humphery.*] You estimate the cost of connecting the tramway with the railway at £30,000? I said that it would be under £30,000.
175. What would the distance be? About 1½ mile.
176. Is your estimate for the cable tramway? Yes.
177. Would there be any land resumption? No; there would be no more land resumption than has been proposed for the extension up to the end of Falcon-street. There are two resumptions there—just small corners.
178. Would it be a branch tram? It would be worked as a continuation of the present line.
179. Would it be a continuation from the present terminus? Yes; there would be no break.
180. If the railway were constructed to Milson's Point, would it not diminish the earnings of the tram? I do not think that it would interfere with the tram at all.
181. You do not think that the railway would come into competition with the tram? No; I consider that the tramway would serve, as it does now, the residents at the top of the hill and along the route.
182. The people who use the railway do not at the present use the tram? No.
183. The railway would create a new traffic? Yes.
184. Traffic that at present is not served by the tram? That is not served at all adequately.

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185. Have you any means of estimating what the earnings of the railway would be? No, I have not the slightest idea. I could only point to the effect that the construction of the Illawarra line has had.
186. That is a line from Sydney without any break? It has the tramway break.
187. Yes, but not the harbour? No, it has not the harbour.
188. As an excursion line, do you think that this would be as profitable as the Illawarra line? There are no places on the line where people would go for excursions much. You could not reckon on the Hawkesbury, because that is already served. The Illawarra line as far as Hurstville is a suburban line, and that part no doubt pays for itself, independently of the excursion traffic.
189. Do you think there is likely to be any comparison between the line from Sydney to Hornsby and that from Sydney to Hurstville, as a suburban line? I should think that the traffic in time along the Milson's Point to Hornsby line, if the connecting line is constructed, will be very great indeed. I am quite sure that it will be a very favourite district.
190. You think then that there would be suburbs between Sydney and Hornsby as populous as Arncliffe, Kogarah, and Rockdale? I think so. Gordon, which is 500 feet above the sea, is only about the same distance from Milson's Point that Strathfield is from Sydney.
191. How many miles? Seven miles, and Strathfield is only 50 feet above the sea-level.
192. You believe that a very large population would settle along this line if it were constructed? I am pretty sure of it.
193. Sufficient population to make the passenger traffic cover the working expenses without interest? I believe it would cover the working expenses, and the interest too in time. Of course it would not do so at first.
194. That would be a new experience? Some of the lines pay now.
195. *Mr. Dowel.*] What is the distance between Newcastle and the proposed terminus of the railway? Ninety-five miles.
196. Is there deep water at Milson's Point? Yes.
197. Can you tell us the depth? Just off the point there is between 50 and 60 feet.
198. Can you tell us the character of the country between Newcastle and Milson's Point;—do you know of any coal having been discovered or worked between these two points? There are some coal-mines south of Newcastle, near the line.
199. Can you say what is the nearest coal to Sydney from Milson's Point? I think the Great Northern Coal Co.'s mine is the nearest.
200. *Mr. Garrard.*] Teralba? That is not working. They have not finished sinking there yet. I think the Great Northern Company is the only one that is at present putting out coal. There are other companies sinking.
201. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know of any coal being discovered on the Hawkesbury, much nearer than the place of which you were speaking, by Mr. Alison? I know that he did not discover coal. I know that he sank 1,300 feet without coming to it.
202. Can you fix the distance of the nearest coal from Milson's Point roughly? You mean where coal has actually been found.
203. Where coal has been got, and where it is known to exist at the present time? You can get coal by sinking all the way across. Sydney lies on the coal-measures. No doubt if Mr. Alison had gone down another 1,000 feet, or something like that, he would have come on to the coal. But if you mean how near can you get coal on the surface, I believe that a little north of Wyong it exists at a depth of about 500 feet. I only speak from memory; but I could easily obtain the information.
204. Are the coal-mines near Wyong working at the present time? No.
205. What distance is Wyong from Milson's Point? There are no coal-mines there, but I believe that a bore has been put down.
206. Coal has been proved to exist there? I have heard so.
207. What distance is that from Milson's Point? Wyong would be about 55 miles, but I would rather that you did not take this information as accurate. I only speak from memory.
208. Supposing large workings of coal took place 50 miles from Sydney, is there a probability of a large coal traffic on the line? I do not think that the coal would compete with the Illawarra coal.
209. Not if it were only 50 miles away? No.
210. Do you think that you could compete with the water carriage from Newcastle to Sydney if you had only 50 miles to carry the coal on this particular line? Yes.
211. Now, as regards the construction of the line itself, what is the steepest grade? Between Newcastle and Milson's Point or on the new extension?
212. On the new extension? 1 in 40. I do not think we can get anything lighter than that. Of course the heavy traffic will be down-hill if goods are carried.
213. The 1 in 40 would be all down-hill from Newcastle? No, down-hill from the present terminus of the North Shore line. There is an ascent from the Hawkesbury. There are several miles of steep grades there. I think there are 4 miles of 1 in 40.
214. Under existing circumstances then, you anticipate no heavy traffic on this line unless coal is discovered about 50 miles from Milson's Point? I think I should scarcely put it in that way. As I said before, I do not think that Milson's Point would be a desirable terminus for the coal traffic. It would not be suitable. There is scarcely room to mix up the passenger and coal traffic there.
215. The terminus would not be suitable for both passenger and goods traffic? No, not if the goods traffic were very large.
216. You have made no particular preparation for goods traffic in this proposal? We have made none at present.
217. You do not anticipate any? Of course some goods traffic could be provided for, but in the estimate no provision has been made.
218. Not to any large extent? No.
219. The traffic has been based principally upon the number of passengers to be carried? Yes. I have here a plan showing the route of the line. There is a good deal of room in Lavender Bay for the goods traffic if it is required, but I do not think that it would be desirable to bring coal traffic there.
220. What is the extent of the platform accommodation? The platform on the plan is only a sketch.
221. It is not provided for in the estimate? Oh, yes; I have here another plan [*produced*] showing the platform. It will be 300 feet long.

THURSDAY, 10 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).
 The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN. | WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
 The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY. | CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Charles Lyne, Esq., Secretary to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, sworn and examined:—

- C. Lyne, Esq. 222. *Chairman.*] You are the Secretary of the Public Works Committee? Yes.
 10 Oct., 1889. 223. And you produce a copy of the Parliamentary Debates? Yes, volume XIV., 8th July to 11th September, 1884; session, 1883-4.
 224. On the 24th August, 1884, Mr. Dibbs moved a resolution inviting the Legislative Assembly to approve of the plans and specifications of a line of railway from Pearce's Corner or to North Shore? Yes.
 225. That resolution was passed without any explanation from the Minister or debate by the House? Yes; according to the report of the proceedings contained in this volume.
 226. On the 10th September of the same year Mr. Dalley invited the Legislative Council to approve of the plans and specifications of the same railway? Of the plan, section, and book of reference.
 227. And that was done without explanation and without debate? Yes.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn and further examined:—

- H. Deane, Esq. 228. *Dr. Garran.*] Can you tell me the height of the ground at the Observatory flagstaff? Yes; it is 134 feet.
 10 Oct., 1889. 229. Where would the 134 feet level be on the North Shore line? It would be about $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
 230. That would be very near Bay Road? Yes.
 231. Or the Crow's Nest? Yes.
 232. Have you considered what would be the best place to make the junction between the tram and the railway, if you extended the tram to the railway? I think I said yesterday that I should recommend the tram being extended to the present railway station.
 233. Why do you recommend going so far north as that with the tramway? Because if you carry the railway any further you have no option in the way of deviation. You are bound to that particular route. If you branch up to the Crow's Nest or into St. Leonards, you cannot get down to Milson's Point afterwards without going back on the line.
 234. Before you could get the descent for the distance? Yes.
 235. You could if you took 1 in 33? That I have not considered.
 236. The present gradient is 1 in 50? One in 40.
 237. Can you tell me the time it takes for the ferry steamer to go from Circular Quay to Milson's Point? I have not timed it; but about seven minutes, I think.
 238. How long would it take to get from the Circular Quay to Ball's Head Wharf? It would be about three times the distance.
 239. It would be a quarter of an hour's journey? Fully.
 240. *Mr. Lee.*] The Under Secretary for Public Works gave us to understand that this proposed extension of 2 miles 21 chains would cost £127,000; but I see by the Commissioner for Railways' report that the Engineer-in-Chief estimates the probable cost at £106,000? That was for a single line; £127,000 is for a double line.
 241. Could you tell me what is the estimated cost of the resumption of land on the route to Cremorne? No, I could not. An estimate has been made for the proposed route to Milson's Point. £135,000 includes cost of land and compensation. If we are obliged by the "Railway Act" to take the land over the tunnel, it may be regarded as an asset, and will be available for sale or lease.
 242. *Mr. Humphery.*] Are you familiar with the route? I have been over it two or three times.
 243. Have you surveyed the route to Berry's Bay for passenger traffic? We have surveyed a line to Blue's Point; but the distance was too short to get down to give a good level length of at the bottom.
 244. Which is the most expensive portion of the line—that between the $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles and Milson's Point, or between the Crow's Nest and the $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles? Between the $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles and Milson's Point.
 245. Do you know the estimated cost of the portion between the Crow's Nest and the $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles? I could not separate it now.
 246. Will you send us in a return showing the cost of the two portions? Yes, I will. The cost to $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles is as follows:—Works, £37,000; land (say) £24,000; total, £61,000.
 247. *Chairman.*] All the trial surveys made by the engineer in charge of the branch, Mr. Alexander, have been submitted to you and you have been over the line? Yes; he could tell you nothing that I have not told you.

Henry Houghton Burton Bradley, Esq., solicitor, sworn and examined:—

- H. H. B. Bradley, Esq. 248. *Chairman.*] You are a solicitor? Yes.
 10 Oct., 1889. 249. You reside at St. Leonards? Yes.
 250. Have you given any consideration to the proposal to extend the line from Pearce's Corner to Milson's Point? I have.
 251. Have you seen the plan of the proposed extension? I have not seen the Government plan; but I have seen a plan which I understand is a copy of it.
 252. You know that where the railway is to come to now is 10 miles 51 chains? I believe that that is the distance.
 253. Now it is proposed to bring it down to Milson's Point, to the edge of the water at 12 miles 72 chains? I understand so. 254.

254. At an estimated cost of £262,000? I understand that that will be the cost.
255. Do you know that it has already cost £173,000 to place the railway where it is? I do not know at all what it has cost to bring it to where it now is; but I thought that the cost was about £200,000.
256. The total cost will be about £180,000, including compensation, and to continue it from there to Milson's Point it is estimated will cost £262,000 more? Yes.
257. In view of those figures, do you think that the present traffic is likely to pay interest on the cost of construction or working expenses? The present traffic is nil.
258. Suppose the line were brought to Milson's Point, do you think the traffic would pay the interest on the cost of construction and the working expenses? I think it would in a short time.
259. Have you estimated how much the traffic would be? I have not.
260. How much do you suppose the interest and working expenses would be? I have not calculated that.
261. Then how can you say that the traffic would pay both? Because I know sufficient of the land up there to know that if there were ready access from Sydney a large population would be attracted there, and the reason for that is that within a very short distance of Sydney you reach an elevation which you cannot get in any other direction without going to the mountains. At about 5 miles from the Post Office you get an elevation as much as that at Springwood. I know that a great number of people are only waiting until access from Sydney is provided to go and build there.
262. The estimated interest and working expenses on this 2 miles and 21 chains is nearly £12,000 a year? But the line in its present condition is useless.
263. Do you think that there is any chance whatever of earning £12,000 a year on this 2½ miles;—if every man, woman, and child in North Shore travelled over it, do you think it would pay that amount? That is not the question, I take it.
264. That is the question I ask you? I do not suppose that the population that would travel on those 2 miles alone would pay anything like the amount named; but it is the passengers coming from a longer distance who would pay.
265. The longest distance which they could come would be 12 miles? Within 12 miles.
266. You base your calculation entirely upon the probable settlement that would occur if the line were completed? To a large extent.
267. The present population would not support the railway? I do not know that they would. I have an interest in some land up near Russell's, which under existing circumstances is absolutely useless to me. It is unsaleable; I cannot get £40 an acre for it. If a railway were made to Milson's Point I could get from my property to my office within such a short time as would enable me or some one else to live there. I know that there are people who would readily buy land and live there if they could get easy access to town; but if they are to be dropped a couple of miles from the steamer, it is the old Redfern difficulty in a very much accentuated form.
268. We are told that the tramway could be continued up to the present terminus of the railway for £30,000? I do not think that a tramway has been found to answer the wishes of the public. You may say that there is an almost perfect system of conveyance by 'bus, tram, and cab to the Redfern railway station; but the public are thoroughly dissatisfied with it.
269. Then your only reason for supposing that the line would pay is that people would go out and buy land beyond what I may call the limits of location at the present time? Not only that, but a large number of people bought land at a Government sale twelve months ago upon the faith of a promise made by the auctioneer—I was present and heard it made—that a railway would be constructed in a short time from Milson's Point. I think the Government sold £30,000 worth of land on that occasion, and people are only waiting to get access to it.
270. As a business man, you do not suppose that the statement of the auctioneer influenced anyone? As a business man I know that some people bought after hearing that promise made.
271. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you gone into any calculation as to the probable revenue that would be derived from this expenditure? I have not.
272. As it is between 2 and 3 miles, I suppose it is fair to assume that the fare from the present terminus to Milson's Point would be about 4d.? Yes.
273. You have not calculated how many fourpences would be required to pay the interest on the cost of the line and the working expenses? I have not. I have not looked at it from that point of view. I have looked at it as a necessary link in the railway. The line is at present useless, and in consequence of that the Government lost during last year, and will continue to lose until the extension is made, the interest on the money spent on the line.
274. I understood you to say that if the line were continued it would be a remunerative investment? I believe that it will be; but only as a part of that suburban railway.
275. To be remunerative it must pay the interest on the debt, together with the working expenses? Exactly.
276. What I want to know is, whether you have worked out a statement to show how many passengers would be required to make it remunerative? No, I have not.
277. Upon what, then, was your estimate based? Upon my general knowledge of the district, and upon my knowledge that people are wanting to settle there.
278. Did your general knowledge lead you to believe that there would be passengers enough to pay interest on the line? Not on this particular 1½ mile, or whatever it is; but upon the whole, as a suburban railway.
279. £180,000 has already been spent, and £262,000 is to be spent, making altogether £442,000, which will probably be increased to £450,000 before the work is completed;—do you think that the line as a whole will pay interest on the cost of construction and working expenses? I think that if any suburban line would pay this one would; and as other suburban lines have paid, I believe this one will.
280. That opinion is not based on specific calculation? It is a general opinion. I have not worked out any figures.
281. You say that you are quite sure that the railway will increase the value of the land along the route? I think that that is unquestionable.
282. Do you think that if the line were completed, and it did not pay, the owners of land along the route would be willing to bear a special taxation to pay off the loss? I cannot say. I should think that it would be almost impracticable to do that without further legislation.

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283. Then you think that the general Government will have to take the risk in the matter? I do not think there is any risk.
284. But supposing there is, the Government must take it? Yes.
285. And if it finds itself in the mud, the local residents will not bear any share of the cost? The local residents are a part of the general Government, and a large portion of the revenue is collected from them. As far as I know, little or no Government money has been spent at North Shore hitherto.
286. £180,000 has been spent in bringing a railway from Milson's Point to St. Leonards, at the request of the inhabitants? I think the request was to bring it down to the harbour.
287. And £50,000 on the tramway? I think more than that.
288. We are told that it will take £30,000 more to connect the tram with the railway—that would be £80,000 to make a continuous rail connection with one break between Pearce's Corner and the harbour. Are you of opinion that that break would spoil the scheme? It would have the same effect as the break at Redfern has had upon the general railway scheme of the Colony. That break has been an endless source of worry and nuisance and public remonstrance.
289. Do you remember the opening of the railway as far as Parramatta? Barely; I do just recollect it.
290. You have seen the thickening of the population between Sydney and Homebush? I have.
291. Yet during the whole of that time the connection between Redfern and the city has been by omnibus, cab, and tram? Yes.
292. So that the population has increased in spite of the break? Yes; but I also know that for probably twenty years there has been endless agitation to get the railway into the city, and the greatest inconvenience has been felt because it has not been brought into the city.
293. But the number of persons to be served by a city extension is very large compared with the number of the North Shore residents to be served? It is not the North Shore residents that this railway will serve, but the people further out from the city, like those at Ashfield and Burwood.
294. I am alluding to the imaginary residents—the people between Milson's Point and Pearce's Corner? The people between Milson's Point and 2 or 3 miles out hardly want the railway at all. It is the people who wish to live, or who do live, from 5 to 9 miles out towards Hornsby who want it.
295. Your opinion is that the railway will serve the people who live between 5 and 10 miles out? Principally; the people living between 3 miles out and Hornsby.
296. That is the last 7 miles of the line? Yes.
297. The first 3 miles will not be much served by it? I do not think they will.
298. That somewhat reduces the question, because it makes the number of persons on the north side of the harbour who are to gain by the extension decidedly less? The habitation out there at present is small, because there are no means of access to the place.
299. But if we say that the great advance of this extension will not begin until we have come 3 miles of the road, we then get past the dense population to a more scattered population? Unquestionably; but that would apply to a railway to Wilcannia, Bathurst, or anywhere else except to the Circular Quay from Redfern. By that reasoning you should make no railway beyond Redfern, because you, in doing so, get away from the dense population.
300. Does it not occur to you that the earnings of the country railways are largely from goods traffic, and not from passenger traffic? From both.
301. We have been told by the engineer that the earnings of this specific line will be from the passenger traffic? It is only in that light that I have considered it.
302. Therefore your analogy with the great produce lines of the interior hardly holds? Then I would say a line between Ashfield and Sydney.
303. What made that line pay? The passenger traffic.
304. The large amount of it? Yes; but there were no more residents there when the railway was made than there are now anywhere along the proposed line. There are more people living now within a short distance of Russell's hotel than there were over the whole of Homebush, Burwood, Ashfield, and Croydon when that railway was constructed. Those suburbs have been made by the railway.
305. But you say you do not look for any traffic between Milson's Point and the 3-mile station, but that it would be beyond that? Yes.
306. You cannot therefore expect so large a passenger traffic to feed this line as feeds the line going into Redfern? Exactly, for the distance; but not at present. I believe I am correct in saying that there is already a larger population on the route of the proposed line than there was on the present suburban line when it was first made.
307. But the question which we have to consider now is the possible remunerativeness of this line as a passenger line? I do not think that it is a possibility; I think that it is an absolute certainty.
308. I understand your evidence to be that no remunerative traffic will arise until we have passed the 3-mile station? I do not think there would be much.
309. Do you think that there would be sufficient population between the 10-mile and the 3-mile stations to pay the interest on this extra £262,000? I do, and I think further that without that extension the Government will be losing heavily upon the line already made.
310. We all understand that the line at present made ends nowhere; but the question is—will this proposed extension add so much to the traffic as to increase the revenue of the line? That is my opinion.
311. You do not give any figures to prove it mathematically? I do not think any figures could be given to prove it mathematically, because it is to a large extent a matter of speculation or anticipation. I do not suppose anybody could for a moment have accurately prognosticated the enormous traffic that would occur between Sydney and Parramatta when that line was made.
312. *Chairman.*] Is it not a fact that more than two-thirds of the present population of North Shore would not be served by this line of railway at all? I quite think so.
313. That would be the whole of the residents to the east of the line, and up to the 3-mile point? Yes.
314. The bulk of the inhabitants of North Shore live at that part? The bulk of the inhabitants of North Shore live, you may say, within a very short radius of the Court-house, and do not require a railway at all. It is exactly the same thing with Sydney. I suppose that nine-tenths of the inhabitants of Sydney do not want a city railway at all.
315. What would you say is the present population that would be served by this line? I do not know.
316. Do you know the population of the North Shore? I do not.
317. *Mr. Dowel.*] Whereabouts in St. Leonards do you reside? About $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile up the main road from Milson's Point.

318. You know the route of the proposed line? Pretty fairly.
319. You know the country through which the present extension has gone? I do.
320. The length of that is about 10 miles? Yes. I have not been all along the line; but I have been on it at several points.
321. What population do you consider there is on this line at present? I do not know.
322. Is there much settlement? There is a pretty fair amount of settlement.
323. What do you call a pretty fair amount? I know that about Russell's there are a good many houses, but I could not tell you whether there are 100, 200, or how many.
324. Along the line already constructed what settlement is there? There are people residing there—farmers and fruit-growers.
325. How many? I could not tell you at all.
326. No considerable number? There are a good number here and there. There are houses all about.
- 326½. From what you state then there is a very sparse population at the present time along the section already constructed? I believe there is much more population there now than there was between Sydney and Parramatta when that line was constructed.
327. Has the population increased since the line was constructed? Yes.
328. Much? Yes.
329. Can you tell me how much? No; but I know that several of my friends have gone out there to live.
330. You do not anticipate that there will be very much goods traffic upon this line? Not very much. It is a question about which I do not know much. I have looked upon this as a suburban line.
331. Are you aware that this route would be shorter from Newcastle than the present route? Yes.
332. How much? Ten or 12 miles, I believe.
333. Still you do not expect any revenue on it except from passenger traffic? I think there would be a slight chance of goods traffic, and there might be more hereafter; but I do not think that the goods traffic would be very great. I fancy that the coal traffic would probably stop at the Hawkesbury, where they have deep water. Wool and heavy bulk goods might be brought that way for the convenience of loading; but I know so little about goods traffic that I would rather say nothing about it. If there is a goods traffic there will be plenty of deep water frontage all round Lavender Bay. There will be an actual wharf area larger than that at the Circular Quay.
334. What area of land do you own on this particular route? I have a 1-22nd interest in 72 acres of land near Russell's—about 3½ acres.
335. Would many land-owners be benefited by the construction of this line? Unquestionably.
336. Do you think that the land along the route would be materially increased in value? Materially. If people could get an elevation of from 300 to 700 feet within 5 or 10 miles of the post-office, a very large number of them would go there, supposing they had railway communication which would bring them into their offices in about half an hour.
337. Do you think it a fair and reasonable proposal that the large land-owners, who you say would be materially benefited by the line, should be taxed to a certain extent? With regard to other people I cannot say; but I should be happy to bear my share of such taxation if there were any legislation which would render it feasible.
338. *Mr. Lee.*] You are acquainted with the existing tram-line? Yes.
339. Does it run through a fairly populated portion of North Shore? It does; it runs through the most populous part.
340. Are you aware whether it is paying interest on working expenses? I should say that probably it does not; but we must bear in mind that that tramway cost three or four times as much as it ought to have done.
341. Have you any idea of what it cost per mile? I have been told outside about £75,000; but Mr. Abbott, I think, said just now £50,000. It is generally considered over there that it cost vastly more than it had any right to have cost. It ought to have cost about £18,000 without rolling stock; and it would have paid very well on that.
342. It is very freely used by the residents living at some considerable distance from the Milson's Point Wharf? It is used all along. You find passengers taking it to reach the first stopping place, about a quarter of a mile along the road.
343. Do not a large number of the residents walk from Ridge-street? Unquestionably—the tramway cannot take them all down.
344. At the present time a certain proportion of the residents walk to and from the steam-boat? No doubt about it. I generally walk down from my place though the tram passes my door. I prefer to walk.
345. These people would still walk if the railway were constructed? All the people living near the Point, or at least a very great number of them would. I should think that when you get out to about the 11-mile—nearly 2 miles out—passengers would begin to use it, just as they begin to use the railway at Newtown.
346. From the 11-miles outward the population is the least—it is most scattered? Unquestionably.
347. Could you tell the Committee whether there is any quantity of land beyond the 11-mile? There is a good deal of land which was not sold last year, but how much I cannot tell you. There is Crown land there.
348. Within easy reach of the proposed line? The line, I think, impinges on one end of this Crown land. A subdivision was made near Roslyn and Lynfield last year, and the railway passed quite close to the corner of that. The land spreads out a mile or two from it. I think only part of the land there was sold.
349. I presume that your remarks in general apply to the traffic over the whole line between Hornsby and Milson's Point? Yes.
350. They will not apply principally to the small piece now under the consideration of the Committee? No.
351. You are dealing with the line as a whole? I am dealing with the suburban extension as a whole.
352. You call the extension from Hornsby to Milson's Point a suburban extension? Yes.
353. Do you think there is likely to be any amount of goods traffic to come in that direction? It is a matter about which I said I do not know very much. My own impression is that there will not be much goods traffic.
354. Then this line must be looked upon essentially as a passenger line? That is the point from which I have considered it. I have no doubt that there will be some goods traffic, and some through passengers, but I have not gone into that at all. It is as a suburban passenger line that I have looked upon it principally.

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355. Have you estimated what the interest and working expenses will be upon the section as a whole? I have not. I have not gone into any figures, because I have felt that they must necessarily be illusory. I think that nobody could possibly have calculated forty years ago, when the line to Parramatta was constructed, what the future traffic would be.
356. Because of the great amount of settlement that has taken place in the western suburbs in consequence of the railway extension there, you assume that the same thing will take place on the North Shore line? I do; and being able to get a great elevation so close to town, will be an extra inducement.
357. Do you know anything of the Illawarra extension within 11 miles of the city? No, except generally. I know that a large settlement has taken place there.
358. Do you know whether as much settlement has taken place there in the same proportion as on the suburban line? I do not think there has been time enough to show whether it will be as great. I think it has been faster, but we must bear in mind that Sydney is a larger city now than it was when the railway to Parramatta was built.
359. Taking the most favourable view of the matter, this line must necessarily be a losing concern for some years to come? I do not think that it can be a losing concern for very long.
360. The portion of the line immediately under consideration, the interest on the cost of which will be nearly £12,000 a year, must necessarily be a losing concern; but taking it as a whole it will not be? Taking it as a whole it will not. The Government have spent nearly £200,000 on the line already, and if it is not taken down to some place such as Milson's Point, it will be spoiling the ship for a pennyworth of tar. It would be like as if we had started our main railways from Newtown instead of from Redfern.
361. Would an additional cost of £262,000 place the country in a better position? I certainly think it would. If a man built a house at an expense of £2,000, and it would cost another £500 to put a roof on it, I should say that it would be better to put a roof on it; so I think that the Government having spent so much on the railway, should spend something more to make it useful.
362. The total cost of the line from Hornsby to Milson's Point would in round numbers be £500,000? Yes.
363. Is there a population along the route at the present time to pay the interest on that and the working expenses? I do not think there is.
364. Consequently the line must for some time be a losing concern? Yes.
365. But in your opinion the population will increase rapidly, and there will, therefore, be an increase in the traffic? Yes.
366. You think the passenger traffic will increase to such an extent that it will make the line payable? Yes.
367. This is simply your opinion; you have not worked the matter out? That is my opinion, based on what has happened with regard to the other suburban lines. With reference to the proposal to extend the line to Cremorne, I may say that the object of persons wishing to come by the railway will be to get to some point near the city Post Office, and Milson's Point is, therefore, the best terminus of the line. There is already excellent passenger and vehicular steamer accommodation from there to the city, and should it be intended to take the railway into Sydney without going to the expense of a high-level bridge it could be taken from there more readily by punts, and if the Sydney railway were brought to the Circular Quay as projected, there would be a through connection made.
368. *Chairman.*] Such a connection could not be made if the line were brought to Cremorne? No. I may also say that without any artificial encouragement at all the traffic has come down to Milson's Point, showing that that is the natural point for the traffic to come to. Any attempts to bring it from Dawes' Point and Windmill-street to Blue's Point have failed. The route to Cremorne by train would be $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile longer by rail, and 24 acres of additional land would have to be resumed. I have heard that one of the proprietors of that land said that the railway would put £40,000 into his pocket. When the passengers by the train got to Cremorne they would have to come $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile back by water; they would be over-carried to that extent. Then the railway at Milson's Point would command the whole of the water-frontage, and could be extended from Lavender Bay around to Kirribilli; in fact there is as much water-frontage available there as there is on this side of the harbour. Taking the line round by Cremorne would be like taking the railway into Sydney by the back of Surry Hills to Potts' Point. Cremorne is also very much exposed to southerly winds from the north-west to the south-west. I have known ships to drag their anchors there and trail on to the rocks. Lavender Bay, on the other hand, is fully sheltered, and there is a large amount of Government land there already reserved and available for use.

TUESDAY, 15 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

James Hobson, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

J. Hobson,
Esq.
15 Oct., 1889.

369. *Chairman.*] Are you a resident of St. Leonards? I am a resident of North Willoughby.
370. How long have you been residing there? About seven years.
371. You are a newspaper proprietor, are you not? I am. I also hold a seat in the Municipal Council of North Willoughby, and I am tolerably familiar with what is taking place.
372. You know the line that has already been constructed from Hornsby towards the Crow's Nest? I know every part of it.
373. And you know that it is proposed that that line should be carried to deep water at Milson's Point? I do.
374. Do you know what the line has cost up to the present time? I know it from the newspaper reports.
375. £180,000 in round numbers? Yes.
376. And there is a further estimated cost of £262,000 to extend the line 2 miles and 72 chains to the deep water. Will you tell the Committee what you have to say in reference to that proposal? I notice

notice one or two matters have transpired with regard to the carriage of coal, and also that no provision is being made for goods traffic. As a matter of fact, no Newcastle coal will travel along this line, but coal from the west for the supply of North Shore. The whole of the coal from the mountains will come by this line, and would be of great advantage to the local brick manufacturers, who muster in very great force, as you are probably aware, in St. Leonards, and particularly about Gore Hill and Chatswood. The cost of mountain coal at the railway station, Sydney, is 14s. per ton. The cost of trucking it round, say to Gore Hill, would probably be a couple of shillings a ton more. There would, therefore, be a saving to the brickmakers of 3s. per ton, as at the present moment Newcastle coal costs them 19s. a ton at the kiln.

377. Have you formed any estimate of what quantity of coal would be required to supply the brickmakers and the public of North Shore? There are at present on the North Shore five steam brick manufactories. At the largest of these the consumption of coal is 30 tons per week. I have not the figures as to the consumption at the others, but probably they would consume on an average one-fourth of what the land company's works consume. Thirty tons per week is their minimum consumption.

378. That would be about 60 tons per week altogether? Yes, that is for brickmaking purposes. Then, again, there is the supply of St. Leonards, which I think to a large extent will come by this railway; I mean the supply for household purposes. The population of the borough of Willoughby, as near as we can estimate it at the present time, is 2,650, and their supplies of fuel and stores would to some extent come by this railway.

379. What is the distance from Strathfield to Willoughby by this railway? Over 20 miles.

380. And what is the distance from the Railway Station, Sydney, to Willoughby by road? About $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Another matter I would like to draw the Committee's attention to is the large amount of road metal that is used in St. Leonards. You are aware that every borough now is using road metal in preference to the ordinary sandstone, and that supply will also come from Emu Plains, for I understand from the Roads and Bridges Department that it can be got at a cheaper rate; in fact, the Department has already received its first consignment of road metal at Gordon. That cost 7s. per load at Emu Plains. I am unable to say what it is, as I have not gone into figures, but we may anticipate the whole of the supply of road metal for St. Leonards will come from that source. Last year the Government consumption of road metal at St. Leonards was 4,550 cubic yards. Another matter I would like to draw the Committee's attention to is the amount of Government land that would be benefited by the construction of this railway. About nine months ago the Government sold a subdivision at Gordon, consisting of 500 acres—Lindfield is the name of the station—and 567 acres of the same subdivision remain unsold. At Hornsby, about the same period, they sold 915 acres of a subdivision, and there are still 116 acres subdivided and ready for sale. The plan which I have here shows that within 3 miles of this railway at Hornsby the Government have 3,000 acres of land designed for public auction.

381. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is the area still unsold? The area unsold, irrespective of those 116 acres, is 3,000 acres, which are not yet subdivided.

382. *Mr. Humphery.*] Within what distance? The farthest distance is 3 miles from the line of railway.

383. *Chairman.*] Do you know what is the total population of the North Shore? About 30,000.

384. Does that include Manly Beach? Yes.

385. Gordon and Willoughby? Yes; the whole electorate of St. Leonards.

386. The bulk of that population resides to the east of this proposed line of railway, does it not? It does.

387. What proportion of it would you say resides to the east of this railway;—would you say five-eighths or six-eighths? I should say quite two-thirds.

388. Then this line of railway would not serve those two-thirds at all as a means of communication with the metropolis? No, it would not.

389. The denser part of the electorate of St. Leonards would not be served by this railway; I mean that part where the population is densest? No, it would not.

390. We were told by Mr. Bradley the other day that, as a matter of fact, this line of railway would not serve the population of St. Leonards at all except beyond 3 miles from Milson's Point? I don't agree with Mr. Bradley. I think this railway will serve a population a mile from Milson's Point.

391. From the Crow's Nest upwards? I think about the Euroka Estate, Bay Road; and Berry's Bush—that part which I understand is to be subdivided. Population settling there would be served by this railway.

392. How far is that from Milson's Point—about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, is it not? A little over a mile, I think.

393. Do you know the estimated cost of working expenses and interest for this 2 miles and 72 chains? I don't remember the estimate as to the working expenses, but I think it was stated the interest would be about £12,000 a year.

394. £11,945 interest, and working expenses. What probability is there of any part of that being repaid by this railway? Certainly not any at the outset. I do not think it could be expected.

395. Do you think the working expenses would be paid by it? I would not like to say that.

396. We are told they would be £2,775 a year;—do you think that these 2 miles and 72 chains would earn enough to pay those working expenses? I do not think that the railway would pay at all at the outset, whether the terminus remains where it is or is removed to Milson's Point. £12,000 does not seem to me to be such a very large item, when I know, as a matter of fact, that a hotel now being built in the city will have to pay interest on £15,000.

397. *Mr. Garrard.*] You said just now you expected that goods would be brought down by this railway;—is it at all likely that goods will be sent round from the city of Sydney, a distance of about 27 miles? No, I did not mean that. I meant there will be a large amount of traffic from the Point to Hornsby, goods being conveyed for the use of those who are settled along the line. There is a large number of manufactories on the line—several large pottery works. There is one pottery works where £10,000 has been sunk by private enterprise.

398. But the principal portion of those works would be served by the line already constructed, without its coming any further down, would it not? To some extent it would.

399. The greater number of those brick-works are on the line at present constructed? Yes.

400. And therefore have nothing at all to do with the proposed extension? Oh yes, they would.

401. In what way? The shipment of bricks. At present a large number of bricks is taken away to the coastal ports.

402. Can you tell us the number of bricks that have been taken away by coastal boats from North Shore? Most of Manly has been built with bricks from North Shore.

403.

J. Hobson,
Esq.
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- J. Hobson,
Esq.
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403. That would not amount to many millions of bricks would it? No; but it is one item in the carrying. I do not think it would be a very large one, but it is one item in the matter, and road metal is another.
404. With reference to road metal;—you have spoken of road metal coming from the Emu Plains? Yes.
405. Are you aware that the bulk of the road metal used by the Roads and Bridges Department and also by the various Municipalities of North Shore comes from the southern quarries and not from Emu Plains? I am.
406. Are you aware that the southern quarries metal is far superior to the Emu Plains metal? I am not aware of the relative qualities of the two metals.
407. *Mr. Lee.*] You mentioned that there were five steam brick-works on the North Shore? Yes.
408. How many of these are located at Gore Hill? Three.
409. And the line at present being constructed from Pearce's Corner passes close to Gore Hill? Yes; the line passes almost through one of the works.
410. Consequently those brick-works would be supplied with coal irrespective of the extension of the line to Milson's Point? Yes; those three brick-works would.
411. So, in calculating the revenue to be derived from the extension to Milson's Point, the carriage for those three brick-works must be left out? As far as coal is concerned, yes.
412. Are not the unsold Crown lands at Gordon and Hornsby made accessible at the present time by the Homebush to Waratah line? Not those at Gordon.
413. Gordon will be rendered accessible by the construction of the line from Hornsby to the Crow's Nest, when the railway is finished to Gore Hill? No, it would not be accessible.
414. It is situated conveniently to Gore Hill, is it not? Yes.
415. How far is the unsold land at Gordon from the line at present constructed? It is by the side of the railway. A portion of that which was sold came right up to the railway line. The greatest distance would be $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Lindfield railway station.
416. I presume you wish the Committee to understand from the tenor of your remarks that, if this line were constructed to Milson's Point, many persons would be induced to purchase land and settle at Gordon and other places? Undoubtedly.
417. And therefore create a certain amount of traffic over the line? Yes. I think a very large settlement would take place on this line. I know many people who are anxious to live in Willoughby or beyond, but who will not put up with the inconvenience of travelling by 'bus.
418. But under any circumstances only about one-third of the population of the St. Leonards electorate could possibly be served by this railway? I should think so.
419. Speaking of the line as a whole from Hornsby to Milson's Point, the estimated cost of which would be £443,000, and the interest upon which would be £15,470, and the working expenses (say) £6,000, or a total annual cost of £21,470—can you give the Committee any idea how this or any portion of this money is likely to be raised either by passenger or by goods traffic? I can only say that if the railway be extended to Milson's Point there will be a much faster settlement on that line than has ever taken place on any line in the Colony.
420. Can you give the Committee any figures as to the western extension or the Illawarra extension within an easy radius, so as to guide the Committee as to what the increase of traffic would be? I know it has been very great on the Illawarra line.
421. Can you give the Committee any figures? I have not prepared any figures.
422. It must be obvious to you that the amount per ticket received from passengers carried on a line 2 miles and 21 chains in length would necessarily be very small? It would.
423. Consequently the railway would have to carry a very large number in order to receive anything like a large amount of revenue? It would have to carry a great number.
424. Your idea as to the carrying of goods from Milson's Point towards Hornsby, along that route, is based upon an individual opinion of your own? Yes, on an individual opinion of my own; but I have watched the progress of the district very much, and it must be obvious to anyone watching it that the population is increasing very largely, and would do so still more if there were convenient means of communication with the places where people went to settle. The land which this line would open up is far superior to that already settled upon.
425. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you think the population would be sufficiently served by an extension of the tramway to join the railway at the Crow's Nest? I do not think it would. I do not think any tramway in existence is satisfactory to the travelling public.
426. That is with regard to the cost of the extension? I think that if the tramway were extended, this proposed extension of the railway would eventually have to be carried out. I may be rather sanguine in my anticipation with regard to the future of North Shore, but I think an enormous population would be settled on that line.
427. That is beyond the Crow's Nest? Beyond Gore Hill—about Willoughby and Lindfield, and right out to Hornsby.
428. What is the distance from Milson's Point to Gordon? About 6 or 7 miles.
429. And you anticipate that the traffic that will eventually support this railway will be beyond the Crow's Nest? Yes; that is where I look for the largest settlement.
430. Between the Crow's Nest and Milson's Point there will be comparatively little traffic? Well, St. Leonards is already built on right up to the Berry Estate, and that is a block to the settlement of the district in that direction.
431. You anticipate all the profitable traffic will be beyond the Crow's Nest? Yes; I do not think the present population of North Shore worth considering compared with the prospective traffic.
432. So that although this extension, which will cost about a quarter of a million for 2 miles, will not be profitable in itself, it will carry traffic beyond which will be profitable? Yes; I look to traffic beyond Crow's Nest.
433. You look not to the present earnings, but to the future? I look to the future.
434. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you say what distance coal from the mountains would have to be carried so as to be used by North Shore people? I am guided in my statement as to that by the fact that coal is delivered at Redfern and thereabouts at 14s. per ton.
435. But you cannot say what distance the coal would have to be carried? No; but probably the extra cost would be 1s. 6d. per ton, or perhaps 2s.
436. Supposing this line were constructed, would not the coal have to be carried a shorter distance than
at

at present;—you have said that coal would be brought from the mountains for consumption by the North Shore people; can you say how many miles the coal would have to be carried before it reached North Shore? I cannot say the number of miles.

J. Hobson,
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437. What particular mountain coal do you refer to? What I said applies to all mountain coal.

438. On both lines? No, the Western line.

439. Can you say whether this extension would pass through any large estates? No, I do not think it would, except the Berry Estate. The Government is the largest proprietor, and I think Berry would come next.

440. The line, if constructed, would pass through a large estate? Not many, mostly small holdings, I think, such as orchards. I do not know any large estate that the line would pass through.

441. You anticipate that the land in the immediate neighbourhood of the railway would be very materially increased in value if the railway were constructed? I am sure it would.

442. Do you think it would be a fair thing to tax to a certain extent the holders of that land? I think it would be fair if all owners of land adjacent to railways were taxed.

443. But dealing with this particular line which would cost so much money for only 2 miles and a few chains, and from which you have shown that not much revenue could be anticipated, do you think it would be a fair thing to ask the owners of land who will be materially benefited by the construction of the line to contribute something in the shape of taxation? I do not think a proposal of that kind could be worked.

Charles Cyrus Bullock, Esq., sworn and examined:—

444. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your profession? I am a licensed surveyor.

C. C. Bullock,
Esq.

445. Are you a resident of North Shore? I am not now, but I was from 1877 to 1886.

446. You are familiar with the whole of the country round about? Yes, perfectly familiar with every part of it.

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447. You are aware of the proposed route for this extension of the railway from the present terminus at Crow's Nest to Milson's Point? Perfectly.

448. Do you think the best route has been chosen for the purpose of reaching the deep waters of the harbour? Yes; I think the Milson's Point route is the best. I have prepared a report which I have here and it might save time if I were to read it.

449. *Chairman.*] Yes; and we will take it as part of your evidence.

The witness then read the following report:—

NORTH SHORE RAILWAY.

Objects of railway.

To afford a means of access from Sydney to the lands lying between St. Leonards and Hornsby. To connect, eventually, the northern and southern railways, either by a high-level bridge across the harbour from Blue's Point to Flagstaff Hill, or by steam-punt to Fort Macquarie or Dawes' Point, to one of which places the city railway will probably be extended.

Terminal point of railway.

But little need be stated to show that of the two proposed routes to the waters of Port Jackson, that to Milson's Point is superior in every respect. The official estimate of the cost of construction of the Cremorne route is £285,000 as against £262,000 for the cost of the construction and resumptions on the Milson's Point route. The length of the extension to Cremorne Point is nearly twice the length of that to Milson's Point, and consequently the area of land to be resumed would be twice as great. Assuming the land to be only half as valuable as that on the Milson's Point route, the cost for resumptions would be £135,000, making a total cost of £420,000, or £158,000 more than the total cost of the Milson's Point route. The distance from Hornsby Junction to Cremorne Point is 14 miles 22 chains, to Milson's Point, 12 miles 72 chains, a difference of 1 mile 30 chains in favour of the latter route. The distance from Cremorne Point to Circular Quay is 1½ miles; from Milson's Point it is ¾ of a mile. Notwithstanding the greater length of the Cremorne route, better grades cannot be obtained than those on the Milson's Point route. This will be readily understood when it is remembered that it traverses for more than 2½ miles country which is more elevated than its point of departure. The Milson's Point route follows the natural features of the country, and gradually descends until it strikes the water-level of Lavender Bay. The Cremorne Point route would compel all persons travelling between Sydney and Hornsby and other places on the line, to be carried 4¼ miles further than they would be by the Milson's Point route. Neither would the Cremorne Point route suit local traffic. The cable tramway in Miller-street commands the traffic to within a half mile to the east of it, while the residents on the southern side of the Military Road would be better served by the ferry service in Neutral Bay. The residents of the Spit Road and Mossman's Bay would not travel by it, because they also would be better served by the ferry service to that bay. Neither would the residents of Cremorne patronize it, because they would be within a walking distance of a ferry. There is no ferry service to Berry's Bay, consequently the Milson's Point route would command all passenger traffic as far as 11¾ miles point. For passengers travelling between Hornsby and St. Leonards, stations at Walker-street, Bay Road, and Edwards Road, would be of great convenience to them. It is stated, as an argument in favour of the Cremorne Point route, that to the Government belongs the water frontage there. It is by no means certain that the Government could take possession of it without paying for it, but in any case it would only be 100 feet in depth, and that would be insufficient. At Bradley's Head, and at Middle Head there are several hundreds of acres of Crown lands, not in strips of 100 feet in depth, but in solid and compact blocks. Neither is there any doubt as to whom it belongs. If, therefore, the terminal point should be governed by the fact that the land belonged to the Government, either of the two places mentioned is superior to Cremorne. Should the Cremorne Point route be adopted, it would be necessary to connect with a bridge across the harbour from Blue's Point to Flagstaff Hill, to construct a branch line of about 2 miles in length. To connect the bridge with the Milson's Point route, the branch line would be only a ½ mile in length. It is also urged that Cremorne Point possesses superior advantages over Milson's Point for shipping purposes. Such is not the case, however, and the plans which I shall presently exhibit will prove it. The advocates for the Cremorne Point route endeavour to show that, if it were constructed to that point, a large amount of coal would be carried by it for exportation purposes. From inquiries I have made at Newcastle, I find that coal can be taken by steamers from Newcastle, and placed in a ship's hold or upon any wharf in Sydney harbour for a sum under but not exceeding 4s. per ton. From Newcastle to Cremorne Point, by the railway route, the distance is nearly 96 miles, and reckoning the freight at only 1d. per ton per mile, the freight for a ton would be 8s., or 100 per cent. more than by water. Another objection, which would render the carriage of coal by railway from Newcastle to Port Jackson impossible, would be the amount of money that would have to be sunk in the construction of coal waggons. In Newcastle the waggons are generally used twice a day, whilst if they were sent to Cremorne, they could not be used oftener than once a day, or probably only once in two days. Last year 667,000 tons of coal were exported to Melbourne alone, being an average daily export of 2,000 tons. To bring this amount to Cremorne Point would require about twenty engines and 330 coal-waggons. Such steamers as the "Wastwater," "Era," and "Age," can carry about 4,000 tons each, as much as could be brought by forty engines in 660 trucks. It is frequently stated that large coal is damaged by being carried in ships. I find, however, that the maximum amount of damage is 1½d. per ton.

Necessity for extending the railway to Milson's Point.

I take it for granted that the North Shore railway must touch the harbour at some point, and I consider that I am justified in assuming, from the evidence which I have adduced, that Milson's Point is the proper terminus; and I shall now proceed to show the necessity for, and the desirability of, extending it to that point.

C. C. Bullock,
Esq.

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The present instalment of the line has cost £187,000, and to extend the tramway to meet it at St. Leonards station will cost, including permanent way, extra engine power, and land, at least £43,000—making a total cost of £230,000. To extend the railway to Milson's Point, the estimated cost, including £135,000 for resumption, is £262,000. From this sum, however, the value of the lands and houses over the tunnel, and of other properties which need not be destroyed, must be deducted therefrom. The value may be safely stated at £32,000, which brings down the cost to £230,000. I particularly desire to impress upon the Committee the fact that the resumptions include about 2,000 feet of deep-water frontage to Lavender Bay. This water frontage can readily be utilised for wharfage purposes, and I have no hesitation in stating that, should the railway be taken to Milson's Point, this asset alone will in ten years hence be worth at least a quarter of a million. I may point out that in consequence of the physical features of the land between the water frontage and the roads at back, the properties, as held by the present proprietors, are by no means as valuable as might be supposed, inasmuch as they can be approached only by water. In the hands of the Government, as a solid block, proper means of egress at the rear could be made.

Another important fact must be taken into consideration, viz., the Crown lands situated on the railway in the district of Gordon. Had it not been for the railway these lands would have had little value, and if the railway be not extended to the harbour, I am of opinion that their value will be reduced by one-half. In September, 1888, about 1,200 acres of land situated near Lindfield station were submitted to public auction, and about 500 acres were sold, realising a sum of £33,000. A little later about £3,000 was realised from Crown lands near Hornsby. Thus £36,000 has been actually received by the Government, and the cost of the railway may be credited with this amount. The balance of the Lindfield subdivision, at £50 per acre, is worth £35,000, at which sum it could be readily disposed of after the extension of the railway had been completed. There are about 10,000 acres of Crown lands improved in value by this railway, which are worth, at £20 per acre, about £200,000. It is thus seen that the Government is the largest landowner along the line, and that its interest in this respect should be considered with, not apart from, the railway proposal.

Whilst I am of opinion that the North Shore railway, if extended to the harbour, will, in the course of four or five years, be one of the best paying railways in the Colony, I am not of opinion that of the two proposals—the extension of the railway to the harbour or of the tramway to the railway—the question to be considered is whether either proposal will pay interest on capital and working expenses, but whether, taking other considerations into view, a better return will not be obtained by the larger expenditure in taking the railway to Milson's Point.

In order to make the line profitable it is self-evident that the greatest facilities should be afforded, not only for the creation of a passenger traffic but also for a goods traffic. Whilst the goods traffic in any case may not be large, should the line be not extended to the harbour there will assuredly be none at all. I have already shown that Newcastle coal cannot be brought by railway to Port Jackson, but as Newcastle coal is forwarded from Darling Harbour by train to the various stations on the suburban lines, it is reasonable to suppose that Newcastle coal would be brought by steamer to Milson's Point, there placed in railway trucks and forwarded to the various stations on the North Shore line. Agricultural produce of every description, as well as live stock, are carried by the Northern line to Sydney. The population of the district of St. Leonards is nearly 20,000, or nearly $\frac{1}{10}$ th of the population of the country. So large a population must necessarily require large supplies of both kinds, and these at least should be carried by the railway. Mr. Edwards, a gentleman who will supply you with detailed accounts, has informed me that about 45,000 cases of fruit are annually sent from the Gordon district to Sydney. The freight on a case for the return journey would probably be 6d., in which case the revenue from this source would amount to about £1,100. There are also brickyards and potteries along the line, the products of which would be sent by railway to Sydney. Whether or not goods will be permitted to come from the north to Milson's Point largely depends upon the Commissioners for Railways. Considering that the distance to Milson's Point is 8 miles shorter than the distance to Redfern Station, together with the fact that splendid wharfage accommodation at Milson's Point would be available, there is no reason why some of it should not find its way there.

To connect the railway with the tramway, instead of extending it, would mean the infliction of the maximum amount of inconvenience upon passengers, and would retard to a very great extent the settlement of a population along the line. St. Leonards station is distant by road and tramway from Milson's Point a little more than 2½ miles. Passengers between Sydney and Hornsby would have to travel by steamer, thence by tram, and thence by train. To passengers without luggage this would be annoying, but to those with luggage, or accompanied by children, or to elderly persons, it would be simply intolerable. Should there be any goods traffic, which I doubt very much, it would have to be carted between the station and Milson's Point, and when it is remembered that a hill having an elevation of 325 feet above sea-level has to be surmounted on a road which has grades of about 1 in 12, it will be readily understood whether or not the requirements of the people would be met by such an arrangement. It may be stated that Redfern station is similarly situated as St. Leonards station, but a moment's consideration will prove the contrary. The physical features between the Redfern station and Port Jackson are such that one horse would draw as much as two horses between Milson's Point and St. Leonards station. The city railway also touches Port Jackson, in Darling Harbour. Redfern station is situated within the city, the objective point of the passengers travelling thereto, and it is only a mile from the centre of the heart of it. The objective point of passengers from North Shore is also the city, but St. Leonards station is several miles from it. Instead of that being the case, however, every facility should be given to reach the city. To passengers travelling to and from the north, the North Shore railway would, in a return journey, save 16 miles, and whilst the General Post Office, in the vicinity of which the principal hotels are situated, is within a walking distance from Circular Quay, Redfern station is not.

Between Milson's Point and the present terminus of the tram there are ten stopping-places, and I understand there would be eight more if it were extended to the railway, making a total of eighteen. The speed of the tram is about 6 miles per hour, but calculating it at 8, it would take twenty minutes without stoppages, and about twenty-five minutes with stoppages, to reach St. Leonards station. Another five minutes for delay in changing from tram to train brings up the time of the journey to twenty-five and thirty minutes for a fast and slow tram respectively. A fast train would reach it in five minutes and a slow train in ten minutes. A fast train would reach Hornsby station in the same time a fast tram would reach St. Leonards station. From these facts it is shown that, if the tram instead of the train be extended, the return journey between St. Leonards station and the other stations on the line will be increased by forty minutes.

I have previously stated that it is not a question as to whether either proposal will pay interest on capital and working expenses, but that it is a question as to which proposal would show the least loss or would yield the greatest profit, other circumstances being taken into consideration. I have no hesitation in stating, and I shall endeavour to show, that not only will the extension result in the least loss at the commencement, but that it will yield the greater profit in a very few years. It must be borne in mind that the same amount of rolling stock would be required to work the line to St. Leonards station as would be required to work it to Milson's Point. From the quarterly report of the Railway Commissioners, ending June last, I find that the working expenses per train mile is 4s. 3d., and for the tramways, 2s. 11d. The difference applies to only 2½ miles, so that for practical purposes the working expenses for both schemes may be deemed to be the same. The difference between the annual charges of the two schemes is obtained by calculating the interest at 3½ per cent. on the difference between the costs of the two schemes. This difference I have already shown to be £180,000, the interest upon which is £6,300 per annum.

It cannot be doubted for a moment but that the railway would eventually be extended to the harbour, and there can be no doubt but that the quicker it is done the cheaper the cost will be. In 1857 the city railway could have been extended to Hyde Park for £80,000. To carry out the extension now would cost £600,000. Should the extension be delayed for five or ten years the cost for resumptions would then be about 100 per cent. higher than the present cost. Indeed such improvements might be erected upon the properties as would make the extension almost impracticable. As it takes about 20½ years for money at 3½ per cent. to double itself, it would pay the Government handsomely to resume the land now, and let it lie idle until such time as it be required. As reasons for the extension of the line, it must be remembered that the resumptions are now obtainable at the minimum cost, that a direct and the most complete service would be obtained, and one that would provide for traffic of any description. It would settle twice the number of people upon the line, and would create an excursion traffic which should equal, if it should not excel, that upon the Illawarra line. The scenery on the North Shore line is equal, if not superior to that on the Illawarra line, and the Hawkesbury River is distant only 28 miles from Milson's Point. As many as 20,000 people patronise that line on a public holiday, and as there are ten during the year, probably 150,000 persons patronise it for pleasure purposes during the year. If, therefore, it be assumed that 50,000 excursionists, including those from St. Leonards, patronised the North Shore line on public holidays during the year and reckoning 20,000 to the river at 5s. per head and 30,000 at 2s. per head, the revenue derived from this source would be £8,000. Then again a large revenue would be derived from persons from Sydney and St. Leonards who would patronise the line on Sundays. It is scarcely reasonable to suppose that advantage would be taken of the railway if passengers had to change so often to get to their destinations as would be the case if the tramway scheme were adopted.

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The increased cost of the railway scheme is £6,300 per annum, or about £17 per day. A first-class return fare to Gordon, situated about midway on the line, will be 1s., and 340 passengers at 1s. per day would cover the increased cost. I must again point out that by securing the water frontages in Lavender Bay a property is secured which can be made to return a revenue, and which in a very few years will be worth more than the cost of the extension.

C. C. Bullock,
Esq.
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Population and character of the country through which the railway passes.

In the immediate vicinity of Milson's Point there are three boroughs, and their populations are as follows:—East St. Leonards, 5,550; St. Leonards, 7,315; and Victoria, 3,470, making a total of 16,335. The Borough of North Willoughby, which extends from St. Leonards station to the parish of Gordon, and through the centre of which the railway passes, has a population of about 2,000. Within this borough, at Chatswood, is situated the site of the elevated reservoirs now in course of construction, and which will supply with Nepean water this and St. Leonards districts. The gas-mains are already extended within the boundaries of the borough, and the Council has authorized their extension to Chatswood. Chatswood station is situated only 4½ miles from Milson's Point, and is situated on a plateau at an elevation of 350 feet above sea-level. It is magnificently situated for suburban residences, and is infinitely superior, for this purpose to any locality on the southern side of the harbour. There are two hotels, three churches, and one Public school. There are also shops and stores and several very fine residences. Besides these there are tanneries, brickyards, and potteries. "The Great Northern Hotel" is a favourite training-ground for athletes, and with proper communication with Sydney, Sheffield handicaps and other sports, which attract large numbers of people to Botany and other places, will be inaugurated. Steps are being taken to secure grounds for a racecourse, the meetings of which will also attract large numbers of people. From Chatswood to Hornsby the country is magnificent in every respect, and has a gradual rise, the latter place having an elevation of 592 feet above sea-level. Within these limits there is a population of about 1,140, who are principally occupied in fruit-growing. There are five hotels, three churches, one bank, and three schools. From Porter's Hill, at Gordon, the South Head light-house and the Pacific Ocean can be clearly seen. Some of the surrounding hills there are over 600 feet above sea-level.

According to the Transit Commissioners there are at the present time running to Willoughby and Gordon four 2-horse waggonettes and four 4-horse 'buses. Another application for a new line of 'buses has also been recently received by the Commissioners. From these data some idea of the present passenger traffic may be obtained. Allowing for three relays of horses, cost of keeping them, interest and depreciation in stock, wages to drivers, and £500 for profits to the four proprietors, I estimate that the revenue received is about £4,000. This gives the daily average earnings of each 'bus at £1 7s. 6d., a sum which appears to me to be rather a low estimate. It should be stated that the greater number of residents, as well as visitors, ride or drive, and consequently do not patronise the 'buses.

Comparison of North Shore districts with districts on the Illawarra line.

According to information received from the Statistician, I find that in 1881 the population of the district known as Rockdale was 858, and at that time there was only one 2-horse 'bus running there. In June last, or about five years after the opening of the railway, the population of Rockdale, including Arncliffe, was 3,500, of Kogarah, 2,500, and of Hurstville, 2,000; making a total of 8,000. This development, it should be stated, took place without water and gas conveniences such as will be at once within reach of the North Shore districts. At the present time those places are not supplied with Nepean water. I would also point out that Arncliffe is 5, Rockdale 6, Kogarah 7, and Hurstville 9 miles from Redfern Station; Gore Hill is 3, Chatswood 4, and Gordon only 7 miles from Milson's Point. The elevation of Arncliffe is 47, of Rockdale 52, of Kogarah 66, and of Hurstville 214 feet above sea-level. The elevation of Gore Hill, however, is 300, of Chatswood 350, and of Gordon 500 feet above sea-level.

With a greater population, with better soil, with advantages in elevation and of proximity to Sydney, there are no reasons to suppose that settlement will not take place on the North Shore line in as great a ratio as that which has taken place on the Illawarra line.

In conclusion, I would point out that in order to obtain a proper conception of the country through which the railway passes it is absolutely necessary that the Sectional Committee shall examine the entire length of the line from Milson's Point to Hornsby.

The following information will give some idea of the vehicular traffic between Milson's Point and the districts beyond the junction of North Sydney Road with Lane Cove Road. The returns are for one day only.

From Sydney, towards Lane Cove	200
„ Lane Cove to Sydney	188
Total	388
From Sydney to North Sydney.....	100
„ North Sydney to Sydney.....	118
Total	218
To and from Sydney and Lane Cove	388
„ „ North Sydney.....	218
Total	606

450. *Chairman.*] Where did you get those returns about the vehicles that passed? I had a man there on a Saturday from 4 o'clock in the morning till 11 o'clock at night.

451. That is an unusual day, is it not? I understand a greater number pass there on a Friday.

452. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you know the amount of land required for this extension along the eastern shore of Lavender Bay;—what depth from the water? I presume 2 chains; that is the usual width.

453. You spoke of the difficulty of getting up to the high land from the water, but said that if the Government held the land laying between the bay and the road above in one solid block the means of egress could be made much easier. If that were done it would be necessary to resume more lands? Yes, to get up to the top.

454. That would increase the cost? Not very much, for the water frontage is of the chief value.

455. Do you know at how much the cost of resumption has been estimated? £135,000.

456. Do you think that is a fair estimate? Yes, I think it is.

457. I suppose that the principal ground for this extension you think is because the present line is incomplete. Supposing that the present line to the Crow's Nest was not made, do you think we should be justified in recommending this North Shore line? I do. As a private individual I should only be too glad to put money in it myself. I think it would be one of the best paying lines round Sydney. There is no line outside Sydney that could compare with the North Shore line as far as Hornsby.

458. Have you any interest in North Shore? Yes, I have a very large interest on the North Shore, but not at Milson's Point.

459. *Chairman.*] I see that this railway runs through some of your property? Yes, but it makes no difference to me whether it goes down to Milson's Point or not. It is not because I have the land that I think it is a fine district, but I bought the land because I thought it was a fine district.

460. *Mr. Garrard.*] I suppose you are aware that through passengers would go right round to Redfern and

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- and the line from Hornsby to Milson's Point would merely be a branch line? That I think would depend chiefly on the Commissioners. If they ran through trains from Newcastle to Sydney perhaps those very flush with money would not take the trouble to come to North Shore, but if through trains were run to St. Leonards and Sydney I think a great number of people would come to Milson's Point, as the distance would be 8 miles shorter; a steamer could take them across the harbour to Circular Quay and they would be within walking distance of the hotels, which at Redfern you are not. If a through train went to Milson's Point and passengers were landed on the wharf alongside of which the Government provided steamers to take them to Circular Quay, they could be landed right in Sydney, whereas at Redfern you have to get into a tram which takes you at least a quarter of a mile from the principal shops in George-street.
461. I am referring to ordinary through passengers;—do you think that if these conveniences were offered to them they would go to Milson's Point, tranship into a steamer, and on their arrival on this side of the harbour get into a cab in order to go to their destinations? Anyone going to Milson's Point should be taken across the harbour in a punt the same as is done in America, and from the punt they could go to their hotel in less time than they could from Redfern.
462. That means revolutionising the present ferry traffic, does it not? I could not say what the effect would be. From Milson's Point to the Post Office by water and land is precisely the same distance as Redfern station is from it. There is no reason why we should not have steamers taking passengers and vehicles across the water and landing them at Circular Quay. One of the principal reasons for taking the line to Milson's Point is that there is a ferry service there.
463. I understood that you anticipated that in the near future there would be a bridge from Flagstaff Point to Blue's Point;—would it not be better therefore to take the railway to Blue's Point, and not to Milson's Point? I say that taking the line to Milson's Point would best suit the bridge. Milson's Point is higher than Blue's Point, and therefore more suitable for a junction with the bridge. If at any time the railway were extended from Redfern to Fort Macquarie, or Dawes' Point, trains could be taken across the harbour on punts as is done in America.
464. Do you know any part of the world where trains are taken on punts across such a narrow stretch of water with so much traffic? I myself have been across in going from San Francisco to New York.
465. I am only asking in reference to a narrow water-way;—at the place you have instanced there is a long stretch of water, 7 miles, I believe? I do not know of any place so narrow as our harbour, but I was speaking of the possibility of a train being taken across.
466. How long do you anticipate it would be before this line would return interest on capital, and pay working expenses? Seeing that the Illawarra line pays now, and has only been constructed five years, I think the North Shore line would pay in four or five years.
467. How long do you think it would take to make the line to the Crow's Nest pay without this extension? I do not think it would pay at all.
468. Were you one of those who agitated for the construction of the line to the Crow's Nest from Hornsby? No, I was not.
469. Then you think that the people who advocated that line, and were parties to the construction of it were simply madmen, or robbing the country? I think it was very unwise.
470. *Mr. Dowel.*] You say you do not anticipate any coal traffic on this particular line? Not from Newcastle.
471. From any other part? No, I do not think so.
472. Do you not think the mountain coal could be brought for consumption at North Shore? Mountain coal could be brought there for consumption by the North Shore people, but I do not think it would be for exportation. It would have to go to Strathfield first, and from Strathfield to Darling Harbour is about 7 or 8 miles, and to get from Strathfield to Port Jackson it would have to travel about 27 or 28 miles. For exportation purposes the coal would go to Darling Harbour.
473. But as regards the brickmakers, and the North Shore people generally, do you think they would use the mountain coal, or do you think it could be brought to them? I think it could be brought to them.
474. And then it would be a source of revenue to the railway? Yes.
475. *Chairman.*] You have said that in ten years you estimate that the water frontage in Lavender Bay would be worth £250,000;—what is to make it that value? There is bound to be goods traffic there. There is no reason why ships should not go there and load.
476. Don't you know as a matter of fact there is not a wharf there, erected either by the Government or the Municipal Council, which is paying in the shape of rent interest on the cost of construction? I did not know that. They are asking very high prices. The water frontage could be utilised for bonds.
477. Don't you know that on the eastern side of Milson's Point Mr. Milson erected a store with a view of making a bond, and has never been able to let it, although it has been there two or three years? I was not aware of that.

P. F. Richardson, Esq., sworn and examined:—

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478. *Mr. Lea.*] Are you a resident of the North Shore? Yes; I reside at Gordon.
479. Are you acquainted with the proposed extension of the railway from the Crow's Nest to Milson's Point? I have some idea of it, but I have never seen the plans.
480. Do you own any land on the proposed railway route? No.
481. Or on the route from the Crow's Nest to Hornsby? Between the Crow's Nest to Hornsby; I have a small piece of land at Willoughby.
482. Have you prepared any statement to lay before the Committee? No.
483. Any statement you have to make the Committee will be glad to hear, and we can ask you a few questions afterwards;—will you please give us your opinion about this proposal? The railway, as it is left at the Crow's Nest, would be almost absolutely useless to the residents in my neighbourhood along the line. Personally, I could make no use of it at all. From my own place now I have to drive 10 miles to North Shore, and I should have to drive 2 miles to a railway station further up the line, get out at the Crow's Nest, and take the tram to Milson's Point. There are a good many other people similarly situated. I think the great traffic on the line would be passenger traffic—the paying part of it would be passenger traffic—

traffic—and unless the communication was pretty direct to the Shore for business people and others going in and out of Sydney, it could not be used by them. Many people are waiting now to build out there so soon as the railway is carried to the harbour, so that they could get across to Sydney without difficulty either from Milson's Point or Blue's Point. I have always thought that Blue's Point was the best place, for I always had a bridge in view, but Milson's Point or Kirribilli Point would be nearer for communication with Circular Quay by means of horse or steam-ferries. With regard to the fruit-growers bringing their fruit to market, a railway to the Crow's Nest only would not be the slightest use to them. They would have to cart their fruit to a railway station, and then from the Crow's Nest. They go straight into Sydney now from my neighbourhood. Upwards of 50,000 cases of fruit come from the neighbourhood of Gordon.

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484. Do I understand there are 50,000 cases of fruit produced annually in that locality? Yes; I think that is the lowest calculation, and the quantity is increasing.

485. With reference to the residents and business people of North Shore who have to visit Sydney, you do not wish the Committee to understand that the whole of the residents of North Shore are depending upon this extension of the railway, or that it would benefit the whole of them? Of course it would not so much affect the people near the Shore. I am speaking of people living at a distance.

486. All the people living a certain distance east of the proposed line would not use it? It could not be much benefit to people living near the Military Road and in that direction.

487. Consequently it could only be of benefit to those already living along the proposed route, and to those also who may in years to come settle along that route? Yes.

488. But they are not more than one-third of the present population? I could not say. I believe the construction of the line would encourage a very large population to settle along the route, especially from the Green Gate.

489. Have you any idea of the cost of the construction of this extension? I have no idea about it.

490. Do you think it would be a fair thing to calculate the interest solely on the cost of constructing that extension, or that the whole line from Hornsby to Milson's Point should be taken into account? I think the interest should be calculated on the cost of constructing the whole line.

491. Have you figured that out? No, I have not.

492. Have you any idea of what the first section of the line cost? I think I saw in the paper the other day a statement that the cost was about £200,000.

493. Not so much as that, but about £185,000; the cost to Milson's Point from Hornsby is estimated at £442,000, and the interest upon that (at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.) at £15,470, and the working expenses at £6,000, making £21,470 a year;—now, can you point out to the Committee any possible traffic in the near future which will pay a fair proportion of the working expenses and interest on the capital, and, if so, how do you arrive at it? I have not gone into the calculation so fully as that. So far as I can judge, I do not think the line will ever pay in its present state. I think that the only way to make it pay eventually is to extend the line to the Shore.

494. Am I correct in summarising your evidence in this way:—that in your opinion the line to the Crow's Nest would be perfectly useless to the country, or rather, that if it is ever to pay at all it must be extended to Milson's Point? That is what I meant.

495. But you are not prepared to show how the whole section from Hornsby to Milson's Point will pay the working expenses and interest? Looking at the estimated cost, I do not believe it will pay all at once, but I think that with a prospect of a large additional population it will pay eventually.

496. Now, about the carrying of fruit already raised there, and the quantity of which will no doubt be increased, is that sent at present to Redfern station by the main line? A small quantity of it may be sent from Hornsby Junction.

497. Does not the greater portion of it go that way? No; it is conveyed to Sydney by horse and cart.

498. And the whole quantity produced is estimated at 50,000 cases a year? Yes; and a very small proportion of it is grown near Hornsby.

499. Is there likely to be any other produce come from there? No.

500. Has any coal been discovered there;—are there any indications of coal? No. I think there would be nothing but fruit and passenger traffic from there.

501. Let me carry you back a few years; when the first agitation for this line took place a very powerful argument was that it could be used in connection with the shipping of coal sent from Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Copper Creek, and other places; no doubt you have heard of that argument;—what is your opinion now? I have not touched on that.

502. No; but what is your opinion of that now;—do you think that coal would be carried along this railway and shipped at Port Jackson? I think there will be a certain amount; and, especially if proper wharfage is constructed at North Shore, there will be a very large traffic.

503. Having in view the cost of carriage by rail as compared with the cost of water carriage? I was coming to that, and I do not know what the railway carriage would be, as compared with the sea carriage.

504. Well, 1d. a ton per mile, and the distance will be about 100 miles? That would be 8s. a ton, and that does not seem in favour of the railway.

505. That would be almost prohibitory as against water carriage at 4s? Yes.

506. Supposing the tramway were extended to the Crow's Nest railway terminus, would that meet the convenience of the passengers using that line? There would always be the inconvenience of changing, and the delay caused thereby, and the tram would not run so fast as a train would. No doubt the tram service would be some assistance to the railway if it were extended to the Crow's Nest, but I do not think that extension will compare favourably with the extension of the railway itself to the Shore. The cost of a tramway would be very much less of course; but I think that the railway, if extended to the Shore, would eventually pay the extra interest.

507. Does the present tramway service on the North Shore meet the requirements of the residents there? Some people are better able to give an opinion on that matter than I am. I reside so far away.

508. You do not travel much by the tramway? About once in three months, not more.

W. H. M'Keown, Esq., J.P., sworn and examined;—

509. *Mr. Humphery.*] Where do you reside? At Gordon.

510. Are you an owner of land there? Yes.

511. A large area of land? About 120 acres.

W. H.
M'Keown,
Esq.

512. 15 Oct., 1889.

- W. H. M'Keown, Esq.
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512. How far from the railway line? The railway line passes through my land and takes a portion of the frontage. I gave the Government the land they required.
513. Is it anywhere near the station? A part of it is.
514. What distance from Milson's Point? I suppose $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
515. What elevation is it above sea-level? About 500 feet.
516. Do you know the proposed route for the extension of the railway from the Crow's Nest to Milson's Point, 2 miles and 72 chains? Yes.
517. Have you been over it? I have not travelled along the proposed route, but I know where it goes.
518. You know what the cost will be—over a quarter of a million? The extension will not cost that, will it?
519. The 2 miles will cost over a quarter of a million. Do you think that the traffic that will be created by this extension will pay the working expenses and interest on the cost of construction? I think the railway will not pay at all unless the extension is made. It is acknowledged on all sides that the line must go to the deep waters of Port Jackson at some time, and I consider that if its construction is delayed ten years you will have to pay double or perhaps treble the price that you will have to pay now for land. In ten years the land resumed for water frontage will be worth all the money that the extension will cost now. That is my idea.
520. Will the value of the water frontage be increased by the railway coming there? Yes.
521. Alone? Yes.
522. In what way will it be increased? For wharfage purposes, if the Government were desirous of selling or using it.
523. You think there will be goods traffic along the extension? I do not think there will be much coal traffic; but our district is one of the best districts in the Colony for clay and shale. I know beds of pipe-clay 20 feet deep, without a stain of iron in it, which would make very fine pottery, and that would create a traffic for coal, and then the goods would have to be conveyed to the water's edge.
524. Do you think a large population would settle between the Crow's Nest and Hornsby if this extension were carried out? I have reason to believe so. It is acknowledged to be one of the best suburbs that we have. If you travel along the Parramatta Road in the winter time you will see floods round the houses, but water can never lie upon the ridges on the North Shore side.
525. Do you think that the population would be well served by connecting the present tramway with the railway at the Crow's Nest? It would not serve producers at all. We are labouring under a great disadvantage now in connection with the getting of fruit to market. I can get a load of fruit from Wagga Wagga as cheaply as a load of fruit from Gordon. If I have to pay for it by the case I can get it to market as cheaply from Wagga Wagga as from Gordon.
526. Do we understand it costs as much to bring a case of fruit from Wagga Wagga to Sydney as from Gordon to Sydney? Some three or four years since I bought a lot of choice grapes at Wagga Wagga, and they cost me 9d. a gin case to get them to Sydney; and if I have to send a lot of fruit to Sydney, and hire a dray, it costs me 9d. a case, but of course not with my own teams.
527. Do you wish to make any general statement to the Committee with regard to the desirability or otherwise of constructing the proposed extension? I think that taking a business view of the matter the railway ought to be extended to the water's edge, and will never pay otherwise. Our land is very productive. If properly cultivated 5 acres will support a family.
528. You think there will be settlement up there for other than residential purposes—that people will settle there in order to cultivate the soil? The back land will be cultivated, and the ridges near the railway line will be occupied by business men. I know several business men who would build at once if they were positive about communication with Sydney being established. Several business men have come to the district, but got tired of travelling backwards and forwards along the road in wet weather in the winter-time, and I am positive we would have a large settlement of Sydney business men if we had a railway running to the water's edge.
529. *Mr. Lee.*] Have you any idea of the cost of this extension? I am not positive about the exact amount; of course it has been stated.
530. It is estimated to cost £262,000. Your remarks are of a general character, and you, like most of the other residents of North Shore, think it would be a great convenience to those residing there, and would probably lead to a large number of people settling there in course of years, do you not? Yes.
531. The only question now is, can the country afford to do this at a certain cost. Do you think the country is justified in doing it at an annual cost for interest and working expenses of £21,000? I think it would be a good speculation for the country.
532. But if it would be a good speculation for the country there must be traffic enough to give a return of £21,000 a year. Will there be that traffic? I cannot speak positively as to that. Of course the railway will make traffic.
533. Have you prepared any statistics to show what the traffic is likely to be? I have not.
534. Or what the revenue from that traffic is likely to be? I have not.
535. You simply hold an opinion of your own that in course of time the railway would pay? The railway cannot pay if it is not brought to the water's edge, and it is reasonable to suppose it will pay in time if it be extended. The money which is expended will, in a large measure, be a "dead horse" if the line be not extended to the water's edge.
536. But you are not prepared to state that if it is brought to Milson's Point it will give a return of £21,000 a year? No, I am not.
537. *Mr. Garrard.*] Did I understand that you gave the Government land through which the line passes? Yes.
538. Was that with the understanding that the line was to be constructed to the water's edge or to the Crow's Nest? To Blue's Point or Ball's Head.
539. You gave the land on the understanding that the line was to be taken either to Blue's Point or Ball's Head? Yes.
540. In other words, to the waters of Port Jackson? Yes. If I recollect rightly, at the time the land was given the survey was not made to Milson's Point.
541. When you promised your land was not the proposal that there should be a passenger station at Crow's Nest, and an export mineral station or goods station at Ball's Head? There was to have been a station at Ball's Head for coal, but we always expected the line would go to Blue's Point. But I was not influenced by that in giving my land.

542-3. That was the first project. Afterwards when the Ball's Head line was removed from consideration, was not the matter again submitted to the owners of land, and were they not asked whether if there were one station, and one only at Crow's Nest they would still be prepared to give their land? It was not submitted to me, and I did not hear of its being submitted to any others,

544. Supposing the station remained at the Crow's Nest would you use it for the purpose of bringing your produce to it? No, I would not; I could not.

545. Supposing this extension were made to Milson's Point would you use it? Every case of my fruit would come by rail.

546. How far is the nearest point of your place from the railway station? About a quarter of a mile.

547. Is that what is called Rosedale? The estate is.

548. But there is a station called Rosedale, is there not? It is not named yet, but I suppose that that will be its name.

549. If you brought your produce you would have to cart it a quarter of a mile to the railway station? Yes.

550. And from Milson's Point to the market? Yes.

551. Have you gone into a calculation so as to ascertain if it would pay you to do that double carting instead of having only one loading? I have.

552. When once you get a load on to your cart or waggon, as the case may be, an extra mile does not matter much. The cost is in the loading and unloading, is it not? Yes, but I have calculated that it would be to my advantage to send the fruit by rail.

553. You are $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Milson's Point? About $9\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

554. Do you think that people living 6 miles from Milson's Point would use the railway or put their produce in vehicles and bring it in as at present? There is not much fruit grown 6 miles from Milson's Point.

555. What is the nearest distance? The greatest quantity of fruit is grown near my place and between my place and the junction.

556. Supposing there is a fruitgrower at a distance of 2 miles from your place, do you think it would pay him to cart his fruit 2 miles to the railway station, and then from Milson's Point to the market rather than to bring it straight in? Men who have agents in Sydney will send their fruit that way. There are a few persons now near Hornsby who come in with their own loads of fruit and sell it, but the greater number send their fruit by rail.

557. That is round the other way? Yes.

558. How far towards Gordon do the people make use of the present line of railway for the carriage of their fruit? At the back part, where perhaps there are not many of them more than 2 miles from the station.

559. How far are you from Hornsby? Four miles or more.

560. But if you were within 2 miles of Hornsby would you send your fruit *via* Hornsby and Strathfield? Yes.

561. So it is only the people near your place and 2 miles beyond you who would send it by this line? They would send it.

562. It would be cheaper for them but not so profitable for the railway? Yes.

563. So if the Government provided this means for sending their fruit to market it would be so much money in their pocket, but out of the Commissioners? Persons on this side of Hornsby would send their fruit this way and the Hornsby people would probably continue to send it the other way.

564. At all events some of the traffic the Railway Commissioners are now carrying *via* Strathfield, would come a shorter distance? Very little of it.

565. You are an old resident of North Shore? I have been there between forty and fifty years.

566. A very large growth has taken place since you went there? Yes.

567. With your knowledge of the growth of the place during the last thirty, forty, or fifty years, how long do you estimate it would be before this railway if constructed at a total cost of £260,000 would pay working expenses and interest on that money? That is a question I have no right to attempt to answer. For years we could scarcely get across the water for there was only a little cockle-shell of a punt, and the progress of the north side of the harbour has been retarded through the want of proper communication, until within the last ten years.

568. To sum up then I understand you to be of opinion that if this station remains where it is the line will be practically useless, and the only means of making it pay will be to extend it to the Shore? That is my opinion.

569. Even at the large cost of £260,000? That is my settled opinion.

THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Dugald Thompson, Esq., sworn and examined:—

570. *Chairman.*] What are you? A merchant.

571. Where do you reside? At Kirribilli Point, North Shore.

572. Are you a land-holder in the district? I am to a certain extent. I have a statement here and it has been suggested to me that it would save the time of the Committee if I were to read it.

573. Very well, will you read it please?

I am induced to give evidence before this Committee because I have been a resident of North Shore for over twelve years, and I feel an interest in, and am well acquainted with, its characteristics, its resources, and its past progress; also because,

W. H.
M'Keown,
Esq.

15 Oct., 1889.

D. Thompson,
Esq.

17 Oct., 1889.

D. Thompson, Esq.
 17 Oct., 1889.

as a member of a local committee on the Railway question, I have given much consideration to the subject. It may be well to state that I have, so far as I know, neither direct nor indirect interest in any property along the route of the present line. Companies in which I have shares do own some land about Milson's Point, but my proportion of such holdings is not, I believe, at the most over £200 in value, and other properties are held in a similar way near the proposed Cremorne route, so that in giving a preference to a particular route, my opinion is at least free from any bias of pecuniary interest. In my evidence I will omit, so far as I can, the points I have noticed by published reports to have been fully pressed on your attention; and will avoid those strictly professional arguments which, whilst most important, have been, and will be, better urged by professional witnesses. Three main propositions have been put forward in connection with the railway. First.—That the line be opened with its present terminus, and that no connection whatever be made between it and Port Jackson. Second.—That an extension of the line be made to the deep waters of Port Jackson. Third.—That the railway be not extended, but that the tram line be extended to the railway. It is hardly necessary to refer to the first proposition, it being difficult to believe that it could be seriously proposed to leave a costly railway line with its terminus in an unpopulated locality, and a serious break between it and the traffic which it was meant to serve, and from which its revenue must be derived. If it is seriously urged, then the reasons in favour of the second proposition, and against the third, can be applied with greater strength against such a proposal. The second proposition meets, I undertake to say, with the almost unanimous approval of the residents of the Shore, any difference of opinion being simply one of route as affecting particular interests. Numerous routes have been considered, but owing to engineering difficulties, or other objections, only two—Cremorne and Milson's Point—have received any strong support. I will not repeat the arguments so fully used against the Cremorne route, of its circuitous course, which would certainly make travellers to the city leave the trains miles before reaching Cremorne, nor of the extra time of the journey, which extra time—itsself a loss—would have to be paid for, thus entailing a further loss to travellers; nor of the higher cost of the line, but would point out that if those who will use the North Shore line had to construct and run it (and it is from this point of view that Governments can most safely decide the various considerations in connection with the construction of railways) it would actually pay them, instead of spending the larger sum on the Cremorne route, to expend, in round numbers, £428,000 on the Milson's Point route over and above whatever the Cremorne route might cost. This is shown thus:—Taking the extra cost to passengers at 2d. each (1½ miles extra by land, and ¾ of a mile by water could scarcely cost less), and taking the passengers as 3,000 in and 3,000 out daily, to which numbers they should grow in a few years if the line is to be a thorough success, the extra expense would be £50 per day, which for, say 300 days in the year, is £15,000, and this at 3½ per cent. would yield interest on a capital expenditure of over £428,000. Thus the extra time and cost as compared with the Milson's Point route would not allow of as large a passenger traffic; but if the traffic did expand, the more it expanded, the greater would be the constant loss as compared with a line to Milson's Point. The third proposition—the extension of the present tramway to the railway, can claim but one advantage, viz.:—a lesser cost; but this lesser cost is only an advantage if the provision it gives is equal to the requirements of the service; and if, with such a connection with the water, the railway will be more profitable than it would be were the railway line itself continued to Milson's Point. Taking the figures as given, the saving by not extending the railway would be (cost of resumption included) £262,000. From this has to be deducted the cost of extension of the tram line said to be £30,000, and the resale value of the resumed land over the tunnel, say £30,000, thus making the extra cost of extending the railway over that of extending the tramway, £202,000. The interest on this at 3½ per cent. per annum would amount to £7,070. From this there ought to be taken the difference in the annual cost of working the rail and the tram extensions, the average annual cost of railway working being only about £750 per mile, whilst the working of the Milson's Point Cable Tramway has cost over £4,000 per mile per year. But, giving the tram service the advantage of this difference, it may be calculated that £7,070 is the yearly charge on the railway to be made good. Now, estimating the sum paid per passenger for each single journey as 4d. (which I think, even allowing for season-tickets, must be considered a low average) it will be found the receipts from 707 resident passengers going in and out once on 300 days in the year will realise the sum of £7,070. Again, estimating that every household settled along the line, the members of which gain their livelihood in the city, furnishes two travellers in and out per day (and this seems also a low estimate as several members of a household may be employed in the city, and some who are not employed there, have to visit it frequently, while each household has its visitors from elsewhere) then the amount in question will be furnished by an additional settlement, over all stations, of some 350 households. It seems to me impossible to come to any other conclusion than that: not only 350 households, but a very much larger number, would settle in the new suburbs, if the speed and convenience of a through railway were provided, in excess of what would settle there under the inconvenience of the slow, broken, and troublesome journeys furnished by the extension of the tram line. Indeed it seems to me that a tram connection must inevitably prevent the growth of any large railway traffic. The objections to it are, (1) The loss of time—a most important matter to those travelling daily. The present tram line (1½ miles) is travelled in about 18 minutes. A further 1¼ mile would bring the time up to about 33 minutes. Allowing for extra detentions, and for transfer, the tram would require to leave Milson's Point 35 to 40 minutes before the train started. Taking the time of the trains on the Parramatta line (stopping at every station) it will be found that 9 miles—with 13 stoppages—are covered in 36 minutes, so that by the time the passengers by the tram were in their train, a train starting from Milson's Point would be at least 9 miles out, and, allowing for fewer stoppages, would probably be a few miles further, or close to the junction of the Northern Railway. A second objection would be the great inconvenience of several transfers, accompanied as one of them would be by a rush for seats on the tram cars. A third objection, the difficulties on the trams with luggage; and the impossibility of the conveyance of goods. A fourth objection, the difficulty (experienced on all the tram lines) of providing season-tickets, or of giving a reduction to second-class passengers. A fifth objection, and a very serious one, is that the system would be weakest where it should be strongest, viz.: at that part which would get almost the whole of the traffic. Thus instead of the main artery being a strong railway service, with tram lines as minor feeding branches, the main artery would be a weak tram system, with a powerful railway as a feeder. For these reasons, the tram connection would be a constant drag on the very traffic it was meant to aid in producing, on which traffic, and its unimpeded increase, the results from the railway entirely depend. It may be said that the extension of the tramway will provide for present wants, and will not prevent the future extension of the railway. I venture to say, however, that in connection with lines in city and suburban areas there should be provision, rather than mere provision. If provision is left till the population grows to pay for it, then it will usually, in such valuable areas never come, because the increased value of land, and the erection of numerous and expensive buildings, make railway extension too costly to pay, whereas if done earlier, whilst there might be a loss at first, the increased population will soon not only make the line a paying one, but greatly increase the value of the land resumed. The mistake in not recognising this when the railway terminus was fixed at Redfern is acknowledged now; and I feel confident that the same causes which have prevented the extension of the City Railway will effectually prevent the extension of the North Shore Railway if it is not accomplished at once. No doubt the great question to decide is, will the line be a paying one? If it has to depend on a tramway connection with Milson's Point I doubt if it will pay in twenty years, or ever. If, on the other hand, the railway be extended to Milson's Point, I believe it will cover expenses in two to three years from date of opening; and in twenty years time will be one of the best paying railway properties in N. S. Wales. These opinions must, of course, be largely based on inference, but such inference is supported by the facts that all suburban railway extensions about Sydney have paid within a reasonable time after opening; that not only in good positions, but even in bad positions, suburbs have leaped into existence when speedy and comfortable transit has been provided, and that the district the North Shore railway taps is, in altitude, in beauty of aspect, in fertility of soil, in opportunity for good drainage, and in fact, in all the elements constituting a superior suburban area, certainly unsurpassed. In the calculations as to its payability, I consider it as essentially a suburban passenger line. For years the goods traffic, though gradually increasing, will not likely be large. There will be some coal for use in the manufactories and dwellings between St. Leonards and the Northern Line. There will be the products of the district (grown and manufactured) to be conveyed towards Sydney, and towards the north; and there will be supplies of all descriptions for the use of the suburban settlements. Gradually, however, as the Shore municipalities merge into a city, manufacture will increase, and commercial and shipping interests will come into existence, when, no doubt an exceedingly large goods traffic will gradually develop. I take no credit in my calculations for these developments, wishing to treat the line as its probable worst, and then to show that it will pay well in a reasonable time. Taking the total cost as £450,000 (an amount exceeding the estimate) the annual interest on this at 3½ per cent. will be £15,750. Allowing the yearly working expenses, including everything, to be £1,000 per mile (the average for the Colony is about £750) the annual cost will be less than £29,000. Call this £30,000, and it will mean that at 4d. each journey, 3,000 travellers in and out on 300 days per year will give that return in fares alone. This, at two travellers per household, will mean 1,500 households. Even without calculating those there now who travel in to and out from the city daily, it may surely be safely concluded that over all the stations on the line there will very soon be such an expansion

expansion, especially when it is remembered that there are great numbers of blocks already purchased on which the owners are ready to build when really good communication is established; and that, in addition to transfers from other suburbs, the natural increase of Sydney, representing as it does some 3,000 households per annum, should yield large additions to such excellent suburbs. By the railway returns for 1887 I observe that the inward and outward traffic realised at Petersham Station, £32,500; at Summer Hill and Croydon together, £34,000; at Croydon and Ashfield, £32,500; so that all necessary to support the North Shore Railway is, along its whole length, a population equal to Petersham or to Summer Hill and Croydon, or to Croydon and Ashfield. Can it be doubted such will quickly be realized? In the foregoing estimates nothing is credited for inter-station traffic, for the travelling of those now resident, for the carriage of goods, for holiday excursions; nor for the great crowds which would be drawn to the places of amusement which would be established along this line, as along other railway lines. The Sunday traffic has also been altogether omitted. All these items would swell the total receipts very considerably, but they are all dependent on a close and complete connection with the large centres of population, which connection only a railway to Milson's Point could give. The Illawarra line, as the most recent suburban one, and in many respects the most analogous to the North Shore line, fully supports my conclusions. Taking a distance on it equal to the North Shore line, when extended to Milson's Point, viz., to Como (13 miles), I find that two years after opening, or in 1886, this distance returned £43,500, which sum per annum would make the North Shore railway pay handsomely. In 1886 the Illawarra line—then open 24 miles to Waterfall—returned 3·18 per cent. interest on capital, showing that the 13 miles nearest the city must have returned a percentage considerably in excess of the cost of the money invested. I am confident that were it possible for capitalists to obtain such a line of railway, with its future possibilities, for £450,000, they would jump at the chance; and I am confident also that were private investors building the line they would not hesitate in extending to a traffic centre, at even a cost far exceeding the estimate of the extension to Milson's Point. An illustration of this is furnished in what is being done at Long Bay, where, in proportion to the land available, capitalists are expending a much larger sum than the North Shore railway extension will cost, in building a bridge and a tramway, and in other improvements, without a house on their ground, satisfied of reaping the benefit of the expenditure eventually. I would call special attention to the fact that in the considerations expressed I have not attempted to credit the Milson's Point line with any of the considerable traffic which it certainly would obtain from the main line, as this traffic is now carried on the line to Homebush. Nor has credit been taken for the increased value which will be given to the wharf property now owned by the Government at Milson's Point, nor for the gradually and largely increasing value of the wharf frontages embraced in the resumptions. Nor has the most important element of the increased value given by a through railway to the Government lands along the line been estimated, I have felt that, whilst all these and other advantages seemed to render the extension to Milson's Point a necessity, so favourable are the prospects of the line that it could afford to be judged stripped of every other advantage, except its suitability for the settlement of a large suburban population.

D.
Thompson,
Esq.
17 Oct., 1889.

Michael M'Mahon, Esq., sworn and examined:—

574. *Chairman.*] You reside at Lavender Bay, St. Leonards? Yes.

575. You are a large landholder at North Shore? I own some land there.

576. Do you know the line from Hornsby to the Crow's Nest? Yes.

577. You have got land along that line, have you not—in that locality? As a matter of fact I sold nearly all the land I had along the line some years even before the line was started. I have some few pieces, but a very small quantity.

578. You know this inquiry is as to the extension of the line from the Crow's Nest to Milson's Point; will you make your statement in support of or against that to the Committee? I have not come prepared with any figures, but as an old resident of the district I think it would be a positive calamity if the railway were stopped at the Crow's Nest, for the reason that, as I understand, it is intended if it should stop there to bring the tramway within about a quarter of a mile of the railway, and let the tramway do all the passenger traffic, no provision being made whatever for goods traffic. If that is the intention, I think it would be a fatal mistake, and looking at the matter just as if I were engaged in it as a private speculation, I should say that at almost any cost the railway should be extended to the deep waters of the harbour somewhere about where it has been decided already, Milson's Point. If I might be permitted to say so I think that before a bridge is built the railway might be met by two large steam-punts similar to what we know are used between Brooklyn and New York, so as to connect the city with the North Shore at some point such as Dawes' Battery, where a large dock might be constructed into which the punts might run. If that were done the country might be saved the expense of a bridge for many years to come, and the service would be complete. I might state to the Committee that during the tenure of office by the Ministry of which I think Mr. Lackey was Minister for Works, money was voted for those steam-punts, but a gentleman from Balmain, named Hutchinson, moved a resolution in the House for the rescission of that vote, and in a thin House one night, to our surprise at North Shore, that vote was carried. I consider that North Shore has lost five years of its growth through that very circumstance. We are at present served by a private ferry company, whose boats run very well indeed, but the ferry company cannot possibly be expected to meet the traffic in view of the fact that a bridge or steam-punts will be constructed at no very distant date. If the railway were extended, even at a very great cost, to Milson's Point, and if steam-punts were tacked on to it, the service would be complete for many years to come. Doubtless a bridge or tunnel would ultimately have to be built, but steam-punts would, I think, do good service for many years to come. The little punt now running at the Spit is an unqualified success. The same arrangement, only on an extended scale, is exactly what I think would suffice for the North Shore. Anyone taking the trouble to go and see the punt at the Spit would find that it takes a minute and a half or two minutes to cross from side to side.

579. *Mr. Garrard.*] But you would not stretch a rope across Port Jackson the same as you have got at the Spit? I think that could be done. I am not sufficient of an engineer to know, but if you had the punts worked by very powerful steam-power I do not suppose that you would want a rope. They could run into a dock on each side. The distance from Milson's Point to Dawes' Point is very short. As an old resident of the North Shore, watching its progress for the last twenty years, I take it that if the railway is not extended to Milson's Point, or some other point in that neighbourhood, it will be a very great calamity.

580. *Chairman.*] And if it is extended, what about the country;—have you entered into any calculations? With all due respect, if we were to examine critically the cost of the railways in the early period of the Colony's history—for instance the Parramatta ———

581. This is a new state of things. They did not examine them in the past as this Committee does now, or probably you would not have so many miles of railway at the present time. What I want to ask you is, if you have given any consideration to the financial position of this line? I have not. I am here more to speak of the matter in a general way, as an old resident of the place.

582. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you think the line from Hornsby to the Crow's Nest will pay? I believe it will be one of the best paying lines in the suburbs of Sydney.

M. M'Mahon,
Esq.
17 Oct., 1889.

- M. M'Mahon, Esq.
17 Oct., 1889.
583. If it stops at the Crow's Nest? No, I don't believe it will. I think it will be a failure.
584. Were you not, with other residents, very urgent in requesting that the railway should be made from Hornsby to the Crow's Nest? As one of the railway committee who agitated pretty vigorously for the railway, I know that the original plan showed that the railway would be extended to Blue's Point. It was that line we agitated for, and succeeded in getting the Government to decide upon. Then the goods line was to go to Ball's Head, and the passenger line to Blue's Point. A change took place in the survey later on, and it was decided to construct the railway only to Crow's Nest. But the railway committee's efforts were put forth for the purpose of getting the line continued to the deep waters of the harbour at both points—Ball's Head and Blue's Point—and that was the line actually adopted.
585. Knowing that the railway could not possibly pay if brought only to the Crow's Nest, why did not you and others protest against its being constructed? I never expected the Government would stop the line there.
586. You thought that if you could get the Government committed to the carrying out of the railway to that point, the railway must come on? I knew it must come to the deep waters of Port Jackson, and that the only question was as to what place it should come to.
587. Do you look upon it as a suburban line or as part of the main line to the north? I look upon it both as a suburban line and as a portion of the northern line. I think that from Sydney to Hornsby is 9 miles shorter by this line than *via* Homebush, and doubtless passengers would leave the train at Hornsby and come on *via* North Shore, and thus avoid passing along that portion of the main line where the traffic is so much congested.
588. You know the estimated amount of the working expenses of this proposed extension and the interest on its cost of construction is nearly £21,000 a year. How long do you expect it will take before that would be recouped? We can scarcely imagine what will be the increase in the population along the line as soon as it is opened. I notice that Dr. Ashburton Thompson has reported to you that the district is very elevated, most healthy, and in every way suitable for a large population. I believe that on sanitary grounds alone the Government should encourage the settlement of people over there as early as possible, and that of course can only be done by the railway being completed.
589. Do you think any coal will ever be brought by that line? I think very little.
590. Was it ever urged as one of the planks in the platform of the railway committee over there that it would be the best place for the shipment of coal? Yes, and hence Ball's Head was decided upon.
591. That plank has broken down completely, has it not? I think it has pretty well.
592. Is it likely this plank of suburban traffic will break down in as easy a manner? No, I think not. That is looking very healthy.
593. Then I understand you consider it mainly in the light of a suburban line? And as a help of course to the Great Northern line.
594. Only so far as North Shore is concerned? It would not help passengers coming to the city, would it? I am pretty sure a great number of persons would get into the train at North Shore for Newcastle.
595. If you were coming from Queensland overland to Sydney do you think you would tranship at Hornsby, come by this branch line to Milson's Point, then get into a steamer, and afterwards into a cab in order to get to the city;—would you do it? I do not know that I would unless the service were complete—unless the steam-punts were running across the harbour.
596. The only through passengers would be those whose destination was North Shore? I think a very large proportion of pleasure seekers—persons out for a day's pleasure—would go that way, and they are becoming very numerous.
597. I am speaking of through passengers? Doubtless a great proportion of through passengers would come right on to Sydney.
598. Don't you think their wants would be met by having a tramway from the present terminus to the Crow's Nest? There is a large proportion of goods traffic along the line—oranges and other fruit of every kind.
599. Do you think it is at all likely that fruit would be brought down that line to be transferred into carts at Milson's Point and taken over the water by ferry? I have it from the fruit growers themselves, Mr. M'Keown and others, that the fruit growers would send it through that way, and it is expected that by-and-by a fruit market will be opened at North Shore.

William Thomas Muston, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

- W. T. Muston, Esq.
17 Oct., 1889.
600. *Chairman.*] Do you live at North Shore? I do.
601. How long have you been a resident there? Nearly forty years.
602. Are you a land owner? I am.
603. Where is your property situated? Between Milson's Point and Hornsby. I have interest right along.
604. You know the line is constructed now from Hornsby to the Crow's Nest? I do.
605. The present inquiry is touching the advisableness of extending the line to Milson's Point. You have been good enough to offer to give evidence to the Committee, and therefore you will tell us what you can about that? Professionally I can say nothing. I can only give my opinion as to the remunerativeness of the line. Having a very large experience on the North Shore, that is what I wish to do.
606. We may as well come to the figures at once. You know the line as it stands now will have cost £180,000? Yes.
607. The cost of the extension will be £262,000, making in round numbers £442,000. Will you tell the Committee how that line is going to be remunerative; you say you have come here to tell us that? Well, in the first place, I believe that the line by being extended to Milson's Point will create a residential city in the Lane Cove and Willoughby districts. I think you will find by reference to the plan that within some four miles of Milson's Point you attain an elevation of about 400 feet, and I should say about 8 or 9 miles from that point, you get an elevation of 600 feet—an elevation which cannot be reached upon any of the existing suburban lines, nor except by travelling a long distance outside the suburban area. There is already a settlement along the line. At the present time there are coaches running there, and there is no doubt that in the first place a large suburban city would be created by this extension, which would eventually

eventually make this line one of the best paying lines in the possession of the Government. In addition to that there is in Lane Cove itself a large fruit-growing industry even now. Within possibly a mile or a mile and a half of the railway line the land has been sold with a view to sub-division, but on the back blocks away on the Stony Creek Road and in that direction there would still be orchards. Therefore in addition to passenger traffic there would be a certain amount of fruit traffic. There is an immense quantity of timber in the Lane Cove district which would be brought to Sydney. There are gullies from 200 to 400 feet deep, in which the timber has never been interfered with, and in which you find many trees 10 feet in diameter. On account of difficulty in getting the timber to Sydney in olden times the people took it down by the Lane Cove River from the heads of the gullies, but afterwards finding the process too expensive they let it alone. However, an extension of the railway to Milson's Point would give them facilities for getting the timber to market, and would result in hundreds of thousands of tons of timber being brought out of the gullies by means of temporary wire tramways, and a very good trade would be developed between Peat's Ferry and St. Leonards. Then, again, the Government have some 16,000 acres of land up there, which if owned by any private syndicate would induce them to make the railway. Fruit growers who have sold out at Lane Cove, or at least a majority of them, have simply moved onward to Gosford, and are establishing orchards there. Nurseries are also being established there. Pearce Brothers have established a nursery there, and other people are about to do the same thing. Mr. Bartlett, of Tresseder and Bartlett, is about to establish a large seed nursery there.

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608. But the North Shore railway could not affect the industries at Gosford? It would make Gosford a suburb of Sydney, and it would practically make Newcastle a suburb of Sydney. The Gosford people have a great interest in this extension. The fruit-growing industry has moved forward to Gosford, which is a very rich district. The land is magnificent. Near Gosford there is also a vast quantity of timber which would come to Sydney. I venture to say that if the railway were extended to Milson's Point, at least twenty persons would travel to Newcastle in the place of one person travelling now. We have excursions to Goulburn and other places on the Southern line, and the same sort of thing would happen on the Northern.

609. Speaking approximately, what would you say the annual income from this railway, from all sources, would be within the next four years, supposing it were built now? That could merely be a guess. I don't think it would be possible for any man to name a sum.

610. Well, let us hear your guess. The whole thing is a guess as to settlement of people up at Gosford, and you say that where one goes now there will be twenty. That can only be a guess? It is a pretty shrewd guess, and I take it that this railway is of vital interest to all the Northern districts, even as far as the borders of Queensland.

611. Just give us a guess of what approximately the railway would pay in about three or four years from the date of construction? I should reckon that three or four years from the date of construction it ought to pay. I am certain that within four years from the date of construction it will more than pay its working expenses and interest.

612. What do you say that would be;—I want to see if you have given the matter financially any consideration at all? I have.

613. Now, what are the working expenses and interest? I do not know what the working expenses are.

614. And yet you say it will pay more than that in four years? I should think it would.

615. And you do not know what they are? I cannot tell what they are. I know what the line should do judging by the results obtained from other lines. I can only judge by comparison. I can remember the first line being opened. I can remember the Ashfield and Burwood line, and I know what those places were like when the line was opened. I would point out that North Shore at present contains something like 25,000 inhabitants, and thus the construction of this railway would give the people of the north a market for the disposal of certain goods used by those 25,000 people.

616. Do you think it is reasonable to expect that within the next four years the line would earn £21,000 a year? I am certain it would earn £25,000 the first year it ran. I may give you an instance of how traffic grows. I, myself, owned a lot of land in the district, and at an expense of something like £7,000 or £8,000, I put on a line of coaches to run to it some seven years ago. At first the coaches brought in about 10s. a week. After a year or two the amount increased to £20, and now it is over £40 a week.

617. Then it is against your interest to have this railway constructed? I did not put the coaches on because I wanted them. The moment their earnings reach £20 a week I turn them over to the man who ran the mail. I ran them on a bush track to North Sydney, and the road has had thousands of pounds spent upon it, because of the running of the coaches, and a wonderful effect has been produced in the district. That will show you what communication will do.

Myles M'Rae, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

618. *Chairman.*] You are Member for the Electoral district of Morpeth? Yes.

619. You have volunteered to give evidence in reference to this railway; will you tell the Committee what you know about it? I advocate the extension of the railway to the deep waters of Port Jackson, on behalf of the agriculturists of the whole of the Northern district, the constituency that I represent being an agricultural constituency, and I do so, because I believe that the use of this railway would result in a saving to the producers of the North to the extent of something like 7s. or 8s. per ton so far as regards tonnage to North Shore. Produce going to Darling Harbour and the Market Wharf would be subjected to 10 or 12 miles extra trackage, and then there is the cost of cartage from the wharves to North Shore, which is 7s. 6d. per ton. If the railway were extended from the Crow's Nest to Milson's Point, the farmers could send their produce direct, and they would save the 10 or 12 miles extra trackage.

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620. You mean the farmers would send the produce required for the North Shore? Yes, and also produce required for different parts of the harbour. The North Shore is growing very rapidly, and the consumption is increasing every year. Besides, I consider that the loop-line from Pearce's Corner to the Crow's Nest will prove unremunerative to the State, unless the extension be made to the deep waters of Port Jackson. If the railway be carried to Milson's Point the development from a suburban point of view, will, I believe, be five or ten times greater. An objection to living at North Shore at the present time, is that passengers would have to go down to the wharf, cross Port Jackson, and then get into the tram, and then trans-ship into the railway. If the railway were extended to the deep waters of Port Jackson, loss of time to a large extent would be obviated, and the development of the district would be much greater.

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As far as the character of the country between Milson's Point and Hornsby is concerned, I do not think that there is any other part of the metropolitan district which offers such inducements for settlement. The soil is exceptionally good; it is different from other parts of the metropolitan district, where the soil is very poor; and then the country is undulating and elevated, the elevation being from 200 to 700 feet. In fact you get mountain air there. Making a comparison between that country and the Illawarra district, I would point out that the development that has taken place along the Illawarra line of railway has been something marvellous. That railway has, in fact, paid interest on the cost of construction almost from the start. The country between Milson's Point and Hornsby is far superior to anything on the Illawarra line, and I am confident that the development will be much greater in consequence. I think it would be economy on the part of the Government to extend the railway now that the land can be resumed at a reasonable price. The apathy displayed by previous Governments in connection with the proposal to extend the railway from Redfern into the city has made it almost impossible to extend that railway now, and by extending the North Shore railway to Milson's Point now we shall avoid the great mistake that previous Governments have made in not extending the railway from Redfern to the Circular Quay when land could have been resumed for one-fourth of the money it would cost now.

621. Have you considered the financial aspect of this line of railway? Yes; I am in favour of the extension.

622. We don't want to know what you are in favour of, but we want you to give reasons why the railway should be constructed? So much public money has been spent on the line between Hornsby and the Crow's Nest, which I believe will not prove productive to the general taxpayers until the railway is extended to Milson's Point. That will, in my opinion, make it highly reproductive.

623. Do you know what the cost is? Yes.

624. The whole line nearly half a million; it would take a lot of traffic to earn that, and we are told there is no reason to hope for goods traffic? Well, I am almost sure that the goods traffic from the north would be increased rapidly to a large extent were the railway extended to Milson's Point.

625. Do you think goods would come down to Milson's Point for delivery in Sydney? I think so. There will be a saving of 10 or 12 miles extra trainage that they would be submitted to if sent to Darling Harbour. The agriculturists are not in a very prosperous condition, and any saving would be very acceptable to them—even 12 miles of trainage. I know also that by having the railway extended to Milson's Point an additional outlet would be given to farmers. The saving of the cost of the extra trainage and of the cartage to North Shore would be a big item to agriculturists who would supply that district. But, independently of the goods traffic, I am confident that if the railway were extended to the deep waters of Port Jackson the development of this district would surprise most people. It would be very rapid. I have been associated with that district for the last nine or ten years, and in my opinion it is the best district for suburban settlement within the metropolitan area. There is no country equal to it.

626. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you know the amount of produce brought down from the northern districts to Darling Harbour at the present time, either in value or in tonnage, because you speak of this line as opening up a new field for the produce of the northern districts? That trade has only recently been opened up. The connecting link has only recently been completed by bridging the Hawkesbury, and the trade is increasing. Many people are not aware that the charges by rail are on a par with those made by the steamers. I believe the rate by rail is as low as it is by steamer, and a great number of farmers are now sending their produce by rail to Darling Harbour. The tonnage is increasing every day.

627. You do not know the tonnage or value? I cannot give the tonnage.

628. Do you know the tonnage or value of produce sent from the Hunter River to Sydney? The railway has only been opened a few months.

629. Independently of the railway? I believe that the tonnage shipped at Morpeth has, up to within a few years, been equal to the tonnage shipped at Newcastle.

630. Ordinary produce, excluding coal? Yes. The tonnage from the Valley of the Hunter amounts to hundreds of thousands of tons—it is something enormous.

631. I suppose you look upon this line more as a suburban line than as forming part of a through line? Yes; but as a through line as well.

632. Principally as a suburban line? I believe that the development that will take place if the railway be extended to Milson's Point will be greater than that which took place on the Illawarra line.

633. You have come to the conclusion that the increase of population at North Shore would be greater than it was on the Illawarra line if suburban communication were given? I thoroughly believe that.

634. We have it in evidence that it would take about £21,000 per annum to pay working expenses and interest on the construction of this line; how long do you think it reasonable to expect it would be before that amount would be earned if this line were constructed? I believe within a few years that amount would be realized.

635. Do you think that the present line constructed to the Crow's Nest could be utilised by extending the present tramway to it instead of incurring this expense of £262,000? There is the objection people would have to trans-shipping. People who live in suburbs do not like to trans-ship so often, and it would make the line unpopular.

636. But at present all the suburban passengers have to trans-ship into trams which bring them into town, do they not? Yes; but they object. The residents of the Western and Illawarra suburbs are to a man in favour of the city extension on that very ground. There is the loss of time and extra charges.

637. While they object, still they suffer? Yes.

638. *Chairman.*] And the suburbs grow? Yes; the suburbs grow. If this railway were mine, I would spend half a million. The Government have 15,000 or 16,000 acres of land in the district, and I believe that the Government would be recouped to the extent of the outlay by the advanced price they would get for their land if the railway were extended to Milson's Point. It would not cost the Government 1s.

639. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you think there would be a large increase if this extension were made? I am confident there would be. I know a great number of people bought land over there, and intend to build.

640. I am speaking of Crown lands; has not all the best been sold within easy distance of this line? The Government have a large quantity.

641. Which would be largely increased in value if this line were extended to Milson's Point? I believe that the increase would amount to the total cost of the extension; that the Government would get as much as would recoup them the whole of the expenditure. If a private company had the railway, and if I were connected with it, the first thing that would be done would be to extend the railway to Milson's Point before I sold any land at all.

642.

642. You would consider it a great blunder to have made the railway to the Crow's Nest unless it is to come farther on? There is no doubt about it.
643. It should not have been made? No, unless it be extended to the deep waters of Port Jackson, and the expenditure will, to a large extent, be a "white elephant" till the extension is made.
644. Do you know if it was urged by those in favour of the construction of the railway that we might expect a large amount of mineral traffic? I don't recollect that, but there is no doubt that a good deal of coal would be brought to the North Shore for consumption there.
645. Is it at all likely that coal will be brought to the North Shore from the Newcastle district; has not the bottom been knocked out of that thing a long time ago? They would not bring it from Newcastle.
646. Well, where from? There is coal at the Hawkesbury.
647. Where? I believe some seams have been discovered on the other side of the Hawkesbury.
648. Do you not think that if any coal were found at the Hawkesbury it would be shipped at Newcastle? No doubt; but I mean for local consumption. I thoroughly believe that this extension would prove highly remunerative to the country, and would develop the best suburban district within the metropolitan area.
649. If your contention is correct there would be a large amount of produce coming down to the North Shore if this line were constructed; would that not rob the line between Hornsby and Sydney of that same traffic? There is no doubt it would.
650. Therefore it would be a convenience and profit to the agricultural producer, but would take money out of the pockets of the Railway Commissioners? I do not see that it would, because the State has already constructed 11 miles of railway which will be useless without this extension. I am in favour of extending the railway to Milson's Point in order to make it reproductive.
651. *Mr. Lee.*] Are you pretty well acquainted with North Shore? Yes.
652. You are aware that the bulk of the population lies to the east of the proposed railway extension? Yes.
653. Do you know the route of the proposed extension? Yes.
654. Have you ever followed the course of the extension? Yes.
655. You are aware then that it runs along the foreshores for some considerable distance, then passes under ground, then comes out near the Berry Estate, then tunnels, and then climbs to the Crow's Nest? Yes.
656. Being acquainted with that route it must be clear to your mind that no amount of heavy traffic could be got out of that depth to serve the North Shore. If your contention is a sound one—that the produce of Morpeth and that locality, not the produce for the city of Sydney but what might be required for the North Shore—would be brought down by that railway, would it not be transhipped at the present terminus at the Crow's Nest—would it not be taken to the drays and conveyed to the various portions of North Shore from that point, and not from Milson's Point? A certain proportion would, but if the railway were extended to Milson's Point it would enable a greater tonnage to be distributed to the different water frontages all round the harbour and even up the Parramatta River, and 10 or 12 miles of trainage would be saved.
657. I am speaking of the North Shore? The same difficulty exists at Darling Harbour; they have got to cart there; but if the railway were extended to Milson's Point it would enable farmers to supply persons who have water frontages, and there are thousands of miles of water frontages in the city, and so they would have that patronage as well as the consumption at North Shore.
658. I am speaking more particularly as to the settlement of North Shore. Assuming, for argument sake, that produce would come down that line, I want to know would it not be transhipped on to the drays at the Crow's Nest station rather than at Milson's Point station, as in the first instance it would be conveyed nearly all down hill, whereas in the latter case it would have to be drawn up hill to the local settlement? The settlement at the present time is on the eastern side. The denser portion of the settlement abuts on the water frontage, and the extension of the railway to Milson's Point would give the agriculturists the advantage of communication by water as well as by land, whereas if the railway stops at the Crow's Nest they will only have land communication. By extending the railway to Milson's Point you give them both services. This is of great advantage to the agriculturists. That is the difference.
659. Have you gone into any figures as to the probable results from this line? I believe the results will be highly satisfactory.
660. Ah, yes; but have you anything more definite than that to lay before us? I have in my mind's eye the development which has taken place during the last twenty years within the metropolitan district, and I am confident that the development between Milson's Point and Hornsby will be greater than that which has taken place in any other suburban district, on account of the superior character of the country, the elevation, and the natural drainage that exists there.
661. You mentioned just now that the western and Illawarra suburbs had increased very rapidly since the railway was extended? Yes.
662. Is it not a fact that tram communication has been extended to some of those suburbs—to Marrickville, for instance? Yes; the tramway has been extended there, but that lessens the proceeds of the railway.
663. But is it not a fact that it has been a very important agent in the development of those districts? There is no doubt about it. Four years ago, on the Illawarra Railway, between Cook's River and George's River, there were only a few houses, but now you can count them by the thousand. Although that is very good country it is not equal to the Lane Cove Road district.
664. You have no tabulated statement or any data to lay before the Committee as to the probable returns of this line; what you have already stated is simply your own opinion, based on experience? Yes.
665. *Mr. Dowd.*] You have referred to agricultural produce, and it is a fact, I believe, that you have had very large transactions? Yes; I have been the largest hay-seller in the Australian colonies for a number of years.
666. You have a very considerable knowledge of the northern districts, have you not? Yes.
667. Can you see any reason why the whole of the northern traffic, including timber, hay, wool, and coal, should not come down to the deep waters of Port Jackson, and why that should not be the terminus of the Great Northern line? I do not.
668. Do you think that would be the proper place for the terminus of the Great Northern line? As a matter of fact I advocated the extension of the Great Northern line to Port Jackson in preference to the loop-line between Hornsby and Homebush. I thought that was an unnecessary expenditure.
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669. Then you considered that this would be the proper terminus of the Great Northern line on account, I presume, of the shorter distance to the deep waters of Port Jackson? Yes.
670. Supposing that were the terminus of the Great Northern line, do you think the railway policy of the country would suffer? No, I think it would be benefited.
671. Do you not think it would be of very considerable advantage in relieving the Redfern terminus from the northern traffic? A great advantage.
672. And instead of this line being only a suburban line for passengers, it would be a portion of the main line;—the Great Northern line? There is no doubt about it.
673. And you consider that would certainly be the best way of dealing with the matter? Yes.
674. *Mr. Humphery.*] Were you referring to passenger traffic or to produce traffic? Passenger and goods traffic—general traffic.
675. Do you think a depôt at Milson's Point or at Blue's Point would be more convenient for the distribution of the produce of the country than at Darling Harbour? Yes, I think so, because Redfern has to contend with the vast traffic of the north, south, and west, and the Illawarra Railway, and the congestion there is very much already, in fact the congestion is too much; and I think that if the railway were extended to Milson's Point it would relieve the congestion that exists at Darling Harbour at the present time.
676. That is a matter of convenience to the Railway Commissioners, but I am speaking of the public. Would it be more convenient to the public if the depôt were at Milson's Point instead of at Darling Harbour? Yes; I think it would benefit the public in many ways, because it would relieve Darling Harbour of some of the enormous traffic that it has to contend with at the present time, and which is increasing every year, and it would prove a benefit to the producers inasmuch as they would have two markets and they would save the cartage, which is a considerable item, between Darling Harbour and North Shore, and also the extra trainage.
677. How would produce received at Blue's Point be distributed in this part of the harbour? By steamers; water carriage is better than land carriage.
678. Will it be necessary to have a steamer to bring it to this side and then distribute it by means of carts in the same way that produce is now distributed from the various wharfs at Darling Harbour? Yes, so far as the distribution would refer to this side of the harbour.
679. As a matter of fact do you believe that this extension, if constructed, will be purely for suburban traffic—suburban passenger traffic chiefly? No; I advocate this extension in the interest of the agriculturists of the north as well as in the interest of persons who live along the line.
680. You think there will be considerable earnings from goods traffic? Yes, but the earnings from the passenger traffic will be something prolific. To give you an idea I may state that persons have bought land between Milson's Point and Hornsby at the rate of £200, £300, and £400 an acre in anticipation of proper facilities being given to enable people to live there. Any person who has travelled there can have only one impression as to the grandeur and the suitability of the district for residential purposes generally. I believe that if the railway be extended to Milson's Point it will in five years give a return of 10 per cent. on the expenditure, if the population of the country continues to increase at the present rate. I do not know of any place where an expenditure would be so reproductive as it would be between the Crow's Nest and Milson's Point. The Government have expended a large sum of money in constructing the loop line as far as the Crow's Nest, and if they left it there settlement would be prevented. If the extension is delayed it will simply mean that the State will have to pay double or treble or four times as much for resumptions, and I consider that the country is favoured now by the Berry Estate being locked up, for if that were not locked up but were built upon the Government would have to pay four times as much for resumptions at the present time as they will have to pay. The present is a very favourable opportunity for resuming the land at a low rate, on account of so much land being locked up there.
681. Do you consider the present extension of the tramway to the Crow's Nest to meet the railway, if a through service were established from Milson's Point to the railway, would serve the requirements of those living beyond? No, nothing in comparison with the extension of the railway.
682. Not in comparison, but do you think it would promote settlement so that the service would be profitable? Not to one-tenth the extent that it would if the railway were extended to Milson's Point. I have been living in the different suburbs for the last twenty years and I know how people have complained of the loss of time and inconvenience of transhipping from the railway to the tram.
683. Notwithstanding the inconvenience to which you refer, has there not been a very great settlement wherever the tramway has been extended into the suburbs? They only pay for the trams, but at North Shore they would first have to get into a 'bus to get to the harbour and then cross ———
684. We are speaking of a possible connection of the tramway with the railway and having a through service from Milson's Point to the Crow's Nest to connect with the railway, and so on? I consider that the railway would not be complete unless it were extended to Milson's Point, which would offer superior facilities for transit, and in my opinion the development would be ten times greater, and the expenditure of £200,000 or £300,000 in extending the railway to Milson's Point would make the line reproductive to the State.
685. You think that the tramway extension would impede settlement? Well, comparing it with railway communication, people object to get in and out, and the loss of time and inconvenience debar settlement.
686. You think that the interest on the additional cost of carrying the railway to Milson's Point would be very quickly covered by the increased earnings? I am almost confident it would. I only wish the railway were mine. I believe it will be a splendid investment.
687. *Mr. Dowel.*] You have referred to large estates through which this railway if constructed would pass? Berry's Estate.
688. And it has already passed through a number of private estates? Yes.
689. You stated that you believed that this railway will pay interest on the cost of construction as well as working expenses? Yes, within four or five years. The Illawarra Railway paid from the start, I believe, and I don't see why this line should not do so. I believe it will pay 10 per cent. within five years.
690. But you consider that the construction of the railway will very largely benefit the private estates to which you have referred? No doubt it will.
691. Supposing the line were not to pay working expenses and interest on capital within five years, do you think

think it would be a fair thing to rate those property owners whose property would be benefited by the construction of the line and whom it would serve, in order to make up the difference? Yes, I think it would.

692. It would be only a fair and equitable tax? Yes.

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Hugh M'Lachlan, Esq., Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

693. *Chairman.*] You are the Secretary to the Railway Commissioners? Yes.

694. You know the tramway from Milson's Point to Ridge-st.? Yes.

695. What is the length of it? About a mile and a half.

696. Do you know what it cost? The capital cost was about £72,000.

697. When was it opened? May, 1886.

698. Can you give us its earnings since then? In 1886, of course we had it opened for only a part of the year, and for seven months the earnings were £4,040. The expenditure was £4,700; thus there was a loss of £660. In 1887, the earnings were £7,274, and the expenditure £6,850.

699. *Mr. Lee.*] Does that include interest? No; that is simply the working expenses.

700. *Chairman.*] In 1888? For the year ending June, 1888, the earnings were £7,248, and the expenditure £6,833. For the year ended 30th June last the gross earnings were £8,178, and the working expenses £6,626. In that year there was £1,550 profit.

701. *Mr. Garrard.*] Which goes to the credit of interest on capital? Yes.

702. *Chairman.*] What is the interest on capital? Taking it at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. it would be about £2,500, in round numbers.

703. So that there has been a loss there? About £1,000, you may say, in round figures.

704. More than that? Last year we had a profit of £1,552.

705. I am speaking of right through? Yes, the loss has been greater in previous years. Last year the profit was greater and the expenses less. The earnings were much higher.

706. *Mr. Garrard.*] The expenditure was so much less? Yes, £207; but there has been a great increase in the earnings. It might be mentioned, in connection with the capital, that we had originally to pay a considerable sum for resumption of land which we have got now, and for which we could get more than we gave.

707. *Chairman.*] Is that the resumption at Milson's Point? Yes. That is charged in the £72,000.

708. *Mr. Garrard.*] And at your station you have got land? Yes; that is for the engine-house.

709. Does the building used by the ferry company at Milson's Point belong to the Railway Department? No; I think not. I think they have a lease from the Lands Department for that.

710. *Chairman.*] No; it is their own; and the Railway Department constructed the tramway on a small piece of their land.

711. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you know how often the cable has been renewed on that line? I think our experience has been that the cable has lasted about twelve months. I think it has been renewed twice, and that the cable lasts twelve or fourteen months.

712. Are the engines working up to their full capacity? I believe the same engines could work nearly double the present length of cable line.

713. Do you know the cost of that wire rope? The present length of cable cost from £600 to £700.

714. What did you say was the reserve power of the engines? I think they could work nearly double what they are working, on a straight line. If the cable went on a different angle that would destroy the power to a certain extent.

715. *Mr. Lee.*] I would like to know exactly what that tramway cost per mile, exclusive of resumptions? The resumptions in round figures cost about £20,000.

716. Were there any other incidental expenses? Not that I am aware. I think the other expenses were construction and equipment expenses.

717. The balance, after deducting the cost of resumptions, would include the cost of the engines? Certainly, and the erection of the building and the running stock.

718. Have you any figures that would show the exact cost of the tramway track? No, I have not.

719. *Mr. Garrard.*] What was the original contract? I think from £30,000 to £40,000.

720. *Mr. Lee.*] Can you obtain that estimate? Yes. The contractors were to provide certain machinery. I think about £40,000 included the cost of the track and the engine-house.

721. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is the cost of renewal charged against earnings? Yes.

722. That is included in the working expenses? Yes.

723. Would the working expenses be largely increased if the tramway were extended to the present terminus of the railway at the Crow's Nest? They would to a certain extent be increased, but not proportionately.

724. Can you say in what proportion probably they would be increased? I cannot exactly say in what proportion. I think the same engine-power would pretty well control the extra length of line.

725. Have you formed any opinion as to the probable increased traffic that might be expected if the tram were extended to meet the railway at the Crow's Nest? No; but naturally there would be some slight increase of traffic. I do not know the district particularly well.

726. Do you know how many passengers travel daily between Hurstville and Sydney by the Illawarra railway? No; but I will be glad to get the return out.

727. Can you get a return showing the weekly passenger traffic between Sydney and the Illawarra suburbs as far as, and inclusive of, Hurstville? Yes.

728. *Mr. Garrard.*] What would the income represent in the way of passengers? About 1,000,000 passenger journeys.

729. *Mr. Dowel.*] What is the cost per mile per annum of working cable trams? The cost we find here for $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile has been £6,626 for last year. That is about £4,300 per mile. It is an isolated line, and would not be a guide as to cable tramways as a whole.

730. What is the cost per mile per annum of working a railway? That varies, of course, according to the traffic. I think I gave you a statement of our expenses on different lines.

731. Can you say the average cost; is it about £800 per mile? It varies in every instance.

732. Name one place? The cost of our branches per mile would be much less than that of the main line. I think our average has been about £800 per mile.

733.

H.M'Lachlan,
Esq.

17 Oct., 1889.

- H.M. Lachlan, Esq. 733. And our cables have cost us £4,300 a mile to work so far? Yes; in this case.
 734. You are acquainted with the system that prevails in working the railways in Victoria? Yes.
 735. The number of termini there? Yes.
 17 Oct., 1889. 736. Do you think it would be an advantage to make the terminus of the Great Northern line at Port Jackson;—do you think it would relieve the traffic very considerably, and that it would be advantageous to have this terminus at Milson's Point for the whole of the traffic—passengers and goods? I do not think it would answer for general goods traffic—that is, for Sydney goods traffic. I do not think it would be so convenient as Darling Harbour, except for the local traffic on the Shore.
 737. You do not think it would be a suitable place then for goods traffic, whatever it might be for passenger traffic from the north? I do not think it would be so convenient as Darling Harbour.
 738. For what reason? There is the difficulty of getting across, the extra charges for ferrying, and one thing and another. A dray going to Darling Harbour takes a load into the city without there being any ferry dues to pay. It is a long round to Milson's Point.
 739. There is nothing to prevent the use of water carriage from Darling Harbour to any part of Sydney? No, but a dray or other vehicle gets direct to any store in Darling Harbour, but ferry dues would have to be paid in coming across from Milson's Point, and then it is not a convenient place. I do not think it would be a suitable place for goods traffic for Sydney.
 740. Would it relieve the goods traffic at Redfern to have a different terminus for the Northern line? No doubt it would.
 741. It would be an advantage to relieve that traffic? Yes, it would to a certain extent, but I do not think it would be done very much.
 742. For the reasons you have given, you think Darling Harbour more convenient? Yes.
 743. *Mr. Humphrey.*] Can you say what are the average working expenses of the tramways to the eastern suburbs—to Randwick and Coogee? I think they are about £5,000 a mile.
 744. Then there is practically very little difference between the cost of working the cable tram and the ordinary tram? There has not been a great deal of difference, but I do not think you can take the North Shore line as a typical instance of cable working.
 745. Do you think that the cable could be worked at less cost than an ordinary tram? The location, &c., will affect the working cost. I think that if we had double the length of cable at North Shore we would work it at proportionately less per mile.
 746. You say that the cost of working the cable tramway is about £4,000 a mile? About £4,300.

TUESDAY, 22 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHREY.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

John Hay, Esq., sworn and examined:—

- J. Hay, Esq. 747. *Chairman.*] You know the Berry Estate at North Shore? Yes.
 22 Oct., 1889. 748. Do you think it at all possible that any concessions would be made by the owners of that land in the event of the railway being extended from where it now terminates at the Lane Cove Road to the deep waters at Milson's Point? That is a matter that I have not discussed with my co-trustee, Mr. Norton.
 749. Do you know how the line is staked out with regard to that estate? I have been over several lines that have been cut in connection with it. I think I know the last one.
 750. Looking at the map produced, do you see that the proposed extension goes through what is known as Berry's Grant on the North Shore? Yes.
 751. And you are not in a position, you say, to state what concessions the trustees of that estate would make to the Commissioners of Railways in the event of that extension being made? I am not at present prepared to say.
 752. Could you let the Committee know at a later date? Yes, I could. It is a matter we would have to take into consideration in connection with the severance of the land and the injury that would be done at the same time.
 753. You know the law is altered now; you can take the other side of the question and could set off one against the other;—the increased value given by the extension against the damage done? That may be true, but as far as the position of the land is concerned, it takes its value from its proximity to Sydney. I do not see that the railway itself will very materially increase the value of the land; but personally I am desirous and willing to do all that lies in my power for the public interest, as well as for the benefit of the estate, in meeting the Government in any shape or form so far as the powers that are vested in us will permit.
 754. Well, then, you will let us know later on what you could do; you can communicate that to the Committee by letter? Yes.
 755. *Mr. Dowel.*] Did I understand you to say you considered your property would be improved by the construction of the proposed line? That I could not say until I examined the cuttings or other works in connection with it. By severance there might be injury done.
 756. From your knowledge of the particular locality, do you, generally speaking, think it an advantage that this particular line should be constructed? From my knowledge of the particular locality, generally speaking, I think it is the best line that could have been taken through the property.
 757. Are you aware what this line is going to cost for construction? I have heard the general reports, but I have never given it serious attention. The late Mr. Berry did not look forward to any increase in the value of the land from the fact of the railway running through it, but was satisfied with the value of the land as it stood, without the railway.

758. In the event of this line being constructed and its not paying interest on the cost of construction and working expenses, do you consider it a fair proposal that property owners who would be benefited by its construction should be called upon ratably to pay a certain amount of money in the case of a loss; would you be prepared to do so? That is a question I am not prepared to answer at present. J. Hay, Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.

759. You are not prepared to say whether you would make any concessions at all as regards the value of this land through which the railway will pass? As far as estimating the value of the land through which the railway would pass, Mr. Berry had a desire to do what was right for the country and in the public interest, and in consequence of that we delayed the subdivision of the land so that no unjust or unfair claim would be made on the Government in connection with it, and in order to grant opportunities to the Government to take the railway in the best position. Mr. Berry's only desire was to see that the railway did go in a proper position. I know he was satisfied with the track as laid out at the present time.

760. In the event of its being determined to construct this line, and if the question of compensation were to arise, and your claim was found to be so large as to prevent the construction of the line, because of the large amount of interest that would be involved, do you consider the railway of so much importance to the district and to yourself that you would be prepared to give the Government the land free of cost? It is no use my saying what I myself would do. I am working in unison with my co-trustee, and we will decide on which course will be the best. I am satisfied that Mr. Norton will consider this matter in the public interest and in the same spirit as I myself will consider it.

761. *Mr. Cox.*] You yourself have no personal interest in this property? I am an executor under the late Mr. Berry's will, and this property belongs to the general estate.

762. Have you a personal interest in this property? I may ultimately have.

763. You have not now? I may ultimately have.

764. *Chairman.*] Legacies have to be paid out of this estate and you may have something to do with the residuary estate? That is so, I believe.

James George Edwards, Esq., sworn and examined:—

765. *Chairman.*] You are a resident of Gordon, are you not? I reside part of my time at Gordon and part of it at Ashfield. J. G.
Edwards, Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.

766. You have property at Gordon? I have an orangery at Gordon.

767. The Committee have been informed you wish to give some evidence to them in reference to this railway. Will you state what you have got to say? Having resided at Gordon and at St. Leonards for upwards of thirty-five years, and being familiar with the whole district between the harbour and Broken Bay and Hawkesbury River, I have been asked by residents of Gordon to give evidence upon the question of the North Shore Railway extension. The line has been made from Pearce's Corner junction to the Lane Cove Road, a point $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Milson's Point, and the question now to determine is, what is the best thing to do to make the line in the highest degree useful and profitable. Three suggestions or propositions have been made:—1st. To make Cremorne the terminal point; 2nd. To extend the present tram service to the Lane Cove Road; and 3rd. To produce the present line on, and make Milson's Point the terminus. The Cremorne scheme is greater in length than the Milson's Point route by 1 mile 30 chains; it terminates at a greater distance from the city; its construction would exceed that of the Milson's Point line by £158,000; its expensiveness both in maintenance to the Department, and in fares to the public throughout all time, if made, greatly exceeds the alternate railway route; therefore we need not seriously consider its construction. The second proposition is to extend the tramway from the reserve to the railway at the Crow's Nest. It is claimed for such an extension that it would be a saving of public money; but I believe that such a connection would be the most extravagant waste of the funds of the country. The first objection against substituting the tram for the railway is that it would render the line utterly valueless and useless for the traffic of luggage and goods. The freights on the Milson's Point line, if made, will greatly exceed general expectation. In his evidence Mr. Hobson, I think, has mentioned that the brick-yards, potteries, tanneries, and timber-getters would supply the line at the start with a large goods traffic. Personally, I am largely interested in one of the brick-yards mentioned, and as I know all about that yard and its workings, I propose to show to what extent it would use a line to Milson's Point. At Gore Hill Brick Works we manufacture 200,000 bricks a week; burn 40 tons of Bulli and Mountain coal; and use 1,500 gallons of tar in the same time (week). Our latest prices for large coal at the mine was 7s. 6d., and for small 2s. 6d. When carted by other carts than ours, as back loading, we have paid as high as 7s. a ton to get this coal delivered at the works. Add to this the cost of freight and you will find that our large coal, delivered at the works, sometimes costs as high as 19s., and the small coal 15s. per ton; and the yearly quantity reaches 2,080 tons. Most of the bricks made by us reach Milson's Point, and in order that the Committee may have every opportunity of testing the accuracy of my statements, I will state some of our largest orders. To Messrs. Alexander Dean and Sons, for the erection of the "Australia Hotel", we have to send 5,000,000 ordinary and 200,000 double pressed bricks; to Messrs. Waine and Baldwin, for the Lands Office, we are sending 250,000; to the Crown-street Reservoir we are sending 50,000 double pressed bricks; to the "Wentworth Hotel" we are sending about 300,000; and we have only recently completed a large order for the Bulli Coke Co., which had to be delivered partly at Darling Harbour and partly at Blue's Point, to be transhipped to Bulli. Other large orders have been delivered during the last few months at Milson's and Blue's Points, and at the present time we are tendering to supply an order of over 4,000,000 which are to be lightered either from Milson's Point or Blue's Point, as economy can best be served. Seeing that the major part of our orders would be in Sydney and among our coast towns, and thinking that Milson's Point would be the terminus, and that the work would be completed at an early date, we considered the question of putting a siding into the works, and long ago applied to the Engineer-in-Chief for points to connect with. Our application was favourably considered, but we have since been kept in such a state of uncertainty that we have gone on with our horse and cart delivery at a very heavy expenditure. The wear and tear on the horses, particularly the shafters, is very heavy, and if we could have delivered the bricks by rail at Milson's Point a few horses could, from that Point, have done what it takes some dozens to do. To deliver bricks at Milson's Point costs us about 10s. a thousand. The Committee will therefore see that the railway completed would be advantageous to my company, also that our works would be an advantage to the railway. Taking the two large orders mentioned only, the Committee will see that we have 7,700,000 bricks

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bricks to deliver. These, at a weight of 4 tons to the 1,000, gives us a total weight of over 30,800 tons, which we would only have been too glad to entrust to the railway. But the foregoing gives no idea of our future work. We have just completed the erection of fresh machinery, so that now we can start any day two Plott's machines, each making 20,000 a day; a Bradley and Coowen, making 18,000 a day; and a Plastic machine, making 10,000 a day; in all 68,000 a day, or 408,000 a week, being double the output up to the present, necessitating double the quantity of coal and other fuel. Of the other factories mentioned by Mr. Hobson I cannot speak, not knowing anything of their output; but I am convinced it is considerable, and as some of them are closer to the line than ours, I feel certain they would be compelled to use the railway. But if it is to terminate in a tram service, than it cannot be utilised by us nor by any other producer. I have taken some trouble to ascertain the quantity of fruit marketed from Gordon. Two most reliable fruit-growers carefully collected the number of cases taken from each orchard during the last year. The total is 43,990 cases. These consist of orange, lemon, peach, apple, pear, and plum, principally, but do not include the grape yield. Taking the average price of these at 7s. we have a sterling value of £15,000. I regret that I have not been able to get the quantities produced by Willoughby and Hornsby, which together would be considerably more than that grown at Gordon. And this I wish to emphasize, viz.:—that not only would a railway to Milson's Point bring the Gordon and Willoughby fruit, but it would bring the greater part of Hornsby fruit. I remember the time when the Hornsby line was being constructed, that the orchardists of that district laughed at the idea of sending their fruit to market by train, but they all do it now. And no marvel either; for it costs me to send oranges from my orchard, which by road is only about 10 miles from Milson's Point, four times as much as it costs Goulburn growers to market their apples. Possibly it may be objected that the railway would not carry the fruit to market. My answer is neither does the western line. The fruit is conveyed to Darling Harbour, and by vans conveyed to the George-street Market, and while the distance between Darling Harbour and the Market is less than between Milson's Point and the Market, yet the easier grades of Pitt and George Streets than of Market and Druitt Streets would enable each horse to take five or seven cases more than on the latter streets, and to travel at a more rapid rate, so that the difference in van carriage would not be great. If it be questioned whether any of the Hornsby fruit would come by the North Shore line let it be remembered that all orchardists north of the junction would have to pay freight on 8 or 9 miles less by using the line to Milson's Point, and that orchardists as far south as Thornleigh, which is only $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the junction, would have less freight to pay by sending their fruit *via* the North Shore. As within a radius of 2 miles of Hornsby Junction lie all the best orchards in that neighbourhood, we believe that the bulk of Hornsby fruit would be conveyed by the line to Milson's Point. Further, I find the quantity of bone dust used in the Gordon orchards which now is carted from Sydney, amounts to about 560 tons annually. Assuming that a similar quantity would find its way by the Milson's Point route to Willoughby and Hornsby, we have over 1,000 tons. Again, with the railway to Milson's Point, mountain coal, which finds its way to outlying districts, such as Balmain, Waverley, and Concord, and other places, should be largely used for household purposes by the residents of St. Leonards, a large proportion of whom reside within $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile of the head of Lavender Bay. To cart it from St. Leonards Station would increase its price considerably. Illawarra coal for steam purposes would be brought by steamer to Milson's Point and forwarded to various places along the line. Again, no blue metal for road-making purposes is found either at Willoughby or Gordon. Large quantities are used both in Willoughby and Gordon. It is punted to the Figtree bridge and conveyed by carts up to and along the various roads. The Illawarra metal, I am told, is used, and if the line to Milson's Point were made there would be an increasing traffic. I think I have shown that the goods traffic on the line would be considerable from the start, and with railway facilities it would grow, and as the tram service would make no provision for this its substitution for the railway would be most disastrous in its consequences. A second objection against the trams is:—It gives least accommodation where most is required. If the proposition were to start from Pearce's Corner with a tram and finish at the harbour with a railway something might be said in favour of the scheme, but to employ a railway as a feeder for a cable tram is out of all reason. The traffic on the line must be greatest near the city and least on the most distant part, therefore the accommodation where the greatest number travel should at least be equal to that supplied for the few. What would be thought of a coach proprietor who had a complete service for that part of his line where the travelling public were small who finished his last stage towards the centre of population with a gig? I have travelled through Europe, America, and all over the colonies, but I have never met with anything resembling the proposal which we are now considering. No one can imagine the confusion, jostling, and irritation which, on a holiday, would follow the arrival at St. Leonards station of a special train containing 400 or 500 persons. The more the line improved the worse would become the inconvenience, and I am convinced it would be better to take up the rails and sleepers and abandon the whole line altogether than to make this hybrid tram-railway. A third objection against substituting the tram for the railway is the loss of time which it would occasion. The tramway would be $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles in length, and as it travels about 6 miles an hour, it would take passengers by tram, allowing ten minutes for stoppages and five minutes for changing, forty minutes to reach the Crow's Nest. A train leaving Redfern at the same time as the tram left Milson's Point would be at Strathfield, $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles out, in fifteen minutes, and after making five stoppages would reach Auburn, 11 miles from Redfern, in twenty-eight minutes. Thus the tram would entail a constant loss of time, and inflict a hardship upon all travellers by the North Shore line, which should not be allowed, unless there are strong reasons in its favour. It has been objected that a terminus at Milson's Point would not give accommodation to even the passenger traffic. The Government officers and Railway Commissioners should be the best authorities on such questions, and they assert there will be sufficient accommodation. If, however, there is not sufficient space for the passenger traffic, if brought to the Point by rail, then, unless the tram is intended to keep down the traffic, there cannot be sufficient if it is brought by tram. It has been said that the water-frontage to Lavender Bay would be of little value for wharfage purposes because of want of shore width. I would point out how at Miller's Point and elsewhere on the southern shore wharfs have been formed on which a gigantic traffic has been carried on by cutting back the hill, filling the debris behind a sea-wall, and extending pile-piers, and this traffic has been conducted without the aid a railway would supply. But I would press this fact on the attention of the Committee, that if the railway had no water-frontage along its route, but simply reached the water at its terminus, and if, without such frontage, it cost as much as the estimate for the proposed line, then, I

submit,

submit, it has been shown the line would pay quickly and well. This is without taking credit for a penny earned from the water-frontages or for any increasing value, although no one can say that something would not be earned, and that water-frontages have no value. Therefore there is really nothing in this against the railway extension, even if it were admitted that the attempt to depreciate the value of its extensive water-frontage were justified by facts. A comparison of the cost of working the railway extension from the present terminus to Milson's Point, and of working the tram service between the same points, will, I think, show that it would be a terrible mistake to decide in favour of an extended tram-line. The cost of working the present $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile of the Milson's Point tramway was, in 1887, £6,850. Taking the further extension of $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile at the same rate per mile, it would cost to work, yearly, £5,716; but charging only one-half this amount as the cost, £2,858, the cost of running the whole line would be £9,717, with a traffic such as the present line carries. Calculating from the income of the tramway, there was an average of about 2,000 travellers per day carried in 1887, and supposing the railway travellers only amounted to 4,000 daily, it would mean, that at the same rate as the 2,000 travellers would be carried on the present line and its extension, the 4,000 extra railway travellers would cost £19,434 to convey the full distance. But again, charging only one-half this sum as the cost, it would amount to £9,717. Allowing only one-half for the extra cost of conveyance is giving an undue advantage to the tramway service, as the detailed yearly cost of working the tram service contains the following:—Wages of gripmen and engine-drivers, £1,337; cost of fuel, £681; repairing and maintenance, £2,327; wages of conductors, clerks, &c., £1,066; or in all, £5,411, which would be increased nearly in full proportion to the length of line and the passengers carried, so that it seems most moderate to allow only an increased cost of £9,717 for a line nearly twice as long as the present, and a traffic three times as large. Deducting from this £9,717, the outside extra cost of running the railway extension, viz., £2,000, there remains an extra cost of tram-running of £7,717, which soon would pay $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest on an extra expenditure in the construction of the railway extension of over £220,000. Now the extra cost of the extension and resumptions is given as £262,000, less the cost of extending the tram, £30,000, and the resale value of land over the tunnel, £28,000, or only £204,000—showing a difference of £16,000 in favour of the railway. Therefore it is obvious that in itself it would be the wisest economy to extend the railway, even if it were not also a self-evident fact that the railway extension must tend to enormously increase the traffic, while the tram service would inevitably tend to retard it. Another point, however, which I have not seen referred to is that whilst the tram extension could at any time be constructed at the present cost the railway could not. With the exception of one small resumption, the tram would pass over public thoroughfares, and delay in construction would not increase the cost for resumption. The railway, however, passes through private lands for its entire length, and consequently delay in construction would enormously increase the cost for land, and improvements erected thereon. In the event of a high-level bridge being built from Blue's Point to Flagstaff Hill the Milson's Point route would be followed to connect the railway with it, and if the necessary land be not resumed until it be required for the purpose, the cost for resumptions will be twice or thrice the present value. In consequence of the distance from the northern districts to Milson's Point being 8 miles less than to Redfern station, and 9 miles less than to Darling Harbour, and the facilities which Lavender Bay offers for shipping purposes, I am of the opinion that Milson's Point should be the terminus of the Northern Line. The proposed railway skirts the eastern shore of Lavender Bay for nearly a half-mile on a level grade to a height of 5 or 6 feet above sea-level, and the whole of this water-frontage could be made available for wharfage purposes. Darling Island, purchased at a cost of £135,000, affords less wharfage accommodation by 900 feet. Lavender Bay contains an area of about 105 acres, being more extensive than Circular Quay or Darling Harbour, either above or below the bridge. Its depth of water far exceeds that of either Circular Quay or Darling Harbour, and large ships could now be taken to within a few yards of the shore. It is frequently stated that a ship could not be berthed at Milson's Point, because the point and the fairway are too narrow. Ships are not berthed at Macquarie Point nor at Dawes' Point, but in the bight. Similarly, ships would not be berthed at the extreme end of Milson's Point, but towards the bight. The narrowness or otherwise of the fairway does not affect the question, because ships would pass through it whether they berthed in Darling Harbour or in Lavender Bay. An erroneous impression seems to exist, to the effect that, although Milson's Point is well adapted for a large passenger traffic, it is too restricted to permit of sufficient accommodation being provided for a large goods traffic. An inspection of a plan which I propose to leave with the Committee, prepared by competent professional gentlemen, will show that if an average depth of 1 chain (only half the width elsewhere) from high-water mark be resumed, and the material available be used to fill up and reclaim as far as the depth of the water will permit, a wharf, extending from the head of Lavender Bay to the southern corner of Government land at Milson's Point, could be constructed. Its length would be 2,670 feet, and its minimum width 132 feet, while the depth of water at low spring tides would be such as would berth the largest ships or steamers which visit this port. Allowing 400 feet of wharfage for passenger traffic, there remain 2,270 feet for goods traffic, sufficient to berth five Orient steamers, and to meet the requirements of the public for years to come. Should this accommodation be found insufficient, the wharf could be extended across the head of Lavender Bay, and around the western side of it. Traffic of both descriptions should be permitted to flow in their natural channel, and if so permitted a very considerable amount of it would find its way to Milson's Point. I have been convinced for years, and am more strongly of the opinion now than ever, that the line to Milson's Point should be the main and not the branch line. Should the high-level bridge across the harbour from Blue's Point to Flagstaff Hill be built, the Milson's Point route makes admirable provision for it, a connecting line of only half a mile in length being necessary to connect the two. In the meantime, if the city railway were extended to Fort Macquarie, trains could be taken across the harbour in punts. Touching then the question of paying, I feel confident that the line in two years from completion to Milson's Point will pay well. As soon as it becomes known that it is decided to carry it to Milson's Point building and development along the route will commence. Illawarra line was not opened as far as Hurstville until October, 1884, and now it is paying splendidly. From the Commissioner's report for 1887, *vide* page 91, we find that the total inwards and outwards traffic for stations between Concord and Hornsby amounted to £9,000 within a fraction, and for the Hawkesbury River, £5,860 16s. 7d. In fact, past experience teaches that no railways pay better than our suburban lines. Surely there cannot be the slightest grounds for doubting the profitableness of the North Shore line. Besides the people of St. Leonards there are the prosperous districts beyond through which the line passes. The municipality of Willoughby contains already a population of over 2,000 persons, and is capable of containing twenty times as many.

Beyond

J. G.
Edwards, Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.

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Beyond Willoughby is the elevated district of Gordon, extending to Hornsby, and bounded on the east and west by Middle Harbour and Lane Cove rivers, containing 228 residences, and upwards of 1,100 persons; most of the land is fit for agriculture, and what is not is adapted for residential purposes. The area of Gordon alone is about 19,000 acres, and every 5 acres of the agricultural land well cultivated would support a family. For residential purposes the district cannot be surpassed. Eight miles from Milson's Point we have an elevation of 500 feet, 9½ miles an elevation of 592 feet, 10 miles an elevation of 620 feet, and at 9 miles, on the Stony Creek Road, an elevation of 626 feet. It may be stated that because I have interests along the railway my opinions are biased. It is true I have an orangery at Gordon, which I have had for years, and will continue to hold, whatever becomes of the railway. I am also interested in the Gore Hill Brickworks as one of a Company; and as one of the directors of that Company, and because I am thus interested, and because I am always anxious to see that done which is for the public good, I am here to give evidence to-day. I would point out that there are two classes of persons whose opinions may be influenced by the railway. Those, like myself, who have interests on the line, and who are desirous of making it a success, and those who have interests elsewhere, and who are desirous of making it a failure. The railway will be a success or otherwise, in proportion to the ability of private owners to attract a population, and the ability to create a population depends upon the facilities offered by the railway. In conclusion, I beg to add, that if the Committee are doubtful about the profitableness of the undertaking, I am prepared to find a Company with a capital of £450,000 to take over the whole line, provided similar powers and privileges are given the Company to those possessed by the Crown.

768. *Mr. Garrard.*] Where did you obtain your figures as to the probable cost of the Cremorne line? I got the figures from an official source.

769. The Gore Hill Brickworks are the largest brickworks on the North Shore, are they not? They are.

770. How many brickworks are there immediately surrounding the Gore Hill Brickworks? There are two close to Gore Hill, and one beyond, and one this side. I think there are five altogether.

771. Would the whole of those put together have an output equal to that of your Company? I could not state; I do not know what their output is. I have never been over their works, except Mr. Magney's, and his output is fairly large, but nothing like ours.

772. As a matter of fact, does not the output of your brickworks equal that of the whole of the other brickworks, even if it is not larger? It probably is.

773. You have told us that your consumption of coal is about 40 tons per day;—how do you get that coal now? We draw it from Sydney—sometimes from Sydney. I think it generally comes from Darling Harbour.

774. You consume nothing but western coal? We also consume Bulli coal.

775. Is not that water-borne? Oh, yes.

776. Landed where? Some is landed at Grant's Wharf—a private wharf off Milson's Point Road.

777. The bulk of the coal you use comes from the western collieries? No; I think from Bulli.

778. All the western coal would reach you whether this line is made or not? We could get it *via* Hornsby—but look at the expense. We would first have to convey it to Strathfield, and thence to Hornsby, and thence to Gore Hill; but if we had the Milson's Point line we could reach the brickworks in 3 miles.

779. Do I understand that if this extension were made you would take delivery of your mountain coal at Darling Harbour and cart it across? That is a matter we have not determined upon.

780. Is it at all likely that you would carry your coal from Darling Harbour by ferry over the water, load it in trucks at Milson's Point, and unship it at your brickworks? Most certainly not. We would get it *via* Strathfield and Hornsby; but we would have to pay for the extra distance between Strathfield and Hornsby, which I suppose is about 12 miles; and also for the distance from Hornsby to Gore Hill, which would put 1s. 6d. a ton on the price of the coal.

781. Would that not be cheaper than going through the process I have enumerated? Most certainly; but not cheaper than from Milson's Point, if we had a railway.

782. Is the largest demand for your bricks on this side or on the north side of the harbour? During the last six months it has been on this side considerably.

783. Prior to that the largest consumption was on the Shore? I would not say that; but certainly during the last six months it has been considerably larger on this side.

784. Do you think there is a probability of that continuing? We must look to Sydney principally for our business, and also to towns on the coast district. We have sent a lot of bricks to Eden. We are in treaty for sending bricks up north, to the Clarence River; and there have been a number of orders given us for bricks to be delivered at towns in the coast district.

785. You are clearly of opinion that if this line were constructed to Milson's Point all the bricks for use in Sydney would come that way, and not still be carted by your ordinary carts? I am certain of that. I could not say all, but I am certain that the bulk of the bricks would be brought that way. It costs us now 10s. a thousand to get our bricks to Milson's Point.

786. 2½ miles? You are reckoning by the train; by road I suppose it is 3 miles.

787. But the principal item is the loading, and not the transit? We have considered the advisability of getting boxes made which would hold 400 or 500 bricks, and the bricks would be lifted by cranes on to trollies, and lifted off again.

788. That is only a thing for the future—you are not doing that now? No.

789. The present cost I suppose is largely made up of the handling? No; the carting is the great item, and the wear and tear of our horses. The down hill racks our shafters to pieces, and we have lately considered the advisability of getting trollies. One trolley we got from Hudson's cost £75 or £80, and two others are being made. The great expense of the bricks is occasioned by the wear and tear of the horses.

790. That does not exist when you get on the shore of the harbour, or go through the city? No, because we are on fairly level ground then.

791. After giving due consideration to this matter, as a director of your Company, you say unhesitatingly that the bulk of your bricks for use in Sydney would come to Milson's Point and then be transhipped? I believe they would. The board has discussed the matter, and we resolved to do that.

792. In reference to the fruit, do you say that 43,900 cases are grown near Gordon alone? Yes.

793. You think there is a likelihood of that fruit being brought to Milson's Point? I do.

794. Would the fruit growers all have sidings put into their orchards? It would not be necessary. There is to be a siding at Gordon and another in the centre of the fruit growing district.
795. These orchardists would have to convey their fruit from their orchards 1, 2, or 3 miles to the railway would they not? Not 4 miles. I don't know any case in which the conveyance would exceed a mile or a mile and a half at the outside.
796. They would have to load their fruit into their own carts, trans-ship it on to the railway waggons, and trans-ship it again at Milson's Point into carts to go to Sydney market? They would.
797. Do you think it is at all likely that the orchardists would do that; having once loaded their stuff into the carts would not they come 4, 5, or 6 miles direct to Milson's Point by road and then on to Sydney? I am certain as I am of my existence that they would use the railway. I have been connected with orchard work in the Lane Cove district for the last thirty years and have kept horses and men, and I am certain that it would be infinitely better to convey the fruit by rail to North Shore and have it taken delivery of there.
798. You reckon just now that if the line were constructed we might reasonably anticipate that fruit grown about Hornsby and as far south as Thornleigh would be conveyed by this line; but would not that benefit the fruit growers at the expense of the Railway Department? I think the public have to be considered, and I don't think the Committee would be anxious to see the Homebush-Waratah line pay at the expense of the Hornsby fruit-growers.
799. But if one of the reasons for making the Homebush-Waratah line and taking it through Thornleigh and Hornsby was to give access to those people, and they have had it for use a year or two, is it not fair to reckon on the produce of the district being sent that way? A fair share of the produce of the district would go that way, and that line would pay without carrying the fruit sent by the North Shore line. I don't think it would seriously affect the Homebush-Waratah line.
800. How far is Gordon from Hornsby? Nearly 5 miles by road.
801. What is the farthest place from Hornsby this way from which fruit is sent by Hornsby and Strathfield now;—I mean from the Gordon side of Hornsby? I cannot tell. I don't think we have any orchards of consequence, except one or two near to Hornsby, that send their fruit by that line.
802. How far from Hornsby are they? Probably a mile or a mile and a half.
803. You think that the Gordon orchardists would send their fruit by this line? I think so.
804. Do you think it at all likely that if this line were constructed there would be a large increase of population at Gordon, Willoughby, and other places? I do, and I have good reasons for thinking so.
805. You are taking the history of the Illawarra line as something to go by? It is something to go by. I think the increase of settlement along the Illawarra line points very strongly to the fact or the inference that a similar settlement will take place along this line.
806. But did not that line give access to the southern districts, whilst this is only a branch line and would not have the same amount of through traffic? I say this would be more than a branch line and would work into the northern line.
807. It is your opinion that this should be the terminus of the northern line? Yes, and that has been my opinion for some time.
808. Have you any land through which this line passes? I have three quarters of an acre. It was an acre and a half. I was one of the advocates of the railway and I offered to give my land and the department took three quarters of an acre for the portion constructed already, and I am left with three quarters of an acre without any frontage—with no access to any road or thoroughfare.
809. Do I understand you gave that land for nothing? I offered to give it for nothing, but the department offered me half-a-sovereign for it and I took it.
810. Was that given on the understanding that you would have railway communication with Port Jackson? That is what we understood—that the line was to be extended to the deep waters of the harbour; otherwise I would not have given my land. I consider the railway would be absolutely useless if it stop where it is now.
811. Is it not a fact that in the first instance the proposal was to bring the line down to the waters of Port Jackson and people were asked to give the land, but that that proposal was afterwards put on one side and a fresh one was made—to bring the railway to the Crow's Nest only and the people were again asked to give their land, and was it not on the last proposition that the land was given? Most decidedly not. I never heard of that proposition. It was simply considered to be one section of the work—the other section to be left till the Government could determine what was the proper approach to the deep waters of the harbour.
812. Then I understand your contention is that the Government will not have carried out their contract until they have brought the passenger and goods line to Port Jackson? That is my opinion. The first line surveyed was to Ball's Head. We thought that in all probability the line would be forked;—that one branch would go round to Ball's Head and the other to Blue's Point. Mr. Wells ran his first line to Ball's Head and the other to Blue's Point.
813. Do you think that if this proposed extension is made it will interfere with the productiveness of the existing tram line? I do not, for it will be required for the North Shore people.
814. Do you not think that until the Shore develops more the gap might be bridged by the extension of the tram? Most decidedly not. Look what the cost of resumptions will be at the end of a few years. I was present at the sale of part of Milson's Estate fifteen years ago, when in the very centre of St. Leonards land was bought at from £1 to £2 12s. 6d. a foot, and I have lived long enough to see that land sold some for £40 and some for £50 a foot.
815. In anticipation of the railway? No; away from the railway altogether—part of Milson's Estate close to the tram—and if land increases in value in anything like the same ratio between the Lane Cove terminus and Milson's Point the Government will have in ten years time to pay £500,000 or £600,000 for resumptions, which they could now make for £135,000;—that is if it increases in value one-fourth as rapidly in the next ten years as land has during the last ten years.
816. I think you said that in your opinion it would pay the Government better if this line were not extended to take up the rails and sleepers already put down, because the line would be useless? I meant the line would not pay unless extended to the harbour.
817. How long do you think it will be before it will pay interest and working expenses? I think from two or three years at the most from the time it is completed. Of course people will commence to build as soon as it is decided to construct the line. I should only be too glad to be one of a company to take
over

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over the line either from Lane Cove Road to Milson's Point, or the whole of the line. I already know some of the gentlemen to go to, and I would find gentlemen to take it over with a capital of £450,000, and make the line, provided we could get the same privileges the Government have.

818. Of course they know it is an impossibility for them to get that, and therefore that their offer is safe? I wished to put it in a business-like way. We could do it if we were not hampered, but allowed to get on with it the same as the Government would.

819. *Mr. Cox.*] You spoke about your brickyards;—is the clay in that neighbourhood so valuable that you can compete with everybody else round Sydney in the sale of bricks? We have a very superior clay at the yards;—in fact I might mention that there is superior shale and clay, or deposits of shale and clay, through most of that district. I think that Mr. Gibson, who has works opposite ours, has better clay and shale than we have. I do not think that there is in the western suburbs anything in the shape of clay and shale equal to Gibson's, Magney's, and our own, and there are deposits equally as good farther on. Take Fisher's Hill, for instance, and the Crow's Nest.

820. Do you think that your clay is so valuable that it would be desirable to go to the expense of making a railway to bring your bricks to Sydney when we have clay equally as good in the Western suburbs? How is it we are now doing it under most unfavourable conditions. We have to pay not only 10s. for haulage, but also the steamerage, which is a heavy handicap, and yet we are competing with those men, who have a very great number of bricks they can't dispose of, whereas we have been taking bricks so hot from the kiln that men could scarcely handle them.

821. So you are competing successfully with those men who have greater facilities? We are.

822. How far are your works from the proposed line? Roughly speaking, one-third of a mile.

823. Have you calculated what the probable returns by rail would be, presuming the railway were made to the deep water? I did not go into that matter, as I saw by the papers it had been gone into exhaustively by, I think, Mr. Thompson or some other witness, who has preceded me, and I did not wish to trouble the Committee by travelling over old ground.

824. Is there any traffic beyond Hornsby that would be likely to come into Sydney by this line? Yes, for instance, there is a good deal of traffic in wood. There is a great deal of bundle wood and other wood which could come by this line from north of the Hornsby Station.

825. When you are travelling on the Homebush-Waratah line, all the good land is left behind when you pass Hornsby? Soon after you get to Hornsby you get on very indifferent land. Wail's and Fear's are, I think, the two last places where there is good land.

826. Consequently there would be no orchards or settlement? It would not be suitable for orchard purposes beyond the area of good land.

827. In taking the Hornsby traffic by this line you would take traffic from the present Western line? Only a little of it, I think.

828. You would be "robbing Peter to pay Paul"? The Western line is showing it would pay well without the traffic this line would take.

829. What is the difference in length between Hornsby and Sydney, *via* Milson's Point and Hornsby, and Sydney *via* Redfern? To Darling Harbour from Hornsby Junction is, I believe, 9 miles longer than from the Junction to Milson's Point.

830. Do you think that that difference in length would be sufficient to make one line pay as against the other? I do not say that the other line will not pay. I believe the Hornsby line will pay. I think the revenue is increasing so rapidly that it will pay. I think both lines will pay.

831. This proposal is to take the railway to the deep waters of Port Jackson. In the event of a high level bridge ever being built—probably it must be some day or other—would not a large amount of unnecessary expense be incurred in taking the railway down to the water rather than letting it remain at the high level where a bridge would probably meet the North Shore? Not at all. I think it would be a great saving to the country inasmuch as land would be resumed for railway purposes and the Government would avoid the necessity of making resumptious at a time when they decided to go on with the bridge. To have the portion that goes to Milson's Point would be a decided advantage as it would give water frontages in Lavender Bay where ships could go and receive our produce.

832. What produce have you that ships could take away? We largely export oranges to Melbourne. Mr. McKeown, a very large grower in the Lane Cove district, carts his oranges to George-street market and sends them by van to the vessels and they are conveyed to Melbourne. If we had wharves at Lavender Bay the fruit could be sent direct to the ships, and handling and expense would be saved.

833. You mentioned just now that you gave your land through which the railway passes free of all charge? Yes.

834. And yet you only had $1\frac{1}{2}$ acre? Only $1\frac{1}{2}$ acre through which the line passes. I did not say I possessed only $1\frac{1}{2}$ acre altogether.

835. That alters the case. I imagined that you had only an acre and a half and that the Government resumed half of it. Any person through whose land the railway passes, although a certain amount of land may be taken from him, benefits no more than his neighbour who has no land taken from him? You are quite right, I have said that many a time. Some of us gave land and lost by doing so. Mr. Frank Treatt gave a lot of his land and the balance could not be enhanced in value to any extent because it was so small. Sergt. Dawson's place lies half way between two stations and there is a tremendous embankment there and the construction of the railway instead of increasing the value of the land has really depreciated it. If some Bill could be passed by the Legislature enabling the Government to rate the land all round, assessors could be sent and the thing could be done more equitably.

836. *Mr. Dowel.*] You have stated that you consider Milson's Point should be the terminus of the Great Northern line? Yes, that it should be.

837. Have you any experience of the northern districts to justify you in making that statement? I have travelled all through the north districts; I know them very well; and one of the reasons why I think that Milson's Point should be the terminus of the Great Northern line is, because it is on the direct route to the metropolis and this line is 8 or 9 miles shorter than the line from Hornsby to Sydney, and would have cost less to construct than that line, and would greatly relieve the congested traffic on the western line. These are some of the reasons.

838. What is the length of the siding for which you have applied? We did not apply for a siding but for points to be put in, in order that we might make a siding.

839. You would construct the siding? We would; but we have not gone on with it yet because we are not certain the line will be extended to the water at Milson's Point. If the line were taken to Cremorne or Ball's Head it would be of no use to us.

840. Would there be any difficulty in constructing a siding from the railway to your brickworks? Mr. Norman Selve, the engineer, says there would be no difficulty. It would probably cost us £3,000 or £4,000.

841. There is no doubt, I suppose, that you would put in this siding if the railway were constructed to Milson's Point? I am one of a Board of three, and I would be only too glad to recommend it to-morrow, and I know my colleagues are of the same opinion.

842. What is the cost of loading bricks per thousand on the drays? I do not know that you can attach much value to the cost of loading bricks. They are run out in barrows, and if you did not load them on to drays you would have to stack them. If we had the railway trucks there the bricks could be taken direct from the kiln on to the trucks and run direct to the Point.

843. The cost of loading bricks is not a great item, then? It is not a great item. Of course if we had to load and unload, and load again, that would be an item.

844. You referred to the use of mountain coal in your brickyards—how do you find mountain coal serves your purpose for burning bricks? The brickmaker informs me that it is far superior to the Newcastle coal.

845. Is it not a fact that this mountain coal could be delivered at your brickyards at a much lower rate than Newcastle coal could, provided you had a siding constructed to the railway? Most decidedly, for if we got Newcastle coal we would have to pay freight by steamer from Newcastle, or bring it by rail something like 94 miles, and that would add 7s. or 8s. to the cost. Mountain coal could be got at considerably less.

846. Can you say what at the present time you pay for the cartage of coal, bricks, &c., per annum? I cannot give you that in a lump sum. The cartage of two of the orders I mentioned—that is Dean's and Waine and Baldwin's—will cost us something like £4,000.

847. *Mr. Garrard.*] Would half or a third of that cost be saved if this line were constructed? I think quite half of it would be saved.

848. *Mr. Humphery.*] In what way would it be a saving to you to get the western coal delivered at Darling Harbour, taken across to Milson's Point, and then conveyed to Gore Hill, instead of getting it direct from Strathfield? We could get it lightered by men like Batty and Shea, from Darling Harbour at a reasonable cost to Milson's Point. A lighter will take about 70 tons at a time. In that way there would be a very great saving to us.

849. Would it cost you more than 5d. a ton to get it from Darling Harbour to Milson's Point? I suppose it would cost us more than that.

850. What difference of haulage do you think there would be between taking coal from Darling Harbour to Gore Hill and from Strathfield to Gore Hill? The distance from Darling Harbour to Milson's Point cannot be more than 2 or 3 miles, I should think.

851. You would have to unload at Milson's Point and put it on the trucks? Just so; but we would have proper appliances—it could be done by a winch.

852. The distance from Strathfield to Hornsby is about 12 miles? As far as I know the distance, it is.

853. The western coal taken to Hornsby would be taken *via* Strathfield and would not be taken to Sydney, and there would, therefore, be 7 miles saved there. The total difference would only be 9 miles, and you would have to pay 1d. a mile per ton extra for taking it by way of Strathfield? Probably, then, it would pay us better to have the western coal *via* Strathfield.

854. Do you not perceive how erroneous your calculation was when you said that you would effect a saving by taking coal from Darling Harbour to Milson's Point, and then on to Gore Hill? If I remember rightly, I think I said the greater quantity of coal used by us was Bulli coal.

855. But that was what you stated in speaking of mountain coal? I was calculating we took the mountain coal from Sydney.

856. You think now you are in error? I am not sure I am, because I don't know what the cost would be for lightering or for railway freights.

857. Do you not know that the freight for coal is 1d. per ton per mile? I believe it is.

858. If there should be a distance of 12 miles from Strathfield to Hornsby, and 9 miles from Hornsby to your works, it would really cost you about four times as much to get your coal from Darling Harbour as to take it *via* Strathfield; is that not the case? The probabilities are we would find it cheaper to take all Bulli coal.

859. Therefore there would be no traffic of mountain coal along the line to your brick-works? Probably if we found that the mountain coal cost us more than the Bulli coal, and that the latter answered equally well, we would run on Bulli coal.

860. In your estimate of the probable traffic by rail, I think you stated that the traffic would be just twice as great as it is at the present time by tram—I mean that the traffic by rail from Milson's Point to Hornsby would be twice as great as that now conveyed by tram? I think so.

861. In what period do you think that traffic would be developed? In a couple of years.

862. Have you taken into consideration the fact that the bulk of the population of North Shore lies east to the proposed line of railway? I have taken that into consideration.

863. So it will have to be entirely new traffic that will be developed by the railway in order to realise your estimate? It would not have to be entirely new traffic. A number of passengers would use the line at holiday times, and there are also the residents of Willoughby, Hornsby, and Gordon, who would travel by the line from the start.

864. You think that the great saving of time effected by using this line would lead to such a rapid development at Gordon and beyond Gordon, that the working expenses and interest would be covered in the course of a few years? I think so.

865. What is the value of land about Gordon? It varies very much, according to quality.

866. In the immediate vicinity of the railway? Some of the land sold by the Government brought, I think, something like £200 an acre near Linfield. I suppose £150 an acre would be a fair price for good land.

867. *Mr. Lee.*] I understood you to deduct from the estimated cost of the extension of the railway the sum of £30,000, which is the estimated cost of the extension of the cable tram? Yes.

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- J. G. Edwards, Esq.
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868. Can you inform me on what grounds you reduced the estimated cost of the railway to the extent of the probable cost of the tram extension? Because that portion of the cable tram would not be required if the railway were made.
869. If the railway were made, it would still cost £262,000? Yes; but the cable tram extension would not be made.
870. I want to know why you deducted the cost of the tram extension? Because the tram extension would be unnecessary if the railway were made. If the railway is not constructed the tramway probably will be at a cost of £30,000, and probably at a later period when land resumption would cost much more it will be found necessary to construct the railway.
871. Do you think it is a fair way to estimate the cost of the railway by deducting from it a sum of money which is the probable cost of an alternative service? If the alternative service is certain to be carried out, provided the other is not, I think that is a fair way of looking at it.
872. But there are two contemplated services, one to cost £262,000, and the other £30,000. If the £262,000 service is adopted, how can you deduct from that the estimated cost of the other contemplated service? I look at it simply from a business point of view, and I think that that is a fair way to put it.
873. And do you consider it equally fair, if the tram service were decided on at a cost of £30,000, to attempt to reduce the sum by deducting £262,000, the estimated cost of the contemplated railway service? No; I do not.
874. What is the weight of 1,000 bricks? I am told it is about 4 tons.
875. At present then they are costing you about 2s. 6d. a ton to deliver them? Yes; that is about it.
876. On reference to the railway rate book, I find there is a special rate for the conveyance of bricks. It is set down here, from Liverpool to Darling Harbour, 21 miles I believe, at 11s. per truck of 6 tons. Now, the distance from Darling Harbour to Gore Hill is 28 miles, or 7 miles longer, which would make the rate probably 13s. a truck, or at the rate of 2s. 2d. per ton? Yes.
877. When the piece of line now being constructed is open for traffic, is it not extremely probable you would use it for the conveyance of your bricks to Sydney, instead of carting them as now? Not at all, as its terminus is not a very great distance from the works. It is only half way to the Point, and it would not be worth our while to load the bricks and convey them to the St. Leonard's station at Lane Cove Road, and then send our carts there. We should still have all the heavy shafting to do, and that is what is so detrimental to our horses.
878. Do I understand that when once the bricks were loaded, it would suit you better to send horses and carts across the ferry to Sydney? Of course, as we should only have to use a few horses.
879. When the present line is completed, are you not likely to use that in sending the bricks to Sydney, instead of sending them by drays? We would never put a brick on it; that would never pay us, for we could not compete with Goodlet, who has a siding at Merrylands, because of the freight we would have to pay.
880. How do you compete with him now you are sending the bricks by your own teams? I suppose he is doing a fair share of business. We have not closed him up by any means, and do not expect to do so, and we are doing a good business too.
881. Provided you could get your bricks taken by the railway, *via* Hornsby and Strathfield to Sydney, at about the same cost as that of sending them by dray, are you not more likely to use that railway than to send the bricks by your own teams? I do not think so at all, because there is the extra cost of travelling.
882. But if the cost were the same? It would not be worth our while, unless we could take a decided saving by it. I do not think we should send bricks round by that line, unless we had an order for some place like Burwood.
883. But supposing the railway rates would admit of your sending bricks at about the same cost as now by dray? I do not think that would pay, as we would have our bricks landed at the far side of the city.
884. Supposing the cost of sending bricks to Sydney, *via* Hornsby was the same as the cost of sending by dray to Sydney, which route would you use? It is hardly probable we would go to the expense of a siding, as there would be very little difference in the cost, and we might as well go on as now.
885. In that case you think you would not be likely to use it? I do not for one moment think we should.
886. What is the distance of the present line from your works? We have not had it measured, but I guess it is something like one-third of a mile.
887. Then no matter which way you sent the bricks—whether by rail to Milson's Point or by rail to Hornsby—you would have to cart them to the railway? No; we would put them on the siding.
888. That would necessitate their being transhipped at Milson's Point? It would.
889. Either into vessels for abroad or into carts to supply the city of Sydney? That is it.
890. You think that route would be cheaper than *via* Hornsby to Darling Harbour? Yes; for at Darling Harbour, we should still have to have drays to cart the bricks away.

Robert Edward M'Intosh, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

- R. E. M'Intosh, Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.
891. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Gordon.
892. Have you lived there long? About forty-five years.
893. You were born there, I suppose? Yes, I was.
894. What are you; have you got an orchard? I began orcharding, and am in business, having land and other business agencies.
895. You are a land holder in the district? I have not 40 acres in the district.
896. We are told you can give us some evidence in favour of this proposal? I don't know about "in favour."
897. Well against it, whichever way you like? I wish to say this much: When this line was first started from Pearce's Corner, it was surveyed to Blue's Point. A Committee came along the line and represented to the land holders that if we gave our land we would get a railway to the deep waters of Port Jackson. It was not said at that time exactly that the line would go to Milson's Point. I was asked if I would give land, and use my influence with others in order to obtain other land for the Government. I gave land 2 chains wide through my orchard for the railway.
898. The committee you speak of was a local committee of patriots? The Government accepted the land.

899. They were not connected with the Government at all; the Government were not responsible for what they did or said? The Government recognized them, inasmuch as the Government accepted the land, and did not pay for it. I used my influence with many, and I think Mr. Archibald, Mr. McIntosh, Mr. Cornwell, Mr. Edwards, Mr. McKeown, and Mr. Treatt also gave their land on the understanding, as I did, that we were to get the railway to the deep waters of Port Jackson. If the railway is cut short and left in Berry's Bush, it will be of no manner of use to us. We want many things there, as I do at the present time, such as building materials, which we cannot get. If we carted them from Milson's Point to Berry's Bush we might as well cart them the whole distance. I am well acquainted with both routes—the Cremorne and the Milson's Point routes—and also with the Government land in the district. The Government have, I think, many thousands of acres which a few years back were worth very little. I bought land from them for about £2 an acre a few years since, and I hear that at a Government land sale recently they sold at £200 and £210 an acre, people buying in the hope that this railway would be completed. I have not seen a single building going up on an allotment of the Government land that was sold, the simple reason for people not building being that they have no proper means of access.

R. E.
M'Intosh,
Esq.
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900. *Mr. Dowel.*] Was the Government land to which you refer, and which realised over £200 per acre, of any better quality, or did it have any better advantages than the land for which you gave the Government £2 an acre? No; it had worse advantages. The land the Government sold for £200 an acre was nearly half a mile from the road. The land I bought is facing the road.

901. Have you a large acquaintance with the particular district through which the railway travels? Yes; I have a very large acquaintance with it. I know nearly every one in the district.

902. Are you aware that the Government have a large area of land in close proximity to this railway? I am.

903. Do you consider that that land will be increased in value if this railway is constructed to deep water? Most undoubtedly, and if the railway is not carried out the land will decrease in value.

904. You have stated that you gave your land on the distinct understanding that the line was to be continued to the deep waters of Port Jackson? I have.

905. If this line were not constructed, would you consider it a breach of faith on the part of the Government? I should, and that they ought to pay me for my land.

906. Because they took your land and gave you no compensation? They gave me compensation for other land and my orchards, but not for that 2 chains for the railway.

E. Du Faur, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

907. *Chairman.*] Do you reside at St. Leonards? No; I reside at Gordon at present—about 10 miles out from St. Leonards.

E. Du Faur,
Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.

908. Have you been living there any length of time? I have been about the district for the last twelve months, and have been living there with my wife and family about three months.

909. The Committee have been told that you wish to give some evidence;—would you be good enough to state what you have to say? I thought it well to put in an application, as I am permanently residing there, and am building my permanent home in that neighbourhood. I satisfied myself of the extreme salubrity of the neighbourhood, from the fact of its being about 600 feet in elevation above sea-level. In fact, it is like living in the western mountains for those who do not thrive in the Sydney air. I found it the case with my family and friends who went there. I determined to live out there, as I saw there was every prospect of a railway being constructed, but at the present time I am driving in every day. There is a very considerable traffic on the road—in fact, more traffic than there are public conveyances to meet, and I have very often to give people a lift. I have every belief that when once the communication by rail is completed, there will be a very large drain of population out of Sydney on to that ground. They can get in that direction what they cannot get anywhere else. They must go 50 miles on the Southern, 40 miles on the Western, and between 20 and 30 miles on the Illawarra line before they can get the same altitude, and to certain constitutions it is a question of life and death to get into a drier atmosphere than that of Sydney. That is the point I wished principally to bring forward. I knew the district seven or eight years ago, and went up there, but found it was useless to attempt to live there as I had my business to attend to, or I would have removed to it then.

910. You think that, by reason of its altitude, it would attract a large population, possibly from Sydney and the other suburbs? I am certain it will attract a great many of my own friends and also other portions of the public.

911. Who are living in the other suburbs? Yes, or closer to the water, which does not suit them—people who frequent the mountains whenever they can.

912. The line as proposed would not in any way serve the bulk of the population of St. Leonards at the present time as a means of transit? Except to let them get farther afield.

913. The route which it takes would not be any advantage to the bulk of the residents of North Shore? Well, they are living on the Shore itself, and therefore cannot want any railway at all. As the St. Leonards' population is scattered east and west along the shore, a line at right angles coming from the north could only strike that settlement at one point.

914. Is it not a fact that three-quarters of the population will be to the east? I am not in a position to speak as to that.

915. Would the present population which is on the line between Hornsby and Milson's Point be sufficient to justify the construction of the line? I think so undoubtedly. Experience shows that, not only here, but in every country in the world, railway communication increases population. You have your experience of the Illawarra line, which produced nothing the first year and paid a handsome dividend the third.

916. Do you know the estimated cost of this line? No, I do not.

917. Or the working expenses or interest? No. I think that the railway might be worked very economically for (say) six months or so—there would be no necessity to have station-masters and porters and gatekeepers at every place—in order first to prove the increase of traffic.

918. *Mr. Cox.*] Do you think that the traffic would increase to such an extent as to warrant the country in completing this somewhat expensive line? I feel as certain of it as one can feel of anything in the future. I know that numbers of my own friends are only waiting for it to go up there, and I believe a very large population will go on to the high ground as soon as they are enabled to get there, but not if they would be blocked by the tramway, which would be as great a nuisance as at Redfern, by which many of us have been driven from the western suburbs. If that is perpetuated on the North Shore, of course that district will be locked up till a railway is forced upon it.

- E. Du Faur, Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.
919. The only traffic you anticipate for this railway is a passenger traffic? I anticipate that the whole of the northern traffic of the Colony will come there, as it would save 10 miles, instead of going by Ryde and Redfern. It is only between 12 and 13 miles from Hornsby to Milson's Point, and it is 21 miles to Redfern.
920. The trip across the harbour notwithstanding? The trip across the harbour is certainly pleasanter than that by tramway from Redfern. If you get out of the tramway you must get into a cab, and you would only have to do that at Circular Quay.
921. You are aware of the probable expense of this extension? I have seen in the Press that it will be an expensive undertaking, and it seems that any work done on the North Shore must, from the character of the North Shore, be expensive.
922. That is irrespective of resumption? Irrespective of the question as to the place to which you take it, the expense of taking the railway to the water must be expensive.
923. Taking that into consideration, you think it will pay to complete this work? I have every belief that in a very few years you would have to double the line.
924. In the event of a high-level bridge being constructed between the high land of Sydney and North Shore, would not a railway down to the deep water be so much money thrown away? Of course that is another question, if there is any possibility of a high-level bridge being built.
925. Do you think it is inevitable that it must come? Then I should think that starting from a level that would fit the bridge would be better. I am quite ready to say that.
926. *Mr. Dowd.*] What profession or business occupation do you follow? I am a land agent at present. I am only interested in the squatting industry. I am not a land agent in the ordinary acceptation of the term. I have nothing to do with suburban land. I am not interested in one single acre in the county of Cumberland, except what I am living on.
927. Would that traffic to which you referred be served by the construction of the line now under consideration? I fancy so. The omnibuses start pretty full from Gordon. A new one was started last week. I came down by it this morning for a change, and it was crowded. Others start from Chatswood, and they all come down to Milson's Point, and are generally full, and not infrequently I pick up people who have been unable to get accommodation in them.
928. You stated that you believed that Milson's Point should be the terminus of the Great Northern line, and have given as a reason that the line is 8 or 9 miles shorter than that to Redfern? Yes.
929. Have you any acquaintance with the northern districts? I have been in them.
930. Have you any large knowledge of them? No; I do not pretend to have a large knowledge of them, farther than Newcastle.
931. Are you well acquainted with the route along which the line now passes? Yes.
932. Do you think it likely that a large population will ever be called into existence in that part of the country between Hornsby and Milson's Point? I am very strongly of that opinion, and that in a very short time—in as short a time as it took population to settle on the Illawarra line—because this is more favourably situated than the suburban part of the Illawarra line.
933. Do you know anything at all of the probability of any goods traffic being carried on this line? I should think there would be a very considerable freight traffic—produce traffic. At present everything is brought down by horse team. There is a very large area under orchard cultivation.
934. Any other produce, excepting fruit? There is a large area of good land available for the production of fruit, dairy produce, and vegetables.

Edward John Smith, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

- E. J. Smith, Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.
935. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am engaged in the Civil Service.
936. How long have you been living at the North Shore? Ten years last March.
937. The Committee have been informed you desire to give evidence in reference to this inquiry;— would you be good enough to state what you have got to say? I was a purchaser of five of the allotments of the subdivision of the Crown lands, situated near Lyndfield station, which were sold about twelve months ago, for which I paid the highest prices realized at the sale, viz., up to £210 per acre. Three of these allotments I purchased for relatives and two for myself, with the intention of residing there on the extension of the railway to Milson's Point. I have no hesitation in saying that it was the expectation that this extension was a thing of the immediate future that induced me, and other purchasers, to offer for these lands, and to give for them a price, I feel assured, they would not have brought had it not been thought that Milson's Point was to be the future terminus of the railway. I feel persuaded that every purchaser, as well as myself, on the occasion regarded the extension of the railway to Milson's Point as almost, if not altogether, a thing of certainty, and this conviction received strong confirmation from the language of the auctioneer, Mr. Greig, of Messrs. Richardson and Wrench, previous to the sale. These Crown lands in the district of Gordon, which were subdivided and sold in October of last year, consisted of 1,265 acres, and were offered in 296 allotments. Of the gross area, about 500 acres were sold, which realized about £33,000, or an average of £66 per acre. Now anyone who has gone over a portion of this land, as I did, must have noted the unfitness of the greater portion of it for anything but suburban residential purposes, being terribly broken country, and in many parts precipitous. I have been informed by a large holder of land in this district, and one quite competent to judge, that if this land had been offered for sale without the probability of railway communication, it would not have brought £10 per acre, and in this opinion I quite concur. Therefore, the railway at present constructed, together with its probable extension to Milson's Point, benefited the Government in the sale of these lands to the extent of about £56 per acre, or about £28,000 on the 500 acres sold. The unsold portions of the subdivision, about 765 acres, in the absence of the proposed extension, will, I submit, be almost unsaleable; but, if the railway is extended to Milson's Point, it will assuredly sell at an average of not less than £50 per acre, or a total of £38,000. As further evidence of the increased value of land along this line, I may state that I have seen the accounts of sales of land at Chatswood in the years 1879, 1881, and 1882, at the prices of £50, £140, and £150 per acre respectively; and lands adjoining the two last-mentioned lots have been purchased this year at the prices of £425 and £500 respectively. These increases I attribute principally to the railway and anticipated extension, as they are convenient to the Chatswood station and purchased for residential purposes.

purposes. I simply bring these statements under the notice of this Committee to indicate the probabilities of settlement along this line, in the event of its being continued to Milson's Point, and the almost certain results that would follow the public being put in possession of speedy transit and better communication with Sydney. Speaking for myself and those relatives for whom I purchased land, I may state that any circuitous route to Sydney or inferior means of transit, involving the loss of time and additional expense, would considerably reduce the prospect of our making the land a place of residence. This, I opine, is the case with many others. Milson's Point I look upon as the natural outlet for all the traffic coming from the western side of the present tramway, and looking upon the railway as mainly suburban, I think that the public convenience will be better served by its extension to Milson's Point than to any other place. Calculations in connection with the probabilities of this railway, if extended to Milson's Point, have been submitted to you, and it is not necessary, therefore, for me to attempt to go into this aspect of the question; but I would just refer to the rapid settlement that took place, and the great revenue now derived from the suburban portion of the Illawarra line, viz., Como to Sydney. The revenue received from that line, Hurstville to Sydney, in 1884, the 9 miles being all at that time completed, was £5,700. In 1886, over the 13 miles, Como to Sydney, an equal distance to that of the North Shore line from Milson's Point to Pearce's Corner, showed a revenue of £43,500. Now, if such an increase in the settlement along the Illawarra line took place in two years as to show an increase in the revenue from £5,700 to £43,500, surely it is not unreasonable to expect that this railway, through one of the most picturesque localities surrounding Sydney, and so naturally adapted by its altitude for suburban settlement, should in a comparatively short time show such a revenue as would, in addition to paying working expenses, pay a handsome return on the cost of construction, viz., £450,000. A revenue equivalent to that derived from the Illawarra line in 1886, after allowing £13,000 for working expenses, would show a net return of over 6½ per cent.

E. J. Smith,
Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.

938. *Mr. Cox.*] Of course the Illawarra railway only touches Sydney at Redfern, consequently people at Sydney have to go by tram or 'bus to and from Redfern;—would not the same apply to this railway, supposing it were met by tram at the top of the hill? No, I do not think so. First, because I think—and not only I, but the public also appear to think, as evidenced by the agitation for a city railway—that to travel by tramway as now in Sydney is a great disadvantage; and secondly, because I think an extension of the tramway on the North Shore would be about three times the length of the tramway in Sydney, and by having to travel by tram instead of by train I should lose about twenty-five minutes on every trip to and from Lyndfield station.

939. The tram has not stopped the Illawarra line from being a great success, and would the fact of the tram meeting the railway at the Crow's Nest not act in the same way in connection with this line as in the case of the Illawarra line? It is not because of the tram that the Illawarra line has become a success, but in spite of it.

940. Then, in spite of the tram, would not this line be, in a corresponding manner, a success? No, I don't think so, because the distance is three times as great.

941. What would be the distance? 2½ miles.

942. What is the distance between Circular Quay and Redfern? I believe the distance between Redfern and the present terminus of the tram in Bridge-street is a mile.

943. *Mr. Dowel.*] You made a comparison between the Illawarra railway and the North Shore line;—are you acquainted with both routes? Only that I have travelled on both routes.

944. You know the country, I suppose, tolerably well? Moderately well.

945. You pointed the Illawarra railway out as having been a successful line as regards the return it has made? Yes.

946. Is there anything as regards the country on the Illawarra line that there is not on the North Shore line? I think that the Illawarra line will not compare with the North Shore line for suburban settlement, because the land is too flat. The great advantage of the North Shore line is its altitude.

947. Then you consider the natural advantages of the North Shore line far superior to the advantages of the Illawarra line? I certainly do for the purpose of settlement.

948. Do you consider it will compare for residential purposes? I do, certainly.

949. And you are of opinion, I presume, that in all probability a large population will settle in that part of the country if the railway is constructed? I think so.

950. What is your opinion in reference to this proposed line being the terminus of the Great Northern line? I think that will very greatly depend on the Commissioners for Railways. If they say they will run their trains from Milson's Point to the Northern Districts it will become the terminus of the Northern line.

951. Do you think the shorter distance should induce people to travel by this line? I certainly think so, considering there is a difference of 8 miles which might be saved in time and expense.

952. And do you not think that its water-frontage is in favour of its being the terminus for the northern traffic? Viewed for passenger traffic, I should say not.

953. Goods traffic then? I don't know that we have a probability of a large goods traffic.

Henry Cornwell, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

954. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Gordon.

955. How long have you been living there? About ten years.

956. What occupation do you follow? I am Secretary of the Southern Insurance Company. I have written my evidence; may I read it?

H. Cornwell,
Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.

957. Yes. What you read will be what you are prepared to swear to? Yes. My desire in attending before the Parliamentary Committee in connection with the railway from Hornsby to Milson's Point is to state, as a resident of Gordon for about ten years, that I agreed to give the land through which the railway passes where I am living, because I understood the line was to be constructed to the water at Blue's or Milson's Point. If I had known that the line was to have stopped short of the water, or if there had been any deviation contemplated, I would not have given any land—and on that understanding I advised some landowners to accept the Government valuation. In one instance a neighbour and myself induced one proprietor to give some 2½ acres, or thereabouts. I filled up the form supplied by the Crown Solicitor, and induced him to sign it. The line damaged my property considerably.

958. How do you travel in and out? I drive in and out.

959. Have you done that for about ten years? Yes.

960. For what distance? I believe it is 10 miles to my house by road.

961.

- H. Cornwell, Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.
961. You would not use the railway if you had one? I would. I would be very happy to use one.
962. *Mr. Lee.*] Who induced you to give the land? Well, a committee of gentlemen called upon me to ask would we give the land if this railway were constructed.
963. Who appointed the committee? I do not know.
964. A committee of residents? I think Mr. M'Keown of North Shore was one.
965. I do not want to know the names. They were a committee of residents appointed by the North Shore residents? One of the gentlemen who came to me, I believe, was a Government official. I am speaking entirely from memory.
966. What I wish to know is, did that committee represent the Government in any shape or form? That I could not say.
967. Was any Government official instructed to wait on you to induce you to give your land for railway purposes? I cannot say that, but a form was brought from the Crown Solicitor and I was asked to sign it, and I filled up a similar form for Mr. Archibald to sign. The day before, or some time prior to that, Mr. Archibald had point blank refused to give any land.
968. Was it not in consequence of its being known that you intended to give the land that this committee obtained the form and submitted it to you for your signature? I do not know that. It may have occurred in other instances perhaps, but not in my own.
969. Were you under the impression that the Government were making the proposal to you to induce you to give the land? I viewed it partly in that way. In the first place, tenders were called in 1885 for the construction of a line from Hornsby to St. Leonards, and after that for the construction of a line from Hornsby to the Crow's Nest, and I understood that if we gave the land either one or the other would be carried out, and if I had known that the intention was not to carry out that line I would not have given my land.
970. The general impression abroad was that the line would be constructed from Hornsby to the deep waters of Port Jackson? I understood that. The feeling generally was so.
971. But there was no representation made to you by the Government of the day that if you gave your land the line would be constructed? No.
972. *Mr. Cox.*] What quantity of land did you give the Government? I think between 4 and 5 acres.
973. At what rate did you value that land per acre? I have not put any value upon it. About 2 acres was part of my vineyard—a chain or a chain and a half from the back of my house.
974. You gave that to the Government, believing that the railway would add considerably to the value of your property? Of course.
975. And that was given under the understanding that the railway was only to go as far as the Crow's Nest? I did not make any stipulation. I saw that tenders were called for to construct the line to the Crow's Nest, and I took it that that line would be carried out.
976. To the Crow's Nest, but not to deep water? Well, to that or to Blue's Point. The line was surveyed to Blue's Point, and I understood from the surveyor that a better line could be got to Milson's Point, and we thought the line would be carried to the water.
977. Did you give this land free to the Government on the understanding that that railway was to go to the Crow's Nest or be continued? I, like many others, had an idea that it would have been taken to Blue's Point or Milson's Point, but the last tender was only to the Crow's Nest.
978. If the railway was to have gone to the Crow's Nest only, would you have given the land? Oh, most decidedly.

John Francis Coffee, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

- J. F. Coffee, Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.
979. *Chairman.*] You are a resident of Gore Hill, are you not? No—Mowbray Road, North Willoughby.
980. How long have you been living over that way? About six years.
981. We have been informed you desire to offer some evidence to the Committee;—would you be good enough to tell us what you have got to say? Some six months ago, in anticipation of this railway being built, we made an investment with the view of starting a nursery. We have spent £3,000 in purchasing the land and making improvements, and think of spending more if we should be able to ship from North Shore. We do not care much for a local market, and if the railway stops at the Crow's Nest it will be practically useless to us. I suppose we would be the largest shippers, excepting the brickmakers, on that line for the next few years.
982. How far out do you live? The nursery is about 10 miles out—1 mile 70 chains this side of Hornsby, at No. 4 cutting.
983. Can you send the produce from there into Sydney at Darling Harbour? It will eat up the profits if you make freights too dear.
984. Would you not be compensated by what you would save by not having to send across the water? My idea was to put it on the train near our nursery, take it to the foreshores, put it on a lighter, and load it on the different colonial and intercolonial steamers. My primary object was to save freight.
985. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is the nature of the industry you are starting? A nursery.
986. Do you anticipate very much produce from that being sent away? Yes.
987. Almost equal to the brickyards? Well, I do not say that; but I do not think there is any industry that will rival ours during the next five years, except the brickyards. I do not know what they would do.
988. They would run into some thousands of tons—yours is not likely to go up to hundreds, is it? Oh, yes.
989. What is the extent of your holding? I think 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres.
990. It would be a very prolific output for such an area? You can grow 19,500 trees to the acre, each tree about 5 or 6 feet high. It is only about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the nearest station.
991. How long is it since you purchased the land? In April this year.
992. Did the vendor of the land give you to understand the Government were pledged to take the railway to the waters of Port Jackson? No; I did not ask him any question.
993. Do you know if the vendor gave any of his land for railway purposes? I do not know. The vendor was a company near Pitt-street, near Bathurst-street—the Sydney Permanent. I see that some gentleman the other day suggested that there might be large ferry-boats to take the cars across the harbour, and Mr. Garrard interjected that there was not so much traffic in America, where these boats were used—not so much

- much traffic on the rivers and lakes in America as there would be in Sydney harbour. I beg leave to differ from that statement. In the city of Detroit there are seven large boats continually conveying cars across, and which hold from fifteen to twenty-four cars each. They convey all the commerce of Lake Michigan, Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Georgian Bay, and St. Clair River; and then, 60 miles above Detroit at Port Huron, there are four boats that transfer cars across the St. Clair River. J. F. Coffee,
Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.
994. What is the distance? Half a mile in Port Huron, and three quarters of a mile in Detroit.
995. How often do those boats leave each side? As soon as they can get loaded—about every half hour.
996. Then the boats here travel to and fro twice as often as the boats to which you refer? You are talking of passenger service. I am speaking of freight service.
997. *Mr. Humphery.*] What sort of boats are they—double-ended transfer boats? Yes.
998. Do you know the cost of construction? No.
999. How many trains a day do they convey across? About every half hour they load up to go across.
1000. From what you have seen in Detroit and elsewhere, do you think it is practicable to have trains conveyed from Sydney to the North Shore in double-ended transfer boats? I do, and have thought so ever since I came here.
1001. *Chairman.*] How are they taken across the river? By steam.
1002. Are the waters as rough as Sydney Harbour? We do not consider Sydney harbour rough. There is a much stronger stream in the St. Clair River at Port Huron, and in Detroit River.
1003. *Mr. Lackey.*] What did you say was the extent of your nursery at North Shore? $17\frac{1}{2}$ acres.
1004. Have you been working it very long? I commenced to clear about six months ago, and have now got about 11 acres cleared.
1005. How much have you under stocks? About 5 acres. I could not buy stocks this year.
1006. Have you taken this up as a new industry, or is it an old occupation of yours? A new enterprise.
1007. You employ skilled men; you do not do it from your own knowledge? No; except what knowledge a layman could acquire by close study the last couple of years.
1008. You say you intend exporting these young trees you produce in the nursery from the shore? Yes.
1009. To other countries or different parts of this Colony? To different parts of the Australasian Colonies.
1010. Are you giving your attention principally to deciduous trees or to evergreens? Both, and plants.
1011. Are you cultivating the orange and the lemon? Yes.

James George Edwards, Esq., sworn, and further examined:—

1012. *Chairman.*] What is it you wanted to say about that committee? It is by way of explaining what was said by Mr. Cornwell with reference to the giving of the land along the railway route. I was one of the committee who waited upon the residents of Gordon and Willoughby to see how many of them would give land. J. G.
Edwards,
Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.
1013. I suppose it was a committee appointed by people over there who wanted to get the railway? Yes. We waited on the Minister for Works in order to see if he would call for tenders for the construction of the line for which the money had been voted previously. The Minister asked how many of us would be prepared to give our land. I said I was, and had a list of other parties in the district who had also promised to give their land. He said he did not think there was sufficient, and that the agreement signed by them was not sufficiently binding, and he adjourned the deputation, I think, for a week or a fortnight.
1014. *Mr. Garrard.*] What Minister was that? I think it was Mr. Lyne, but I am not quite positive. We were then directed to wait upon Mr. Williams, the Crown Solicitor, to see whether the document we had signed was sufficiently binding. The Crown Solicitor thought it was not, and he prepared a document, and requested us to wait on the people again. We went from the Crown Solicitor's office and waited on Mr. Cornwell, Mr. Treatt, and other residents of the district. Some consented to give their land, and others refused to give theirs. That was the way the thing was done.
1015. *Mr. Cox.*] Upon that paper did the railway purport to be from Hornsby to the Crow's Nest, or whither? From Hornsby to the deep waters of Port Jackson, we understood.
1016. What was the exact wording of the paper? I cannot give the exact wording, but the purport, I believe, was from Hornsby junction to the deep waters of Port Jackson.
1017. Is that paper in the hands of the Government? It is. We lodged it with the Government.
1018. *Mr. Humphery.*] What is the bus fare from Milson's Point to the "Great Northern Hotel"? Sixpence.
1019. To Lindfield? One shilling, up as far as Waterhouse's, which is 8 miles from Milson's Point.
1020. To Stony Creek Corner? A mile further on, it is 1s. 3d.; and to "Jenkins' Hotel," very nearly another mile, it is 1s. 6d. The 10-mile peg is just beyond "Jenkins' Hotel."

James Banford Thompson, Esq., land valuer, sworn, and examined:—

1021. *Chairman.*] You are in the Government service, what is your position? At present I am a land valuer in the Public Works Department. J. B.
Thompson,
Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.
1022. Have you inspected this line from Hornsby to Milson's Point? Yes; I dealt with all the resumptions on the constructed part of the line, and furnished an estimate of the probable cost of the land between the terminus of the line that has been made and Milson's Point.
1023. What was that estimate? The total was £133,909.
1024. The whole of the land through which the proposed railway passes on the Berry Estate is not built upon? It is quite unimproved.
1025. The foreshores on the eastern side of Lavender Bay are practically unimproved? Yes.
1026. There are no improvements there of any value? Not much.
1027. Are those the only lands on these 2 miles 21 chains—from Milson's Point to the terminus at Lane Cove Road—which are unimproved? Berry's Estate is unimproved, and there is very little improved on the eastern side of Lavender Bay.
1028. Otherwise there is no unimproved land? No.

J. B.
Thompson,
Esq.
22 Oct., 1889.

1029. So that if it were not determined to construct this line at the present time, and these lands were now resumed, it would not add much to the cost of constructing it hereafter? Except there were a rise in the value of property, as frequently occurs.
1030. But I am saying, suppose it were deemed inexpedient to construct the line of railway from the Lane Cove Road to Milson's Point now, but the Government were to resume the unimproved lands at the present time, with the view of ultimately constructing it at some time or other, do you think it would be a wise thing to do? I think it would be wise to resume the unimproved land.
1031. In proportion to the unimproved land, the improved land would not give it any increase in value? Nothing like in the same proportion.
1032. You have not got the reputation of valuing land too highly? No; I think I am rather extravagant.
1033. But the land-owners do not consider you extravagant? I would be very sorry to satisfy the land-owners.
1034. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is the width of the land proposed to be resumed? I think it is about 2 chains. That is the usual width taken.
1035. Have you allowed 2 chains on the water frontage for instance? Yes; I have a plan showing the width, and I have a book of reference.
1036. *Mr. Dowel.*] In your opinion, would the construction of this railway improve those unimproved properties through which it would pass? I think it would do so very largely. I feel certain of that, and there is the enhanced value, for which some credits will be taken, and which I have not taken into account. I estimated what I considered the fee-simple value at the time I made the estimate.
1037. But the enhanced value which you are entitled to take into consideration under the existing law you have not considered at present? No; I have not.
1038. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is the Lavender Bay frontage Crown property, or does it belong to private persons? It is nearly all alienated.
1039. Who are the owners? There are a great number of them. It reaches from Cavill's baths down to Milson's Point.
1040. It is all private property? Yes.
1041. The whole 2,000 feet? Yes; except streets.
1042. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do I understand you to say that the applications to reclaim and purchase have been granted to nearly all the holders on the eastern side of Lavender Bay? There are several applications to reclaim that have been granted.
1043. Are the reclamations carried out? Some of them have been carried out, and others have not.

WEDNESDAY, 23 OCTOBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

William Cornelius Goddard, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

W. C.
Goddard, Esq.
23 Oct., 1889.

1044. *Chairman.*] You are Chairman of the Board of Directors of the North Shore Steam Ferry Company are you not? I am one of the directors.
1045. We were informed that you could give the Committee some valuable evidence as to the proposed extension of this line of railway from the Crow's Nest to Milson's Point;—do you know the length—2 miles and 21 chains? I know the proposed line. I would like to say I have very little information to give, but what I have to give I have written.
1046. You understand you are swearing to what you have written—that is your evidence? Yes.
1047. Very well then; will you read it, please? I have been resident at North Shore for the past nineteen years, and have been a member of the Board of the North Shore Ferry Company since its formation, over eleven years ago. Comparing the present traffic with that of ten years ago, the company could then efficiently meet the requirements of the trade, of which Milson's Point forms part, with steamers licensed to carry 640 passengers, whilst now more frequent trips have to be made with steamers in the same trade carrying 2,580 passengers. The traffic by the vehicular steamers during the same period has correspondingly increased. About fourteen months ago, shortly after the establishment of the uniform fare of one penny, a return was initiated, showing the removals to and from the North Shore by the Company's steamers, the result of which is that to date there have been 337 removals from and 554 removals to the North Shore during that period. As the North Shore bears the same relation to Sydney as Birkenhead to Liverpool, or Brooklyn to New York, which places have enormously increased in population, it is not too much to expect that in the course of a very few years the railway to Milson's Point will pay handsomely.
1048. I suppose you found that the better class of steamers developed the traffic? Well, of course, the facilities we gave the public developed the traffic and the population also.
1049. Have you any idea how much the number of passengers has increased during the last few years—take four or five years? I should say that in the last five years they have increased 33 per cent.
1050. Would you not say that the bulk of that increase is away to the east of this proposed railway line—that the people are residents to the east of this line, and it could be of no use to them; the growth of population is near Neutral Bay, Mossman's Bay, and up that way, towards Middle Harbour, is it not? I am not prepared to say that. Those living right up the North Shore might possibly not come over by our boats to remove there; very likely they do not.
1051. *Mr. Cox.*] What connection is there between this railway scheme and your North Shore ferry-boats? There is a tram-line for a certain distance, but there is really no connection between the tramway and the railway at present.

1052. Beyond the tram-line, what increase do you expect in the ferry traffic in the event of the railway being constructed? That is a question I can hardly answer. I can only speak as to the ferry service.
1053. The passengers going from shore to shore would have nothing to do with the interior of the country or with the country miles back—between Sydney Harbour and Hornsby on the Homebush line? I think they would, because it would become a suburban line.
1054. Have you formed any estimate as to the probable increase in the traffic on your boats in the event of the railway being constructed between Port Jackson and Hornsby? We have not considered that question, but we should be prepared to put on direct boats to Milson's Point instead of making that point as at present a port of call.
1055. Have you formed any idea as to whether there would be any traffic other than passenger traffic? The vehicular traffic would be sure to develop.
1056. Would there be any goods traffic? I take it that there would be a good proportion of goods traffic.
1057. In what respect? I suppose the fruit and produce from Lane Cove would come down by that way.
1058. You are aware, I presume, of the estimated cost of this extension from Crow's Nest? I am not.
1059. Therefore you are not able to say whether the increased traffic is likely to pay a fair percentage on the outlay? I am only speaking in a general way.
1060. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you reside at North Shore? Yes; I have resided there for nineteen years.
1061. Then you have a considerable acquaintance with the whole of the district which the line traverses, and with the proposed route of the new section? I am sorry to say that my acquaintance is not very considerable. I simply reside across the water, and I have not seen as much of the upper part of North Shore as I might have done.
1062. Do you know anything of the country through which the line goes? I have seen it several times.
1063. From your knowledge of Milson's Point, do you think it is a suitable place to be the terminus of the Great Northern line? Yes, decidedly.
1064. Have you any knowledge of the northern districts at all—the districts beyond Hornsby? Yes; I have been over the line two or three times.
1065. You are aware that large quantities of wool, hay, and other produce are sent down from the north? Yes.
1066. Well, in view of that knowledge, are you still of opinion that Milson's Point would be a proper place for the terminus of the line? I am speaking more particularly in regard to the passenger traffic.
1067. I desire to know whether you, as a person having a large knowledge of the ferry service to Milson's Point, think that that point would be a suitable terminus for the Great Northern line for goods as well as passengers? I do, with the foreshores of Lavender Bay.
1068. You think it would offer more facilities for the transaction of business by the public than either Redfern or Darling Harbour? I do.
1069. *Mr. Lackey.*] Have you noticed any perceptible alteration in the ferry traffic since the establishment of the tram service? Decidedly. Before the establishment of the tram service, two-thirds of our traffic went to Lavender Bay, but three-fourths of the increased traffic now goes to Milson's Point.
1070. The increase in the traffic has been very marked generally? Undoubtedly; but of course that is largely due to the liberality of the directors of the North Shore Ferry Co.

W. C.
Goddard, Esq.
23 Oct., 1889.

James George Edwards, Esq., sworn, and further examined:—

1071. *Chairman.*] The Committee understand that you desire to make a statement concerning the evidence you gave yesterday about the expensiveness of the tram service over the railway service? Yesterday I do not think I made myself very clear. I have looked over that part of the report of my evidence to which Mr. Lee took exception. From my point of view, I believe the figures are correct; but at the same time I do not think I presented them in the clearest possible manner, and I desire now to present them in a way which will show that the result is the same. Yesterday, in referring to the cost of the tram service over the railway service I gave the following figures:—Working expenses of the tramway, £9,717; working expenses of the railway, £2,000; leaving a balance of £7,717 against the tramway, which sum, capitalised at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., is equal to £220,485. Now, with regard to the railway, the estimated cost is £262,000, and the value of the land over the tunnel is estimated to be £28,000, leaving a balance of £234,000, and deducting cost of tram extension, £30,000, we get a balance of £204,000. The tramway service would cost £220,485, and the railway service £204,000, leaving a balance of £16,485 in favour of the railway. The matter would have been less obscure if it had been stated in the following form, which I think the Committee will admit is fair, and which reaches the same deduction:—The working expenses of the tramway scheme would be £9,717, and the interest on cost of extension (£30,000 at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.), £1,050, making a total cost of £10,767. Now, taking the railway scheme, the estimated cost of extension is £262,000, minus £28,000—I am not taking the £30,000 equals—and the interest on £234,000 at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. is £8,190, and the working expenses are £2,000 a year. The total working expenses of the railway scheme are £10,190 a year, whereas the tramway scheme costs £10,760 a year, leaving a balance of £577 in favour of the railway; £577 annually is interest, at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., on £16,485. We have therefore arrived at the same result in another way, and I think in a far clearer and perhaps more logical way. There is only one other thing I wish to say. Yesterday Mr. Lee asked whether it would not be cheaper to take coal to the works from Strathfield than from Darling Harbour. I find that it would be decidedly cheaper to take the coal from Strathfield. At the same time, what I said yesterday was correct—we would rather take Bulli coal than mountain coal, because the carriage would be only 3s. 6d.

J. G.
Edwards,
Esq.
23 Oct., 1889.

TUESDAY,

TUESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER, 1889.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson, at Milson's Point.

Joseph Barling, Esq., Under Secretary for Public Works, sworn and further examined:—

J. Barling,
Esq.

5 Nov., 1889.

1072. *Chairman.*] It has been stated here by some of the witnesses that some people gave their lands free of charge to the Government in consideration of their constructing this line of railway to the deep waters of Port Jackson;—do you know of any such gift? As I have explained before, I have had no personal knowledge of the earlier matters relating to this extension; but it having been intimated to me that such a statement had been made, and that the Committee required information on the matter, I instructed the officer who has the papers in his charge to go carefully through the whole matter, and see if any reference to any such promise having been made was to be found among the papers, and he could find none.

1073. Are you able to say that there are no documents among the papers showing any gift by anybody? So far as I know there are not; but a careful *précis* is being made of the whole of the papers, and I think we shall be able to have it ready to-morrow and I will put it, together with the whole of the papers, before the Committee.

1074. *Dr. Garrau.*] I understand that in recommending [this extension to the water's edge you are representing the views of the Department of Works? Quite so.

1075. Is this extension to the water's edge intended as a substitute for the bridge? I think not.

1076. Then I understand that it is the view of the Department that we should make the extension to the water's edge whether the bridge is made or not? I think so.

1077. Leaving the bridge as an open question to be decided hereafter? Quite so.

1078. But if a bridge should be made in the course of a few years, would it not, for the purposes of suburban traffic, which we are told would not begin till 3 miles from the water's edge, supersede this line to a certain extent? No doubt it would to a certain extent do away with the necessity for it; but I think there will be traffic for the extension for all time. No doubt there will always be traffic from this line to the region round about Milson's Point.

1079. We are told that this railway is not desired for what you may call the present North Shore residential population, but is to accommodate the existing residential population between the 3-mile post and Hornsby? Quite so.

1080. And it is to accommodate future traffic, which is expected quickly to develop, that this line to the water's edge is recommended? Quite so.

1081. And we are to spend £262,000 for that purpose? Quite so.

1082. But if we are to make a bridge, would not all the residents beyond the 3-mile post go straight over the bridge to Sydney? I daresay they would, but it must be remembered that eventually the railway would develop a very large city on the North Shore, and some time must elapse before we can have the bridge. We shall have a city to deal with then. The extension will be always available, always useful, and always needed in such an event.

1083. Can you tell me whether there has been any estimate made in the Department as to the cost of the bridge? Estimates, I believe, have been made with respect to the cost of a bridge, but I have not the papers before me. They are out of the office. I have tried to get them, but have failed to do so up to the present time, and I am searching for them now. They have been dealt with by several Departments, and I am trying to collect the papers together, and shall then have a connected account of the whole transactions with regard to the bridge.

1084. Have you any idea of the amount of the estimate? I should not like to commit myself unprepared to any statement.

1085. Do you know whether that estimate included the approaches on either side? I should not like to answer. I have not a personal knowledge of the papers. I have not had an opportunity to look at them, and I would not like to commit myself till I have prepared myself.

1086. From what you have seen of the papers, do you know if any scheme has been designed by the engineers for connecting the line with (say) the Observatory Hill? As a matter of fact, I believe Sir John Fowler prepared some sort of a scheme and estimate; but I have not the particulars before me, and I believe other schemes by other engineers have been propounded.

1087. Do you know whether there has been any alternative route for a bridge considered at all by the engineers? I could not say.

1088. You have only had a slight view of the papers? Yes, a very slight view of the papers.

1089. Is there anybody in the Department who would know? I very much question whether there is any one in the Department who could answer the question in the absence of the papers, which we are trying to collect together. As soon as I have the papers together I will be able to give a connected account of the matter.

1090. You know the goods route was at one time to go to Ball's Head;—was there ever a scheme to carry a bridge across from there to Balmain? I do not know. I hardly think there could have been, but I am not sure.

1091. If the proposal before us is to be looked upon as an alternative proposal, we have not the details of the other alternatives? We would hardly look at it in the light of an alternative scheme. Our contention is that it is desirable to take the line to Milson's Point.

1092. You treat it on its own merits? Yes, quite irrespective of the bridge.

1093.

1093. *Mr. Cox.*] Has there been any proposal to make a tunnel under the harbour, instead of constructing a bridge across it? There have been some proposals to make a tunnel under the harbour, but the matter is at present in such an experimental stage that I could not give any evidence on the point at all, and I do not know that any others could, so far as the Department is concerned.

J. Barling,
Esq.
5 Nov., 1889.

Robert Henry De Low, Esq., Clerk in the Department of Lands, sworn and examined:—

1094. *Mr. Copeland.*] You are in the Lands Department are you not? Yes.

1095. What position do you occupy there? Clerk in charge of the Miscellaneous and Alienation branches.

R. H. De Low,
Esq.
5 Nov., 1889.

1096. Did you occupy that position at the time of the Crown lands subdivision at Gordon? Yes.

1097. At the time of the sale? Yes.

1098. Who were the auctioneers who sold that land? Richardson and Wrench.

1099. It has been implied in evidence taken before this Committee with reference to the construction of this railway that when the lands at Gordon were sold the auctioneers gave the purchasers to understand that the railway would be carried on to Milson's Point; as an officer of the Lands Department can you tell this Committee whether any instructions emanated from the Lands Department to the auctioneers to make such a statement? None whatever.

1100. Were you at the sale? Yes.

1101. You generally attend those sales, do you not? Yes.

1102. Did you hear any such statement made by the auctioneer? I did not hear any such statement.

1103. If such a statement had been made would you have been likely to hear it? Yes. I sat alongside the auctioneer, Mr. A. W. S. Gregg.

1104. And no such statement was made? Not that I heard.

1105. Either by the auctioneer or any lands official? No, sir. If it had been I, not having known of such a promise, should have deemed it my duty to have checked the auctioneers.

1106. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you know what the auctioneer did promise the buyers who were there; were you paying attention to him all the time—before he commenced the sale and during the sale—so as to know what he did say? I was following him closely.

1107. Did you hear any promise made by the auctioneer in connection with this railway matter? I heard no promise whatever made.

1108. Were any other Lands officials there? Yes.

1109. Who were they? Mr. Marr was there.

1110. *Mr. Dowel.*] Were any statements made by the auctioneer to the effect that the land would, in all probability, be materially increased in value by the construction of this line to deep water? No, sir,—not that I heard.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.
Railway to connect the North Shore Railway with Port Jackson at Milson's Point.

APPENDIX.

A.

REPORT BY MR. JOHN WHITTON, ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR RAILWAYS, DATED 17 MAY, 1888.

Department of Public Works, Railway Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Sydney, 23rd October, 1889.

MEMORANDUM to the Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

I FORWARD herewith for the information of the Parliamentary Committee, a copy of a report of the Engineer-in-Chief, on the subject of the "Extension of the Railway from the termination of the present contract from Pearce's Corner to St. Leonards to the deep waters of Port Jackson," dated May 17th, 1888.

W. H. QUODLING,
Secretary.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Sydney, 17th May, 1888.

(*Minute Paper.*)

SUBJECT:—"EXTENSION OF THE RAILWAY FROM THE TERMINATION OF THE PRESENT CONTRACT FROM PEARCE'S CORNER TO ST LEONARDS, TO THE DEEP WATERS OF PORT JACKSON."

THREE routes have been surveyed, commencing near the termination of the contract now in progress, viz. :—1. To Cremorne Point. 2. To Blue's Point. 3. To Milson's Point.

1. *Extension to Cremorne Point.*

This line commences at 10 miles 13 chains on the railway from Pearce's Corner to St. Leonards, and terminates at Cremorne Point, having a length of 4 miles 64 chains.

The line crosses under the Lane Cove Road at 25 chains and again at 53 chains, then runs parallel to Burlington-street, passing under the North Sydney Road and Alexander-street. West-street and Miller-street are crossed on the level. Between Miller-street and Walker-street a station can be provided. The line afterwards crosses Alfred and Ernest Streets near their intersection on the level, and after passing under Grassmere-street sweeps round along the western side of Mossman's Bay, thence crossing the spur by a tunnel, runs along the northern side of Shell Cove, and terminates at Cremorne Point.

There are three tunnels on this line of an aggregate length of 56 chains.

As this line will be inconvenient for passenger traffic to the harbour, and provision is being made for the coal traffic at Long Nose Point, it has not been deemed advisable to further consider this scheme.

2. *Extension to Blue's Point.*

This line commences at 10 miles 13 chains on the Pearce's Corner St. Leonards Railway, and terminates at Blue's Point, being a length of 2 miles 37 chains; it follows for the greater portion of its course the same ground as the extension to Milson's Point, but the distance is too short to enable any satisfactory station arrangements to be made.

In addition, no passenger steamers are running to that point, nor a horse-ferry boat, and there is no tram to connect with the railway. It is therefore, in my opinion, unsuitable for a railway terminus, even had it been practicable to place a station at that point.

3. *Extension to Milson's Point.*

This line commences at 10 miles 2 chains 28 links on the railway from Pearce's Corner to St. Leonards, and terminates at Milson's Point, having a total length of 2 miles 71 chains and 32 links.

The line passes under the Lane Cove Road at 36½ chains. At 79 chains it passes under Edwardes Road; Bay Road and Carr-street are crossed on the level.

After passing under Union-street it sweeps round to the left, and by means of a tunnel crosses to the head of Lavender Bay, then skirts the eastern shore of this bay, and terminates at Milson's Point.

A station will be provided at the crossing of the Lane Cove Road, and a platform will be made at Bay-street.

A platform at Walker-street, at the head of Lavender Bay, can also be provided if necessary.

The terminal station, at Milson's Point, is intended for passengers, and no arrangements are contemplated for shipping coal, as provision is being made for that purpose at Long Nose Point.

Facilities will be provided for light goods traffic, and coal will be carried for local consumption.

The works include a tunnel 308 yards long under Blue's Point Road, and a viaduct 470 feet in length at the head of Lavender Bay.

The steepest gradient is 1 in 40, the distance being too short to admit of a flatter incline.

The sharpest curve is 10 chains radius.

For a mile and a half the line passes through unimproved property belonging to David Berry, Esq., and very little valuable land is interfered with in the whole distance, nor are any important houses seriously damaged.

The terminus at this point will give every accommodation to the travelling public, as it will meet the steamers to and from Sydney, and be close to, and on the same level as the Cable Tramway running through the centre of St. Leonards; and will also provide for the transference of horses and carriages between the Railway and the Horse Ferry Steamers.

The estimated cost of this line is £105,000, or at the rate of £36,207 per mile.

The tunnel—308 yards in length—will be constructed for a double line.

The Secretary for Public Works.

JOHN WHITTON.

B.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PROPOSED RAILWAY, BY MR. HENRY DEANE, ACTING ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR RAILWAYS.

Minute Paper.

Subject:—North Shore Railway Extension to Milson's Point.

To the Chairman and Committee of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Sydney, 22 Oct., 1889.

AN examination of the details of the land valuer's estimate will show that the cost of resumption of the land over the tunnel has been put down at £28,000. Clause 18 of the "Lands for Public Purposes Acquisition Act of 1880," however, gives power to the Government to make tunnels for railway purposes without resumption, if the surface is uninjured, as it would

would be in the present case. Further—£21,000 has been taken as the value of the land on the Berry Estate, although the owner would probably be willing to give it without charge, in consideration of the enormous increase in value which would result from the construction of the railway. The cutting out of these two items would cause a reduction of £49,000, thus bringing the estimate for land down to £87,000, and the total cost of works and land to £214,000.

The extension of the tramway from the present terminus along Ridge-street (*produced*) and Lane Cove Road to the railway would cost about £30,000, its length being 1 mile $12\frac{1}{2}$ chains. This amount includes the cost of extra engine power, which must be provided, and would probably also cover the cost of compensation for land and purchase of additional rolling stock.

I take the liberty of pointing out that such a connection as this would not have the effect of converting the districts situated along the Lane Cove Road into suburbs of Sydney, as the double change from steamer to tram and tram to train, and *vice versa*, would be fatal to any chance of extensive settlement, whereas if the railway were extended to Milson's Point it would be as easy to get to the heights of Chatswood and Gordon as it is now to reach the suburbs along the railway.

It is generally assumed that the Illawarra Railway, as far as Hurstville, is a good paying property. The length of this line is $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It cost roughly £300,000, and when first constructed had about as little population on it as the country along the North Shore Railway; yet the residential attractiveness of the district it served is not as great as that of the country which the latter traverses. The revised estimate of the Milson's Point extension is as explained above, £214,000; and, with the already constructed portion added, £394,000—say £400,000 for $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles of line; and mile for mile this is cheaper than the Hurstville Railway. The already constructed line has cost £180,000; but unless extended the revenue will be insignificant, so that it is not an expenditure of £400,000 that has to be considered, but £214,000 only for the opening up of $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles of country.

In the event of the railway being extended to Milson's Point, traffic would begin to come in from the western side of Blue's Point, where there is already a large population, and there would appear to be little doubt that in a very short time the land on each side of the line between the present terminus at 10 miles 40 chains, and the tunnel at 12 miles, would become thickly populated, and a considerable revenue would result; while between the present terminal station and Hornsby, settlement would also largely increase as the altitude would be a great attraction to many.

The proposal to use the tramway for goods traffic is scarcely practicable. Although the tramway is laid to the same gauge as the railway, the rolling-stock of the latter is not fitted to run over it, as the shape of the wheels is not suitable, and the traction power could not be applied. Specially designed rolling-stock would, therefore, be required for the purpose, and the transfer of goods between train and tram would have to take place.

If the construction of a bridge over the harbour is to be considered as a rival scheme to the Milson's Point extension, it is, of course, to be assumed that it would be designed to carry a double line of railway as well as a road. The direction of this bridge could best be made, I think, in a line connecting M'Mahon and Dawes' Points; the railway would then naturally branch off from the present proposed Milson's Point line at about $11\frac{3}{4}$ miles. Considering, however, the very large probable cost of the bridge with its approaches and land resumption involved, I would suggest that it might be well to consider the desirability of at least temporarily forming the connection with Sydney by railway to Milson's Point and thence by steam ferry to Fort Macquarie, especially as even after the construction of the bridge there would still be a large ferry traffic, and probably sufficient revenue to produce a fair return on the outlay.

H. DEANE.

The Chairman and Committee of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

C.

PRECIS OF PROCEEDINGS IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

FOR the extension of the North Shore line from its present terminus to the waters of Port Jackson three alternative routes have been suggested and surveyed—(1) with terminus at Cremorne; (2) with terminus at Blue's Point; and (3) with terminus at Milson's Point. The Engineer-in-Chief was in favour of the lastnamed route, and this was adopted by the Government.

There are not many papers referring to the matter, but the following is the purport of them.

9/5/88.—The Mayor of St. Leonards forwarded to the Minister, copy of a resolution carried at a meeting of the Council of that Borough, to the effect that any extension of the North Shore line towards the deep waters of Port Jackson, which did not pass through the centre of St. Leonards, and provide for a central goods and passenger station somewhere near the Reserve, would fail to be a remunerative undertaking, and would inflict a grave wrong upon the population of that Borough.

The matter was referred to the Engineer-in-Chief, who reported that he did not see how it was possible to comply with this request. The cost of land and compensation would be so great, that nothing would justify our incurring it.

13/6/88.—The Mayor was so informed.

17/8/89.—A deputation of the Corporation of St. Leonards waited upon Mr. Secretary Sutherland to urge the same point. They stated that the line as proposed would not serve the Borough;—the most important and populous part of North Shore, and it was moreover not the best route. It should pass through St. Leonards and touch the water at Neutral Bay or Cremorne. The line as designed would divert their trade to Sydney and seriously interfere with the prosperity and progress of the Borough. They believed the resumptions by the proposed line would be more costly than if the line were carried through St. Leonards. There was a consensus of opinion in favour of a central station at St. Leonards, and in favour of Cremorne as the terminus. They pointed out also that there was no room for shipping at Milson's Point.

Mr. Sutherland informed the deputation that Mr. Whitton was in favour of the Milson's Point route, and that to adopt the line they proposed would involve enormous expense. He was aware that the approved line would not serve the bulk of the population of St. Leonards. The Government would submit the line for the consideration of the Parliamentary Committee, when persons interested would have an opportunity of tendering their evidence.

October.—Mr. J. S. Edwards forwarded to the Minister copy of a resolution carried at a meeting of the inhabitants of Lane Cove, Willoughby, and Hornsby, to the effect that any deviation of the North Shore line in the direction of Cremorne would prove most disastrous to those districts, and that if such line did not terminate at some point between Careening Bay and Sugar Works Bay it would not serve their interests. Mr. Edwards went on to say that the places named were unanimous that the terminus should not be at Cremorne, and that three out of four of the Municipalities of North Shore were of the same opinion. They were aware that a small section of the public residing at Cremorne, or interested in property there, were agitating for such a deviation of the line as would render it impossible to have the terminus anywhere, but at Cremorne. Palpably absurd as the scheme was, some large landed proprietors were "working for its consummation." The line he was advocating presented manifest advantages: (1) it was shorter; (2) and cheaper; (3) and more direct for the city; (4) it would better accommodate the majority of the North Shore people, and meet the requirements of the fruit-growers; and, (5) would terminate near the terminus of the proposed city railway.

12/10/88.—A deputation waited upon Mr. Secretary Sutherland to advocate the views conveyed in Mr. Edwards' letter, *i.e.*, to condemn the Cremorne scheme and to urge that the line should be carried to some point between Careening Bay and Sugar Works Bay. The arguments urged by the deputation were identical with those employed by Mr. Edwards.

Mr. Sutherland informed the deputation that he concurred in their representations, and that the line would best serve its purposes if taken in the direction indicated by them, as the Government hoped ultimately to have better communication across the harbour, and a line into the city. They had not interfered with Mr. Whitton as to the route he might consider the best; but before anything was decided, the question would have to be submitted to the Public Works Committee, and to the House. The deputation, however, need not be under any apprehension, as the Government was not moving in opposition to their views.

20/10/88.—A *resumé* of the whole case appeared in an article in the *North Shore and Manly Times* of this date. The writer pointed out that this railway was never intended to enable the residents of North Shore in the vicinity of Port Jackson to get to the waters of that port. That could only be done by a system of cable-trams extending northerly from the several ferries towards the Military Road. The principal objects of the railway were to afford facilities for settlement on the splendid country between St. Leonards and Pearce's Corner, to connect the northern and southern railway systems, and to utilise the waterfronts of North Shore for shipping. The writer then proceeds to compare the several routes. Of the Blue's Point route, he states that the grades near the terminus are almost impracticable. The Cremorne route is condemned, because, while one mile

mile and a half longer than the Milson's Point route, it presents no better grades than the latter, and will cost at least half as much again. The cost of land resumptions would also be greater. A glance at the map would disprove the assertion of the advocates of the Cremorne route, that that route would meet the requirements of the bulk of the population. The flow of passenger traffic from Blue's Point to Mossman's Bay took a northerly direction, and no railway or tramway running east would serve even a minority. At least 90 per cent. of the present and future population would be located between the Cremorne route and the waters of Port Jackson. Was it reasonable to suppose that these people, in order to get to a given point, would consent to travel in the opposite direction? Again, would this route accommodate the residents of Hornsby, Gordon, or Willoughby? Would any person residing on the western side, or within half a mile on the eastern side, of Miller-street, travel by it? Would the residents of the Cooper Estate, or those near the Spit Road, or Middle Head Road, or those at Mossman's Bay, use it? Would anyone consent to travel unnecessarily a mile and a half by railway, and three-quarters of a mile by water, in order to get to and from Sydney? At no distant date North Shore would be connected with Sydney by a bridge either at Milson's Point or Blue's Point. If at the former a branch line would be required a mile and a half long; if at the latter a branch two miles and a quarter long would be needed to connect the terminus at Cremorne with the bridge. On the other hand, if the line were brought to Milson's Point and the bridge placed at Blue's Point, a branch line half a mile in length would connect the two. The writer thought he had conclusively shown that the Milson's Point line was in all respects the best, and he hoped the Government would quickly come to a decision in order that the 10 miles of line already constructed might be utilized.

A deputation from East St. Leonards waited upon Mr. Secretary Sutherland to advocate the construction of the line and the adoption of the Milson's Point route, but as no new arguments were employed details need not be given here.

8/4/89.—The land valuer submitted a valuation of the property required to be resumed for the extension to Milson's Point, the amount being £133,909. Mr. Thompson admits that his estimate may have to undergo revision. For instance, if the owners of the properties which overlie the tunnel, and which are not injured or affected by the works, waived their legal claim to have such properties taken, a reduction of £28,000 would have to be made in the amount; but if, on the other hand, the parties insisted on their rights the Government would be largely recouped by the acquisition of highly valuable properties. Was of opinion that if the viaduct were extended from 2 miles 26 chains to 2 miles 32 chains towards Milson's Point, a larger amount of compensation might be saved.

In connection with Mr. Thompson's remarks about the land which overlies the tunnel, reference is here made to clause 18 of the "Lands for Public Purposes Acquisition Act," which provides (in the absence of a copy of the Act, the *ipsissima verba* cannot be quoted) that no claim shall lie in the case of land overlying a tunnel, unless the soil, or the surface, has been damaged.

Dr. Ashburton Thomson reported to the Minister, representing the elevation and salubrity of the districts to which the completion of this extension would afford access; but as that gentleman's letter itself is before the Committee, it need not be further referred to here.

6/8/89.—Mr. Gerald Phillips, an advocate of the Cremorne scheme, in a letter published in the *Herald* of this date, states the case against Milson's Point and Blue's Point as follows:—(1) These points project into the narrowest portion, and the strongest tideway of the harbour, where any concourse of shipping would involve considerable risk to the general traffic. (2) The points are too limited in extent to afford sites for a railway station equal to the traffic, and wharfage for even half the shipping requiring it. (3) The cost of resumption would be immense. (4) The engineering difficulties being very great, the cost of construction would be so vast as to preclude the possibility of the line paying interest on capital. (5) If the terminus were placed here we must for ever abandon the hope of connecting St. Leonards with Sydney by means of a bridge. To these objections the following replies have been given:—(1 & 2) The line is not intended for shipping (and therefore wharfage would not be required, and there would be no concourse of shipping). (3) An accurate estimate of cost has been prepared. (4) There are no engineering difficulties. (5) It does not follow that the idea of a bridge must be abandoned. Mr. Phillips then proceeds to state his case in favour of Cremorne, as follows:—(1) The grades are easy, and there are no engineering difficulties. (2) There is a mile and a half of deep water frontage which belongs to the Crown. (3) There is ample space both for railway and shipping. (4) It is opposite the widest part of the harbour, and could never interfere with the proposed bridge. (5) It is the best site in view of the certain increase of the population towards Manly. The following replies have been given to these pleas:—(1) The gradients are no better than those on the Milson's Point line. (2, 3 and 4) The line is not intended for a heavy goods or coal traffic. (5) Is purely speculative. Mr. Phillips proceeded to quote the opinions of "Nauticus," but as these opinions are based upon the same erroneous idea that the proposed line is to carry a large goods and coal traffic, and to do a large shipping business they need not be followed here.

In the same issue of the *Herald* a writer, under the *nom de plume* of "Disinterested," maintains that the value of the North Shore line was always held to consist in its adaptability for the conveyance of heavy traffic, especially of coal, and that was, in fact, the *raison d'être* of the line. If, he says, the line is to pay, it must be by the carriage of freight, of which there is plenty rather than by that of passengers, of which there are few. He is of opinion that the advantages of Cremorne as a terminus are so remarkable and exceptional, that no unprejudiced person could fail to be struck by them, and he hopes that private interests will not be allowed to stand in the way of the public welfare. It is not, he concludes, only a question of saving £200,000 in compensation, but for providing facilities for carrying on the trade of the port, and enormously increasing that trade.

11/10/89.—Mr. G. M. Pitt wrote to the Under Secretary stating that he was nearly sure the North Shore line would not pay interest on the money expended upon it. As regarded the terminus, it was a mistake to have it at Milson's Point. Cremorne was the best place on account of the shipping. We already had a tramway which might be extended up to the present terminus, and it would carry the passengers and their luggage, while heavy goods and coal could be carried to Cremorne.

12/10/89.—The Under Secretary replied that the question before the Department was not whether the line to Milson's Point would pay, but what had to be done to make the line already constructed pay, and this the Department thought could best be accomplished by extending the line to the waters of Port Jackson. As regarded the location of the terminus, Milson's Point was only three quarters of a mile from Circular Quay, while Cremorne was 1½ mile, and the former would cost much less than the latter. It had been shown conclusively that the line would carry no coal or heavy goods. The freight by water from Bullock Island was 5s. 6d. a ton, while by railway it was 7s. to 8s.—a prohibitory rate. We had, therefore, to consider the passenger traffic only, and for this Milson's Point was unquestionably the best.

The report of the Railway Commissioners is before the Committee and *précis* of it therefore need not be given here.

Forwarded for the information of the Public Works Committee.—J. BARLING.

C. A. B., 31/10/89.

D.

[To Evidence of H. M'Lachlan, Esq.]

STATEMENT OF PASSENGER TRAFFIC ON THE SUBURBAN PORTION OF THE ILLAWARRA LINE, AND ON THE NORTH SHORE TRAMWAY.

Sir,

Government Railways of New South Wales, Secretary's Office,
Sydney, 31 October, 1889.

In compliance with the request of Honorable Members of your Committee, I beg to forward herewith statement showing the number of passengers travelling from the Illawarra line stations (between Hurstville and Sydney) to Sydney during the month of February, 1885-89. Also earnings and estimated number of passengers travelling on the North Shore line, July, 1886-89.

With regard to the power of the North Shore cable engines, our engineer reports that they are capable of exerting over 50 per cent. more power than at present.

The value of the original contract for the construction of the North Shore cable line was £35,500.

I have, &c.,

H. M'LACHLAN, Secretary.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

RETURN

RETURN showing the number of passengers from Illawarra Stations to Sydney during February of the undermentioned years.

Stations.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.
Erskinville		1,238	1,281	1,889	2,825
St. Peters	3,671	4,096	2,359	3,962	4,248
Marrickville	3,550	5,517	5,533	5,480	6,225
Tempe	1,518	2,553	2,632	3,840	3,977
Arncliffe	1,434	2,207	2,636	4,009	3,914
Rockdale	2,407	4,155	5,540	8,023	8,663
Kogarah	2,310	4,115	4,557	5,719	5,603
Carlton				1,111	1,403
Hurstville	2,562	3,291	3,667	3,546	3,714
Totals	17,452	27,172	29,316	37,756	40,572

STATEMENT of earnings and estimated number of passengers travelling on the North Shore line for the month of July, 1886-1889.

Date.	Earnings.	Estimated number of Passengers.
	£ s. d.	
July, 1886	510 16 1	73,555
July, 1887	593 12 4	85,480
July, 1888	586 16 2	84,500
July, 1889	699 12 3	100,684

E.

STATEMENT OF THE DIFFERENCE IN THE COST TO PASSENGERS BETWEEN RAILWAY FARES AND COMBINED RAILWAY AND TRAMWAY FARES.

Sir,

Public Works Department, Sydney, 5 November, 1889.
 In reading over my evidence before the Public Works Committee in regard to the proposed extension of the railway from its present terminus to Milson's Point, I noticed I have not referred to that portion of the argument which deals with difference in the cost to passengers as between the railway fare from Pearce's Corner to Milson's Point, and the combined railway and tramway fares for the same distance. Taking the fare by tramway, in the event of its being extended to the present terminus of the railway, at 4d., and adding to that the season-ticket rate (as at present in force for similar distances on other lines) for the remainder of the distance to Pearce's Corner, and then taking the season-ticket rates for the through railway to Milson's Point the comparison will stand as shown in the enclosed return, which I have had prepared, and which has been kindly checked by the Secretary for Railways. In the case of second-class fares only it will be seen that the through railway service would give an advantage over the combined tram and railway service, as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Monthly—Through fares	1	4	0
Monthly—Combined fares	2	2	0
Quarterly—Through fares	3	1	3
Quarterly—Combined fares	5	16	0
Half-yearly—Through fares	5	10	3
Half-yearly—Combined fares	11	0	9
Yearly—Through fares	10	9	6
Yearly—Combined fares	21	11	6

If the first-class fares are taken into comparison, the difference, as will be seen from the return, is much greater.

I venture to think, therefore, that a very strong argument is presented in favour of the proposed railway by this return, the cheaper fares being certain to attract residents who would otherwise not settle in the district, were the combined tram and rail service only available. It should also be borne in mind that, in making this comparison, I have only allowed one journey by tram each way per day, whereas by the railway a season-ticket holder could make as many journeys as he wished.

I have, &c.

J. BARLING,

Under Secretary.

The Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

Pearce's Corner to Milson's Point, 12 miles 72 chains—say 13 miles.

FIRST CLASS.

Season tickets.	Month.	Quarter.	Half-year.	Year.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Railway.	1 14 0	4 6 9	7 16 3	14 17 0
	1 4 0	3 1 3	5 10 3	10 9 6

Pearce's Corner to present terminus, 10 miles 51 chains—say 11 miles.

FIRST CLASS.

Season tickets.	Month.	Quarter.	Half-year.	Year.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Railway.	1 11 0	3 19 0	7 3 3	13 12 3
Tramway fare.	1 0 0	3 0 0	6 0 0	12 0 0
	2 11 0	6 19 0	13 3 3	25 12 3

SECOND CLASS.

Season tickets.	Month.	Quarter.	Half-year.	Year.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Railway.	1 2 2	2 16 0	5 0 9	9 11 6
Tramway.	1 0 0	3 0 0	6 0 0	12 0 0
	2 2 0	5 16 0	11 0 9	21 11 6

Forwarded for the information of the Public Works Committee.—J. BARLING, 5/11/89.

F.

PROBABLE COST OF TAKING THE RAILWAY THROUGH THE BERRY ESTATE.

Dear Sir, Coolangatta, 4 November, 1889.
 Adverting to evidence which I gave before your Committee in re the North Shore Railway, I have now the honor to state, after mature deliberation, that I am prepared to advise my co-executor to sell to the Government such lands as may be required for the construction of this railway at £500 per acre, conditionally, upon certain provision being made for stations and overhead bridges, as may be mutually arranged, and on the distinct understanding that such line of railway will be constructed within the next two years.
 The Chairman of the Public Works Committee, Sydney. I have, &c.,
JOHN HAY.

G.

LETTER FROM H. H. B. BRADLEY, ESQ., WITH REFERENCE TO HIS EVIDENCE.

Sir, 60, Margaret-street, Sydney, 6 November, 1889.
 I return notes of my evidence before your Committee, which, with some trifling alterations at the end in pencil, seem to be correct. I may add that since I gave my evidence my attention has been called to the fact of the very large number of passengers travelling on the suburban line between Eveleigh, Macdonaldtown, Newtown, Stanmore, and Petersham, all within 3 miles of the terminus, as indicating that my evidence was probably wrong when I expressed an opinion that the North Shore railway would not be much used within 3 miles of Milson's Point; and, were it in order to do so, I should desire to place on record my change of opinion in that respect.
 The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Sydney. I am, &c.,
H. H. B. BRADLEY.

H.

PEARCE'S CORNER TO MILSON'S POINT—BOOK OF REFERENCE—PARLIAMENTARY PLAN, PART No. 2.

No. on Plan.	Description of Property,	State of Cultivation.	Names of			Remarks.
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.	
6	Bush land	Nil.....	David Berry .....	.....	Unoccupied.....	
7	Edward Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
8	Bush land	Nil.....	David Berry .....	.....	Unoccupied.....	
9	Bay Road .....	.....	Crown .....	.....	.....
10	Bush land	Nil.....	David Berry .....	.....	Unoccupied.....	
11	Carr-street .....	.....	Municipality of St. Leonards.	.....	.....
12	Vacant blocks, No. 31	Sec. 2	Leggo & Co. (syndicate) .....	.....	.....	Euroka Heights
13	" No. 46	Nil.....	" .....	.....	.....	Estate.
14	" No. 47 .....	" .....	" .....	.....	.....	"
15	" No. 48 .....	" .....	" .....	.....	.....	"
16	" No. 49 .....	" .....	" .....	.....	.....	"
17	" No. 50 .....	" .....	" .....	.....	.....	"
18	Clifton-street .....	.....	Municipality of St. Leonards.	.....	.....	Partly formed.
19	Lavender, Crescent-street .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....	Unformed.
20	Vacant blocks, No. 12	Sec. 1	Leggo & Co. ....	.....	Unoccupied	
21	" No. 13	Nil.....	" .....	.....	.....
22	" No. 14 .....	" .....	" .....	.....	.....
23	" No. 15 .....	" .....	" .....	.....	.....
24	" No. 16 .....	" .....	" .....	.....	.....
25	" No. 17 .....	" .....	" .....	.....	.....
26	" No. 10 .....	" .....	" .....	.....	.....
27	Wooden building, No. 9 .....	.....	Joseph Love .....	.....	Joseph Love.	
28	Brick building, No. 8 .....	.....	Charles Burns .....	.....	Charles Burns.	
29	Wooden building, No. 7 .....	.....	Leggo & Co. ....	.....	S. Boyes	Old wooden shop.
30	Brick building, No. 6 .....	.....	" .....	.....	James Smith	Brick terrace.
31	" No. 6	Sec. 1	— Leggo .....	.....	S. Brickdale	Address of Mr.
32	Vacant block, No. 5 .....	.....	" .....	.....	Unoccupied.	Leggo; Regent-
33	Wooden building, No. 4 .....	.....	" .....	.....	S. Boyes.	st., Paddington.
34	" No. 3 .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
35	Vacant block, No. 2 .....	.....	" .....	.....	Unoccupied.	
36	" No. 1 .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
37	Euroka-street .....	.....	Municipality of St. Leonards	.....	.....
38	Union-street .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
39	Stone building .....	.....	John Blue .....	.....	Unoccupied	Blue's Estate
40	Vacant block, No. 1	Sec. 1 .....	" .....	.....	.....	subdivided.
41	" No. 2 .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
42	" No. 3 .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
43	" No. 4 .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
44	" No. 5 .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
45	Commodore-street .....	.....	Municipality of St. Leonards	.....	.....
46	Stone house and garden... ..	No. 10	John Blue .....	.....	William Gourley.	
47	" No. 11	Sec. 1 .....	" .....	.....	Mrs. Knowler.	
48	Brick house, No. 12 .....	.....	" .....	.....	Mrs. Duncan.	
49	Wooden house, No. 13 .....	.....	" .....	.....	Mrs. Josephs.	
50	Vacant block, No. 14 .....	.....	" .....	.....	Unoccupied.	
51	" No. 15 .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
52	Bay-street .....	.....	Municipality of St. Leonards	.....	.....
53	Vacant block, No.	Sec. 3	John Blue .....	.....	Unoccupied.	
54	" No. ....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
55	" No. ....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
56	Little Blue-street .....	.....	Municipality of St. Leonards	.....	.....
57	Vacant block, No. ....	.....	John Blue .....	.....	Unoccupied.	
58	" No. ....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
59	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
60	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
61	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
62	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	.....
63	Brick building .....	.....	John Sullivan .....	.....	John Sullivan	Brick terrace (2)
64	" .....	.....	William Martin .....	.....	W. Martin.	
65	" .....	.....	John Conlon .....	.....	James Lamb	} Brick terrace
66	" .....	.....	" .....	.....	John Hayes.....	
67	Vacant block	Nil.....	" .....	.....	Unoccupied.	(2).

No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of			Remarks.
			Owners.	Lessees.	Occupiers.	
68	Wooden building		Thomas Hay		Thomas Hay.	
69	"		T. Maclachlan		T. Hay.	
70	"		Chuter Estate			
71	Thomas-street		Municipality of St. Leonards			
72	Wooden building, No. 20	Sec. 4	Mrs. Sullivan		Mrs. Sullivan	Chuter Estate.
73	Vacant block		Robert Brunton		Unoccupied.	Address : 5, Bridge-st., City
74	"		C. Smith		"	
75	"		W. Jenson		"	
76	Wooden building		William Ray		W. Ray.	
77	Webb-street		Municipality of St. Leonards			
78	Wooden building		R. Heliott		T. Hayes.	
79	"		"		F. Brown.	
80	"		Thomas Adamson		Lucy Cleary.	
81	"		Robert Robinson		Robert Robinson.	
82	Garden (kitchen)		"		"	
83	Vacant block		Geo. Shipley		Unoccupied.	
84	Stone house		"		Geo. Shipley.	
85	Wooden building		William Robertson		Geo. King.	
86	Brick building		Mrs. Allerick		William Dunn.	
87	Stone building		Samuel Crews		J. C. Brainwood.	
88	"		"		H. Fischer.	
89	"		"		C. Williams.	
90	Chuter-street		Municipality of St. Leonards			
91	Stone building		Samuel Crews		Samuel Crews.	
92	"		James Munro		Robert Little.	
93	Lawn	Grass-plot	"		Hector Munro.	
94	House and garden	Garden	"		"	Stone dwelling.
95	Susannah-street		Municipality of St. Leonards			
96	Stone building		W. Jones			
97	Brick building		C. Sampson			
98	"		"			
99	"		"			
100	Vacant block	Nil	James Hilton		Unoccupied.	
101	Wooden building		Joseph Hilton		Joseph Hilton.	
102	Vacant block		J. B. Moore		Unoccupied.	
103	"		"			
104	Wooden buildings—shops		F. Johns		F. Johns.	
105	Stone building—shops		J. B. Moore		Flicknell and Chapman.	
106	"		R. Smyth		Wellington & Sons	Grocers.
107	Mitchell-street		Municipality of St. Leonards			
108	Blue's Point Road		"			
109	Paddock, &c.	Nil	John William Cliff		J. W. Cliff.	
110	Yard, &c.		R. F. Binder		Dr. Cortis.	
111	Stone building, &c.	Garden	"			
112	" and garden	"	J. W. Cliff		J. W. Cliff.	
113	Garden, &c.	"	"		"	
114	Cow-yard, &c.	Nil	"		"	
115	Outhouses		"		— Lark.	
116	Stone building and garden	Garden	"		"	
117	"	"	W. Renny		— Fitzhardinge.	
118	"	"	Matthew Charlton		— Jones.	
119	Walker-street (Lavender Bay Steps).		Municipality of St. Leonards			
120	Reserve to water	Nil	Crown			
121	Baths		Municipality of St. Leonards		Frederick Cavil.	
122	Vacant land	Scrubby	J. Milson		Unoccupied.	
123	"	Nil	Bligh and Grant			
124	Partly built upon		— Jones		W. Lane.	
125	Boats, sheds, &c.		W. Waterhouse	Hy. Younger	H. Younger	Boat builder.
126	"		J. J. Underwood	"	Working Men's Rowing Club, N.S.	
127	Limekilns and dwelling		G. A. Alderton		G. A. Alderton.	Lime-burner.
128	Fish-street		Municipality of St. Leonards			
129	House and garden		C. Bolton		C. Bolton	Wooden house.
130	"		H. C. Mitchell		H. C. Mitchell.	
131	Vacant land	Nil	D. Wilson		Unoccupied.	
132	"	"	"		"	
133	Palmer-street		Municipality of St. Leonards			Partly formed.
134	Vacant land	Scrubby	J. S. Glaister		Unoccupied.	
135	"	"	"		"	
136	"	"	"		"	
137	"	"	"		"	
138	Reclaimed land		"		"	
139	Brick dwelling		W. Paul		W. Paul	Brick house.
140	Garden		Mrs. C. Rolleston		Mrs. C. Rolleston	
141	Street		Municipality of St. Leonards			
142	House and garden		Mrs. C. Rolleston		Mrs. C. Rolleston	
143	Walter-street		Municipality of St. Leonards			
144	Coaling wharf		N.S.S.F. Co. (Limited)			
145	Dwelling and garden		C. Boulivant		H. Ellis.	
146	"		"		C. Boulivant.	
147	Stone house		N.S.S.F. Co. (Limited)		Mrs. Murphy.	
148	Thoroughfare to wharf		"		"	
149	Brick building		Charles & Thos. Waterhouse		Unoccupied.	
150	"		"		James Blanch.	
151	"		"		Unoccupied.	
152	"		"		Hector Sutherland	Boat builder.
153	Western Wharf Road		Municipality of St. Leonards			
154	Vacant land		Commissioner for Railways		Unoccupied.	

End of Parliamentary Plan—Part No. 2.

December, 1888.

[Four Plans.]

JOHN WHITTON, Engineer.

1890.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

MILSON'S POINT EXTENSION RAILWAY BILL.

(MESSAGE No. 58.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 9 October, 1890.

CARRINGTON,

Governor.

Message No. 58.

In accordance with the provisions contained in the 54th section of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses in connection with a Bill to sanction the construction of a line of railway to connect the North Shore Railway with the deep waters of Port Jackson at Milson's Point.

Government House,

Sydney, 9th October, 1890.

1890.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDICES, AND PLANS,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

MOSS VALE TO ROBERTSON.

Presented to Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act,
51 Vic. No. 37, section 8.

SYDNEY: CHARLES POTTER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

34—A

1890.

[4s. 6d.]

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 The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN.
 The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
 The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
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MEMBERS OF THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, Chairman.
 JACOB GARRARD, Esquire.
 WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esquire.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM MOSS VALE TO ROBERTSON.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, and the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon the expediency of "constructing a line of railway from Moss Vale to Robertson," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is not expedient the proposed railway should be constructed, and in accordance with the provision of sub-section IV, of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly :—

1. The proposed railway, which it is intended should be a light single line, would leave the Great Southern line at the southern end of the Moss Vale railway station, and crossing White's Creek, pass through the parishes of Bong Bong, Yarrunga, and Yarrowa, in the county of Camden, and the district of Wild's Meadows, running parallel to the Fitzroy Falls and Shoalhaven Road, at a distance of about 10 chains, and crossing the Yarrunga and Wild's Meadows Road; thence proceeding in a north-easterly direction to Yarrunga-street in the village of Robertson, where it would terminate. The length of the railway would be 14 miles and 20 chains, and the estimated cost, exclusive of land or compensation, is £84,900 or £5,953 per mile. The ruling grade is 1 in 40, but it is thought by the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways that this might be improved.

Description of the proposed railway.

2. As far back as 1881 improved means of communication between Robertson and the main Southern line was advocated, the first suggestion being that a tramway should be constructed. The idea of a tramway gave way in 1882 to the proposal for a light railway, and since that period the matter has been the subject of considerable agitation on the part of the residents of the district, and various official examinations of the country which the railway would traverse, and inquiries as to the prospects of traffic, have been carried out. In the representations which from time to time have been made in favour of a railway there has been apparent a difference of opinion with regard to the most suitable point of departure from the Southern line, and, in some respects, as to the route that should be adopted in getting to Robertson; but the people of the district are unanimous in the assertion of their claim to a railway, and of the development which railway facilities would bring about.

Period during which the railway has been advocated.

3. The country which the proposed railway is intended to serve is principally of an agricultural character, at present devoted chiefly to dairy farming. The township or village of Robertson lies on an elevated plateau, the approach to which from the Great Southern Railway is by the Burrawang and Kangaloon Ranges. These ranges are covered with extensive tracts of rich chocolate or volcanic soil, and between them lies the Wingecarribee Swamp. The area of good soil is about 50,000 acres, and Wingecarribee Swamp roughly divides it into two portions, the situation of the swamp being such that some of the settled portions of the district are completely cut off from direct communication with others. The railway route passes on the

The country to be served by the railway.

the southern side of the swamp, and for that reason will not be of service to what is known as West Kangaloon and Kangaloon proper. Within a radius of ten miles of the route the line would serve, it is stated, "Meryla, the whole of Yarrunga, the Waterfall district, Barrangarry, Wild's Meadows, Burrawang, the Bong Bong River district, the Robertson district, East Kangaloon, the head of the swamp, and all along the top of the mountains as you go down towards Jamberoo;" but it does not appear likely to be as generally serviceable as, in the case of a branch railway of this kind, is advisable. East Kangaloon would find an outlet or depôt at Robertson, the country falling in that direction; West Kangaloon could be accommodated only at what is called the "Sheep-wash." Dairy farming is the principal industry in the district, because of the obstacle which the great expense of road carriage proves to enterprise in other directions. With railway facilities the land is capable of producing extensive and constant supplies of vegetables and fruit, and such production would probably be one of the immediate results of the railway being constructed. A Sectional Committee who visited the district report that as much as 5,000 acres of land are available for the cultivation of potatoes, for which the district is singularly well adapted, and an area of equal extent for the growth of general market-garden produce; a large part of the district is also admirably suited for fruit-growing. Added to these recommendations for railway communication are the circumstances that the climate is of the finest description, and the natural scenery of the district is very beautiful.

Railway Commissioners' Report.

4. The Railway Commissioners' report on the railway represents a difference of £4,734 between the estimated total annual traffic, £1,843, and the total annual cost, £6,577. The traffic, they point out, would have to develop largely before working expenses could be covered, and a considerable part of the district which the line would pass through is not of such a character as to enable such a change to take place rapidly; but they remark that the district around Robertson is very rich, and they are of opinion that if it were devoted more to the production of fruit and vegetables, a much greater traffic could be developed, and, in that manner, the construction of a railway be justified.

Prospects of traffic.

5. A profitable traffic on the railway is a matter that depends upon the development of the district in the manner in which the Committee are informed by the evidence and by the visit of the Sectional Committee it is capable of being developed. This development is, as it must necessarily be in all instances of the kind, not altogether certain, but it is very probable, and in the case of a district which has so much to recommend it as the one under consideration, probabilities approach to certainties. The Sectional Committee say "the district is so charming, the soil so rich, the land so well divided and so industriously cleared, the climate so beautiful, the rainfall so good, and the whole locality so likely to attract fresh enterprise and population," that it would be reasonable to do something towards relieving the inhabitants of the disabilities under which they now labour. Mr. J. B. Thompson, Land Valuer, Department of Public Works, who was specially instructed to visit the district, says in a report, which will be found with the evidence, "I am firmly convinced, if easily accessible, this district would attract more tourists than the Blue Mountains, as it has every advantage of scenery and climate possessed by the latter, with others peculiar to itself, such as the local production of farm, garden, orchard, and dairy produce in abundance, and of the best description, which is no small attraction to those who might visit the district as a sanatorium. I regard the certain and speedy recognition of the superiority of this district as a health and pleasure resort as a source of large revenue to the railway if constructed." The testimony in favour of the probability of a profitable traffic is supported also by evidence from Mr. John Harper, Railway Goods Superintendent, upon a report from whom the Railway Commissioners based their conclusions with regard to the proposed line. This officer, who states that the traffic question in connection with this railway was more thoroughly analysed than that of any other railway he has reported on, says that the line would lead to an expansion of both the dairying and the fruit industries, and that the fruit industry would prove a "paying concern"; and also that the railway would give great facilities for tourists. It should further be mentioned that there appears to be, on the part of the residents of the district, a willingness to pay higher carriage rates on this railway than are charged on the main line.

6. The estimated cost of the railway appears large when the comparatively small extent of the district to be served is considered; but the country is not favourable to the construction of a cheap line, the sections showing either cutting or embankment for nearly the whole of the distance. Originally the estimated total cost was £110,000; but that was revised, and a reduction effected to £84,900, in order to bring the railway as near as possible under the denomination of light cheap lines. The practicability of making a further reduction the Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways doubts. He believes the grades could be improved without increasing the cost, but he does not think the estimate per mile could be decreased. It is his intention, however, to subject the railway to further revision if the line should be approved of. A matter of importance connected with the question of cost is that the route of the railway as proposed runs for the whole distance through private property, and there is little Crown land to be brought under cultivation by the construction of the line. Cost of the proposed railway.

7. Two routes to connect Robertson with the Great Southern Railway have been surveyed—one that referred to the Committee from Moss Vale, and the other from Bowral. The line from Bowral would save 6 miles of carriage on the main line between Bowral and Moss Vale, and it may be made to accommodate a part of the district between the main line and Robertson that will not be served by the proposed railway from Moss Vale. It may, in fact, while saving the 6 miles on the main line, be so laid down as to serve a greater number of people than the line from Moss Vale would serve, and practically secure the whole of the traffic of the district. To do this it would pass the Wingecarribee Swamp on the northern side, cross what is called the Sheepwash, and then go over to Wild's Meadows, and thence to Robertson, by which means West Kangaloon would be accommodated. Question of route.

8. The Sectional Committee gave much attention to this question of route, and it formed a prominent feature in the examination of witnesses who gave evidence before them. It appeared to them desirable to secure for the railway the maximum amount of traffic available, and at the same time not to go further with the line at present than is absolutely necessary; and finding that the Moss Vale line would not accommodate the West Kangaloon farmers and the farmers of Kangaloon proper, they endeavoured to ascertain whether any alteration of route would be more generally serviceable. Such an alteration they found could be made by adopting the Bowral route for the line as far as the Sheepwash, and thence connecting with the Moss Vale route at Wild's Meadows, and proceeding from that point on to Robertson; or, which they think is more desirable, adopting this route as far as Wild's Meadows, and for the present stopping there. The Engineer-in-Charge of Trial Surveys, who was with the Sectional Committee during their visit to the district, states that by the alteration the length of the line to Robertson would be increased by 2 miles as against the Moss Vale route, and half-a-mile as against the surveyed route from Bowral to Robertson; and that as far as the Sheepwash the alteration would produce a line a little cheaper than that between Moss Vale and Wild's Meadows, but between the Sheepwash and Wild's Meadows the expense would be greater. At the same time, he regards the route by the Sheepwash as the best for the country around Kangaloon. The suggestion to terminate the line at Wild's Meadows for the present is made because that point is regarded as very suitable for catching the traffic of the district generally, including Robertson, and it is convenient to the Fitzroy Falls as well as for the traffic from Kangaroo Valley. By shortening the line in this manner, the cost will not exceed £50,000. On the return of the Sectional Committee to Sydney, and as a result of their Report, the Committee requested the Acting Engineer-in-Chief to have an examination of the country between Bowral and the Sheepwash made, in order to ascertain if it were practicable, from an engineering point of view, to effect the alteration suggested, and also whether the line could be continued from the Sheepwash, on the same side of the swamp, to Robertson. This examination has taken place, and it will be seen from the report of Mr. District Engineer Hutchinson that the alteration is both practicable and easy. A suggested alteration.

9. In view of all the circumstances, the Committee have resolved that it is not expedient the railway, as proposed, from Moss Vale to Robertson, should be constructed; but they are favourable to the construction of a line, in accordance with the Resolution arrived at by the Committee.

the suggestion of the Sectional Committee, from Bowral to the Sheepwash, and thence across to Wild's Meadows. Such a line, in their opinion, will secure most of the available traffic, both passenger and goods, and it will be more generally convenient than the line from Moss Vale. The resolution arrived at by the Committee, which was moved by Dr. Garran on Thursday, 27 March, 1890, and seconded by Mr. Garrard, was passed unanimously in the following terms:—

“That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is not expedient the proposed Railway from Moss Vale to Robertson, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out, because the evidence shows that a line from Bowral to Wild's Meadows, *via* Sheepwash, would give more general accommodation to the district, and would be sufficient for the present.”

J. P. ABBOTT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 29 April, 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM MOSS VALE TO ROBERTSON.

THURSDAY, 23 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.	JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Moss Vale to Robertson.

Joseph Barling, Esq., Under Secretary for Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] You are Under Secretary for Public Works? I am.
2. Will you hand in the official documents relating to the proposed railway from Moss Vale to Robertson? Yes. I hand in the official description of the line, and the Commissioner's report.
3. Have you no *précis* of papers? No; I will produce that later on. I would suggest that the Committee take the evidence of our officer, Mr. Thompson, who visited the locality, and collected all the data.

J. Barling,
Esq.

23 Jan., 1890.

WEDNESDAY, 29 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.	WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
JACOB GARRARD, Esq.	CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Moss Vale to Robertson.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

4. *Chairman.*] You are Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways? Yes.
5. Do you know the proposal which is before the Committee—to construct a line of railway from Moss Vale to Robertson? Yes.
6. Have you yourself inspected the proposed route? No; I have not been over the line.
7. What officers have been? The surveyor who surveyed that line is not here.
8. Is he in the service? No; he is not in the service; I believe he is in Tasmania. Mr. Stewart has been over the line with a view to making a deviation via the Fitzroy Falls.
9. When was it surveyed? It was surveyed in May, 1884.
10. And when was Mr. Stewart over it? He was over it pretty recently—in 1888.
11. Were these estimates of the Engineer-in-Chief based upon the surveys made in 1884? Yes.
12. That is £84,300 for the cost of construction? £84,900; I think that is a misprint.
13. Then when that estimate was furnished by the Engineer-in-Chief no engineer had been over the line at all? That is an estimate that was made last year. The plans and sections being in the office it was made from the plans and sections.
14. Without any engineer in the department having inspected the route? It was made by an engineer, but he did not go over to inspect it.
15. That estimate was made without any inspection of the proposed route by any engineer connected with the department? Mr. Bell, who made the survey in 1884, is an engineer and surveyor. I thought you wanted to know whether any engineer had been over it since to inspect it.
16. Has Mr. Bell laid out any other lines in the Colony? Yes. He surveyed the first line between Marrickville or St. Peters and Liverpool, and he was engaged, I believe, on part of the survey of the North Shore line. He then left the service.

H. Deane,
Esq.

29 Jan., 1890.

- H. Deane,
Esq.
29 Jan., 1890.
17. You were telling us that Mr. Stewart had inspected it since then? Yes. Mr. Stewart went over the line with a view of making a deviation. I can show you a plan of the deviation. It adopts very little of the line submitted.
18. You would call that a new line, would you not? Yes.
19. It is quite possible that this estimated cost may still be reduced considerably, is it not? I do not think it is very likely. Before the line came to be permanently staked it would be examined, and of course laid out in a proper manner, and more money would not be expended upon it than necessary, but the country is not favourable to a very cheap line.
20. The length of this line is 14 miles 20 chains, and I see according to the return here from the Department the cost is £5,952 per mile? Yes. You may depend upon that estimate, so far as it goes, for the particular line that has been surveyed.
21. *Mr. Copeland.*] Which is that—the red line or the blue? The red line.
22. *Chairman.*] The red line shown on the map produced by you is the one now under consideration? Yes. This map was made with a view of showing the deviation which leaves the old line at 90½ miles and joins again at 95½ miles, but that line is 3½ miles longer than the submitted line.
23. *Mr. Copeland.*] Have you any estimates for the deviation? No; but the character of the country would be about the same; that line would not cost any less per mile than the other.
24. *Chairman.*] This red line is the one now submitted by the Department? Yes.
25. And the blue is what? The deviation by Fitzroy Falls.
26. But that is the original survey, is it not? No, the red line is the original survey.
27. The red line is the one we are considering? The red line is the one submitted. It is the 14-mile long line; the other is nearly 18 miles.
28. *Mr. Copeland.*] Do the Department wish us to consider the red line or the blue one? The red one. I merely mentioned the other incidentally. I have a report from Mr. Whitton, dated 22nd October, 1888, about this line, wherein he says that the suggested deviation would lengthen the distance between those places to about 17½ miles, or nearly one-fourth. The survey was made in consequence of a deputation which waited on the Minister, and the representations of Mr. M'Court.
29. *Chairman.*] Have you any idea of the approximate cost of a survey of that kind;—what has actually been done, I mean? If it were necessary, I could get out the expense, but I should say about £200.
30. *Dr. Garran.*] Your answer just now to Mr. Abbott about cost referred to the deviation to Fitzroy Falls, did it not? About the cost of the survey—yes, it was the survey of the deviation to which I referred.
31. Taking the whole line from Robertson to Moss Vale, how much has it cost the Department to have all this surveying work done, and all these cuttings and embankments estimated;—have you any idea? I could only make a rough guess at it. Of course we have a record of all the expenses.
32. A rough estimate will do for what I want? I should think that from £20 to £25 per mile might be reckoned.
33. I observe from this cross-section that nearly the whole distance from Moss Vale to Robertson is cutting or embankment? Yes; it is not a surface line.
34. Do you cross ridges or go over the top of an undulating ridge? I think you will find there are two ridges to cross there. This is one of our parish maps, showing the course of the line from Moss Vale to Robertson. At about 94 miles there is a ridge to cross, and we cross another ridge just before getting into Robertson.
35. The line runs along the south side of the Wingecarribee Swamp, does it not? Yes.
36. And you cross the little streams running into that swamp? Some of them.
37. You do not keep on the head of a dividing ridge at all? You see we cross this ridge at 94 miles, and we are in another valley—Wild's Meadow—and we go up there to cross another ridge just before getting into Robertson. There has been no survey made from Burradoo. There has been a survey made from Bowral.
38. Would the Bowral line be a more level line? The Bowral line is a very costly one, according to the estimates made at the time.
39. Does it run over rougher country then? Yes, and it crosses a river.
40. This line seems to run through private property the whole distance? Yes.
41. There is no Crown land to be brought under cultivation by the construction of this line? No.
42. The cost of resumption is not at all included in your estimate? No.
43. Every inch of the ground would have to be bought? Yes.
44. Are there many road crossings? There are a good many road crossings.
45. Have you made any provision for gates or gate-keepers in the estimate of expenses? Yes, that is all accounted for. £2,427 for level crossings includes gate-houses at public level crossings.
46. Robertson is very near the edge of the plateau, is it not? Yes.
47. You could not continue this line beyond Robertson anywhere? No, I think not.
48. The road beyond that descends to Kiama rapidly? Yes.
49. Do you know whether there is a good main road along the line, between Moss Vale and Robertson? I believe there is.
50. There has been one made at the public expense by the Roads Department? I have not the slightest doubt of it.
51. It was not made at local expense? No.
52. You have not travelled on that road? No.
53. The costliness of this line arises entirely from the quantity of earthworks necessary? Yes.
54. What is the ruling gradient? The maximum gradient on this section is 1 in 40.
55. *Mr. Lee.*] Has there been any revision of this estimate made since it was referred by Parliament to the Committee? No, nothing since then. This is the latest revision. The previous estimate was £110,000; but it has been reduced in order to bring it as near as possible under the denomination of light, cheap, lines. So the estimate has been reduced to £84,900.
56. Was it at £84,900 when submitted to Parliament? Yes.
57. Do you think it possible to reduce this estimate to a still lower sum? I believe the grades could be improved without increasing the cost; but I should not say that the estimate per mile would be decreased. I do not think it would, because you see from the sections it is not at all favourable country for cheap railways.
58. What is the heaviest grade at present? One in 40.

59. To what do you think it could be reduced? Without examination, and only giving an opinion, "I should say it might be reduced to 1 in 60.
60. Is it the intention of the department to revise this line? Decidedly, if it is approved of.
61. *Mr. Tonkin.*] Have you any idea of the amount of compensation that would be required for the land through which this line is proposed to run? No, I have not considered that.
62. *Mr. Lackey.*] What do you propose ballasting with on this line? I think it will be necessary to ballast with blue metal.
- 63-4. That, I suppose, is about the best ballast, is it not? It is the very best.
65. That abounds all round that country? That is the most durable kind of ballast we can get.
66. What would you use for sleepers? Ironbark in any case.
67. *Mr. Cox.*] Where would you get it? It would have to be brought up from the country somewhere and imported into the district. The forests there are messmate chiefly.
68. *Chairman.*] I see the fencing is put down at £160 per mile—£4,480 for 28 miles of fencing? That is for substantial two-rail fence, two rails and four wires. If the ordinary wire fencing were used it might be done for half that sum.
69. *Mr. Copeland.*] It surely would not cost £160 per mile for two-rail fencing? I am quite sure it would cost that to make anything like a substantial fence, but I am not at all certain I would recommend a two-rail fence to be put up; I am rather in favour of wire fences in almost all cases on account of their cheapness.
70. They might be going to use mahogany or cedar? No. I can assure you that fences near Sydney according to specifications have cost over 10s. per rod, which is over £160 per mile.
71. *Chairman.*] The object of the fence is to keep stock off the railway? Yes.
72. That object is accomplished by local stock-owners putting up their fences? Not altogether. It appears to me that the circumstances are slightly altered. The local stockowners object is to keep the stock within certain paddocks; if they happen to get from one paddock into another it does not matter so much, for that can be easily rectified, but if stock get on to the railway-line they may cause a serious railway accident, or if the cattle or other stock are destroyed some considerable compensation has to be paid by the Railway Department.
73. You pay four times as much as local owners would pay? Still you see there are these difficulties.
74. *Mr. Lackey.*] You are fencing with wire on some of the outside lines? Yes.
75. It is found to answer the purpose? Oh, yes. Most of the other lines that have been submitted have included fencing at about 4s. per rod, which I think is a fair price considering that in the case of railways the fencing is not similar to what a squatter would put up. He runs fences for miles in a straight line sometimes. If we run a few chains then we have to turn off for a culvert or level crossing, and we have to run over just the country that the railway takes. It is by no means level country.

H. Deane,
Esq.
29 Jan., 1890.

James B. Thompson, Esq., Land Valuer, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

76. *Dr. Garran.*] What position do you hold in the Public Service? Land Valuer in the Public Works Department.
77. Have you valued any portion of the land for this railway? No sir.
78. Do you know the district? I know it pretty well. I know Moss Vale pretty well, but the Robertson district I have only passed through a few times. I passed through on my way to Kiama, and two or three times from Kiama to Moss Vale.
79. Then you have been on the coach road between those two places? Yes.
80. You know the character of the country? Yes.
81. Near Moss Vale, and for some distance parallel with the swamp, the land is of a rich character, is it not? Very rich.
82. Good dairy country? Yes.
83. It has cost a great deal to clear, has it not? It must have been an enormous expense to clear. It was a dense brush originally.
84. Do you know what the farmers value their land at? I know what it sells at. I think fairly good land there would fetch about £20 an acre. In fact there was a sale when I was in the district for about £20—either a little under or a little over.
85. Are the dairy farms mostly freeholds? I think they are.
86. Are they held in large or small blocks? All moderate size, not very large.
87. What do you call moderate size? I would call 100 or 150 acres a moderate-size farm.
88. If you intersect with a railway a farm of that kind for your own purposes, you may often do considerable damage to the land, may you not, in cutting it? Yes; sometimes, but the damage is not very great as a rule.
89. Even under the Public Works Act you would not be able to get much compensation from the Government—you would have to pay for the land? Of course.
90. What do you reckon you would have to pay for the land, and as compensation for severance of these dairy farms? I would not like to speak at random, and I have not considered that. The market value of the land now is about £20 per acre. From that, in the event of the railway being made, the enhanced value given to any properties traversed would be deducted, and that I have not considered sufficiently to answer your question.
91. If a man's farm is near a station to which he would take his milk the construction of the railway would enhance the value of his property? Very much.
92. If his farm did not happen to be near a station it might do him more harm than good? There are cases where harm might be done.
93. If you had to take land then you would expect to pay £20 per acre? Yes.
94. The part near Moss Vale is not good land? There are patches of good land, but you get into the volcanic soil near Burrawang.
95. How far from Moss Vale? 5 or 6 miles.
96. The first 5 or 6 miles from Moss Vale is not rich land? No, it is not.
97. It is the ordinary mountain land? Yes. It is poor compared with the Robertson land.
98. You would not expect to get much traffic in produce for a railway from those first 5 miles? I do not think so. I do not suppose it would support a dense population.

J. B.
Thompson,
Esq.
29 Jan., 1890.

J. B.
Thompson,
Esq.
29 Jan., 1890.

99. The real value of that land is, I suppose, for residential purposes? Principally.
 100. Does a good deal of it lie in the hands of gentlemen? I think there are a good many large estates about there.
 101. You would have to cut up these estates in going through with the railway? Oh, yes.
 102. You think that the railway would add to their value? I am sure it would.
 103. You would get back in additional value all it would cost for the land? I think so.
 104. Between Moss Vale and Burrawang you think that the cost of the land would not come to anything material? I do not think it would.
 105. You would get as much back? Well, if you take £100 worth of land, and you benefit the residue of the property to the extent of £10,000, you can only set that against the £100.
 106. Of course you could not fine the land-owner, you only do not give him anything? That is all.
 107. And so far as those 5 miles to Burrawang are concerned you do not think you would have to give anything? I do not think so.
 108. Then the principal price you would have to pay for the land would be to the dairy farmers? Yes.
 109. And that would be about 10 miles on the whole journey? About 9, I think.
 110. Going into Robertson you would have some allotments to take up? Yes.
 111. And have to pay for those at their full value? Yes.
 112. You could not give us any estimate within £1,000 or so of what it would be likely to cost? No, I have not gone into that. The effect that the railway might have in enhancing the value of the property is a point that requires a great deal of consideration.
 113. You could not say within £1,000 what the total would be likely to come to? No, I could not.
 114. Would you say a minimum compensation payable for resumptions? I do not like speaking at random, sir. Speaking roughly I would fix the minimum at about £5.

THURSDAY, 30 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Moss Vale to Robertson.

John Harper, Esq., Railway Goods Superintendent, sworn, and examined:—

J. Harper,
Esq.
30 Jan., 1890.

115. *Mr. Garrard.*] Did you collect the information upon which the Commissioners based their estimate of traffic? Yes.
 116. You are not in a position to check that statement at all—that is the Commissioners' statement;—have you a copy of it there? Of the Commissioners' report I have—yes.
 117. Of course you are not in a position to check that;—you do not know upon what they have based their report? They have based it on the returns I obtained six months previously.
 118. Is that your latest report? Yes.
 119. Did you travel over the country from Moss Vale to Robertson? Yes; I was all over it.
 120. Merely upon the line of the proposed railway or on the main road? In all the settlements. I spent a week there.
 121. Have you had under consideration the report of Mr. Surveyor Bell, of 1884, in reference to this railway? I had it at the time; but it was not so much the question of route that I had to do with; I had to gather information as to the produce of the district and the character of the country through which it passed.
 122. You are aware that Mr. Bell in his report went very fully into the matter, not only from the constructive point of view but also from the traffic point of view? Yes.
 123. Did you agree mainly with the conclusions that Mr. Bell had arrived at, or had circumstances altered during the intervening years? We did not agree as far as I can remember, but he could not possibly have had the same sources of information that I had. I may say that the traffic in connection with this proposed line was more thoroughly analysed than the traffic of any other railway I have reported on.
 124. How long were you in the district? A week on one occasion and four days on another.
 125. Do you not think that Mr. Bell, who spent months in the district, would have as good an opportunity of judging of the traffic as you would in a week? No; simply because we had representatives from each of the townships who met at Moss Vale. They selected the best season, and went through item by item of every keg of butter and all the live stock that came from those districts.
 126. How did they obtain them? From our invoices. I read it out and asked where it came from—from Yarrunga, Wild's Meadow, or wherever the case might be.
 127. Did the produce of the districts show any marked increase during any number of years? We selected the most favourable season that they could think of—half of 1886 and half of 1887.
 128. And your estimate is based on that very best year? Entirely upon that. We devoted three days and three nights in going through every item that fell in at Bowral, Mittagong, and Moss Vale.
 129. But if this line is constructed much of that which goes direct to Bowral would still go there and not come to this branch line? On the other hand there is a good deal that would. I have a statement here of the traffic that fell in at Bowral which would go to this line.
 130. Can you have a copy of that report made and sent in? Yes. There were 115 tons that went to Robertson via Bowral and 163 tons that went from Robertson through Bowral which were included.
 131. Have you counted any of the produce or goods going outward to places between Bowral and Robertson which even if this proposed line were constructed would still go direct to Bowral and not use this line? Oh yes; we took the most favourable view of it in every way. I might explain that the local
 Committee

- Committee were dissatisfied with the previous report and they requested the then Minister to have the matter gone into more thoroughly, and in order that the thing might be thoroughly dealt with every concession was given them in selecting their traffic.
132. Then have you taken into consideration to the credit of this line produce which now finds its depot at Bowral and would still find it there although this railway were constructed? No doubt a portion of this tonnage I refer to would still continue to go to Bowral.
133. On the Kangaloon Road, for instance, by Mr. Lamb's place, and that way? Yes.
134. You have included that traffic inward and outward which comes by Mr. Lamb's place, although as a matter of fact if this line were constructed that would go direct to Bowral? Yes—not much of it; the principal portion of this is Robertson traffic from Bowral.
135. Do you think that the district which this railway would serve is capable of very much expansion in the way of trade? I imagine it would grow fruit extremely well, and I was surprised to find they were not growing more fruit. Their facilities even now by road are as great as some of the orchardists have at the Curragong in reaching Richmond.
136. The land is principally employed for dairying purposes? Yes.
137. Is there a possibility of expansion in that direction or is it doing its very level best now? I think it is capable of expansion. I think more could be got out of the ground for dairy purposes than at present.
138. Would this line lead to an expansion of the dairying industry or the fruit industry? I think it would do both—the expansion of the dairying industry and the fruit industry; both would be gone into more extensively.
139. Do you think that the fruit industry would be a paying concern? I do. I had an opportunity of inspecting the books of one gentleman who grows fruit, and I imagine that he makes more out of his fruit than out of dairying.
140. Are you aware that Mr. Hordern has a very large area of land under cultivation as an orchard? Yes. That is between Bowral and Moss Vale.
141. You think that is likely to prove a paying concern? I did not pay much attention to the country within 3 or 4 miles of Moss Vale.
142. On whose statement do you base your opinion that it would be a profitable thing to grow fruit there? Mr. Blencoe's.
143. Where is his place? At Wild's Meadow.
144. Did you take evidence at or visit all these places besides Moss Vale, or did you confine your attention to the evidence submitted at Moss Vale? I obtained the Bowral books and the Mittagong books for two years—the two most favourable—and with the deputation, consisting of one from each place—one from Yarrunga, Wild's Meadow, Robertson, and so on from each settlement—went through the entries item by item of live stock and goods inwards and outwards.
145. You are familiar with the route this proposed line would take? I crossed it and recrossed it in several places.
146. Are you aware that there was an alternative route suggested, which is shown by the blue line on the plan submitted to us—from Moss Vale via Fitzroy Falls? Yes.
147. Do you think that that would serve more country than the line under consideration? I cannot say that I paid particular attention to it, for I was committed to one object, and that was to have a look into the general productiveness of the district and the traffic.
148. Do you estimate that you would get any of the traffic of Kangaroo Valley if this line were constructed? One portion of it.
149. Is it not possible if the south coast line is continued down to Nowra that the whole of the Kangaroo Valley traffic would go to Nowra? I think it is possible it might.
150. And that would take away some portion of the traffic you are depending on for this line? Yes; although we did not take very much Kangaroo Valley traffic in this. I had the details for that year, but I did not have very much, and I think that those at the interview were very conscientious in checking, and the stationmaster was present to say where the things came from or went to.
151. You think it is likely that if this line were constructed it would lead to a large increase of passengers to the Fitzroy Falls and surrounding sights? I think so, and I have also thought since that in view of an extension to Nowra it would be a very good tourist district down the Barragarry Mountain and down to the south coast railway.
152. But they can do that now? Yes, but it is a longer drive.
153. The road is good? Yes. It was not when I was there.
154. Do you think that the proposed line—to get the most traffic, do the most trade, bring the most grist to your mill—would be better taken from Moss Vale to Robertson, or from Bowral to Robertson? Moss Vale I should imagine.
155. Do you think that any intermediate place between Bowral and Moss Vale would be the best place to start from? I did not study the routes.
156. So far as trade is concerned you think that Moss Vale would have the preference over Bowral or intermediate places? Yes.
157. I see by the report that for passage traffic the Commissioners allow for each adult in the district making two double journeys each year and each child one double journey, and they speak of this as being a very high average for an agricultural district; is that based on statistics of our agricultural population, or of the old country? I imagine on our own.
158. Did you give them any information about this? Yes.
159. Is this estimate of the probable number of passengers that would travel your estimate? No. My estimate was arrived at in a different way. So far as passenger traffic is concerned of course it is purely a matter of conjecture.
160. On what then did you base your estimate of the passenger traffic? On the general averages we find in districts similar to this, and therefore on actual experience. I estimated 1,500 first-class fares and 3,500 second-class fares. There is a difference in this estimate of £160.
161. Yours is in excess of this? No, mine is less.
162. The goods traffic on this line, excepting the goods going out to Robertson, would be at one particular time of the year—that is produce such as fruit? Well, the butter is continuous, and fruit does not represent much.

J. Harper,
Esq.
30 Jan., 1890.

- J. Harper, Esq.
30 Jan., 1890.
163. But you estimate an increase in the productiveness of the district more particularly in the matter of fruit and that would be confined to four months in the year? Yes. Four or five months in the year.
164. Did you actually visit Wild's Meadow and Robertson? Yes, I stayed at Wild's Meadow and at Robertson.
165. Did you go down the Kangaloon Valley at all? No.
166. You did not go over that side of the swamp at all? No, I kept on the other side of Wingecarribee swamp.
167. You did not anticipate drawing any trade from that side to this railway? We have some of it—from Burrawang; some portion of it would come in there.
168. Do you think that the people of the district are favourable to the tapping of the main line at Mossvale as against Bowral or any intermediate place? Those I came across I think with one exception all appeared to be in favour of Moss Vale. Mr. Barrett, of Burrawang, was I think the only Bowral advocate I met.
169. If the matter was one of giving the Robertson people access to the metropolis, and no other question arising, it would be better for them to tap at Bowral than at Moss Vale, having so much less distance to run, would it not? Yes, they would save mileage certainly.
170. But you would not tap such a good district by a direct route from Robertson? No; it would not be so convenient for Wild's Meadow and Yarrunga and people on the south side.
171. If the line were taken to Robertson how far would it be from Fitzroy Falls? I think about 2 miles the way I went.
172. Do you think that if the line were constructed only as far as Robertson it would meet the passenger traffic, or would it be necessary to construct a line right to the Falls? No, I think not. I think the Falls would be reached from Wild's Meadow.
173. How far is it from Wild's Meadow to the Falls? Three miles I should imagine.
174. You think that these estimates of the Commissioners we have here would have every chance of being realized? Yes, I think so; that is in ordinary seasons. We selected an exceptionally favourable one.
175. But to counterbalance that you estimated a large increase in the district because of the construction of this line? Yes.
176. And so it is reasonable to suppose that what is the maximum in your case would become the minimum? Yes.

THURSDAY, 13 FEBRUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed railway from Moss Vale to Robertson.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

- H. Deane, Esq.
13 Feb., 1890.
177. *Dr. Garran.*] The Sectional Committee who have been to Moss Vale and Robertson would like some information about Bowral and the Sheepwash—a continuance of that to the surveyed line between Moss Vale and Robertson. Have you such information in the office as would enable you to tell the Committee what they want to know in regard to this matter? It would be better to send someone up there; I would much prefer that course.
178. I do not consider it would be necessary to make a survey; I think if an officer were sent up to inspect the route by just walking over it that would be sufficient. Will you oblige the Committee by having that done? Yes.
179. He would make a survey or an inspection as far as the northern side of the swamp, and see whether the route is very much easier, as some of the witnesses say; whether it could be possibly taken by such a route as that, on the northern side, or edge of the swamp. It would be enough for the surveyor just to walk over the route and see whether it would be practicable or not? I understand you wish to know whether it is practicable to make a line from Bowral to the Sheepwash Station, and then to connect up with the Moss Vale to Robertson line; also, whether it would be practicable to continue the line from the Sheepwash, on the same side of the swamp, to Robertson. I will have an examination of the country made.

WEDNESDAY, 12 MARCH, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

HENRY COPELAND, Esq.

EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

JOHN HUBLEY, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Moss Vale to Robertson.

William Hutchinson, Esq., District Engineer, Department of the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

- W. Hutchinson, Esq.
12 Mar., 1890.
180. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you recently made a survey of the proposed line from Bowral to Robertson? I have recently travelled over the country without making a detailed survey.
181. Are the blue and green lines on this plan the routes you have examined? Yes.
182. Taking your blue line from Bowral to the Sheepwash is that a very easy route? With the exception at the Sheepwash, where there will be a cutting, the line is comparatively easy. 183.

W.
Hutchinson,
Esq.
12 Mar., 1890.

183. And no difficulty with regard to water running under it? Nothing further than ordinary country.
184. That would be a cheap line to construct? Yes.
185. And it could be made without danger of any serious damage on the cheapest principles? Quite.
186. You would require a bridge at the Sheepwash? If you cross the river there, but not otherwise.
187. Have you formed any opinion as to what such a bridge would cost? I should think a wooden bridge on piles would cost from £3,000 to £4,000.
188. Before you get to the river you would have a station? Yes.
189. Would that station be a convenient place for both the roads which come from Kangaloon? It would carry the Mittagong traffic, and also the Kangaloon traffic.
190. It would be a great convenience to all these people? Yes.
191. There would be no engineering difficulties in placing a station there? None.
192. After you have crossed the river at the Sheepwash till you rejoin what is known as the trial line from Bowral is there any difficulty in ascending gradients? No, it is what I should call level country, it is easier country than on the north side of the river.
193. From Mr. Bell's line across is there any difficulty in that piece? I did not travel over that, but the department have a section of it, and it shows that there is a good deal of excavation.
194. It would be the only kind of difficulty you would meet in getting on to Bell's line? That is all.
195. Did you examine from Bell's line forward to the position where it will be necessary to make a station for the Fitzroy Falls traffic? No, my instructions were to go only over the trial line from Robertson to Bowral.
196. So far as this Bell's line is concerned you did not examine it at all? No.
197. You say you can make a line up by the bank of the swamp with only one or two difficult places? Yes, one at the Sheepwash, and the other at about 10 miles. Of course there would be small cuttings and banks all the way, more or less, but all light work.
198. Are there no lateral creeks going into the swamp? Yes.
199. No more difficult on that line than on the other trial line? No.
200. It will be quite possible to make a horse tramway from the Sheepwash station up to Robertson? I think so.
201. Can you make an easy ascent into Robertson? Yes.
202. From the head of the swamp can you make an easy ascent into Robertson? Yes.
203. Is not Robertson considerably above the bed of the creek? No; the aneroid barometer shows Robertson to be only about 50 feet above the level of the swamp.
204. The access to Robertson that way is very easy? Yes.
205. Suppose the railway were made to Wild's Meadows, the station there would accommodate the Fitzroy Falls traffic and the traffic from Kangaroo Valley? In speaking of that district I cannot speak with any authority.
206. A separate branch line could be made, if necessary, by the banks of the lake to Robertson? Yes.
207. No engineering difficulties whatever? No. I should like to point out in the case of the route on the north side you have a gradual ascent all the way from Bowral to Robertson, whereas by either of the other two routes you have to rise 190 feet above Robertson and then go down again.
208. By your line for the produce of the district you would have a descending grade all the way? Up and down all the way.
209. Where is the principal rise in the 190 feet? It would be about 12½ miles beyond Bowral.
210. On that route it is quite unavoidable? Yes.
211. *Mr. Humphery.*] What would be the length of the blue line? It would be 14 miles from Bowral to Robertson *via* the northern side of the swamp without crossing the river.
212. What is the length of the other line? Following the green line it would be about 15½ miles.
213. Crossing the river at the Sheepwash? That would be still longer; I should think it would be about 15½ miles.
214. Can you say, approximately, what would be the cost per mile of the blue line? No.
215. Can you give any estimate of the cost of the other line? No.
216. Which, in your opinion, would be the least costly? The blue line from Bowral to Robertson all the way.
217. Would there be an appreciable difference in the cost? I think there would be a considerable difference. It is shorter, it saves a bridge over the river, it involves less excavations, and the gradients are not nearly so heavy.
218. What portion of Kangaloon would be served by the blue line? The whole of Kangaloon.
219. How many miles is it from the Sheepwash to Bowral? It is 5 miles to that station.
220. What distance will that be from Kangaloon? I suppose another 5 miles.
221. How far is the Sheepwash from Burrawang? Close on 5 miles.
222. The Sheepwash is equi-distant from Kangaloon and Bowral? Yes; I should like to point out that if the blue line were constructed some better provision than at present exists would require to be made at the Sheepwash for getting traffic to the station proposed on that plan.
223. Although the blue line beyond the Sheepwash to Kangaloon would be the least expensive line, crossing the river and carrying the line in the direction of Bowral would better serve the traffic? It would better serve the traffic on the south side of the river, not on the north.
224. Where is there likely to be the most traffic? In the Kangaloon district, I think.
225. That will be served fully by the blue line? Yes.
226. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you think a line from Bowral, by your blue line as far as the Sheepwash, crossing the Sheepwash and joining Bell's line at Wild's Meadows and terminating there—do you think that that line, for the present, will give the largest amount of accommodation to Robertson, Bowral, and Kangaloon if it were determined not to go on to Robertson in any case? Under these circumstances I think it would be the best line.
227. If it were thought to be too costly to extend the line to Robertson and it were proposed to make only a portion of the line, do you think that would be the best? I think so.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Moss Vale to Robertson.

APPENDIX.

A.

PRECIS OF PROCEEDINGS IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED LIGHT RAILWAY FROM MOSS VALE, BOWRAL, OR BURRADOO, TO ROBERTSON.

THE advocates of the measure of giving to Robertson communication by rail with the main Southern line, at Moss Vale or elsewhere, at first proposed a tramway.

Some time in 1881 a petition was presented to Mr. Secretary Lackey by inhabitants of Moss Vale and surrounding district, praying for such a tramway, representing the productiveness of the land and the isolation of Kangaroo Valley, and pointing out that if a tramway were constructed the heavy expenditure on the main roads would be saved.

Feb, 1881

A deputation also waited upon the same Minister to present a petition from the inhabitants of Burrawang, Wild's Meadow, and Robertson, stating that they (the petitioners) represented an area of 325 square miles of the finest agricultural land in the Colony; that they were 1,200 adult males, occupied chiefly in dairy-farming; that they had farms varying in value from £500 to £5,000 each; that they paid 15s. to 20s. per ton for the conveyance of their produce 10 miles by road, double the charge by rail for the whole distance from Moss Vale to Sydney (86 miles); that the population of the district was 6,200; that the district contained eight public schools (average attendance 400), and the usual public offices; that at Burrawang there was a Farmers' Club, with over 200 members, a Race Club, and an Agricultural Society, ranking fourth or fifth in the Colony; that the mineral resources of the district were rich and abundant, that if a tramway were constructed there would be a great saving in the maintenance of ordinary roads and bridges; and that they were confident not only that a tramway would pay, but that it would add a considerable sum to the general revenue of the country. They therefore prayed for the construction of a tramway from Moss Vale to Robertson and Burrawang, and they estimated the cost of such a line at £25,000, and the annual earnings at £13,539 (up traffic only; down traffic one-third more). They pointed out that the construction of this line would give an impetus to many important industries. Valuable timber, which was now ring barked and destroyed, would be cut up and sent to market, and the great coal-measures existing along the line would be worked, and give employment to the surplus population of Sydney. Moreover, the certainty of access to a market would encourage further settlement.

Mr. Cowdery was instructed to send an engineer to examine the country, and Mr. Halligan was deputed for the duty.

24/4/81

Mr. T. Blencowe wrote to the Minister, suggesting that, if the line *via* Burrawang and Wild's Meadow, as asked for in the petition, were not approved, a line to Wild's Meadow by the lower road might be examined, and a branch from Wild's Meadow to the Cambewarra Road.

The Commissioner minuted, "To be considered at the proper time."

2/5 81

Mr. Halligan reported that he had examined several routes for a tramway. These, however, as the idea of a tramway has been abandoned, need not be described here. Mr. Halligan recommended the adoption of one of these routes, as being easier in grade and more central than any others, although through about $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles of private land and was a mile longer than the high road. He thus described the route in question—From Moss Vale to point B (on plan); from B along an unused road to C; from C across a paddock to D; and thence by F to Robertson.

28/4/80

Mr. D. T. Smith addressed a letter to the Minister (Mr. Lackey), stating that Burradoo was a far better junction for the Robertson line than Moss Vale. It was a well known fact that when roads were surveyed in this district the land was too heavily timbered to admit of much selection of route, and that the surveyors, to save time, ran their lines over the steepest hills, regardless of grade. If, then, Mr. Halligan based his observations on the theory that the main road must be his line there was no alternative but to make Moss Vale the point of junction, to the marrying of the gradients of the proposed line and waste of public money. Mr. Halligan had been industriously "shepherded" by the Moss Vale people, and he feared that officer's report would be biased by them. He would point out that the route recommended by him (Mr. Smith) was perfectly level—"not a hill to impede nor a cutting to stay the road," while the Moss Vale route was continuous hill and dale from end to end, with grades of 1 in 5 to 1 in 20. By the Burradoo route the route to Sydney would be 5 miles shorter than from Moss Vale, and, in justice to the Upper Mattagong and West Kangaloon people this route ought to be adopted. He had no interest in one line more than another, and sought only "the greatest good to the greatest possible number," and desired also to prevent the waste of public money.

2 1/2 81

Mr. T. Garrett also forwarded to the Minister a letter which he had received from Mr. T. Blencowe dealing with the question of route, stating that the route over the range through Burrawang having been condemned by the Engineer, the persons who had petitioned wished Mr. Garrett's influence to be used in favour of the route by Wild's Meadow to Robertson on the ground that if constructed on the north side of the range it would be of no service to the district, and, so far as paying went, a complete failure.

9/12/81

A deputation waited on Mr. Secretary Lackey to ask for the construction of a tramway from Moss Vale to Robertson. The Minister said he was not unfavourable to the line, but he could not promise to make it until the result of the Camden tramway experiment had been ascertained.

22/7/82

Mr. Secretary Lackey received a highly influential deputation on the subject of a tramway between Moss Vale and Burrawang. They urged the construction of this line, alleging that it was required to meet the wants of a rich agricultural district, peopled by at least 1,000 farmers.

The Minister admitted the importance of the district, and was sure a line would pay there, but they could not construct it without a vote in Parliament. The route had been explored, and the report of the officer was not unfavourable, but it was very possible the Government might entertain a proposal for a system of light railways, which would be more serviceable than tramways. He had had a conversation with the Engineer-in-Chief, and he found such railways could be constructed for £2,000, £2,500, or £3,000 a mile. He would have a survey made between Moss Vale and Burrawang.

20 11/82

Mr. A. Osborne wrote to the Minister stating that if Kangaroo Valley and Kangaloon (the residents of which were among the original petitioners) were to be accommodated and the present proposal of a line from Moss Vale to Robertson was adhered to, branch lines would be necessary. He would therefore suggest the survey of a through line from Bowral through Kangaloon, crossing the range by a depression between Burrawang and Robertson; thence by Wild's Meadow to the top of Barrengary mountain. This line would run through the centre of the rich farming lands, bring double the traffic to the railway, be financially a success, and satisfy the whole of the districts concerned. It would, moreover, shorten by 6 or 8 miles the distance to Sydney, whether 80 per cent of the traffic would tend.

3 11/83

The Hon. Secretary of the Burrawang Farmers Club addressed the Minister requesting the fulfilment of a promise said to have been made by Mr. Lackey to have a line surveyed from Moss Vale to Burrawang.

May 1883

The inhabitants of Kangaroo Valley presented a petition to the Minister praying for the construction of a light railway to the top of Barrengary Mountain. They represented that the population of the valley was over 1,000, and rapidly increasing; that they sent weekly to Sydney large consignments of produce, and if proper means of transit were provided they would send a large supply of milk, that 30 tons of merchandise were received weekly, that the passenger traffic was considerable, and that the timber growing on the Crown land in the vicinity of the line would cover a considerable proportion of the cost.

Mr.

Mr. T. Blencowe addressed the Minister stating that his advocacy of the line originally proposed was based upon the assumption that a tramway following the line of road would be constructed, but as it had been found that tramways were not suited for heavy traffic, and a system of light railways had been adopted in lieu thereof, the question of a better route had to be considered. He would propose a branch line from near Bowral to Kangaloon, thence through the range between Burrawang and Robertson to Wild's Meadow, with the terminus at Barrengarrey Mountain. The first 5 miles of this route would be through good pastoral land devoted to dairy farming, &c., but the chief feature was the immense deposits of iron ore in the range and spurs; the next 4 miles was through thickly populated country to Kangaloon, whence the best dairy produce was sent to Sydney; thence across the Wingearabee Swamp, where a large fresh-water lake would be formed above the embankment, while below the land was of the best description for dairy purposes. The next 7 miles was through splendid land capable of growing anything suited to a cold climate, and the last 2 miles was poor sandstone country to the Kangaroo Valley Road, on the top of Barrengarrey Mountain. Here (the terminus) a township should be laid out. Near this the mountain was broken down in perpendicular cliffs, and revealed splendid seams of coal. He wished specially to direct attention to the vast mineral wealth on this route, and to the splendid scenery and healthy climate of the district, which would, ere long, make it the favourite summer resort from Sydney. 16/5/83.

As regarded the route from Moss Vale to Robertson, the first 8 miles went through second-class pastoral country sparsely populated, and not capable of contributing much traffic to the railway, the next 8 miles was through splendid land densely populated, as already described in the Bowral route. This (the Moss Vale) route would run between the ranges and accommodate only one-third of the district, and would never pay interest on cost.

The line he suggested was opposed from interested motives, by Moss Vale, which was jealous of Bowral becoming the leading place; by Burrawang, because it took the line from their property, and by Robertson, because it did not place the terminus there. In submitting these remarks, he had only done what he conceived to be a public duty.

The Commissioner, in reply, informed Mr. Blencowe that, prior to the receipt of his letter, instructions had been given to survey a line from Bowral, via the Kangaroo Valley, to Robertson, and that he was glad to see by the valuable information given by Mr. Blencowe that it was more than probable that the survey would result in the adoption of a really good route. 30/5/83.

Mr. Halligan reported that he had made an examination of the country as directed from Bowral to Robertson, via Kangaloon. Several routes were examined by Mr. Halligan, and he describes and illustrates each of these by references to a plan, but as this plan is no longer on the file, it would be impossible to make his descriptions intelligible here. Suffice it to state that he recommends the adoption of route No. 4, which he says would be the easiest to construct, and would meet the requirements of most of the inhabitants. He points out that if a line were made from Moss Vale to Robertson direct, Kangaloon would be left out entirely, and on the other hand that a line from Bowral to Kangaloon would not serve the people of Burrawang, Yarrunga, and Wild's Meadow*. Mr. Halligan adds that very likely it would be suggested to leave out Robertson, and carry a line to Kangaroo Valley and Barrengarrey Mountain, and he therefore mentions that his instructions were to examine a line from Bowral or Burradoo to Robertson. All the routes examined by him could start from either of those stations. 7/6/83.

* Does not the route suggested by Mr. Blencowe in his letter of 16/5/83 (*quod vide*) provide for these places?

Mr. Secretary Wright promised a deputation which waited upon him from Moss Vale, that a survey should be made for a line of railway from that place to Robertson. 27/7/83.

The Commissioner minuted in anticipation of a deputation which was about to attend, that in his opinion, the line should go by the Kangaloon Valley or near it, it being thence that the greater portion of the traffic would come. If the line went direct to Robertson, the Kangaloon Valley would be left out, and if taken by the Kangaloon Valley, Burrawang would be left out. The Commissioner therefore suggested what he termed a compromise by the adoption of a route starting from Bowral, which would in a measure serve all the places, but again in the absence of the plan, it would be impossible to describe the route. 24/7/83.

Does the Commissioner refer to Kangaloon or Kangaroo Valley? They seem to be two distinct localities.—C.A.B.

The Minister received the proposed deputation, and informed them that as a trial survey had been promised from Moss Vale to Robertson, he would feel justified in granting it. 25/1/84.

Another deputation waited on the Minister to urge the same matter, and Mr. Wright thereupon requested the Engineer-in-Chief to send up an officer to examine and report upon the country. Mr. Bell was accordingly deputed to examine the country from Moss Vale to Robertson, via Yarrunga, Wild's Meadow, and Burrawang. 25/1/84.

A deputation waited on Mr. Secretary Wright to ask for a trial survey for a light railway from Wild's Meadow to Barrengarrey Mountain. Wild's Meadow, they explained, was on the line in course of being surveyed from Moss Vale to Robertson, and the Mountain was about 6 miles distant therefrom. There was a considerable population, which would be largely increased if the means of conveyance were afforded, and the traffic would pay a good return upon the outlay. The Minister replied that he would grant the trial survey, but he could not promise that the railway would be made as they would depend upon the nature of the reports received. The experimental light line—that to Camden—had not been a success. 15/5/84.

A deputation from the localities interested waited on Mr. Secretary Dibbs (acting) to advocate the construction of a line either from Moss Vale or Bowral to Robertson. 8/8/84.

The Minister asked if the residents were prepared to give the necessary land, free of cost, to the Government.

The deputation did not approve of the suggestion, and Mr. Dibbs promised to obtain information from the Engineer-in-Chief as to levels, cost, &c., and submit the matter to the Cabinet.

Mr. A. Osborne addressed the Minister on behalf of the inhabitants of Kangaroo Valley, Wild's Meadow, and Yarrunga, with reference to the proposed line from Moss Vale to Robertson, with a branch from Wild's Meadow to the top of Barrengarrey Mountain, reviewing what had taken place, and stating that 5,000 gallons of milk were produced daily, which, if facilities were afforded, would be sent to Sydney; that the soil was specially adapted for the growth of potatoes and vegetables, and fruit of all kinds; that the climate was unsurpassed in New South Wales, and that this, with the scenery, would induce thousands to settle in the district if means of transit were provided. It would be seen, Mr. Osborne continued, that the construction of this line would amply repay the cost, and he trusted there would be no further delay in carrying out the work. 29/8/84.

A deputation from Kangaroo Valley waited on the Minister to advocate the construction of a railway from the Southern line to the top of Barrengarrey Mountain. They asked that this line might be included in the next list of railway proposals. It had been approved by the Stuart Government, and it was due to petty jealousy that it had been defeated. They were sure the line would prove remunerative. As regarded the point of junction they were quite willing to leave that to the Government. The Minister informed the deputation that probably no railway policy would be submitted that session, but he would obtain a report, and at a convenient opportunity submit the matter to his colleagues. 13/8/86.

Mr. Palmer reported that trial surveys had been made from Moss Vale and Bowral to Robertson, and that a branch line had been surveyed from the Moss Vale line to the top of Barrengarrey Mountain, 6 miles, and estimates had been submitted:—

Bowral to Robertson, 15 miles.....	£126,192
Moss Vale to Robertson, 14½ miles	106,770

Mr. Garrett, M.P., forwarded to the Minister a letter from Mr. T. Blencowe, in which the latter urged that the Barrengarrey and Robertson line might be included in the list of railways to be submitted to the House. It had, he said, been favourably entertained by past Ministries, and Messrs. Lackey, Wright, Dibbs, and Lyne pronounced it to be one of the most promising lines of any proposed. Mr. Blencowe, after reviewing what had been done in advocacy of the line, proceeded to give particulars of his own consignments to Sydney, but as he did not state the period to which his figures referred, they are valueless as statistics. He added that he could put on the railway 163 tons of milk and 25 tons of fruit and sundries per annum. 18/5/87.

A deputation interviewed Mr. Secretary Sutherland with reference to a railway from Moss Vale or Bowral to Kangaroo Valley. The deputation gave a *resumé* of what had occurred, and the Minister, in reply, intimated that they would have had their railway if the people could have agreed as to the route. He would obtain reports, and give the matter fair consideration. 6/8/87.

In accordance with the Minister's promise, Mr. Inspector Crawford was sent on a mission of inquiry in the district, and his report confirmed what had been before stated as to the extent and fertility of the country, the occupations of the people, &c. He stated that the places concerned are 10 to 15 miles from Moss Vale, with roads almost impassable in wet weather, the charges for carriage being very high in consequence. He estimated the population interested in the Moss Vale route at 6,000 or 7,000, having the usual complement of schools, churches, and public buildings, with Schools of Arts and other evidences of progress and affluence. The capabilities of the country were unlimited, but required transit facilities to develop them. Robertson, on an elevated plateau (2,000 feet), with a healthy climate, was cut off from the sea by the rugged

rugged nature of the country, and its only outlet was by Bowral or Moss Vale. Burrawang was situated on the range of that name, 10 miles from Moss Vale, and near the source of the Wingecarribee Creek. The country was undulating and fertile, and devoted to dairy-farming and grazing. Near by was Wild's Meadow, a tract of country also occupied by dairy-farmers. 3 miles further on was Barrengarry Mountain, with a road having a fall of 1,500 feet into Kangaroo Valley. The latter had two outlets for its produce—(1) by Barrengarry Mountain to Moss Vale, 20 miles; and (2) over the mountains to Broughton Creek (16 miles), the latter being an objectionable route, on account of the many transshipments. By reason of the extent of country opened up, the population served, and the cost of construction, he would give the preference to the Moss Vale route. The argument of the Bowral people that the route should be adopted because it placed Robertson 6 miles nearer Sydney, was valueless, inasmuch as it meant that while we were called upon to construct 14 miles of new line we should only get additional traffic for 8 miles. He estimated the financial result of the working of the line as under:—

Working expenses	£2,060 12 0
Interest at *5 per cent. on a capital of †£100,000	5,000 0 0
	7,060 12 0
Estimated revenue from all sources	585 15 8
Annual loss	£6,474 16 4

The Commissioner did not think Mr. Crawford had made sufficient allowance for the development of traffic by the construction of a railway, but was of opinion that if three times the anticipated traffic were realized, the construction of the line could not be recommended on economic grounds.

Extracts from Inspector Crawford's report were sent to Mr. M'Court, M.L.A., at the request of the latter.

21/10/87. A deputation from Robertson, introduced by Mr. M'Court, waited on the Minister, for the purpose of impugning the accuracy of Mr. Crawford's return of traffic, and obtaining further inquiry. They were prepared, they said, to prove that officer's figures altogether inaccurate and absurd.

The Minister thought it proper to give the persons interested an opportunity of proving their case, and directed that an officer should be sent to the district to collect evidence and verify the statements of the objectors.

26/11/87. Mr. Superintendent Harper was appointed for the purpose to confer with a committee of residents; and after a visit to the district, submitted a report.

Mr. Harper mentioned in emphatic terms the fertility of the district, the beauty of the scenery, and the healthiness of the climate. He stated that after seeing the district he could understand the extravagant estimate formed by the residents of the traffic likely to be developed; and, doubtless, it was capable of great improvement. But the duty confided to him was that of enabling the committee to prove the present traffic, and in this view he arranged for an examination by them and himself of all invoices, way-bills, &c., at Bowral and Moss Vale stations. The examination, which was an exhaustive one, entirely upset the extravagant theory of the residents, and the committee frankly admitted that the figures were unchallengeable. There could be no doubt, however, that Mr. Crawford's estimate, both of goods and passenger traffic was considerably underestimated. As the result of an elaborate calculation he found the present value of the goods traffic to be £600 14s. 3d., which he thought in estimating for a railway might fairly be doubled. With a population of 6,000 or 7,000 persons, and with the attractions presented to visitors by the scenery and climate, it was not unreasonable to expect that at least 5,000 persons per annum would use the line. Taking these in the proportion of 1,500 1st class and 3,500 2nd class fares, and including £180 for the carriage of mails, and a return was shown of £1,071 13s. 4d. The account would then stand,—

Goods traffic	£1,201 8 6
Passengers and mails	1,071 3 4
Total earnings	£2,272 11 10

Notwithstanding this more favorable return, Mr. Harper was of opinion that the construction of a line to Robertson *at present* would add another to the list of non-paying lines. In this opinion Mr. Kircaldie fully concurred.

3/1/88. The Commissioner minuted that there was not much difference between Mr. Crawford's and Mr. Harper's estimate of goods traffic. The former on the basis of present traffic put it at £551, while Mr. Harper, taking the most favorable year the committee could select, brought it out as £601, and this he had doubled, because a railway would be likely to increase the traffic. Mr. Harper again had put down a sum for passenger traffic not based on present traffic, but on anticipated increase due to visitors, who, he assumed, would be attracted by the picturesque beauty of the district. If these somewhat fanciful sources of revenue were developed, the gross earnings would still be £4,000 per annum short of what would be required to make the line a self-supporting one.

13/2/88. Mr. M'Court, M.P., writing to the Minister, hoped the Robertson line would not be overlooked. He was sure a line costing £40,000 or £50,000 would pay well.

6/7/88. An influential deputation waited on Mr. Secretary Sutherland to urge the construction of a light line of railway to Robertson. They wished it referred at once to the Public Works Committee, feeling assured that they could make their case good before the Committee. Mr. M'Court thought that in view of the importance and population of the district, they were entitled to a railway. He was sure that a light line, costing £4,000 or £5,000 a mile would pay handsomely, and he did not fear the result of any inquiry. Mr. Blencowe pointed out that their produce was of such a nature as to require quick transit to a market. Their population was from 1,200 to 1,500 persons. He was satisfied that Mr. Harper had under-estimated the traffic. For instance, he had made no mention of milk, which would be an important item. Mr. Harper had put down the goods freight at 11d. and 1s. 3d. per ton, but they were paying 15s. to 20s. per ton, and an average of 8s. per ton would have enabled Mr. Harper to add £1,000 to his estimate. He (Mr. Blencowe) believed the line could be made to pay 3 per cent. on a capital of £70,000.

Mr. Sutherland informed the deputation that he believed this branch would pay as a light line, and if the plans were ready he would submit them to the Cabinet.

24/9/88. The chairman of public meeting held at Yarrunga requested the Minister—in terms of a resolution carried at such meeting—to have a deviation surveyed to meet the requirements of Kangaroo Valley and Fitzroy Falls traffic.

5/10/88. A deputation, with the same object in view, waited on the Minister. They pointed out that the line, as proposed, passed some distance from the Falls and was not convenient for Kangaroo Valley, and if the traffic of these places was provided for the line would have a better chance of paying. There was always considerable passenger traffic to the Falls, which would be greatly increased if railway facilities were given. Again, Kangaroo Valley, one of the most fertile districts in the Colony, sent its produce by sea from Broughton's Creek; but if the line were made it would all go by rail. Large quantities of goods would be sent away if the line were taken to the top of the mountain. They were satisfied to rest their claim on its merits, and would like an officer to be sent to report on the deviation.

Mr. Sutherland informed the deputation that from his knowledge of the localities he was quite prepared to comply with their very reasonable request, and would depute an officer accordingly.

Mr. Stuart was instructed to undertake this duty, and to place himself in communication with Mr. Alderman Hart, who would show him the localities.

It may suffice here to say that Mr. Stuart reported the deviation to be practicable, but that to reach the top of the Barrengarry Mountain a branch line would be necessary, and it would lengthen the present about 3½ miles.

28/10/88. The President of the Burrawang Farmers' Club forwarded to the Minister copy of resolutions carried at a meeting of the Club affirming—(1) that the district, from its position, population, and resources is entitled to a railway; (2) that the nature of its produce renders speedy access to Sydney a necessity; (3) that the produce of the district would be quadrupled if a railway were made, and the land would be worked up to its full capacity; (4) that the salubrity of the climate and the beauty of the scenery would attract visitors in large numbers; and (5) that Surveyor Wilkins' line be adopted as the most easily constructed, and the most direct, and the best suited for the accommodation of the majority of the people.

Mr. Thompson, the land valuer, paid a visit of inspection and inquiry to the district, and his report will be laid before the Committee.

The Railway Commissioners also reported on the line.

C.A.B., 6/2/90.

B.

B.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, 29 December, 1888.

Proposed line of light Railway, Moss Vale to Robertson, 14 miles 20 chains.

In accordance with the provisions of the "Public Works Act, 1888," section 13, we beg to report as under :—

Cost of Construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief estimates to cost of constructing this line at (this is exclusive of land and compensation)	£84,300
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Annual Cost—

Interest at 3½ per cent. on capital.....	2,950
Expense of working line (two trains per day each way), Permanent-way and traffic expenses	3,627
Total annual cost	<u>£6,577</u>

Traffic Estimate—

Goods traffic now passing through Bowral and Moss Vale to and from Wild's Meadow and Robertson Districts	2,504 tons.
Value to branch	£465
Live stock.....	115

Passenger Traffic—

Allowing for each adult in the district making two double journeys each year, and each child one double journey, which is an exceedingly high average for an agricultural district, value of traffic to the branch would be	1,075
Mails and parcels.....	188

Total annual traffic	<u>£1,843</u>
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It will be seen that the traffic would have to develop exceedingly before working expenses could be covered, and the district through which the line passes for a considerable part of its course is not of such a character as to enable such a change to take place rapidly.

The district around Robertson itself is very rich, and if it were devoted more to the growth of fruit and vegetables a much greater traffic could be developed, and so later on perhaps justify the making of a branch line.

The Common seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales has been hereunto affixed by the Railway Commissioners in the presence of,—	E. M. G. EDDY,	(L.S.)
	Chief Commissioner.	
	W. M. FEHON,	(L.S.)
D. VERNON.	Commissioner.	
	CHARLES OLIVER,	(L.S.)
	Commissioner.	

C.

OFFICIAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

Line from Moss Vale to Robertson.

Length, 14 miles 20 chains. Estimated cost of a light single line, £84,900, exclusive of cost of land and compensation, or £5,953 per mile.

THIS proposed branch railway leaves the Great Southern Line at 85 miles 60 chains, at the southern end of the Moss Vale railway station, and proceeds in a south-easterly and north-easterly direction, terminating at Yarrunga-street, in the village of Robertson, being a distance from Sydney of 100 miles, crossing White's Creek at 86½ miles; passing through the parishes of Bong Bong, Yarrunga, and Yarrawa, county of Camden, and the district of Wilde's Meadow; from 89 to 90 miles, running parallel to Fitzroy Falls and Shoalhaven Road at a distance of about 10 chains; crossing the Yarrunga and Wilde's Meadow Road at 93 miles; thence in a north-easterly direction to the terminus, running the latter portion of the way along the southern side of the road from Moss Vale and Burrawang, and along the south side of Congewoi-street, crossing West Wallungunda and Caalong Streets,—being a distance of 14 miles 20 chains.

January, 1889.

D.

DETAILS OF ESTIMATED COST OF PROPOSED RAILWAY.

Proposed Railway from Moss Vale to Robertson.

Estimated cost of constructing a single line of railway (exclusive of cost of land and compensation).

Length of main line, 14 miles 20 chains; length of sidings, 67½ chains. Total, 15 miles 7½ chains.

Class of Work.	Estimated Cost of Works of each Class.		Total Cost.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Excavations			25,950	0 0
Culverts—				
No. 24—3 ft.	2,082	5 0		
No. 4—4 ft.	422	15 0		
No. 5—5 ft.	960	15 0		
No. 1—6 ft. 6 in.	484	0 0		
No. 1—8 ft.	365	0 0		
No. 36—Box drains			4,314	15 0
Bridges—			474	0 0
No. 4—Single spans of 10 ft. 6 in.	652	10 0		
No. 1—Double spans of 10 ft. 6 in.	211	10 0		
No. 1—Treble spans of 10 ft. 6 in.	264	10 0		
Overbridges—			1,128	10 0
No. 5—Roadway, 14 ft. wide			2,378	10 0
No. 33—Level crossings			2,427	8 0
Diversions of roads			636	5 0
Permanent-way and ballasting			27,528	5 4
No. 3—Stations			4,380	0 0
No. 1—Water supply			1,500	0 0
Fencing			4,480	0 0
Signals			200	0 0
Cost of works			75,397	13 4
Engineering and contingencies	12½ per cent.		9,424	14 2
Total (say)			84,822	7 6
Average cost per mile (say)	5,953	0 0	5,952	8 11

H. DEANE,
Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

Engineer-in-Chief's Office, 27th September, 1889.

E.

REPORT ON ROUTES FOR PROPOSED RAILWAY, BOWRAL OR MOSS VALE TO ROBERTSON.

[Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 22 November, 1888]

Sir,

Trial Survey Office, Railway Department, Sydney, 12 March, 1884.

Instruction

On the 26th February I received instructions from the Engineer in Charge of Surveys to proceed to Moss Vale, examine the district towards Robertson, and report upon the most suitable route for a railway connecting Robertson with the Great Southern Railway.

Description of country.

Having made the examination, and devoted considerable time to inspecting the districts to be served by the proposed railway, I have the honor to report as follows—

The township of Robertson, about 14 miles east of Moss Vale, lies on an elevated plateau, and is approached from the Southern Railway at Moss Vale and Bowral by the Burrawang and Kangaloon Ranges, between which lie the Wingecarribee Swamp and the Bong Bong River. These two ranges are covered with extensive tracts of rich chocolate soil, eminently adapted for dairy farming, and this good land extends 3 or 4 miles past Robertson, gradually getting poorer, however. Around Robertson settlement is not so advanced as in the more westerly parts of the district.

Opposite the west end of the Wingecarribee Swamp the ranges die out about 5 or 6 miles from the Southern Railway, and are succeeded by grazing country.

On the Burrawang Range, 10 miles from Moss Vale, lies the private township of Burrawang, through which the line already surveyed from Bowral to Robertson passes. Three-quarters of a mile southward, at the foot of the hill, is the head of Joe Wild's Meadows, formerly a swamp fed by the Meadows Creek from the southern slope of the Burrawang Range. This meadow is now occupied by dairy farms; it runs out towards the Fitzroy Waterfall, a favourite resort of pleasure-seekers, and is crossed at its lower end by the road from Moss Vale to Shoalhaven and Broughton Creek, and is bounded on east and west by fertile ranges. The Shoalhaven Road, 3 miles after passing Wild's Meadows, descends the Barrengarry Mountain by a road 4 miles in length and falling more than 1,500 feet into the Kangaroo Valley.

This is the most important district in the neighbourhood, and comprises Kangaroo, Barrengarry, Broger's, and Camberwarra Creeks, and the district round Bendiela. Up each of these creeks are large tracts of fertile land, a great portion of which has been cleared of brush and dense scrub, and is occupied by dairy farms of from 40 to 100 acres and upwards. The tenure is largely freehold, and the land is already selected on the hillsides up to the foot of the cliffs. The climate is very mild, and the settlers could thus keep up the supply of produce throughout the winter, when the upland pastures were unproductive.

Between Wild's Meadows and Moss Vale is the parish of Yarrunga, containing the settlement of Manchester Square. The land is in small farms, but the soil is not so fertile as in the districts already described.

Description of route existing survey.

There is already a railway-line surveyed direct from Bowral to Robertson. Starting from the Great Southern Railway near the former place it runs in a south-easterly direction for 2½ miles, where it crosses the Bong Bong River in a flat half-a-mile across, and subject to floods upwards of 6 feet deep. Continuing in the same direction through pastoral land it crosses the Moss Vale and Robertson Road about 7½ miles from Bowral, and begins to ascend the Burrawang Range, keeping on the north side of the ridge until at 11¾ miles it crosses a saddle, whence it continues on the south side of the road and ridge to near Robertson, which it enters from the south-west. It passes through Burrawang township at 10 miles, and the summit is reached at 12½ miles from Bowral.

The districts it serves are the Burrawang Range, Robertson, and through it East Kangaloon, while the West Kangaloon people would meet it about 6 miles from Bowral. The Wild's Meadows settlers would have to either travel uphill to Burrawang (at 10 miles), or go out to meet the line on the level, at the crossing of the Moss Vale Road, 7 miles from Bowral. The Kangaroo Valley and Manchester Square traffic would be entirely cut off.

Accommodation of districts

The various districts would be accommodated as shown hereunder.

Kangaloon

Kangaloon is completely cut off by Wingecarribee Swamp from communication with Burrawang direct; East Kangaloon has, therefore, an outlet by Robertson, the country falling in that direction, while West Kangaloon, sloping towards Bowral, would be accommodated only at the "Sheepwash" by the line as now surveyed; but considering the short distance saved, and the extra mileage to Bowral, it is doubtful whether the western settlers would avail themselves of the branch line.

In deciding therefore upon the route for a railway to Robertson, Kangaloon interests must be set aside, as nothing less than a railway through Kangaloon would serve the country properly, and the district is too rough and too circumscribed to justify the construction of a line.

The Burrawang Range is best served by the surveyed line, but the district is too small of itself to make a railway pay, there being actually only half-a-mile to a mile of land between the surveyed line and Wingecarribee Swamp, the virtual boundary on the north, whereas all the other districts lie to the south of the line, and to reach it would have to come uphill.

A line by Wild's Meadows would give the settlers $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile more to carry their produce, but as this is downhill, and as no part of the Burrawang District would be 2 miles from such a line they would have nothing whatever to complain of.

Their objections to such a line resolve themselves into a fear that the present township would be hurt, and that stores would have to be brought $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile uphill.

Of Wild's Meadows and the districts between Burrawang Hill and the Shoalhaven (Kangaroo Valley) Road, the centre is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the surveyed line, and the carriage is uphill, whereas the proposed line would not be more than 2 miles from the centre, and would meet the traffic on the flat.

At present there are two modes of exit from Kangaroo Valley by which produce is brought out. The one is *via* Barren-garry Mountain to Moss Vale, about 20 miles from the valley township, and the other is over the mountains to Broughton Creek, about 16 miles.

At Broughton Creek the exports, consisting of butter, eggs, fowls, pigs, and cedar are shipped on a small steamer for Shoalhaven, where they are again transhipped to the coasting steamers. By this route there is great loss and deterioration, as after the heavy journey up and down the mountain the produce is much knocked about, and delayed in the several transshipments. One item of produce, viz., calves, cannot be transported either *via* Broughton Creek or Moss Vale, and farmers have consequently to destroy large numbers which might otherwise be a source of profit.

In coming out of the valley *via* Moss Vale there is only one hill to climb, but the distance is such that the double journey cannot be performed in one day. The settlers in the valley were unanimous in stating that their wants would be well satisfied by any line that came sufficiently near the top of the hill on the flat, so that each man could take out his produce by his own vehicle and return to the valley the same day.

This would be accomplished by a line at the upper end of Wild's Meadows, but the valley traffic could not be counted upon if, in addition to the long carriage up from Barren-garry, the carts had to climb another hill at the end. It is a matter for consideration how much of the traffic would be diverted from such a line by the completion of the Illawarra Line to Shoalhaven, but so important is the valley traffic that it might even be advisable to lengthen the proposed line by going so far down Wild's Meadows in order to bring it nearer to the Valley Road, and also to accommodate visitors to the Fitzroy Falls, which at holiday times are visited by great numbers of people.

One of the largest landowners in the valley has at present to devote a large part of his land to fattening cattle, whereas were there better facilities for getting to market he would lay it out in dairy farms. There is always a great amount of clearing going on, which will greatly increase the traffic in the district as the land is brought into use.

The Yarrunga and Manchester Square settlers would be accommodated only by a line from Moss Vale *via* Wild's Meadows.

There are three practicable routes other than the line at present surveyed; they would unite before reaching Wild's Meadows, which would be passed on the level ground, they would have easier gradients and a considerably lower summit level than the present line—

- 1st. Leaving Bowral by the line already surveyed, and following it for 7 miles, then bearing to the south so as to get on to the southern side of the Burrawang Range on E. Shipley's section of 378 acres, then keeping up to the head of Kelly's Creek through Stagg's 237 acres to water reserve where Meadows Creek crosses Wild's Meadows Road; keeping thence on the slope of Burrawang Range up the Meadows Creek to the saddle on William Hanrahan's land at head of the creek; thence in to Robertson nearly on the line of the existing survey.
- 2nd. Starting from Austermere, on the Great Southern Railway, keeping round the bend of the Bong Bong River, crossing the western boundary of Throsby's 4,000 acres, about 30 chains from the southern corner; thence straight to meet the first proposed line in Shipley's 378 acres; thence *via* top of Wild's Meadows to Robertson as before.
- 3rd. Starting from the Great Southern Railway, 20 or 30 chains to south of Moss Vale Station, and keeping up White's Creek; thence bearing eastwards through the 1,000 acres, originally Chas. Throsby's, along the southern side of the watershed separating the Bong Bong basin from that of the Meryla to a point about a mile to the north of Yarrunga School, where the selections of Messrs. T. Seery, Bath, and Hayter adjoin; thence keeping up by Kelly's Creek and joining the first proposed route between Shipley's and Stagg's land, whence it is continued *via* Wild's Meadows to Robertson as previously described.

The three proposed routes coinciding from near Shipley's 378 acres to Robertson the advantages of that portion over the surveyed route are:—It is more in the centre of the district, and from that part whence the line is diverted the traffic is downhill. The rise does not commence until after leaving Wild's Meadows, and the gradients up to Robertson are easier, the summit level being nearly 100 feet lower than on the present survey. There is a good permanent supply of water in the Meadows Creek.

- 1st. Of the portions of the proposed routes before they unite, the advantages of the first running on the surveyed line to Bowral are that it will save 6 miles of carriage on Sydney traffic over a line starting from Moss Vale, and it will partially serve West Kangaloon. The disadvantages are the scantiness of the population, and the liability of the Bong Bong River to floods.
- 2nd. The second route starting from Austermere will avoid the Bong Bong River entirely, and will save 2 miles on the Sydney traffic over the Moss Vale route. On the other hand the junction is away from a township, and the population for the first 8 miles from the Southern Railway is scattered.
- 3rd. The line to Moss Vale has the advantage of joining the main line near the township, which at present is the chief place in the district, and it also serves the Yarrunga residents. It is carried for some distance on the watershed, and thus avoids gullies and creeks. The only disadvantage is that the distance towards Sydney is 6 miles longer than *via* Bowral.

It therefore appears that the most payable line would be one from Robertson down the south side of the Burrawang Range, past Wild's Meadows, and that the most suitable junction would be at Moss Vale, unless the saving in mileage on the other routes would override other considerations. It would be necessary to open a road along the side of Wild's Meadows to enable the Kangaloon Valley traffic to come from the head of the mountain to the railway on the level, as the present road runs on the top of a range.

The lengths of all the routes do not differ greatly, but on the new proposals the heavy work commences on leaving Wild's Meadows; and it is worthy of consideration whether the line should be constructed to that point in the first instance, leaving its extension to Robertson to a future time. The drawback to such a course would be that it would very greatly retard the progress of East Kangaloon.

I have, &c.,
WM. REID BELL.

I have attached to Mr. Bell's report portion of a county map on which I have shown the line already surveyed from Bowral to Robertson and the alternative routes that have been suggested and examined by Mr. Bell. It appears from this report that a line from Moss Vale to Robertson would pass through the most populated part of the district, and I think a trial survey of this route might be made, to compare with the route from Bowral. I do not see any necessity for surveying the intermediate routes, as I imagine the point to be eventually decided will be whether this line is to leave the Southern Railway at Bowral or at Moss Vale.—H.P., 14/3/84. The Engineer-in-Chief. Forwarded for the information of the Minister for Works.—J.W. (*per* W.H.Q.), 20/3/84. Under Secretary, B.C. Submitted, 21/3/84.—J.R. I approve of Mr. Palmer's suggestion that a trial survey be made from Moss Vale to Robertson.—F.A.W., 22/3/84. Mr. Palmer.—W.H.Q., 25/3/84. Instructions given to Mr. Bell to proceed with this survey without delay.—H.P., 26/3/84.

F.

REPORT BY MR. J. B. THOMPSON, LAND VALUER, ON PROPOSED RAILWAY EXTENSION FROM MOSS VALE TO ROBERTSON.

Department of Public Works, Valuation Branch, Sydney, 27 September, 1889.

In compliance with your instructions of 16/8/89, I have now the honor to submit a report on the proposed railway extension from Moss Vale to Robertson. 1. As to the character of the country on and near the proposed line. 2. The nature of settlement, and the principal industries of the district. 3. Respecting the traffic which is likely to be developed by the construction of this line; and 4. As to the character of the country and its attractions as a resort for tourists.

1. The character of the country on and near the proposed line:—

The country for a distance of about 6 miles from Moss Vale is of variable quality, most of it being open, forest, well-grassed, but light, sandy soil, with patches of good agricultural land on the rises, and some black flats. Thence to within about 1 mile of Burrawang, a distance of about 2½ miles, the country gradually improves, until at the point mentioned it becomes entirely volcanic, with chocolate-coloured soil of great depth and extraordinary fertility.

This volcanic eruption covers an extensive area, approximately about 10 miles from north to south and about 8 miles from east to west, or an area of over 50,000 acres, nearly the whole of which is of the very best description. The volcanic district now referred to has many striking characteristics. It is a plateau, within about 10 miles of the ocean, overlying the coal-measures, at an elevation of about 2,500 feet. Its surface is very irregular, as it is intersected by numerous ranges, with deep valleys and water-courses intervening. Many of the ranges are steep, with extensive outcrops of loose basaltic boulders on their summits and many of their slopes, but all fertile and well grassed. The volcanic country is sharply defined, and, except on the north, it is surrounded by sandstone country, which on the west and south forms a belt or fringe of a width varying from 1 to 3 miles, dividing it from the precipitous cliffs which hem in the fertile Kangaroo Valley on the west, and which fall towards Jamberoo and Albion Park on the south. The only approach to this district from the direction of the coast available for wheel traffic are the long and steep ascents of Barrengarry Mountain, from Kangaroo Valley, and Jamberoo Mountain, from Kiama. As might be expected from the great elevation of this district, and its proximity to the ocean, it has a most salubrious climate and a copious and regular annual rainfall. The most striking feature of the district, however, is, I think, its indigenous vegetation, notwithstanding its height above sea level, and its cold winters. It was originally covered, both on hill tops and valleys, with a forest of gigantic trees, with as dense an undergrowth of shrubs, creepers, and innumerable tree-ferns as I have ever seen in the coast brushes. The district has now been mostly cleared and sown with artificial grasses, which succeed admirably. The character of the country and its attractions as a resort for tourists I shall explain under another head.

2. The nature of settlement and the principal industries of the district:—

The district is almost wholly occupied by small farmers, whose principal pursuit is dairy-farming. There are seven or eight butter factories at work, and a couple of bacon factories, all of which turn out considerable quantities of produce.

3. Respecting the traffic, which is likely to be developed by the construction of this line.

There is a practically unlimited area of first rate agricultural soil, much of which would undoubtedly be brought under cultivation were there easy access to the Sydney market—the present rate of carriage from 15s. to 20s. per ton from Robertson to Moss Vale being a complete barrier to the conveyance of bulky produce. There would also be large quantities of sawn timber taken to market were there a railway, as the high rate of dray carriage leaves but little margin for profit to the mill owners.

4. As to the character of the country and its attractions as a resort for tourists.

This district is not only intrinsically valuable, but it is surrounded by some of the finest scenery to be found in the Colony. The Fitzroy, Belmore, Carrington, or Kangaroo River Falls are magnificent beyond description. I am firmly convinced, if easily accessible, this district would attract more tourists than the Blue Mountains, as it has every advantage of scenery and climate possessed by the latter, with others peculiar to itself, such as the local production of farm, garden, orchard, and dairy produce in abundance, and if the best descriptions, which is no small attraction to those who might visit the district as a sanatorium. I regard the certain and speedy recognition of the superiority of this district as a health and pleasure resort as a source of large revenue to the railway, if constructed. I should mention that the Falls are within a radius of 4 miles of Robertson, which may be regarded as the centre of the district.

The Under Secretary, Public Works, Sydney.

J. B. THOMPSON,
Land Valuer.

G.

REPORT BY MR. DISTRICT-ENGINEER HUTCHINSON ON THE ROUTE OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY FROM BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office,
Sydney, 5 March, 1890.

Bowral to Robertson Railway.

I FORWARD herewith for the information of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, a copy of Mr. District-Engineer Hutchinson's report on his examination of the route of the above proposed Railway.
The Secretary Parliamentary Standing Committee, Public Works.

H. DEANE.

Railway Construction Department, Sydney, 3 March, 1890.

Bowral to Robertson Railway.

In compliance with your instructions I examined the country between Bowral and Robertson, for the purpose of ascertaining if a line of railway could be constructed *via* the Sheep-wash, to connect these two towns, and I have marked on the accompanying parish map, in blue and green, the two lines which I examined.

I consider that the point selected for the junction of the trial survey with the Great Southern Railway is the best, although by deviating about 5 or 6 chains closer to Bowral, a slightly better line could be obtained; but as some valuable property would have to be resumed, I do not think any saving would be effected.

For the first mile and a half the trial survey could be adopted; at this point the line would deviate as shown in blue, continuing on the south side of the main road for the next 3½ miles; thence close along the north bank of the river to the Sheep-wash; thence along the edge of the Wingecarribee swamp for 6 miles; the line would then cross the creek at the head of the swamp, and would follow the south bank of the Cualong Creek into Robertson.

On this route the gradients would be very favourable, the maximum being about 1 in 60; the earthworks would also be light, except at two places, one close to the "sheep-wash," and the other about 10 miles; at these places the range runs close down to the river and the swamps, and a good deal of excavation would be required to take the railway line past. Should this route be adopted, a siding at 5 miles would catch all the upper Mittagong traffic, and also, I believe, a good deal of the traffic from the south side of the river, and a siding at 10½ miles would be the best place for the Kangaloon district.

The other line would deviate from the trial survey at the same point as the blue one, and would follow the direction shown by green line in plan, passing over level country, and joining the trial survey again at 7½ miles. From that point to Robertson the lines as surveyed would be adopted, but in a few places improvements could be made, principally at 9½ miles, where a cutting 60 feet deep is shown, but which could be considerably reduced by keeping the line a few chains to the north; also at 13½ miles, when by twisting the line a little to the south, the cutting shown on section could be avoided.

By crossing the Wingecarribee River as shown on green line, instead of at the place selected for the trial line, the length of the bridge could be reduced quite one-half.

The earthworks on this line would be more expensive than on the blue line, and the gradients would not be so favourable. Should this line be adopted, a siding of about 6½ miles, near the "sheep-wash," would be the most convenient for the traffic on the north side of the river.

I have shown in black a line leaving the blue line at 5¾ miles, and joining the green line at about the same mileage; this line would cross the Wingecarribee River at a very oblique angle, but the length of the bridge required would be less than where the green line crosses the river.

When examining the various lines, I was accompanied by Messrs. Alcorn, Kennedy, and Brennan. These gentlemen are very old residents of the district, and gave me all the information and assistance in their power, and they informed me that the Wingecarribee River and swamp had not been in such a flooded state as it was at the time of my visit since 1870, and therefore I could not have examined the country at a more favourable time for railway construction purposes.

To the acting Engineer-in-Chief.

W. HUTCHINSON.

H.

H.

MOSS VALE TO ROBERTSON RAILWAY

Book of Reference to accompany Parliamentary Plan
 Trial Survey, Moss Vale to Robertson, *via* Wild's Meadow.

Name of Parish	No on Plan	Description of Property	State of Cultivation	Name of		
				Owners	Lessees	Occupiers
Bong Bong	1	Great Southern Railway	...	...	.....
"	2	Building allotment	...	W. M. Coward	..	
"	3	"	...	C. C. Gale...	..	
"	4	"	...	Samuel Tooth	..	
"	5	"	...	James Tate	..	
"	6	House and garden	...	— Murphy	..	— Murphy.
"	7	Building allotment	...	P. C. Ferguson	..	
"	8	"	...	"	.....
"	9	"	...	"	.....
"	10	"	...	Wm Jones	..	
"	11	Throsby-street	...	"	.....
"	12	Building allotment	...	John Adams	..	
"	13	House and garden	...	George Tate	..	
"	14	Building allotment	...	Jeremiah Hayter	..	
"	15	"	...	A. A. Woodward	..	
"	16	House and garden	...	— Rilter	..	
"	17	Spring-street	...	"	.....
"	18	Building allotment	...	A. J. Riley	..	
"	19	"	...	Stephen Downs	..	
"	20	Arthur street	...	"	.....
"	21	Park street	...	"	.....
"	22	Building allotments	...	Thos Lovell	..	Thos Lovell.
"	23	Pasture land	Grass and trees	Mrs. Throsby	..	
"	24	"	Grass, bush, and swamp	G. O. Gilchrist	..	G. O. Gilchrist.
Yarrunga	25	"	"	Patrick Throsby	G. P. Gilbert	G. P. Gilbert
"	26	Government Road	...	"	.....
"	27	Pasture land	Grass and swamp	J. M. Byrnes	J. T. Hayter	J. T. Hayter.
"	28	Pasture and arable land	Grass	Wm. Goodfellow	..	Wm Goodfellow
"	29	Government Road	...	"	.....
"	30	Pasture land	Grass and bush	John Lackey	..	
"	31	Bush land	Scrubbed	— Pearson	..	
"	32	"	...	"	.....
"	33	"	...	S. Murphy (?)	..	
"	34	"	Bush, scrub, and swamp	T. Lawler	..	— Smith.
"	35	"	...	James Bunter	..	Jas Bunter.
"	36	Government Road	...	"	.....
"	37	Bush land	Bush and swamp	John Moore	..	John Moore.
"	38	"	...	Th. Lawler	— Smith	J. T. Hayter.
"	39	Government Road	...	"	.....
"	40	Bush land	...	John T. Hayter	..	"
"	41	Government Road	...	"	.....
"	42	Bush land	...	John T. Hayter	..	"
"	43	Government Road	...	"	.....
"	44	Pasture land	Grass and swamp	Thos. Seery	..	T. Seery.
"	45	"	Grass and bush	"	.....	"
"	46	Arable land	Crop	"	.....	"
"	47	"	Grass	"	.....	"
"	48	Yard	...	"	.....	"
"	49	Pasture land	Grass	"	.....	"
"	50	Arable land	"	"	.....	"
"	51	Government Road	...	"	.....
"	52	Arable land	Grass	J. T. Hayter	..	J. T. Hayter.
"	53	"	Crop	"	..	"
"	54	Pasture land	Grass	"	..	"
"	55	Government Road	...	"	.....
"	56	Pasture land	Grass and scrub	J. T. Hayter	..	"
"	57	"	Grass and bush	Edward Shipley	..	"
"	58	Arable land	Crop	J. T. Hayter	..	J. T. Hayter.
"	59	Bush land	...	Jas. Baxter	..	Jas Baxter.
"	60	Pasture land	Grass and bush	"	..	"
"	61	"	Grass, swamp, and scrub	"	..	"
"	62	"	"	"	..	"
"	63	Bush land	...	Mrs Turnbull	..	Mrs Turnbull
"	64	Government Road	...	A. A. Donmcliff	..	A. A. Donmcliff.
"	65	Pasture land	Bush and grass	"	..	"
"	66	"	Grass and bush	D. Brosnahan	..	D. Brosnahan.
"	66a	Orchard	...	Wm. Vance	..	Wm. Vance.
"	67	Government Road	...	"	..	"
"	68	Water Reserve, No 85	Bush	"	..	"
Yarrawa	69	Pasture land	Grass	Joseph Grice	..	Joseph Grice.
"	70	"	Grass and swamp	"	..	"
"	71	Government Road	...	"	.....
"	72	Pasture land	Grass	John Moore	..	John Moore.
"	73	Bush and pasture land	Grass and bush	J. Synnot	Jas Graham	Jas Graham.
"	74	Road	...	"	.....
"	75	Pasture land	Grass	Jas. Graham	..	"
"	76	"	...	"	..	"
"	77	"	...	"	..	"
"	78	"	...	"	..	"

Name of Parish	No on Plan	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Name of		
				Owners	Lessees	Occupiers
Yarrawa	79	Bush land	Partly felled	J H. Irvine	.	J H Irvine.
"	80	Pasture land	Grass	"	.....	"
"	81	"	Grass and bush	Henry Chulcock.	.....	"
"	82	Government Road	.....	.....	.....	.....
"	83	Pasture land	Grass	T. Howell	Wm. Wamsley	Wm. Wamsley.
"	84	Bush land	Grass and bush	Wm. Davis	L Eagan	L Eagan.
"	85	Bush and pasture land	.....	Wm. Hanrahan.	— Keeves	— Keeves.
"	86	Arable land	Crop	"	"	"
"	87	Pasture land	Grass	"	"	"
"	88	Arable land	Crop	"	"	"
"	89	"	.....	"	"	"
"	90	Pasture land	Grass	"	"	"
"	91	Government Road	.....	.....	.....	.....
"	92	Pasture land	Grass	R. Johnston	J. Curtis	J Curtis.
"	93	"	Grass and scrub	"	"	"
"	94	"	"	"	"	"
"	95	Arable land	Crop	"	— Clark.	— Clark.
"	96	Pasture land	Grass	"	"	"
"	97	"	"	"	"	"
"	98	Government Road	.....	.....	.....	.....
"	99	Pasture land	Felled timber and grass.	H. Dunster	— Graham.	"
"	100	"	Grass	Moffat & Hayter	.....	"
"	101	Private Road	.....	.....	.....	.....
"	102	Pasture land	Grass	Mrs. Macmahon.	.....	Wm Hanrahan.
"	103	Government Road, Robertson Township.	.....	Crown	.....	"
"	104	Congewoi-street	.....	"	"	"
"	105	Town lots, section 3	.....	"	"	"
"	106	Wallangunda-street	.....	"	"	"
"	107	Town lots, section 4	.....	"	"	"
"	108	Caalong-street	.....	"	"	"
"	109	Reserve No. 63, Section 5	.....	"	.....	"

18th July, 1888.

JOHN WHITTON,
Engineer.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

RAILWAY FROM MOSS VALE TO ROBERTSON.

REPORT.

THE Sectional Committee appointed to "inspect, take evidence, and report upon the proposed line of railway from Moss Vale to Robertson," beg to report as follows:—

The Committee left Sydney on the afternoon of Friday, the 7th instant, and opened the inquiry in the Moss Vale Court-house on Saturday morning, taking evidence for three hours. They then proceeded by coach through Burrawang to Robertson, where they took evidence that evening in the School of Arts. The inquiry was resumed on the Monday following, and continued from 9 o'clock in the morning until 1 o'clock p.m. The Committee then drove from Robertson, through Kangaloon, to Bowral, and took evidence at the Town Hall there for two hours in the evening. Altogether thirty-two witnesses were examined.

The road for the first portion of the line, from Moss Vale towards Burrawang, is thus described by Mr. J. B. Thompson:—"The country, for a distance of about 6 miles from Moss Vale, is of variable quality, most of it being open forest, well grazed, but light sandy soil, with patches of good agricultural land on the rises, and some black flats. Thence to within about 1 mile of Burrawang, a distance of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, the country gradually improves, until at the point mentioned it becomes gradually volcanic, a chocolate, rich soil of great depth and extraordinary fertility."

This description the inspection of the route by the Committee substantially confirmed. The purpose of the railway is to reach and serve the area of volcanic soil, which is about 50,000 acres in extent. This area is roughly divided into two portions by the Wingecarribee Swamp. The proposed line runs on the southern side of that swamp, and fails therefore to give any accommodation to what is called West Kangaloon and Kangaloon proper.

For the first 10 miles west of Moss Vale little or no traffic can be anticipated. The prospects of traffic arise from the development of the productiveness of the volcanic area. At the present time that land is mostly devoted to dairying, and as a dairying district its existing traffic would not pay the working expenses of a railway. The Sectional Committee failed to obtain any evidence that destroyed the accuracy of Mr. Harper's calculations as taken from the railway books, but there are some small items of revenue which those books do not disclose.

The district is very largely limited to dairying because the cost of road carriage makes it precarious to send anything but dairy produce to Sydney. The cost of road carriage to Moss Vale and Bowral respectively is twice or three times as much as the cost of carriage from either of those stations to Sydney, and it is to reduce the cost of this road carriage that the railway is asked for. Road metal abounds in the district, and the cost of making a mile of road is stated by the Road Superintendent to be £800, the annual cost of maintenance being about £10 a mile. With the exception of about 20 miles the roads are now made, and they stand the wear of the traffic even in bad weather. The carriage of potatoes, even on such good roads, ranges from 10s. to £1 5s. a ton, according to the distance—the higher rate being almost a prohibitory one. Indeed, so great is the difference between road and train rates that the settlers in this district could well afford to pay on the proposed branch line an advance of 50 per cent. on the trunk line rates, and yet be immensely advantaged. Several witnesses stated that the inhabitants would be willing to submit to these charges rather than not have the railway. This is a case in which the principle of differential rates could be applied equitably, and with the consent of those who would pay them, and as the line is non-competitive the system would probably work successfully.

The

The country is singularly well adapted for the production of potatoes, and the Committee were informed that as much as 5,000 acres of land are available for the cultivation of this product. Evidence was also given to show that the land and the climate are equally suitable for the growth of market-garden produce, and that an area of about 5,000 acres was suitable for this industry. Already one enterprising settler is sending cabbages to the Sydney market at a profit, and there is every reason to believe that if better and cheaper means of transit were provided a considerable quantity of the land would be used for the cultivation of vegetables, and that the district would become a mountain market garden for Sydney. It was also shown that a large part of the district is admirably adapted for growing such fruits as would bear carriage to Sydney, but that at present the cost of the road transit offers little inducement for orchard cultivation.

Coal underlies the sandstone formation, and in one place a thin seam of kerosene shale has been discovered. No land has been taken up for mining purposes, nor are there any indications that a large coal traffic would pass over the line. Chrome of good quality, which, it was stated, could be obtained in abundance in the district, was shown to the Sectional Committee. The proposed line will go within a few miles of the Fitzroy Waterfalls, and will be available to some extent to settlers in the Kangaroo Valley, two-thirds of whose produce at present goes to Moss Vale.

It will be seen from these statements that the prospect of the line becoming remunerative depends entirely upon certain expected developments taking place. These developments are all highly probable, but there is no certainty about them, while the line, from the great quantity of cutting and embankment, will cost about £6,000 a mile, a large sum to tap a district of the area indicated.

The Sectional Committee, however, are disposed to take a very liberal view of the future. The district is so charming, the soil so rich, the land so well divided, and has been so industriously cleared; the climate is so beautiful, the rainfall so good, and the whole locality so likely to attract fresh enterprise and population, that the Committee, whilst unable to recommend immediately the large expenditure proposed, consider that subject to the differential rate heretofore suggested, it would be reasonable to do something towards relieving the inhabitants of the disabilities under which they now labour.

The first 10 miles of the proposed line runs through comparatively easy country, and would be the cheapest part of the work, the great difficulties and cost of construction being concentrated on the remaining 7 miles. The Committee therefore suggest that for the present only that part of the project submitted to their inquiry be carried out which would cover the making of a line to a point at or near Wild's Meadows,—the point selected to be the most suitable for catching the traffic to and from Fitzroy Falls and from Kangaroo Valley. This would not entail an expenditure of more than £50,000, a sum which might be fairly adventured in view of the resources of the district. A branch line to the point indicated would shorten the road carriage to all those who can make use of the railway by at least 10 miles, but as before pointed out the settlers at West Kangaloon and Kangaloon proper will receive no benefit from this railway. In order therefore to do some justice to them as well as to increase the traffic on the line, the Sectional Committee suggests that before any decision is arrived at by the Standing Committee a survey should be made of a line from Bowral to the Sheepwash, and thence to the nearest point on Bell's line. If a line by this route can be carried out economically the West Kangaloon people will reach the railway at the Sheepwash, the East Kangaloon people will get to it at Robertson, and the whole district will be more or less accommodated.

ANDREW GARRAN,
Chairman.

12th February, 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

[TAKEN BEFORE THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.]

RAILWAY FROM MOSS VALE TO ROBERTSON.

SATURDAY, 8 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Moss Vale.]

Present:—

The HONORABLE ANDREW GARRAN (CHAIRMAN).

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

The Sectional Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Moss Vale to Robertson.

Mr. Edmund Milne, railway station-master, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] What position do you occupy in the township? I am the railway station-master at Moss Vale. Mr. E. Milne.
8 Feb., 1890.
2. How long have you been station-master here? Ten months.
3. Then you have not had an opportunity to make up a complete return of the traffic for the past twelve months? I have not. I was not aware that I should be called upon to do that.
4. Have you any subordinates who have been longer in the office than yourself? Yes.
5. Are they acquainted with the figures? Yes; I could obtain a rough estimate for you.
6. We want to know the quantity and the nature of the traffic from the direction in which the proposed railway would go? That traffic comprises agricultural produce of all kinds, such as butter, bacon, and eggs. We get cabbages from the Robertson district and various other kinds of produce.
7. Is most of it consigned to Sydney? Yes; that is our principal market.
8. Do the cabbages go to Sydney? Yes.
9. Is the traffic uniform in quantity, or is it heavier in some seasons than in others? It is continuous all the year round; but it depends a great deal on the seasons. Last month was a heavy month, owing to the excellent season we have had. I might also state, as far as the traffic to Moss Vale is concerned, that it comes principally from the Robertson district.
10. Robertson is the chief point from which you receive it? Not the township of Robertson, but the country to Robertson.
11. Does traffic come in from Wild's Meadows? Yes.
12. And from Kangaroo Valley? Yes, we get a fair traffic from there.
13. Do you know whether the traffic from Kangaroo Valley is equal to or larger than that from Robertson? A railway from here to Robertson would carry more traffic between here and Robertson than comes from the Kangaroo Valley.
14. Do you know the route of the proposed line? No.
15. Suppose this railway were made, where do you think the Kangaroo Valley traffic would strike the line? It should strike it somewhere between Burrawang and Robertson.
16. Eight or nine miles from Moss Vale? Yes.
17. How far would it be from Kangaroo Valley to that station? I could not say.
18. Do you think that the Kangaroo Valley people, after travelling the larger part of the journey by road, would avail themselves of the railway? I do. The advantage would be sufficiently great to induce them to do so. The roads along here are very heavy in wet weather, and I do not think the farmers would travel further on them than they were obliged to. They would catch the railway as soon as they could.
19. Has there been a large traffic in milk to Sydney since you have been here? From and around Moss Vale the new traffic is showing a decided increase, but I do not think that that would affect the Robertson traffic.
20. There used to be a large milk traffic at one time? Not while I have been here.
21. Does much milk come from Burrawang? No.
22. The dairy produce is principally butter? Yes, and bacon.
23. Have you any knowledge of the cost of carriage by road in this district? I have not, I think that in most cases the teams are employed in connection with the butter factories by private contract.
24. Can you state the annual tonnage that comes in from the district that will be served by the railway? No, I could not. I believe I should be within bounds in saying that 80 per cent. of our outward traffic comes from that district.

- Mr. E. Milne. 25. What you send to Sydney from Moss Vale comes from the district that would be served by this railway? Yes. If we include the Yurunga traffic it will be more than 80 per cent.
 8 Feb., 1890. 26. What is the second class rate for the carriage of produce to Sydney? I think it is £1 9s. 6d. per ton.
 27. Most of the traffic from this district is of that class? Yes; I can get you the exact rate.

Mr. Henry William Taylor, auctioneer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. 28. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am an auctioneer.
 H. W. Taylor. 29. As an auctioneer are you well acquainted with the value of the produce of this district? Fairly well.
 8 Feb., 1890. 30. Has that value been increasing or decreasing during the last few years? Increasing.
 31. In quantity or in price? In quantity, and prices are more reasonable now than they were on account of the good seasons.
 32. The farmers have more produce to sell, but they did not get such a high price for it as they do in dry seasons? Exactly.
 33. But they make up in quantity what they lose in the price? Yes.
 34. In the district through which the proposed line will go are cultivation and the use of the ground extending? The line starts from here and goes right through Yurunga, which is a dairying and farming district. Potatoes are grown between there and Wild's Meadows and the produce all along the route is increasing.
 35. The line keeps to the south of the main road all the way? Yes.
 36. How far from Moss Vale is it before you get into the rich land? The land is good from the start at Moss Vale for 3 or 4 miles; then there is a barren strip till you get into Yurunga. The distance to Wild's Meadows is ten miles and four of that is good land at the start.
 37. When you say good country do you mean that chocolate-coloured soil? There is some of the best land in the world going through Mr. Gilchrist's and Mr. Throsby's properties for a distance of between 5 and 6 miles.
 38. Mr. Thompson, the land valuer, in his report says:—"The country, for a distance of about 6 miles from Moss Vale, is of variable quality most of it being open forest with grass with light sandy soil and patches of good agricultural land on the rises and some black tracks. Then to within about 1 mile of Burrawang, a distance of about 2½ miles, the country gradually improves until, at the point mentioned, it becomes entirely volcanic, with a chocolate rich soil of great depth and extraordinary fertility."—Do you agree with that? Yes.
 39. It is not what you call scrub land? No.
 40. Not until you get about 7 miles out of Moss Vale? 10 miles; you would get very little scrub land before you get to Wild's Meadows. You touch it at Burrawang.
 41. Is that 10 miles from here? Yes.
 42. That is 10 miles out of 14? Yes.
 43. And the best land lies beyond the 10 miles; and we should have to extend the line 10 miles before we could tap this rich chocolate scrub land? Yes.
 44. And how much is there? I could not tell you. There would be a place on the route where tourists will leave the train for the waterfall, which will be a great source of attraction.
 45. The line as laid out does not go close to the falls? No; it goes to the left.
 46. It goes to richer country? Yes; but Wild's Meadows is not above a mile and a half from the falls—there will be a great passenger traffic to the falls.
 47. You know where the line is laid out? Yes.
 48. Which is the nearest point of the falls? Brcsnhan's place.
 49. Would take the line for the first part of the journey, then travel the remainder by road? Yes, they would.
 50. According to the map it is 3 or 4 miles to the falls—if it were 3 miles or more do you think tourists make use of the line.
 51. You think that a station ought to be put at Wild's Meadows which would suit the Kangaroo Valley people? Yes.
 52. That would accommodate the Wild's Meadows people also? Yes; and the visitors to the waterfalls.
 53. And it would be the station at which the Kangaroo Valley traffic would reach the line? Yes.
 54. How far from Kangaroo Valley? To the top of the mountain and about 4 or 5 miles from Wild's Meadows. From the mountain down to the Meadows is 2 or 3 miles. It will be between 7 and 8 miles from Wild's Meadows to the Kangaroo River, and the river is 2 miles down the other side of Barrengarry.
 55. Taking the Kangaroo people as a whole they would have a journey of about 10 miles to the Wild's Meadows station? Yes.
 56. And that station would suit them? Yes.
 57. And you think that it would catch that traffic? I am certain of it.
 58. How long have you been residing in the district? Fifty years.
 59. And you saw the rise of the milk traffic? Yes.
 60. How long is it since it ceased? It has not ceased at all; a large number of factories have been started, and the milk is being made into butter.
 61. I mean the sending of the milk to Sydney? The milk trade with Sydney is falling off through the establishment of the factories and partly through the town Companies getting their milk from the Illawarra district, one of the principal reasons being the heavy cost of cartage.
 62. What does it cost per mile to cart the milk? Something like 10s. a ton.
 63. And about 30s. from Moss Vale to Sydney? Yes.
 64. It takes one third of the cost to get it to the Station? Yes that has been the great stumbling block.
 65. What is the proportion in weight of butter from a ton of milk? One third is butter.
 66. Then this transformation of the business from milk to butter should reduce the cost to Sydney by two thirds? I do not think so, if facilities were afforded for transit the trade would increase enormously.
 67. But if you send your produce as butter instead of as milk it will only cost you the same rate per ton? There would be a falling off in the cost to the producer.
 68. And are the farms being as fully worked as they were when the milk was going to Sydney? They are not.

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H. W. Taylor.
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68. Why not? Because the factories do not take the whole of the milk, a lot of it goes to waste.
69. Then they only take certain quantities? There are certain agreements between the factories and the milk producers, the factories will not take anything like all the milk that the farmers can produce.
70. Are they co-operative factories? They are, and there is a loss to the producer.
71. Is the land which is held by private owners mostly cleared? Portions of it are cleared and a larger proportion of it would be cleared if the settlers had better means of transit.
72. Do you mean one fourth more? Yes, nearly.
73. What area belonging to the Government is there remaining to be sold and cleared? I think that the best of the Government land is of medium quality, there are thousands of acres within reach of the proposed railway, there are large timber reserves.
74. What is the area? I could not tell; it is very large.
75. If that land was sold as special areas what upset price would it reach? Land in Robertson has been fetching from £14 to £26 an acre.
76. That is cleared land? Yes improved.
77. I am speaking of the reserves? You can put down the lowest price as an average of £4 an acre.
78. The bulk of the unsold Crown lands would fetch that? Yes.
79. *Mr. Garrard.*] How many butter factories are there in the district? Four.
80. Where are they? There is one at Wild's Meadows a co-operative factory, and another co-operative factory at Barrengarry.
81. Does the produce of the Barrengarry factory come to Moss Vale? Yes, there are one or two factories in Robertson.
82. Do you think that if this line were constructed there would be a very large increase in the productiveness of the district? I do.
83. To the extent of one fourth, one half, or what? I think one fourth would be a reasonable estimate.
84. The Commissioners have stated that it will take £6,500 a year to pay the annual interest on the outlay and the working expenses of the line, and that the present traffic will produce a revenue of only £1,843, that does not look like paying, does it? There is this to be taken into consideration that that estimate must include only the dairy produce. The farmers can grow thousands of tons of potatoes.
85. But if they went into farming would not that reduce the revenue from the dairy produce? No; there is plenty of land for both.
86. If the line were made, and there is an increase of one-fourth in the dairying line, what do you estimate would be the quantity of the agricultural products? It must be enormous. At present there is very little agriculture; it would probably double itself.
87. Do all these people bring their produce into Moss Vale now? I do not know; I fancy that some go to Bowral.
88. And would if this line were made? Certainly not.
89. By going to Bowral would they not have 6 miles less of main line haulage? Yes, they would have that.
90. What portion of the community who now go to Bowral would the line serve? The people at Kangaloon.
91. Would the line serve them? It would serve the whole of East Kangaloon.
92. Is that a small area? It is an area that can be improved.
93. Has not the use of the milk for making butter decreased the earnings of the railway here? I do not think so; I think that you will find that the earnings of the railway have been on the increase.
94. You told us that one-third was butter as against two-thirds milk, is not that a striking off of two-thirds of the traffic? I said that the quantity produced would be one-third.
95. If the district has gone into that line of business is there not so much less to carry? You are right there; but the farmers would go back to the milk business if they had the means of transit.
96. Do you think that is likely, when milk is supplied from a district nearer to the metropolis? Not to compete with the Wingecarribee district, which is second only to the Illawarra district for milk.
97. Do you think that fruit could be grown here? Yes.
98. Is any fruit grown here? Yes, all over the district, Mr. Lackey and several others are starting orchards.
99. That produce would be for only one part of the year? Yes, there are minerals, a vast amount of coal all through the barren ground.
100. Is it likely that that coal can be profitably worked when there are coal-measures near to the metropolis? They are buying coal now to take into Burrawang from Mittagong.
101. What is the coal being taken to Burrawang for? For the butter factories—they have to make steam.
102. Are they taking coal from Mittagong to Burrawang? Yes, it shows that there is a demand for coal even now, and there would be a greater demand if there were better means of transit.
103. I have mentioned that the interest on the outlay for the construction of the line, and the working expenses will amount to £6,500 a year, whilst the Commissioners estimate that the revenue will be only £1,843, do you think that the country, under those circumstances, would be justified in making this railway? I do.
104. At that enormous loss to the general taxpayer? I do not believe there will be any loss; I believe the line will pay 4 per cent.
105. How long do you think it would be before the railway would earn £6,500 a year? About three years.
106. Then that district would have to go ahead? It will go ahead.
107. *Mr. Dowel.*] You are a very old resident of the district? Yes.
108. Do you know the route of the line? I do.
109. What localities within a radius of 10 miles will be served by the construction of the railway? There is Meryla, the whole of Yurunga, the Waterfall district, Barrengarry, Wild's Meadows, Burrawang, the Bung Bung River district, the Robertson district, East Kangaloon, the head of the swamp, all along the top of the mountains as you go down towards Jamberoo.
110. Does any of the Kangaroo Valley traffic go to Broughton Creek? Yes, and to Nowra.
111. If this railway were constructed do you think that that produce would be brought to the line? I am certain of it; we have had deputations time after time to the Minister on the subject, and the farmers have

- Mr. H. W. Taylor.
8 Feb., 1890.
- have pledged themselves to bring the traffic to the railway. We sent in a petition bearing over 1,500 signatures four or five years ago.
112. Is there likely to be any timber trade developed if the line is constructed? There are enormous quantities of timber which will be available if the Government will cancel the reserves.
113. You think that if the reserves were cancelled this line would develop a timber trade? Yes, a large trade.
114. What kinds of timber are there in the district? Beech, yellow jacket, black butt, and various other woods. There is also stringy bark and grey gum.
115. Have you seen this timber? Yes.
116. Is it of good quality? Yes. There is in this district some of the finest timber in the world.
117. You have stated that the district could grow fruit; does it grow vegetables well? Yes, wonderfully well. A farm at Burrawang sends a couple of tons of vegetables a week to Sydney.
118. You said something about potatoes being very prolific? Yes; this district is equal to Warnambool for potatoes.
119. Can you say what quantity the land will produce? 25 tons per acre.
120. That is a great crop? It is a fact that the crop is produced in the Robertson district.
121. You have spoken about the coal-measures in the district; have you tested the quality of the thickness of the seams? No; various applications have been made by people wanting to take up the land for coal-mining; there are enormous quantities of coal and kerosene shale.
122. Where is there any shale about here proved? Joadja lies a few miles from Berrima; it is a continuation of the same country right through to the coast; all those measures run out to the coast.
123. But because the coal does that it does not follow that the shale does? It has been proved at Fitzroy where shale has been got.
124. What is the thickness? The shale is 2 or 3 feet thick and the coal 14 feet thick. You can get coal cropping out of the mountains.
125. The shale has been found in one place? Only in one place.
126. Would this district produce fruit at different seasons from those in which fruit is produced at Camden? The only difference is that this district is later than the Camden district.
127. How much later? From six weeks to two months. Peaches were ripe at Camden a month ago, but they are not ripe here yet.
128. This district could supply the market then a month later? Yes.
129. But it is not a better district than the Camden district? Camden is rather warm, the climate in this district is more moist.

Frederick Robertson Wilshire, Esq., Police Magistrate, sworn, and examined:—

- F. R. Wilshire, Esq.
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130. *Chairman.*] What position do you occupy? I hold the office of Police Magistrate in this district and various other offices.
131. How long have you resided here? About eighteen years.
132. Do you know the district through which this railway will run? Yes, I have a very good knowledge of it though I have not traversed the line.
133. Do you concur in the evidence which has already been given to the effect that when the line gets 9 or 10 miles out of Moss Vale it comes to very rich soil? I should say about 11 or 12 miles out, the rich district commences in the neighbourhood of Burrawang, it is a district of extraordinary richness.
134. It is the cream of the district? That part of the country is the cream of the Colony; I do not think that anything could be better.
135. Do you know how much there is of it? It is overlaid by trap rock. I don't know the area.
136. It is the disintegration of the Trap Rock? Yes, I think it is the most recent trap formation to be found in the colony. The volcanic ashes are quite visible in places in cuttings, &c., on the road.
137. Can you trace the dyke itself? Yes.
138. Does it run north or south? No; in all directions it is one mass of upheavals forming knolls and hills.
139. Have you any idea of the extent of this rich land which would be reached by the railway? I have not looked it up, it is a narrow strip.
140. What would be about the length and the breadth of the district which the railway would serve? It would touch the Wingecarribee swamp on the northern side and the whole of the Macquarie Pass district up to the coast range.
141. And I suppose the eastern portion of Kangaloon? Yes.
142. How far west from Robertson do you think the East Kangaloon people would go? 3 or 4 miles.
143. You have no idea of the number of the population in the district to be served? I have not.
144. You could not tell us the area? I could not.
145. You would not pretend to form a judgment as to the tonnage of the traffic that would come in from that district? No.
146. Is there a very industrious population settled there? Yes, very industrious indeed.
147. All well-to-do settlers? All have made money; some have made small fortunes, some are absolutely rich.
148. And they succeeded in getting rich even without a railway? Yes.
149. Have the roads in the district been improved? The main road from Moss Vale to Robertson has improved, considerable sums have been spent on it.
150. Do you go to Robertson to hold a Court? I do.
151. You are frequently on the road? Yes.
152. Is the road in fair condition? It is a very good road.
153. Is there plenty of blue metal in the district? It is all blue metal after you pass Burrawang.
154. There is no want of road-making material? No; there is any quantity of it.
155. From what you have seen, do you think that fruit-growing here is payable? I do not think that attention has been devoted to it; I do not think that much has been made out of it. The country is capable of growing English fruits to any extent.
156. Dairying pays best at present? Yes; but it is only recently that dairying has been so profitable.
157. If it is profitable now would it be still more so if a railway were made? I am sure it would be.

158. If dairying is more profitable than an orchard, without a railway, it would be so with a railway would it not? I should not think so; I think that dairying will give way to orcharding.
159. You are acquainted with the trade in milk which was established by the Fresh Food and Ice Company? Yes.
160. They have transferred their trade to the Illawarra district? I have heard something about it.
161. Do you think that the milk trade with Sydney would revive in competition with the Illawarra district if the line were made? The line would foster the trade very largely; I did not know that it was extinct; I do not think it is; the railway would be a great help to it.
162. The scrub district was originally taken up by farmers from the Illawarra district? The Robertson district is one of the best; it is one of the coolest districts that I ever was in.
163. Is not the winter rather cold there? It is rather better for that.
164. Does the grass grow? In that part of the country the cold does not make much difference. The English grasses which are grown there stand the cold better than the native grasses; there are other parts of the district somewhat similar. In the dry time, particularly during the drought of 1888, it was surprising to see the difference between the grass at Robertson and the grass in other places. There the grass was green while everywhere else it was burnt up.
165. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do your duties take you to Bowral? I am often at Bowral, but not on duty.
166. To what do you attribute the extraordinary growth of Bowral as compared with Moss Vale;—is it because it is the best centre to which to send produce for the market? I do not think so; I think sentiment has to do with it. People take a fancy to a place and you cannot account for it.
167. There are many country residences there belonging to Sydney people? Yes.
168. Is it not that it is more convenient to send produce there? No; I think Moss Vale is more central.
169. From your knowledge of the district, you think that Moss Vale is the best place from which the line to Robertson should start? I could not say that exactly; I would rather leave that an open question.
170. Where do you think would be the best place? Without knowing the exact route I could not answer that question.
171. The primary object of the railway is to give Robertson access to a market;—would it not be better for the line to commence from Bowral, so as to save the 6 miles of haulage on the main line between Bowral and Moss Vale? It would seem so, but I think that the Robertson people will be the best judges of that.
172. If the line were made from Bowral to Robertson, would it pass through a smaller area of rich land than it would if it went from Moss Vale to Robertson? I think it would; I fancy that a line from here would be more accessible to the general public.
173. That it would serve a better country with a larger population? It would be more convenient for the Kangaroo Valley traffic.
174. Then the Kangaroo Valley people would reach the line at some point like Wild's Meadows? Yes.
175. Has there been a very large development of the products in the district during your residence there? Yes, there has been an extraordinary development during the seventeen or eighteen years that I have been here.
176. Do you think that there would be a larger increase still if the railway were made? Undoubtedly there would be.
177. Do you know what will be the interest on the expenditure and the working expenses of the line? I do not.
178. The annual interest on the outlay will be £2,950 and the working expenses will amount to £3,627, making a total of £6,577, and, after very careful consideration of the possible traffic from the district, the Commissioners estimate that the total revenue from the line will be £1,843 a year;—would there not be a large loss? Yes.
179. Do you think that that traffic would be likely to be exceeded? I have not given the matter a single thought.
180. Do you think that there would be such a large increase in the traffic in the immediate future as would soon overtake this large expenditure? I think there would be; the district is a most productive one; I know from what I have heard that there is a very large traffic, and this line will take the whole of the traffic from the Robertson district.
181. You have good roads and all the beautiful scenery, and the Fitzroy Falls are within 15 or 16 miles of this centre;—should not that be sufficient? No; it is different from having a railway running right out to this point.
182. The railway would not run to Fitzroy Falls? But there is just as fine scenery at Robertson, Belmore, and Kangaroo Valley.
183. You anticipate that if the railway is made there will be a very large increase in the products grown and in the passenger traffic? Yes.
184. As that is problematical, and seeing that a large annual loss is involved, do you think the country would be justified in incurring this expenditure? If the loss is likely to be kept up for any number of years I should say that it would not, but I consider that the loss would soon be recovered.
185. How many years do you think it would be? If the district progresses at the same rate as that at which it has progressed since I have known it, it would not take long. The whole of the population has been settled within the last eighteen years; Bowral has grown up in seven years, Moss Vale in ten years. I should say that the loss would not extend over more than four or six years at the outside.

Mr. Edmund Milne, Railway Station-master, sworn, and further examined:—

186. *Chairman.*] Can you give the figures of the actual traffic? I cannot.
187. Have you checked the railway rate which you gave us this morning? Yes; it is 30s. per ton from here to Darling Harbour. 30s. is the first-class rate. For small lots under 1 ton we charge at the rate of 37s. a ton.
188. If a farmer sends less he pays a higher rate? Yes, if he sends less than 16 cwt.
189. Are there not persons who accumulate the traffic and send it in bulk? No, with the exception of butter factories.
190. Your customers are the farmers themselves? Yes.

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- Mr. E. Milne. 191. Are there many farmers who send less than a ton? Yes; with the exception of the butter from the factories the produce is carried in lots of less than a ton, and is charged for at the rate of 37s. a ton.
 8 Feb., 1890. 192. If they were to combine together could they send their produce at a cheaper rate? Yes.
 193. *Mr. Dowel.*] Did you say that you furnished the particulars on which the Railway Commissioners based their estimate of the traffic? No; it was done long before I came here. I suppose that the estimate of £1,843 a year would be based upon the actual mileage carried on the route of the proposed new line. At 30s. a ton it should largely exceed the Commissioners' estimate.
 194. There is a great difference between your figures and those of the Commissioners;—your estimate is 1,815 tons 1 cwt.? Yes.
 195. How do you account for the discrepancy? Where they get 1 ton at Bowral we get 15 tons. Bowral only serves the two Kangaloons. I know this from the names of the people who send goods away.
 196. *Mr. Garrard.*] Have you seen the railway returns, or are you only supposing that because certain districts would be served such and such will be the case? It is nothing to me; I know that teams come here from Kangaroo Valley, Burrawang, and Robertson every week.
 197. *Mr. Dowel.*] What would be the value of this 1,350 tons to this branch line? The branch line would be 15 miles in length, and it would have to be estimated at the 15 miles rate.
 198. Can you not tell us what it would be? I cannot. The whole of that tonnage would not be carried 15 miles. It would come on to the line at various points—some at Robertson, some at Wild's Meadows, some at Burrawang, and so on.

Mr. John Hadden, carrier, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. Hadden. 199. *Chairman.*] How long have you been in this district? About eighteen years.
 8 Feb., 1890. 200. Have you been a farmer in the district? No; I have been a butcher and a carrier on the road.
 201. You have been a carrier for the settlers? I have.
 202. Do you know whether any carrying is done now? Yes; large teams are employed—six and eight horse teams.
 203. What is the carriage from the Robertson district to Moss Vale? That depends upon the produce. A person who has large quantities will arrange with the carrier to take it at so much per ton. The ordinary rate would be about £1 a ton.
 204. What does the carriage of timber cost per ton? There is none carried.
 205. What is the cost of the carriage of butter? That is much higher. In my time we used to carry it at 1s. 6d. a cask, the weight of the casks being from 80 to 112 lb. The tonnage is now 15s. by contract from Yurunga.
 206. How much from Robertson? From 18s. to £1.
 207. Has the cost of carriage diminished since the roads were improved? Yes; I commenced with a two-horse dray, and afterwards had a six-horse waggon. They are now driving eight-horse teams, but they have much larger waggons. My waggon was estimated to carry 2½ tons, but I should think the waggons of the present carriers will carry 4 tons.
 208. Then they try the road more severely? Yes.
 209. So as the roadmaker makes the road good they cut it up more? They put more weight on it.
 210. Are the roads pretty good here now? Yes; very good on the whole.
 211. And as the roads have improved between here and Robertson, has the carriage improved? Yes.
 212. And is it cheaper? I should think a little dearer; the traffic is not so plentiful; they have to pick it up as they go along the road. In my time there were several places at which we picked up the traffic, and we had a separate rate for each place of picking up; there were no factories when I was carrying.
 213. We have been told that the charge is 30s. a ton from Moss Vale to Sydney, and that it costs one-third of that amount to get the produce into Moss Vale? Quite so.
 214. Would that charge be reduced if there was a railway? I should think so.
 215. Then the farmers would have to take their produce to the nearest station? Yes.
 216. Then the road carriage would be 3 or 4 miles? Some would be 5 miles; the Pheasants' Ground people would have to carry their produce from 5 to 10 miles.
 217. Do you think it would reduce their rates by one half? I think it would.
 218. If the railway were made the charge would not be more than 4s. or 5s. per ton would it? Not more.
 219. It is now 40s. a ton to get their goods to Sydney, but if a railway were made the charge would be reduced to 35s. a ton? I should think so.
 220. You know the rate very well? Yes.
 221. Do you agree with the statement that the line will have to go 8 or 10 miles from Moss Vale before it gets to the chocolate country? Somewhere about that. You travel on good land, however, before you get there.
 222. How many farmers would put their produce on the railway? I could not tell.
 223. How many did you collect from when you were carrying? From about 40.
 224. I suppose that number is about quadrupled now? Quite.
 225. Would there be 160? I should think there would be over 200; they had not the opportunities at that time that they have got since of sending their stuff to market.
 226. How many tons a year will each farmer send a year off his land? That is more than I can say.
 227. You could not say how much produce per acre is sent to the station? No, they do not crop regularly; as a rule they do not grow produce; they are more for dairying; it suits them better.
 228. Would dairying suit them better if they had better facilities for reaching the market? No doubt they would continue dairying.
 229. Does nothing pay them better? I do not think so.
 230. Would growing potatoes pay them better? I do not know whether it would or not; I do not think they would give up dairying for that.
 231. Would fruit-growing pay them better? No one has given attention to fruit-growing; they have bought trees, but they have not carefully cultivated orchards.
 232. Would market-gardening pay them? There are some who make it pay.
 233. Have they any knowledge of that business at Bowral? They have larger scope and better land there.

234. Looking at the cultivable land between here and Sydney, do you think that people so far away as Robertson will be able to hold their own in competition with others? With the advantage of the seasons they may be able to do it. All through last season they were sending away cabbages when other people could not raise them at all.

235. You think that market-gardening pays well? Yes, it pays one firm and they are sticking to it.

236. Taking the district as a whole, you think that if additional accommodation were provided for the carriage of produce dairying would still be the industry of the district? I feel sure of it.

237. And we have to look to dairy produce for the traffic of the railway? Yes.

238. You know something of the traffic to the falls? I do.

239. How many in a year go there? I could not say—thousands.

240. And if the railway were made would the nearest station be at Wild's Meadows? That would be the nearest point for tourists.

241. How far is that from the falls? From 3 to 5 miles.

242. And if a railway were made there, there would be vehicles at Wild's Meadows station? Most likely there would be.

243. And the railway would get all that traffic? Yes.

244. And it would be a large traffic? I am satisfied that it would be.

245. You have heard something of the rival lines;—it is suggested that there should be one from Bowral, taking West Kangaloon, crossing at the Sheep Wash, or near there, crossing the ridge on the southern side, and passing through Wild's Meadows to Robertson? Yes.

246. Would that, on the whole, accommodate the large number of people? We have never considered that it would. We have always considered that the line marked out by Mr. Bell would be the weight-carrying line, as it would serve the Yurrunga people.

247. Would the Bowral line serve the West Kangaloon people? It is not likely to do so.

248. Do you agree with the statement that the East Kangaloon people would be within 3 miles of Robertson? Yes.

249. And whom else would it serve? There are a good many scattered round the district in the vicinity of the Macquarie Pass.

250. Then the concentrated traffic would be on the eastern and western sides and the end of the swamp? Yes.

251. And the district falling into the Kangaroo Valley? Yes.

252. That contains the really rich land? Yes.

253. Can there be much traffic between here and Burrawang? Not for a distance of some 5 or 6 miles.

254. This district is a favourite resort in summer, is it not? Yes.

255. And for 6 miles from here we may expect gentlemen's residences to increase? Yes.

256. That would increase the main traffic, but it would not particularly affect the branch lines? No.

257. The branch line would be for the produce and the tourists? Yes.

258. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you explored the country much within a radius of 10 miles of the proposed railway? I have travelled over the whole district from time to time.

259. Do you know pretty well every part of the district that would be served by the railway? Yes.

260. You do not anticipate that country more than 10 miles from the line would be served by the railway? Only one particular point—the Pheasant Ground people and part of the Kangaroo Valley.

261. Is the whole of the country pretty fairly settled on? Yes.

262. What is the size of the holdings? I should think they would average from 150 to 200 acres. There are some larger, some farmers having commenced with 320 acres, and when people have shifted out of the district others have bought their land.

263. Are there signs of their holdings being permanent? There is every sign of it.

264. They are not likely to sell out to the pastoralists? No.

265. Have they laid down their land in English grasses? I think all the land has been sown with English grasses.

266. Do you know any large timber reserves in the district? Yes; there are some very large belts of timber.

267. Do you think there would be a traffic in timber on the railway? That is a thing which I could not speak positively upon. There are some exporters of timber who have got large forests.

268. Have you been over those parts of the country where the shale and coal are found? It is considered that the whole of the country holds kerosene and coal.

269. Have you seen any of it? No; but I have heard of it frequently.

Valentine John Stuart Blomfield, Esq., A.M. Inst., C.E., Road Superintendent, sworn, and examined:—

270. *Chairman.*] What position do you hold? I am road superintendent here.

271. Is the road from here to Kangaroo Valley in your district, and also from here to Robertson and Bowral, and the cross-roads? Yes. I have prepared a statement of the different roads, and I will put it in as my evidence. The road votes in the vicinity of Robertson were as follows:—Moss Vale to Kiama Municipality, 16 miles, £800; Moss Vale, *via* Fitzroy Falls, to Kangaroo Valley, 23 miles, £1,150; Fitzroy Falls, *via* Belmore Falls, to Rossgall Road, 8 miles, £400; Kiama Road to Wild's Meadows, 3 miles, £150; Burrawang to Robertson Road, 2 miles, £100; Robertson to Underhill (Rossgall Road), under trustees, 5 miles, £50; Jamberoo Road to Fountain Dale Public School, under trustees, 6 miles, £90; Robertson to Macquarie Pass, 3 miles, £120; Kangaloon Road to Macquarie Pass, 12 miles, £480; Alcorn's Store to Macquarie Pass Road, 1 mile, £50; Bowral to Robertson, 17 miles, £85;—Total, £3,475. All these votes, with the exception of the two under Trustees, have been reduced this year by 22 per cent.

272. Do you mean that the amount is £3,475 with the reduction? No, before the reduction; all these votes have been reduced this year.

273. You take the whole of the road to Kiama? No. But as far as the Kiama Municipality, 5 miles on the other side of Robertson.

274. You take all the descent? Only as far as the head of the Kangaroo River, about 5 miles on the western side of the Jamberoo Mountain.

Mr.
J. Hadden.
8 Feb., 1890.

V. J. S.
Blomfield,
Esq.,
A.M.I.C.E.
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275. The principal sum is spent on the road to the Kangaroo Valley? There was a large sum spent on the road to Kiama, but owing to a large part of the road coming within the municipality, it is not now so much, only the actual mileage outside the municipality being given.
276. How many miles of this line from here to Kangaroo Valley would be available for the Robertson and the Wild's Meadows people altogether? The Wild's Meadows people do not use that road to come to Moss Vale, they use the road through Burrawang.
277. The district which the railway is to serve, is served also by your road from Moss Vale to Kiama? Yes. The ordinary traffic goes on that road now.
278. What is the condition of that road now? It is in very good order, nearly all of it is metalled. There are only two or three gaps that are not metalled.
279. Do carriers cut up the road much? No, except on the unmetalled parts.
280. Have you a good supply of metal? Very good; the hills are full of metal.
281. What does it cost to make a mile of road in the first instance? About £800.
282. And what is the cost for annual maintenance, keeping the road in good condition? I think about £10 a mile.
283. In wet weather is the road pretty fair? It is very good in wet weather.
284. It sustains the traffic? Yes.
285. How much tonnage do the people bring in in one waggon? I have not particularly noticed that, but I daresay that they take from 3 to 5 tons.
286. Having got your roads into good order, all that you have to do now is to maintain them? Of course we are continuing to make the unmetalled portions.
287. Have you a cross-road made for the use of the Kangaroo Valley people to strike the Wild's Meadows station? They would be able to come up the Barrengarry Mountain, and then up the road to Wild's Meadows, which is only just formed, and is traversable in dry weather.
288. How much a mile will you have to spend on that road? There are 6 or 8 miles of it not metalled, and that will cost about £800 a mile.
289. How many miles is it from the top of the mountain to Wild's Meadows station? About 7 miles.
290. How many miles is it from the top of the mountain to Kangaroo Valley? 4 miles down the mountain 2 from there into the village.
291. And what is the distance by the ordinary road from Kangaroo Valley to Moss Vale? 23 miles.
292. It is 17 miles to Wild's Meadows, as against 23 into Moss Vale? Yes; it is very probable that most of the Kangaroo Valley traffic will go to Broughton Creek.
293. Have they not to go up a very steep mountain that way? Yes, but ultimately that very narrow neck of land will have to be pierced.
294. Can you tell what length of tunnel it would require? I cannot, but it could not be more than 1 mile.
295. A mile of tunnel and a road through it? No, not a road—a tramway into the Kangaroo Valley.
296. What is the distance from Broughton Creek? It is 6 miles from Broughton Creek to the valley.
297. Then there is no chance of the traffic coming to Moss Vale? Not the slightest.
298. It was stated in evidence in Sydney that Robertson was the practical limit of any line in this direction, do you believe that? No; if the country were explored I think it would be possible not only to have a line from Robertson through Bottle Forest to the Illawarra Line, near Waterfall, but also a very useful line from Robertson to Jervis Bay.
299. By what route? By way of Nowra.
300. Have you ever yourself travelled on the top of the ridge from Robertson to Waterfall? I have not been along the whole of it, but I have been on the top of the Jamberoo Mountain; I have been in the Macquarie Pass, and as far as one can see from looking up it appears to be feasible. I think a *prima facie* case can be made out of it, but speaking as an engineer, I should not like to commit myself without making a further examination of the country.
301. You do not know whether the mountain is pierced by deep gorges? I do not think it is at all likely.
302. It may be undulating? If there are undulations the line might be carried round the sides.
303. How far have you been from Robertson on the edge of that cliff? I have only touched it in particular places. I have been at the top of the Macquarie Pass, and at the top of the Bulli Pass, but I have never been past Mount Keira.
304. On the road from Robertson to Nowra what descent would you have to make? About 1,800 feet, by following the main range until you come to the top of the Jamberoo Mountain, and from there to Nowra there is a descent of about 1,800 feet. There is a dividing-range between the watershed of the Broger's Creek and the Kangaroo Valley on the one side and the watershed of the Broughton Creek on the other side, which I think is worth exploring. Of course I could not state whether or not the thing were possible without a survey, but from the appearance of the country I should think it would be quite possible to take a line from the top of Jamberoo Mountain through Nowra and joining the proposed Illawarra Line on to Jervis Bay. The whole of that country shows signs of coal, and a large area of it has already been taken up in mineral selections. Near the top of the Jamberoo Mountain signs of coal are showing in the cuttings going down from the top of the mountain towards Kiama. There is another point in reference to this line, it would be a most beautiful line, there would be a great tourist traffic through it, and it would bring the whole of the country to the west of Moss Vale 40 miles nearer the coast.
305. So far as the coal is concerned, could not that be got better by adits into the hill from the lower line? I daresay it could.
306. If we had to deal with it from this side we should have to sink shafts and then carry the coal to Sydney? There is some of the coal showing near the top of Jamberoo Mountain, and it is generally believed that the whole of that range which divides the watersheds of the coast and the Kangaroo River is full of coal.
307. But the fact that we have the rich land here is a sign of the disturbance that has taken place since the coal was deposited? Yes.
308. And the extent to which the coal has been tossed about by that upthrow is undetermined? Yes; the whole strata seem to have been thrown about in great confusion.
309. Close to the area of the disturbance the coal seems to have been too much disturbed to be workable? I have not sufficient knowledge of the working of coal-seams to express an opinion upon that point.
310. You have not geologically examined the area of this disturbance? I have not.

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311. Can you trace the line of trap-dykes in the district? Yes; the whole of this district from the top of Cambewarra Mountain by the Nowra Road to Bowral is full of basalt thrown up.
312. It is full of dykes? Yes.
313. It has been a very much disturbed district? Yes.
314. Wherever you have the dykes you have the basalt on the top and this rich soil? Yes. Especially about Robertson, Kangaloon, Burrawang, and Cambewarra Mountain, the soil about Robertson is some of the richest that I ever saw.
315. You cannot say anything as to the commercial value of the coal? No, I have passed over the ranges, but that country is not properly in my district. I have never thoroughly explored the line, but I should like to do so.
316. But your notion of the profitableness of the line would depend on the coal traffic and the tourist traffic? Yes; and it would bring the whole of the country to the west of Moss Vale 40 miles nearer to the coast.
317. But, allowing for the edge of the cliff, would only draw the traffic from one side? Yes. I do not think that, with the exception of the fruit traffic, there would be much locally; but the line would take a large amount of traffic from the back country.
318. *Mr. Garrard.*] What does blue metal cost per cubic yard? We use the 2½ inch gauge, and it costs 7s. a cubic yard.
319. Where do you reside? At Moss Vale.
320. Do you think that the line proposed would accommodate the largest possible number of people, and reach the largest area of land? Yes, it goes right through the most populous part of the district between here and Robertson where there are the greatest number of small holdings.
321. Do you not think that a line joining the main southern line at Bowral and going by the Wingecarribee swamp would serve the people well? I dare say it would suit the Robertson people as well as this; but, looking at its probable future extension, I should say that this was the better line.
322. Extension to where? Its extension to Bottle Forest or to Nowra. It would tap the whole of the country from Moss Vale through Goulburn to Hay.
323. Looking at it regardless of its possible extension to Bottle Forest or Nowra, which do you consider the better place for the line to start from—Moss Vale or Bowral? I do not know the actual difference between the two surveys.
324. There is not much difference except that it would save 6 miles journey on the main line if the railway went to Bowral? Moss Vale is the most central portion of the whole district, but I daresay that the line to Bowral would suit the people of Robertson just as well.
325. To what do you attribute the phenomenal growth of Bowral as compared with Moss Vale? Simply to the visitors.
326. Not to its being the centre of the district? No; Moss Vale is the centre.
327. Have you any particular interest in Moss Vale? None whatever.
328. Would a line from Bowral to Robertson, *via* East Kangaloon, leave out Wild's Meadows? Yes; it would leave out Wild's Meadows and Burrawang entirely.
329. How long have you been in the district? Two years.
330. You have not seen very much progress in that time, have you? No; but I remember travelling through the district twenty-two years ago; it appears very different now from what it did then.
331. There has been a great advance? Yes, a great advance in population and in every way.
332. Have you considered the probable paying capabilities of the line? I have not.
333. Looking at it as a colonist do you think that the State would be justified in making this line if it was shown that there would be a loss of £4,734 a year on it? No, unless there would be a probable extension.
334. How would the extension make it profitable? By taking the Bottle Forest line you do away with the very heavy gradients that have to be traversed between here and Campbelltown. I have no doubt that the line could be constructed with very easy gradients from Robertson to the Illawarra line.
335. That would merely be taking the traffic from the main line and putting it on to another—what benefit would that be to the State? The present main line would then become only a local line, but the cost of sending goods into the interior would be less.
336. You do not anticipate any local trade between Robertson and Bottle Forest—your idea is to avoid the heavy gradients? Yes.
337. It is very rough country, I believe? Yes.
338. Is there much timber there? Yes, a large amount of hardwood.
339. It is not volcanic soil only sandstone formation? Yes. The land would be suitable for orchards.
340. I understand you to say that you do not think the country would be justified in incurring an annual loss of £4,734 by making this line? I should be very sorry to have to assist in paying the difference.
341. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you been over the staked line? I have not.
342. Have you explored the country in the vicinity of the line? I know the country pretty well within a radius of 10 miles of it.
343. Is it good country? Not the whole of the 10 miles; the whole of the land on the top of the tableland is exceedingly good, the land below the mountain is very good, that for instance, in the Kangaroo Valley; but, as I said before, I believe the traffic will ultimately go to the Illawarra line, it goes to Broughton Creek at present. Undoubtedly most of it will come to the railway at Wild's Meadows, because there is a good road from Kangaroo Valley.
344. What proportion of the Kangaroo Valley traffic would be accommodated by the line to Robertson? I suppose not one-fifth.
345. Would the construction of this line relieve the Roads Department of any expenditure on the roads of the district? I do not think so at all.
346. Would it rather increase it? There would be a large tourist traffic, and when once a road is made the annual expenditure in keeping it in order is not very great. We have nearly finished making the road from here to Robertson, and whether the railway is made or not the gaps will have to be filled up.
347. How many miles of roads are there not made in the district that will be served by the railway? I suppose between here and Robertson 3 or 4 miles; on the road to Wild's Meadows, about 6 miles; on the road past the Belmore Falls it is now proposed to make another 4 miles. These roads will always be used whether the railway is made or not.

- V. J. S. Blomfield, Esq., A.M.I.C.E.
8 Feb., 1890.
348. The construction of the railway would not relieve you of any expenditure on the roads? Of none whatever.
349. Do you anticipate that you would have to make many more roads to the stations? I do not think so; I think the present roads would do. There might be a road wanted at Wild's Meadows.
350. Can you inform the Committee why your roads estimate has been so much reduced this year? I have not the faintest idea.
351. Do you not require the money? I do, very badly.
352. How many years have you had in your hands this annual expenditure of £3,475—how long was it going on before you came into office? My predecessor was here twelve years, but the annual expenditure on the roads throughout the Colony has annually increased, so that what it was twelve years ago, I cannot say.
353. Could you say what has been expended on roads altogether in the district? I could not.
354. Can you say what is the area of the timber reserves? I do not know, they are of large extent.
355. Have you explored those timber reserves? No.
356. What is the character of the timber? It is very good; there is stringy bark, black butt, and other timbers suitable for bridge-building.
357. Do you think that if the railway were made, and that State forests were thrown open, a revenue would be derived from the carriage of timber? I should think so.
358. What distance would that be from the railway? The timber reserves are principally on the northern side of the railway from the head of the Mittagong and Nepean Rivers.
359. Can you say how many miles? The reserve extends from near Robertson to almost where the tunnel for the Sydney water supply commences.
360. Would that reserve be accessible from the railway? Yes, the distance is about 4 miles.
361. Are there any reserves on the southern side of the railway? I do not know of any on that side.
362. *Chairman.*] Although you cannot tell us the exact votes for the district, can you give any opinion as to the amount of money that has been spent on the roads to put them in their present condition? I could make a small calculation. I should think the expenditure on the roads cannot have been less than from £50,000 to £80,000—that is on the whole of the roads in my district.

John Alexander Badgery, Esq., sworn, and examined:—

- J. A. Badgery, Esq.
8 Feb., 1890.
363. *Chairman.*] Were you born in this district? Yes.
364. Do you occupy an official position now? No.
365. What statement would you like to make to the Committee? Only a general statement as to the resources of the district and its productiveness. I do not reside in Robertson, but I frequently go there to do business with the inhabitants. I am acquainted with the people of that district, and with the products of the district. If the railway were constructed to Robertson the products of the district could be very largely increased. I think the inhabitants would go into fruit-growing more largely than they do at present. They would grow fruit for the markets. In their climate they can grow fruit which will not grow in other places.
366. Has that district any advantage over Bowral for fruit-growing? Yes; two advantages. The land is much richer at Robertson than the land at Bowral, and at Robertson they have a greater rainfall.
367. Has the rainfall been tested, or is the statement merely a guess? I make that statement from my own observations, and I think everyone residing in the district will know that on the coast range they get a great deal more rain than we get here. They get a constant drizzle on the coast range.
368. Does not the drizzle reach up to Bowral? No; nor does it reach Moss Vale so heavy as it is on the range.
369. Of course every additional mile that a fruit-grower is from Sydney is a handicap? Yes; but no one near Sydney can compete with Robertson district, because they have not the climate. In the Robertson district they can grow cherries, raspberries, and gooseberries, which cannot be grown near Sydney.
370. Do you think that at Colo Vale they could not grow apples? Apples are grown about Parramatta, but they are not equal to those from the Robertson district. They can grow good apples at Colo Vale. They cannot grow such fruit as we can grow at Robertson.
371. Is there not a good deal of risk in sending fruit long distances? Not if it is properly picked.
372. Do you think that fruit-growing will pay better than dairying? I think the settlers will combine the two. They will have to pay more attention to different kinds of cultivation.
373. Can you give us any ideas as to the profits from fruit-growing? I cannot.
374. What has kept the people from growing fruit? It is a new district, and when the inhabitants get a little ground cleared they go in for cows, because they get an immediate return from them. If they put in fruit-trees it will take time to obtain a return, and a poor man cannot wait so long.
375. We understand that many of the old settlers are now in a comfortable position—could they not afford to wait? Yes, and they are gradually going into fruit cultivation. They are extending their orchards, but I do not know of anyone who has gone into the business on a large scale.
376. Have those who are beginning to make orchards got fruit to send to market? I do not know anyone who has a large quantity.
377. There can be no business test then? No.
378. So that it is a speculation at present? Yes.
379. We have had evidence that the present cost of 10s. a ton for carting produce to Moss Vale would be reduced by one-half if a railway were made, thus reducing the charge to Sydney from 40s. to 35s. Do you think that that would be sufficient to induce people to go into the business of fruit-growing? A reduction of the cost of carriage would be some inducement.
380. Suppose this charge of 10s. for the carriage to Moss Vale were reduced to 5s., would that make a difference in the profits of the fruit-growers? No, I do not think that that would make much difference; indeed I think it would be no inducement.
381. Can you say whether the existing charge of 10s. is a deterrent to fruit-growing? I cannot say that such a reduction in the cost of carriage would be an absolute inducement to grow fruit.

382. Do you think the cleared land is carrying its full quantity of stock now? I think that the land has not been used to its utmost capacity.
383. Have most of the freehold settlers got their land pretty well cleared? There is a great deal to be done yet.
384. Do you think that one fourth of the land requires to be cleared? Yes, more.
385. And you think that a railway would stimulate the settlers to greater exertions in that direction? I think it would.
386. Do you know anything of those reserves to the south of the line? I do not.
387. If this remains a dairy district will the sale of calves be increased? I think so.
388. Are they obliged to destroy their calves now? Yes; some send them to Sydney, but most of the calves are destroyed.
389. What number annually? That I do not know;—hundreds are destroyed.

J. A.
Badgery, Esq.
8 Feb., 1890.

J. S. Ponder, Esq., Bank Manager, sworn, and examined:—

390. *Chairman.*] What position do you occupy in Moss Vale? Manager of the English, Scottish, and J. S. Ponder, Australian Chartered Bank.
391. How many years have you been here? About ten years.
392. During your time has the district increased in wealth? It has.
393. Are the settlers in the district which this railway is to accommodate fairly prosperous? They are.
394. Is your deposit account increasing? Yes.
395. Have you many bad debts? We have never had one since I have been here.
396. In spite of the bad seasons and bad roads the settlers have been steadily going ahead? They have.
397. They are mostly out of debt? Yes, and many of them have farms of their own.
398. Are the farms paid for? Yes, and they have some money to the good.
399. Are there many younger selectors who have not yet cleared themselves? There may be one or two who have perhaps not got such very good land as most of them. They are doing well. They pay 5s. to the Government, and then pay the interest on the balance.
400. It is better to pay 5 per cent. to the Government than to mortgage? Yes.
401. Is there any large class of selectors who have not yet struggled out of their early difficulties? No.
402. Most of them have been some years on their land? Yes.
403. And secured their position? Quite so.
404. And the only increase in the class of settlers could arise from the throwing open of any reserve land? Yes.
405. The available land is all taken up? Yes, the greater portion of it. A lot of land has been taken up recently at the top of the Merylan Mountain.
406. That I suppose is second-class land? It is very good land, but perhaps not as rich as the Burrawang soil.
407. Is it a further distance from the market? Yes; but the settlers there would be benefited by the railway.
408. The profits of occupation are such that the settlers are tempted to go greater distances and on to inferior land? Yes.
409. Farming is not a ruinous occupation in this district? No.
410. You do not know of any settlers who have thrown up their selections and gone away? No.
411. The young men growing up, do they find land in the district to settle on, or have they to go further afield? Some select further back, and some have gone up to the Richmond River.
412. On the whole you have to report very favourably? Yes.
413. *Mr. Downel.*] Have you explored the district well which the railway is to serve? Yes.
414. Is it good country? Very rich, the land is very rich chocolate soil, some of the richest being at Burrawang.
415. Do you know anything of the coal and shale seams that have been referred to? No; I have heard of coal cropping out of the Fitzroy Waterfalls, but I have not seen it myself.

J. S. Ponder, Esq.
8 Feb., 1890.

Charles Lindsay Nicholson, Esq., J.P., sworn, and examined:—

416. *Chairman.*] Are you a magistrate of the district? Yes.
417. Are you a farmer? I combine grazing with farming.
418. Do you know the locality well through which the railway is to go? I do not live near the proposed line; I live at Sutton Forest.
419. You have been in the district a great many years? Yes.
420. Have you traversed the route many times between Moss Vale and Robertson? Yes.
421. Do you agree with what has been said as to the great richness of the soil? I think the soil is good from the very start to the finish, except an odd patch that the line would go through.
422. Can you tell me of any farm in the district that is utilized as it should be? No; there is not a farm that I consider to be farmed in a proper manner.
423. You do not think that the settlers have done justice to their land? Not many. Mr. Throsby, who has an estate near the line, is farming in a more modern style.
424. What has he done? He is growing maize and hay, and going largely into ensilage; and others also.
425. The principal improvement is to tackle the ground with the plough? Yes.
426. You have not tried irrigation? Messrs. Badgery tried it with success, I believe.
427. You have not tried it on your land? No.
428. What have you grown principally on your land? In the earlier years we used to grow thousands of bushels of wheat and oats.
429. Why did you give that up? In consequence of rust and the high price of labour.
430. What do you put in the land? Chiefly grasses for grazing.
431. Is this a good district for fattening stock? Yes, very good.
432. Is that the most productive use to which it can be put? No; I think dairying is superseding it fast.

C. L.
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Esq.
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C. L.
Nicholson,
Esq.
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433. Even on second-class land? Yes.
434. Do you think that dairying would be best on the land held by your family and the Badgerys? Yes. I am dairying almost solely, and Messrs. Badgerys are, largely.
435. But your land is not so rich as the brush land? Not in some virtues, but in other respects it is as good. I don't think we could produce so much, but our land will hold better in bad seasons.
436. Can you grow as rich a crop of Italian rye-grass? Yes; but the land is more difficult to work.
437. Does your land produce well in cold weather? So long as it is reasonably stocked; we have to make preparation for the winter.
438. Can you keep cattle in as good milk by stall-feeding as by out-door feeding? We do not stall-feed.
439. By using preserved food you can keep your cows in as good heart in the winter as you can in the summer? Yes. The three worst months in the year for dairying are December, January, and February.
440. How much milk is being sent from Moss Vale at present? I suppose about 1,400 gallons a day.
441. Who are the buyers? Several companies. The Ice and Cool Storage Company receive large quantities, and the Fresh Food and Ice Company are doing business again in the district; also other companies.
442. I thought they had given up? That was rather a blunder.
443. Do not the Fresh Food and Ice Company get their produce from Kiama? Yes, a large quantity, I believe. The distance is less from Sydney, but the heat is greater. I do not think that they can cool their milk so well in the Kiama district as we can here.
444. You think there is a disposition on the part of some companies to return to this district? I am sure there is.
445. Are they sending away as much milk from this district as they were when the Fresh Food and Ice Company were buying here? Yes; many who were struck off went to other businesses, not having any consumer to take the place of the Fresh Food and Ice Co. Butter factories were then established, since which other milk companies have started.
446. You think that the second-class land is good dairying land? Yes; very fine. I consider my farm not the best land in the district, but if I farmed it better I should make more money. It pays now fairly well.
447. Taking the line from Moss Vale, do you think that the first 10 miles of the land could be increased in productiveness by making good dairy farms of it? Yes; it is good agricultural land too.
448. Could they not, for a distance of 6 miles, send their milk to Moss Vale? Within 4 miles.
449. From what distance between Bowral and Moss Vale have they been sending in milk? I should think that about 7 miles is the maximum distance.
450. Then none comes from Robertson? I think they sent some in two years ago. In winter time they can carry milk 12 miles, with a good road.
451. Wild's Meadows is nearly 12 miles? Yes.
452. If the proposed line from Kiama to Shoalhaven was carried out, will not that bring a large milk-producing district on to the Kiama line? I do not think it would be such a good district as ours would be with the line to Robertson.
453. Do you think there is a demand in Sydney for all the milk that the farmers down below and the farmers here can produce? I think so.
454. Suppose the competition so severe that prices had to be reduced, and that you had to reduce your price;—what would be the effect then? I should be glad to supply milk at 5d. a gallon now.
455. Would it pay? Yes.
456. Do you think that milk pays the best? I think so, and I employ labour. Many of the producers employ their own families, and prefer to make butter.
457. Do you think it damages butter to carry it long distances to the station? No; they carry 100 kegs in a van.
458. You do not think that the butter deteriorates? I do not think so, except when there is extremely hot weather. I think there will be a very large demand for butter in the south country immediately.
459. Taking the year all round, you think that the milk producers should be within 6 miles of a railway-station? Yes. 6 miles is rather too far; they ought not to be more than 4 miles from a station.
460. Would you like to make any statement about fruit-growing? I do not think they have gone into fruit-growing as they ought to have done. I am confident that fruit-growing can be combined with dairying to a very large extent. In the course of time fruit-growing will almost supersede other occupations. A number of farmers at Yurunga are making large orchards. There is one near the Fitzroy Waterfall. Alderman Hart has a nice estate there, and the man from whom he bought it made a considerable amount from fruit.
461. Do you know anyone who is making his living out of fruit now? No, not anyone who is making a living; but a man at Sutton Forest who is paying 15s. an acre for land makes more than half his rent out of fruit.
462. Do you think that the profits of fruit-growing would be such as to induce farmers to put down larger areas in orchards? Yes; but they are lazy. There is too much labour in connection with it.
463. The people have been very industrious in clearing their land? Yes; I think the people of Robertson, Burrawang, &c., ought to have had their land for nothing.
464. You think the country capable of greater development if people would develop it? Yes; if we could only get the labour.

Mr. Sam King Miller, journalist, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
S. K. Miller.
8 Feb., 1890.

465. *Chairman.*] How long have you been in the district? Eleven years.
466. Do you wish to make a statement to the Committee? I may say with reference to this line that I was about the first to propose such a line for the part of the country I was then living in, in the interests of the farmers. I spent seven years at Burrawang, and we held several meetings on the subject. I drew up a petition based on data which I had obtained.
467. *Mr. Garrard.*] What petition are you referring to now? To the first petition which was ever presented in reference to the railway. The petition was presented to Parliament, a Committee was appointed to inquire

inquire into the matter, and after inquiry, the Committee said that we had clearly made out our case. This was during the time that Mr. Lyne was Minister for Works, I believe.

468. *Chairman.*] I will read you an extract from the official *précis* of matters connected with the proposed railway:—

Mr.
S. K. Miller.
8 Feb., 1890.

A deputation from Robertson, introduced by Mr. M'Court, waited on the Minister for the purpose of impugning the accuracy of Mr. Crawford's return of the traffic, and obtaining further inquiry. They were prepared they said to prove that officer's figures altogether inaccurate and absurd. The Minister thought it proper to give the persons interested an opportunity of proving their case, and directed that an officer should be sent to the district to collect evidence and verify the statements of the objectors. Mr. Superintendent Harper was appointed for the purpose to confer with the Committee of residents, and after a visit to the district submit a report. Mr. Harper mentioned in emphatic terms the fertility of the district, the beauty of the scenery, and the healthiness of the climate. He stated that after seeing the district he could understand the extravagant estimate formed by the residents of the traffic likely to be developed, and doubtless it was capable of great improvement, but the duty confided to him was that of enabling the Committee to prove the present traffic, and with this view he arranged for the examination by them and himself of all invoices, way-bills, &c., at Bowral and Moss Vale Stations. The examination, which was an exhaustive one, entirely upset the extravagant theories of the residents, and the Committee frankly admitted that the figures were unchallengeable. There could be no doubt however that Mr. Crawford's estimate, both of the goods and passenger traffic, was considerably under estimated. As a result of elaborate calculations he estimated the present value of goods traffic to be £600 14s. 3d., which he thought in estimating for a railway might fairly be doubled with a population of 6,000 or 7,000 persons, and with the attractions presented to visitors by the scenery and climate, it was not unreasonable to expect that at least 5,000 persons per annum would use the line.

The local Committee are there said to have admitted that the original figures were extravagant, those were your figures were they not? That petition was mine.

469. Were the figures of the second Committee in excess of or below yours? I never prepared the statement. Our data were based on the capabilities of the district. We know that some most important industries were suspended entirely for the want of a railway. We know that people left off growing wheat and potatoes.

470. *Mr. Garrard.*] One witness says it was because of the rust? Yes, they have had rust in other parts of the country, but here we have had to pay more for the carriage of wheat than it was worth.

471. Were you a grower of wheat? No.

472. If a grower of wheat had said that he left off growing wheat because of rust, that is not correct? He was wise to do so.

473. *Chairman.*] Your estimate of the revenue from the traffic was £13,539. The Commissioners' present estimate is £1,843, do you adhere to your original estimate? I think it will be ten times heavier now.

474. £130,000? Yes, I think it can be made 500 times greater if the railway were constructed.

475. You think it would turn in half a million of money? I do. I saw a representative of a firm here a short time ago whose expenditure formerly was only £1,000; now they have spent £22,000. Look at the factories that have been established? Land at the time I refer to was only worth £3 an acre, now you cannot get an acre under £25.

476. *Mr. Garrard.*] You say that your estimate was not based merely on the then productiveness of the district, but on its possible productiveness? Yes, from actual data I obtained from 300 farmers.

477. The anticipated productiveness of the district has been reached now? Our anticipations have been surpassed by a long way.

478. You estimate then that there would be a return from the railway of £13,539 a year? Yes.

479. But you go further and say that the amount will be very much increased? Yes.

480. The Railway Commissioners, after a searching investigation, have come to the conclusion that the revenue would be £1,843 a year instead of £13,000 a year—who is right and who is wrong? You are merely taking the fees payable for the traffic; that £13,000 is the total value of the products.

481. This is what you say "Your petitioners believe that the total receipts from the railway or tramway would equal the costs of the working and construction of the line and be considerably in excess of the figures here quoted, viz."—Then you give a total of £13,539, not the value of the products, but the revenue from the traffic; how do you reconcile that? There would be 15,000 tons of potatoes at 4s. a ton, £3,000 revenue; but the potatoes were not grown, for want of a railway.

482. Was that the estimated revenue or the value of the products? That was the estimated carriage, if a railway had been constructed through the district.

483. You say that the revenue would be £13,000 a year, but the Commissioners, after making exhaustive inquiries, estimate that it will be only £1,800 a year? I cannot help that.

484. Then the Commissioners are wrong, all the people who gave evidence are wrong, and you are right? I have conversed with far more men than the Commissioners did, and I have had data furnished by the farmers themselves.

485. Are you aware that the officers who were sent up here and all the witnesses had the invoices, way-bills and books of the two stations to go through? Yes; but that had nothing to do with our data.

486. Are not the actual invoices and way-bills far better than mere statements? This is not a mere statement, it is a fact that Burrawang used to send away immense quantities of produce that are not sent from there now owing to the want of a railway.

487. You told us that your estimate of £13,000 was not from the then productiveness of the district, but upon its possible productions? Yes.

488. Did I understand you to say just now in answer to the Chairman that that possible productiveness had now been reached? In one way, and in one way it has not. Let me deal with the figures.

489. I want you to answer my question? I cannot answer it, that is all.

490. I ask whether you did not say yes in answer to that question from the Chairman? I believe that it is surpassed five times over.

491. You believe that at the present time your figures, based upon the probable productiveness of the country, have been reached? I think so.

492. You think that the estimate of the Railway Commissioners is absolutely incorrect? As far as this return is concerned—the Commissioners took one kind of evidence and we took another.

493. *Chairman.*] Were you not both taking evidence as to the receipts on the line? I was not; the Commissioners were. I know they examined a document at the railway station. I say that there are different products which would be carried by the proposed line which have not been carried. There were

Mr.
S. K. Miller.
8 Feb., 1890.

were 2,000,000 gallons of milk per annum which was thrown away. If we had had a railway that would have been carried to Sydney. There would have been 15,000 tons of potatoes, but we know that there are not 15 tons taken to Sydney at present; the farmers ceased growing potatoes because they could not carry them.

494. *Mr. Dowel.*] When the petition was presented you said there were 300 farms in the district? Yes.

495. This was in 1881;—has the number of these farms increased? I do not know.

496. Has there been increased settlement? I think so.

497. Do you think there are more than 300 farms in the district? I believe there are many more.

498. I asked a question to elicit information as to whether the district is progressing? I think it has been going on rapidly.

499. You have been through the district, I presume? I am constantly going through it.

500. Visiting all the centres of population? I visit a great number of them.

501. Do you think the line, as proposed, is one which would serve the largest possible number of people? Yes; if from Moss Vale to Robertson.

502. And open up the country? The country is pretty well opened up.

503. Is there any Crown land in the district? Very little, I believe.

504. Are there no large timber reserves? There may be some, but they are comparatively small.

505. Have you made any inquiries as to the area of land under cultivation? The land is scarcely cropped at all for want of a railway, except to grow a few acres of green stuff. The 15,000 tons of potatoes have not been carried, but if we had had a railway they would have been carried.

506. Is it good soil for the cultivation of potatoes? It is the best in the world.

507. Have you any idea of the average crop? I have seen as much as 26 tons to the acre. I have seen them put in, grown, and taken out and weighed; and I wrote an article on the subject for the *Town and Country Journal*. There is a double crop every year. A new industry has cropped up lately—growing cabbages, 30 tons of which came in this week. This part of the country could supply Sydney, instead of Sydney having to get its supplies from other countries.

508. The soil is good, and the climate suitable? Yes; equal to Tasmania or England.

509. Do you anticipate that 40,000 passengers per annum would be carried by the line? I do.

510. On what grounds? I can see by the increasing traffic. It is increasing now at the rate of thousands a week.

511. Are there thousands a week travelling between Moss Vale and Robertson? Yes; at the different stages there is a constant stream.

512. Do you think the traffic is likely to be increased? I think it would pay for the line.

513. Do you consider, from what you know of the district, that the Commissioners' estimate of £465 for the carriage of the produce of the district is sufficient? That would not be my estimate.

514. You think the estimate could be considerably increased? Undoubtedly, a thousandfold.

515. In how long? In a very little time. It is only lately that the coaches have begun to run, and in different spots we see as many as 800 and 1,000 people.

516. How many coaches are there? Two from Bowral and two from Moss Vale, I think.

SATURDAY, 8 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met in the School of Arts, Robertson, at 8 p.m.]

Present:

The HONORABLE ANDREW GARRAN (CHAIRMAN).

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Moss Vale to Robertson.

Mr. Denis Coston, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
D. Coston.
8 Feb., 1890.

517. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At the Pheasant Ground.

518. How far from here? About 5 miles in the direction of Kiama.

519. Is it on the slope downwards towards the coast? It is on the table-land, 3 or 4 miles on this side of the descent.

520. Is it rich chocolate soil there? Yes; it is what we call brush country.

521. Is it as good as the land between here and Burrawang? Yes, as good, if not better.

522. Was it originally brush country? Yes.

523. Is it freehold? No, it is leasehold.

524. Would you mind saying what rent you pay? I took the land under clearing leases of fifteen and twenty years for ten years free and for the remainder of the time at from 7s. 6d. to 12s. an acre.

525. Are you now reaping the fruits of your early labour in clearing? Yes; but I am paying rent now and have been for four or five years.

526. Do your cows do as well in the winter as in the summer? No.

527. What is the difference in the quantity of milk they give? In winter they give only half the quantity that they give in summer.

528. Do you think the land on the top of the mountain here is as productive of milk as the land at Kiama? Not in winter.

529. Taking all the year round would you rather give a higher rent for land on the plains? For the convenience of sending produce to Sydney the land on the coast would be much more valuable, but taking it all the year round the cows are nearly as productive here as they are on the coast.

530. Do you think that you are compensated by the extra yield in summer for the deficient yield in winter? Well, hardly, in consequence of prices being so much lower in the summer time.

531. What do you reckon the quantity of land requisite to keep a cow on the average? About 3 acres all the year round, but with cultivation I daresay that less would do.

Mr.
D. Coston.
8 Feb., 1890.

532. Do you cultivate any hay? Yes, we have to grow a little to feed the cattle with in winter; we should grow more if we could send the surplus to Sydney. Some years we have plenty, but not having means of sending the surplus away we neglect even to make provision for bad seasons.
533. Would it pay you to use your ground to grow hay for Sydney instead of grazing cows? I believe it would.
534. Then it would be better to use the whole for that? I think the best would be a mixed system, such as they have in the old country.
535. Suppose you grew hay where you could cultivate, and grazed cows where you could not cultivate, which would pay the best? The hay and potatoes with a market would pay better than dairying.
536. How much hay do you think you can grow to the acre? About 2 tons.
537. What will that fetch you? It depends upon the market price. Kiama is our only market; the price generally ranges from £4 10s. to £7 a ton there.
538. That is a yield of from £8 to £10 an acre? Yes.
539. How much milk can you get off an acre? I have not tried that experiment.
540. What quantity of potatoes? I think a fair average is about 5 tons by using artificial manure. If we cultivated them carefully I daresay that we could grow more, but all we do is to plough the potatoes in at random.
541. You do not use manure? None whatever.
542. What do you generally get from potatoes? The market being so far away we hardly ever send any. In August we send some to the coast and sell them for seed potatoes. They prefer them in the Kangaroo Valley and at Albion Park for seed.
543. You do not send them to Sydney? No. Carriage is very expensive.
544. What do you get for them for seed purposes? From 7s. to 8s. a cwt. in Kiama, but this is only when they are planting potatoes.
545. Does it beat hay-growing? Yes.
546. Have you got any butter factories at the Pheasant Ground? No.
547. Do you make your own butter? Yes; we make it and send it to Sydney.
548. What do you get for your butter? The factory butter puts us altogether adrift; I get from 5d. to 6½d. a lb.
549. Do you know how many lb. an acre turns you in? No.
550. You would have about a third of one cow's produce to the acre? The produce of a cow is about 200 lb. per acre, and one-third of that would be about 70 lb.
551. Could you tell us what weight of milk goes to a lb. of butter? In summer time about 3 gallons, in winter time a little less.
552. What is the weight? About 30 lb.
553. Have you not enough ground in occupation at the Pheasant Ground to support a factory? We have not started one there. All the settlers there make butter in the usual style.
554. What quantity of milk do you send annually from the Pheasant Ground to Moss Vale? The only thing we send is butter, the produce of about 300 cows.
555. And how much does each cow produce per annum? About 140 lb.
556. You do not send pork or bacon? Oh, yes.
557. What quantity of dairy produce do you send, including pigs, pork, and bacon? We send a good few live pigs and a number of young cattle in spring.
558. Do you kill your calves? No.
559. Do you waste skimmed milk? Very seldom; we feed pigs and calves with it.
560. Where do you send your pigs and calves to? To Moss Vale and Robertson; some to Kiama and Jamberoo, and they find their way by various routes to Sydney.
561. Can you get a fair market for bacon and pork in the township? We get the best we can from the storekeepers; we are at their mercy.
562. Do you grow any Indian corn or planter's friend? Yes; as much as we require for our own use.
563. What proportion of your land do you cultivate in that way? Not more than 2 per cent. of our lands, because we cannot get rid of the produce.
564. Speaking as a practical farmer, you think that if you had a railway to Robertson it would pay to cultivate your land? Yes; and a small farmer could make an independent living then. Large farmers do well dairying; small farmers are in poverty.
565. Are the farmers round you on clearing leases? No; most of them are freeholders.
566. Are they living from hand to mouth? Those who have forty or fifty cows are independent; those who have less than 100 acres of land are poor, and have to take a job on the road occasionally; they cannot make a living on their farms; I cannot; I have to depend upon contracting, and one thing or another.
567. Have the freeholders been free selectors? Originally they were.
568. *Mr. Garrard.*] You say that you get rid of the calves and pigs by sending some here and some to the coast;—can you tell us how many calves come here and go on to Moss Vale in a year? I suppose that a farmer would send away one fat pig for every cow that he has. A farmer milking 300 cows would send away 300 fat pigs.
569. How many calves? Not so many calves; we do not send them direct; sometimes men from Goulburn will take them.
570. But they eventually go north or south? Yes; they are driven into the neighbourhood of Goulburn.
571. If the destination of the calves is north or south would they be driven or taken in the train if you had a railway? By rail, if there was a station here.
572. How would they go if you were sending to Sutton Forest? Some would go by rail, some would be driven.
573. The majority are driven? Yes; they travel by stages.
574. Do you look upon Robertson as a market for those living in your district? Yes, and for people considerably beyond.
575. Your potatoes are purchased on the coast only as seed potatoes? Yes.
576. If the Government constructed a railway from Moss Vale to Robertson, and there happened to be a better market on the coast than elsewhere, the Government railway would have to remain idle, because you would go to the coast to sell your produce? Only in the month of August.

Mr.
D. Coston.
8 Feb., 1890.

577. Do you think that if the railway were made a larger area of land would be put under cultivation in this district? The area would be more than doubled.
578. Would you do more? I believe I would sell my stock and go into cultivation.
579. Do you think those surrounding you would go in for cultivation? I am sure they would; those having large farms would reduce their stock, and those who have small farms would sell off their stock.
580. What is the size of the farms? 60 acres, 80 acres, some 200 acres, some 300 acres. Mr. Cullen, of Kiama, owns about 800 acres, and that land is simply waiting until people see whether they can make a living out of it, and if they can he will let it on clearing leases.
581. Do you know the estimated cost per annum of the proposed line? I have no idea.
582. The interest on the cost and the working expenses are estimated to amount to £6,577;—do you think that this district will be able to produce sufficient revenue to meet all that expenditure? I believe that in a very short time it would do more than that.
583. You have no idea of what the estimated traffic would be if that line were made? No.
584. The revenue from the traffic is estimated at £1,843 a year, leaving a deficiency of £4,734;—how long do you think it would be before the traffic would pay that amount? From three to five years.
585. Do you think if it was known that the line was being constructed the farmers would immediately begin to cultivate more land? They would make preparations to go into cultivation on an extensive scale.
586. If the first sod of the railway was turned, and contracts let, and the line was to be completed in a year, the farmers would commence to extend their cultivation, so that when the line was opened there would be more produce? Yes. Because there was a little increase in the price of potatoes last year many of the farmers have this year increased their areas by 15 or 20 acres.
587. Do you think that within three years of the opening of the line the revenue would amount to £6,577? That is my candid conviction.
588. Unless there is a reasonable prospect of that, you do not think it would be fair to the general taxpayer to have to make up the deficiency? It would be very wrong; but my conviction is that the railway would pay a very good interest on the capital invested.
589. Do you know anything about the district generally? I have been here fifteen years.
590. Do you know Wild's Meadows? Not so well as the mountains.
591. Is East Kangaloon a productive district? It is a good dairying district.
592. Is it similar to this? Yes, but rougher country.
593. Do you know anything of Yurunga? No.
594. Is that a good country? I prefer this part of the district. I consider that this is more fertile country.
595. *Chairman.*] What would your land be worth per acre without the railway? A farm adjoining it, with soil of a poorer quality, was sold, and it only realized about £6 10s. an acre. Had there been a railway in the district the price would have been double that.
596. You think that the effect of a railway would be to double the price of the land? Yes.
597. Are there any carriers who take your produce to Moss Vale? Yes; the storekeepers take fowls, eggs, and butter.
598. What do they charge per ton? So much that we do not trouble them; we scarcely send any away.
599. You cannot tell what they were taken to Moss Vale for? I think about 30s. a ton.
600. Do you send eggs and poultry? Yes.
601. What do the storekeepers charge for them? They simply buy them and we do not pay the carriage except of butter. We pay 1s. 6d. each for the carriage of kegs of from 60 lb. to 80 lb.
602. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know the country fairly well between Robertson and Moss Vale? I have traversed the country often, but I know the country from here to Kiama and the top of the mountain much better.
603. Have you been over any part of the State line? I have a very good idea of the route both from Bowral and Moss Vale.
604. Do you think the proposed route is the best? I think it would be as good as any.
605. What places would it serve within a radius of 10 miles? Wild's Meadows, Burrawang, East Kangaloon, Kangaroo Valley, and a number of settlers in other parts, including settlers in a south-westerly direction, also on the top of the table land between the Pheasant Ground and Jamberoo, who would go through Moss Vale instead of to Kiama. They have to pack their produce down the mountains a distance of 8 or 10 miles. It would only be 7 miles from there to here, and they would come this way.
606. Do you know anything about wheat producing in the district? I have not seen any wheat tried there.
607. Are there no threshing-machines or flour-mills here? None; when I came up here there was scarcely a road and you could scarcely travel.
608. Do you consider the district suitable for growing fruit and vegetables? There is not a better district in Australia; anything that will grow in the English climate can be grown here.
609. What is the average price that you obtain in this district for bacon? From 5d. to 6d. per lb. is what the bacon realizes in Sydney.
610. Hand-cured? Yes; it is sent by carriers to Moss Vale and thence to Sydney; we are all bacon curers more or less.

Mr. William White, butcher, sworn, and examined:—

Mr.
W. White.
8 Feb., 1890.

611. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Butcher.
612. Are your customers mostly occupied with land in the district? Yes.
613. Do you know any of the carriers between here and Moss Vale? Some of them.
614. Do you ever employ them? I have done but not during the last couple of years.
615. How much a ton do they charge for the carriage of produce between here and Moss Vale? From 15s. to £1 a ton; it depends on the character of the article.
616. What would they take potatoes for? I have heard they pay as high as £1 and 25s. a ton for the carriage of potatoes from Kangaloon. I do not know the charge from here.

Mr.
W. White.
8 Feb., 1890.

617. What would you expect to have to pay? £1 a ton.
 618. You could not send them in cheaper in your own carts? No.
 619. What is the charge for the carriage of butter? 1s. 6d. a keg.
 620. Does that include the weight of the keg? They bring back the keg; that is the charge for both ways.
 621. What is done with the calves in the district? A great many of them are killed.
 622. Wasted? Yes.
 623. Does it not pay to rear them on skimmed milk? If we had the facilities which they have on the coast the calves would be fed for a month or five weeks and then sent to market. The heifers alone are kept.
 624. It will not pay to cart them to Moss Vale? No.
 625. Would it pay to send them away to a railway? Twelve years ago they sent them from here in cases, two calves in a case.
 626. How much did it cost? It cost about 6s. to send two to Moss Vale. The experiment was tried, but it was found difficult and troublesome and the farmers got little or nothing for their calves.
 627. Are the farmers in the district prosperous or in difficulties? They are prosperous.
 628. What have they made their money mostly out of? Dairying.
 629. Principally butter? Yes.
 630. Is any milk sent from here to Moss Vale? It used to be before the factories started; the Fresh Food and Ice Company took it.
 631. Was milk sent a distance of 14 miles? Yes.
 632. And did it arrive in good condition? It did.
 633. We have been told that milk could not be carried more than 6 miles? It has been taken from here.
 634. Were any complaints made of the condition of the milk? Sometimes it was bad; they cooled it here before they took it.
 635. Did it pay better to send the milk 14 miles than to make butter? It did then, and the butter was cheaper then than it has been since.
 636. Do the farmers cart butter to Moss Vale? No, the factories send the butter.
 637. How many cows are supplying the butter factory here? I do not know.
 638. Can you tell me what area of land one of these factories will take the milk from? I suppose they would take the milk from 2,000 acres.
 639. And how much butter do you think they will supply in a year? I could not say.
 640. Do you agree with the estimate made that 3 acres are required for a cow? No.
 641. What is your estimate? I should think 2 acres of ground will carry one cow.
 642. Then 2,000 acres will carry 1,000 cows? Yes.
 643. How much butter will 1,000 cows give? I reckon 130 lb. on the average.
 644. *Mr. Garrard.*] Have you any other information to give the Committee? I only came to speak about the bacon.
 645. Is there much bacon cured here? Yes. Last year about 33 tons of bacon was made here and sent away *via* Moss Vale.
 646. Do you think that if the railway were made it would cause an increase in the production of bacon? Yes.
 647. To what extent? I should say double or treble the quantity made now. Except in one or two cases it has not been done in a business-like way for want of facilities to get the bacon to market.
 648. Then the quantity would be about 100 tons a year? Yes.
 649. It would not take many trains to carry 100 tons of bacon, would it? No.
 650. Is there anything brought here that will bring grist to the mill of the railway? There are a great many other things that would have to be carried.
 651. Will you mention some of them? There would be a larger production requiring increased carriage. There would be the calves and thirty head of cattle every year which I take myself which would be sent by rail instead of being driven.
 652. Are you the principal butcher? There is another in the town.
 653. Doing as large a business as you do? I believe so.
 654. Then sixty head of cattle might be expected to come from Moss Vale to Robertson? Yes, we have to drive them here now.
 655. How many trucks would they take? Six trucks.
 656. That is 100 tons in the year and three trucks of cattle; what else? You would get about 1,300 live pigs; that is the number that went from here last year without reckoning what private parties have sent.
 657. Independent of the bacon, of course? Yes; independent of the bacon 1,300 pigs went alive from here to Moss Vale and 300 went to the coast, which would probably have gone the other way had there been a railway.
 658. Do you think that when there is a railway there will be a great increase in the cultivation of the land? Yes.
 659. Do you anticipate a larger population here requiring more cattle for Robertson? Yes.
 660. Is there plenty of room for more population here? Yes.
 661. Do you know the estimated cost per annum of the proposed railway? No.
 662. Do you think that the traffic of the district would give a return equal to £6,500 a year, the interest on the cost of construction and the working expenses? Not at present.
 663. How long would it be before it would? Five or six years.
 664. Then for five or six years the general taxpayer would have to pay £4,734 a year for the benefit of the people of Robertson? Yes.
 665. Do you think that is a fair thing? Well, we have to pay taxes for the benefits that other people get.
 666. Where? In different parts of the country and on the coast.
 667. Does the coast line show a loss like that on the cost? Not quite.
 668. Do you think that the estimate of the Commissioners that the revenue will amount to £1,843 is an incorrect one? I do not think it was an under-estimate at the time, but I think it would be now.
 669. Has there been a large increase in the productiveness of the district during the last year? Yes.
 670. How much—50 per cent.? More, I believe. Very nearly all that you see of the prosperity of this place has grown up within the last ten or twelve years.
 671. If it has been stated in evidence that the district has not progressed, it has almost gone back; that is not true? I do not understand that.

Mr.
W. White.
8 Feb., 1890.

672. If a witness has stated to the Committee that the productiveness of the district has not increased during the last two years, that would be incorrect? I suppose the witness spoke of his own particular part, not of Robertson.
673. I am speaking of Robertson, the Pheasant Ground, Wild's Meadows, East Kangaloon, and all the district;—is the statement correct? I do not think it is.
674. Not if your statement is correct that there has been an increase of 50 per cent.? I spoke of the increase of population and other matters. There have been various matters taken in hand during the last twelve months. We had no butter factories before that time.
675. But instead of butter you used to send milk, did you not? It is three or four years since we sent milk.
676. Butter takes less room than milk in the way of carriage, does it not? I don't know.
677. Suppose, for the sake of argument, we say this district will produce 100 tons of milk, that milk would not make 100 tons of butter, would it? I could not say; I have not made any calculation.
678. Does a given quantity of milk yield the same weight of butter? Some gives a larger quantity of butter than others.
679. You have already told us how much butter can be made out of so many gallons of milk? I do not wish to state that for a fact, because I have never made a calculation. There is a difference of opinion as to the quantity of milk which it takes to make a pound of butter.
680. If you had never seen a cow would you suppose that a ton of milk would make a ton of butter? I could not say.
681. *Mr. Douel.*] Have you resided long in the district? About eighteen years.
682. Do you know the district through which the railway would traverse? Yes.
683. Do you think it is the best route that could be adopted? Yes.
684. Do you know anything about the agricultural produce of the district? I know nothing about the grain. Some oats, barley, and rye have been grown here.
685. Are there any threshing machines in the district? I know of one.
686. Is it a steam machine? No.
687. What is the cost of sending a pig from Robertson to Moss Vale? The carriers used to charge from 1s. 6d. to 2s. a pig.
688. That would be a considerable source of revenue to the railway? Yes.
689. If the railway would carry them at 2s. a head do you think they would be sent by rail? I do.
690. Don't you think that the Commissioners considerably under-estimated the revenue that would be derived from the line when they stated it at £1,843? Yes.
691. What do you think they have omitted? I do not think they have given credit for the carriage of all the various articles that go from here. They have only reckoned the carriage from a particular place.
692. What articles do you think they have omitted? Pretty well all in connection with the goods brought into the district by the storekeepers and others, and from private sources.
693. Do the storekeepers pay a considerable amount for carriage from Moss Vale? Yes.
694. From your knowledge of the district do you think that if the timber reserves were thrown open there would be a trade in timber? Yes.
695. What is the character of the timber? There is gum, messmate, and stringybark.
696. Would there be any difficulty in getting the timber from the reserves to the railway station at Robertson? No.
697. What is the distance? The principal reserve is 8 or 10 miles away.
698. Are there any Crown lands with good timber on them nearer the line? Yes; within 4 or 5 miles of them.
699. Is this a good fruit-growing country? Yes; they could grow fruit here equal to any in the colony.
700. Are there any large orchards in the district? A number of orchards have been commenced.
701. Of what area? From an acre upwards.
702. During your eighteen years experience in the district, although there has been no railway here, the district has advanced? Yes.
703. Has the population doubled? I believe it has. Eighteen years ago there was only one house in this town.

Mr. Joseph Scott Armstrong, journalist, sworn, and examined:—

Mr. J. S.
Armstrong.
8 Feb., 1890.

704. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? At present I represent the *Robertson Advocate* newspaper.
705. How long have you been here? About three years.
706. Has your occupation brought you into intimate acquaintance with the people here? Yes; I have travelled all over the district among the farmers.
707. Have you had an opportunity of observing whether the district is progressing or stagnant? It certainly is progressing, although the inhabitants have not increased they have improved their land; I can see every few months trees felled and paddocks cleared.
708. More ground is cleared and more stock is being fed? I think so.
709. And more produce exported? Yes.
710. A steady increase is going on? Yes; in the township the number of houses has doubled in three years.
711. You have heard the evidence given as to the rate of carriage between here and Moss Vale? Yes.
712. We are told that the cost of the carriage of potatoes from here to Moss Vale is £1 a ton. Is that correct? Yes; the expense has been the great difficulty. I have heard many farmers say that they would cultivate a great deal more land if they had a railway.
713. We are told that the cost of carriage from Moss Vale to Sydney is 30s. a ton, only 50 per cent. more than this 14 miles between Robertson and Moss Vale;—do you think the farmers would pay a higher price for the carriage of their goods on the branch line than is charged on the trunk line? Yes; some say they would be glad to pay increased rates if they could have the benefit of the railway.
714. Would they pay 10s. a ton for the carriage of potatoes on this line? I should not like to state what amount they would pay; I know that they are willing to pay more than the ordinary rates.
715. If the line were made on that guarantee would they be content to pay the higher rates or would they agitate to get them reduced? I believe they would be content to pay the increased rates.
716. You do not pretend to be acquainted with the commercial working of a farm? No.

717. Is there any statement which you would like to make? The chief thing that I have taken an interest in is the scenery? I have heard opinions expressed by many who have compared the scenery in this district with that of other places and their opinion has been invariably favourable to this district. People from town speak highly of this district, not only on account of the beauty of the scenery but the coolness of the atmosphere and its freedom from mosquitoes. If we had a railway in this district the great attractions to be found here would make Robertson a place of resort preferable to Bowral and Moss Vale. I was hoping that the Committee would have taken sufficient time in the district to have visited Fitzroy Falls, Belmore Falls, and some of the other sights.

Mr. J. S.
Armstrong.
8 Feb., 1890.

718. You are of opinion that if the railway reached this place it would become a favourite summer sanatorium? I am confident that it would. All who have come here express themselves highly pleased with the district.

719-20. Do you have any visitors here for the summer? A few—Dr. Tarrant's family come every summer. I heard a gentleman from Tasmania say the other day that he considered this climate even superior to that of Tasmania.

721. Is it rather a changeable climate? It is to some extent.

722. Plenty of cold mists come up? A fog comes up from the sea, but I never heard that it produced any ill effects.

723. Are the people here healthy? Yes, very healthy.

724. *Mr. Dowel.*] Is there any considerable passenger traffic between Kiama and Robertson, and Robertson and Moss Vale? The coaches go at such inconvenient hours;—they pass through here during the night; the coach from Kiama to Moss Vale passes through here at 11 o'clock at night, and coming from Moss Vale it gets here at 4 o'clock in the morning.

725. Is there no day coach? No; they have to hire conveyances, and that is an expensive matter.

726. Is there any considerable passenger traffic independent of the coach traffic? We often have people coming through in hired vehicles from Moss Vale and Bowral.

727. Do you know the number per week? No.

728. Do you know the number of tourists who have been here at one time? No; the coaches proceed to the Belmore Falls without coming into the township.

729. Is the statement correct that there have been as many as 1,000 people at the Falls at one time? I believe it is correct with regard to the Fitzroy Falls. At the Belmore Falls the number of visitors is not so great, but still I have seen a great many there at times.

730. Was it on any special occasion? No, the ordinary holiday time. There are the Kangaroo Valley Falls. Very often visitors come from Jamberoo and Kiama way that we never see at all. I have seen three large waggonettes at a time there which must have brought twenty or thirty people.

731. Is public opinion in favour of the line marked out? Yes, most people consider it the best.

732. Has there been during your time any agitation for the construction of a railway? There have been public meetings; we have had this hall well filled several times lately, and the feeling in favour of the railway was unanimous.

733. Do you know where the railway station is to be? I do not; it is to be to the south of the township.

734. As a journalist, have you had an opportunity of observing the character of the timber in the reserves? Yes, there are a great number of reserves.

735. What is the character of the soil—is it good or bad? It is excellent soil.

736. Did you notice the character of the timber? I am not well versed in the names of trees, but I have noticed messmate and gum trees.

737. Do you know of any minerals in this district? I have seen traces of coal cropping out in a great number of places. Going down to the Belmore Falls you cross four or five seams; there is one about 14 feet thick; there are signs of coal in the Kangaroo Valley also.

738. What distance is the coal from Robertson? What I have seen in the valley would be about 5 miles away by road. The best specimens of coal that I have seen are those at the Fitzroy Falls, 3 or 4 miles from Wild's Meadows.

739. *Chairman.*] Do you know whether anybody proposes to open a coal-mine on the line of railway? I do not.

MONDAY, 10 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[*The Sectional Committee met at the School of Arts, Robertson, at 9 a.m.*]

Present:—

The HONORABLE ANDREW GARRAN (CHAIRMAN).

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Moss Vale to Robertson.

Mr. Thomas Blencowe, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined:—

740. *Chairman.*] Are you a resident in the district? Yes, I have been for the past twenty-seven years.

741. In which portion of it do you reside? At Wild's Meadows.

742. Are you a proprietor of land? Yes.

743. How much do you hold? About 350 acres.

744. Is most of that in practical use? Yes.

745. To what uses do you put that land? Chiefly dairy-farming, making butter principally; some of the land is used for growing fruit and green crops for fodder. Some years ago I grew large quantities of potatoes, but I found the roads so bad and the cost of carriage so great that I gave up growing them.

746. What is a fair average crop, taking all the seasons round? I should think about 5 tons per acre.

747. Where would be your market for the potatoes? Sydney.

748. What is the average price of potatoes in the Sydney market? I think the potatoes from this district, taking one season with another, will average £4 a ton.

749. How much do you pay for the carriage of potatoes to Moss Vale? £1 a ton.

750. And how much for the carriage from there to Sydney? I think about 10s. a ton.

751.

Mr.
T. Blencowe.
10 Feb., 1890.

Mr.
T. Blencowe.
10 Feb., 1890.

751. Taking the cost of carriage into consideration, and adding to it the cost of the seed potatoes, the cost of ploughing, drilling, hoeing and bagging, and all the other labour connected with their production, what do you think the gross outlay is in producing a ton of potatoes? I think you could put it down at £2 a ton, but out of the 5 tons to the acre, I should not consider that more than 4 tons would be marketable at £4 a ton.
752. And you think you would get £2 a ton profit? We have to pay commission, which would amount to 5s. a ton if the potatoes sold at £4.
753. You would have to take 45s. off the £4, and the balance would be profit? No.
754. Is that profit not sufficient to induce people here to grow potatoes? No.
755. Is the profit on dairying more than that? Yes; the produce from the dairy is much more valuable than the potatoes; and in getting the potatoes to market we have to contend with very bad roads.
756. What is the profit of dairying per acre? It varies, according to the price of butter; but I estimate the value of land for dairying at from 30s. to £1 an acre.
757. And unless you can get more than £2 an acre potatoes would pay better than dairy produce? Yes.
758. Unless you had a railway that would reduce the cost of carriage you do not think it would be worth while to go into the production of potatoes? No.
759. In your estimate of £2, I suppose you have not excluded the cost of carriage? No; but when the cost of carriage and commission are paid there is very little left.
760. You could well afford to pay 5s. for the carriage to Moss Vale? Of course, if we could get it done cheaper it would be all the better.
761. Would it pay the growers in the district if on the branch line they paid 50 per cent. more than the rates charged on the main line? Yes.*
762. Do you think that to get the railway the people in the district would willingly pay twice the rate per mile between Moss Vale and Robertson that they pay between Moss Vale and Sydney? Yes, and four times the rate.
763. And would be better off then? Yes. On these goods the official charges are actually based on 11d. a ton from Wild's Meadows and 1s. 3d. from Robertson, and if the charge was four times as much it would amount to 5s.
764. The calculation of the railway officials is that the existing rates on the trunk line would be charged also on the branch line, and they think the produce would yield a revenue of £1,843 a year;—do you think the people would be willing to pay double, or even quadruple that amount to make the line pay? Yes, rather than not have the railway. Of course, if they could get it cheaper they would gladly do so.
765. You notice that out of this £1,843 £1,075 is for passenger traffic, and only £180 for mails and parcels, and £580 for goods traffic? Yes; Mr. Harper's calculation is at 11d. to the Meadows, and the same rate is continued on.
766. Have you also tried fruit-growing? Yes.
767. Is this district likely to grow fruit? It is one of the best fruit districts in the Colony.
768. What sort of fruit would stand the carriage to Sydney? We could send fruit away better by rail than by dray, on account of the jolting. The fruits that could be extensively grown are apples, pears, cherries, plums, strawberries, raspberries, and other fruits suitable for cold climates.
769. Supposing the railway were made, in most instances there would be 3 or 4 miles cartage, would there not? Yes; but we could send that class of fruit at a profit.
770. Out of the 50,000 acres of good land here how many acres would be suitable for orchards? I should pick out about 5,000 acres as being the most suitable land for orchards.
771. And how many acres do you think are fit for potato-growing? About 10,000 acres.
772. In addition to the other 5,000 acres? Yes. The land could be used for growing fruit and vegetables.
773. How many acres are suitable for market gardening? The best potato land is suitable for growing other vegetables as well as potatoes. I think altogether 15,000 acres would be a fair estimate.
774. Leaving 35,000 acres for dairying purposes? Yes. I think that the area for growing fruit and vegetables might be set down at 20,000 acres, leaving 30,000 for dairying.
775. You think that that would be an extreme calculation? No; I think it would be a fair calculation.
776. With regard to dairying, what is the average number of acres that will keep a cow all the year round? I suppose about 2 acres.
777. How many months of the year do you consider the land to be in first-class condition for feeding? About nine months. We have only three months of winter here.
778. Do you mean to say that it is equally good for nine months as a rule? Yes; of course we must expect drought seasons. I suffer nothing in a drought, and it is the same with some others.
779. You do sometimes have dry seasons? We suffer somewhat from droughts, but not like some parts.
780. You are exceptionally favoured as regards rainfall? Yes; I think we get something like 55 inches of rain annually.
781. Taking 2 acres to a cow, what is the annual yield of milk in the district? I took the milk yield from the statistics that we obtained at Moss Vale. The farmers would be paying on the butter.
782. What was the amount of butter to begin with? The quantity exported from Moss Vale to Sydney was 14,000 kegs a year, and it takes about a ton of milk to produce a keg of butter. This season, about double this quantity was sent to market.
783. What is the weight of butter in a keg? About 80 lb. without the keg.
784. One ton of milk will make 80 lb. of butter? Yes. I may point out that since the factories and separators have come into use I do not think it takes quite so much milk to produce a pound of butter as it did when the butter was made by hand.
785. Still it would not materially alter the calculation? Not much.
786. For some years you did a milk business with Sydney? Yes.
787. That has practically ceased? It has.
788. The milk companies are getting it from the coast line? Yes; I think the carriage is cheaper from

789.

* NOTE (on revision):—Potatoes, @ per ton—

Labour, rent, and bags	£2	5	0	
Present carriage, commission, &c. ...	1	15	0	
		4	0	Profit, nil.
If railway constructed, cost 12s. ...	3	2	0	„ 18s.

789. Looking at the present low price of milk, even if there was a railway, do you think that the farmers would send their milk to town instead of to the factory? I think they would if a fair standard value could be obtained.

Mr.
T. Blencowe.
10 Feb., 1890.

790. What do you call a fair standard value? There is a company paying 7d. a gallon all the year round, and that is a remarkably good price.

791. If milk rose to 7d. the farmers would sell their milk instead of making butter? Yes.

792. Would it pay at 4d. a gallon? I do not think so.

793. Then at the present rate, even with a railway, you would prefer to turn your milk into butter? Yes; but this is an exceptional season.

794. Is there much freehold land here remaining to be cleared? Yes; a considerable quantity.

795. What proportion? I should think about one-third.

796. Some of the timber is left for shelter? Yes; but the country is in a very rough state yet. Considerable improvement could be effected, and a far larger quantity of grass could be grown.

797. You think that the existing holdings are capable of producing a great deal more than they do at present? I think so.

798. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you come into contact with the large number of residents in the district in reference to this particular railway route? I know a great many in the district.

799. Is the general feeling in favour of the proposed route? Yes, from Moss Vale to Robertson.

800. Have you been over the staked line? Not all of it; but I know the direction in which it goes.

801. Do you think the line staked out is the best to serve the various centres of population? Yes; a better line could not be found if the cost of construction is taken into account.

802. *Mr. Garrard.*] Were you not at one time in favour of a line from Bowral, *via* Kangaloon? Yes.

803. Why have you altered your opinion? Because of the expense of the route. I understood from Mr. Bell that that line would cost half a million of money.

804. I suppose it does not matter to the inhabitants where the branch joins the main line as long as they get to the metropolis? I do not think so.

805. If by going to Bowral they could save 6 miles of haulage, would not that be an advantage? Of course it would.

806. Do you know anything of the country about the Sheepwash? Yes.

807. Do you think it practicable to bring a line along to the north side of the Wingecaribee Swamp? Yes, but more expensive.

808. Would it serve the Kangaloon people better? It would serve Kangaloon.

809. If the line was constructed from Robertson to Moss Vale the East Kangaloon people would make Robertson their depôt? Yes.

810. But if the line went to the Sheepwash the West Kangaloon people would be able to use it as well? Yes.

811. A line from Bowral would serve a greater number of people and save 6 miles of main line haulage? Yes.

812. That is a consideration? Yes, but we have gone for the cheapest line, the line that will accommodate the greatest number of people at the least expense.

813. Suppose it is a question of railway or no railway, and the raising of the rates to three-fourths more than is charged on the main line, do you think the people are prepared to pay it? I think so.

814. There are good agitators in the district are there not; do you think that if a line is constructed we shall not then have deputations going to the Government and asking for a reduction of the rates? No doubt they would try it as they did on the Illawarra line.

815. Then if the railway were made on the understanding that higher rates were to be paid we should have to provide for that by Act of Parliament because peoples word cannot be trusted? My own opinion is that higher rates should be charged on the branch line than on the main line.

816. You made us believe that the people here had no conscience, that immediately after the line was made they would commence to agitate for the reduction of the rates? Exactly as they did on the Illawarra Line; there is one thing which I wish to mention. I was engaged with Mr. Harper in ascertaining the amount of the goods traffic from this district as far as could be found out at the Moss Vale Station. Matters were gone carefully into, all the names called out of residents in the Moss Vale and Bowral districts, but there were farms in this district which were omitted because it is impossible to know everyone, and a considerable traffic with Moss Vale was not taken into account, and we do not get credit for it in Mr. Harper's report.* Further, the tourists' tickets issued in Sydney are not credited to Moss Vale but to the place where they are issued. The returns from Moss Vale station alone make £22,000. Mr. Harper gave us no credit for what we may put on the main line because the main line is not paying. As far as it is possible to ascertain, of that £22,000 the people of the Robertson district contribute about £16,000. If the railway were constructed the growth of vegetables, potatoes, and other crops would become more profitable than dairying and that would give the railway better returns.†

817. *Chairman.*] Your object is to show that Mr. Harper under-estimated the revenue? Yes.

818. *Mr. Garrard.*] Where were the Local Committee when Mr. Harper under-estimated the revenue. Did he go through the figures with them? Yes.

819. And did they not agree that it was a correct statement? Yes, from actual reports at Moss Vale station, but no allowance is made for the tourists' tickets. I go to Sydney ten times in a year but no credit was given by Mr. Crawford for anybody going anywhere.‡

820. These facts having occurred to you since Mr. Harper left, have you put them before him? I put them before him at Moss Vale. 821.

* NOTE (on revision):—The residents within 3 miles of Moss Vale and Bowral stations are omitted from Mr. Harper's report, as they are near existing stations.

† NOTE (on revision):—Potatoes—I would like to point out to the Committee that the soil and climate of this district are especially favourable to the growth of potatoes. In my twenty-seven years' experience I have never known a crop to fail; notwithstanding the severest droughts there is always sufficient moisture from the frequent mists and fogs to ensure a crop. I have grown varieties for more than twenty years in this district that have not deteriorated, but remain true to name. The quality of the potatoes is superior to the famed Circular Heads, and they realize the highest price in Sydney market. In my estimate of 20,000 acres, as being suitable for growing potatoes, to prevent misunderstanding I may state that the 50,000 acres would all be available for that purpose—the drawback being the heavy expense—removing the heavy whinstone and drainage of other portions. The great obstacle to the cultivation of potatoes, successfully, is *bad roads and high costs of carriage*. I have taken some trouble to ascertain costs and profits which are given on "margin of form." At present there are no profits, but if the railway was constructed, and the product taken by rail at 12s. per ton, this would leave a net profit to the grower of about 18s. per ton. This would be a great inducement to cultivation, and I have no hesitation in stating that 10,000 tons per annum could be relied upon, coming by rail from this district alone. We have the soil, the climate, and a hardworking industrious class of people—give them the necessary facilities and they are able to compete in the market against their more favored rivals from other colonies.

‡ NOTE (on revision):—I do not place any value on Mr. Crawford's report.

- Mr. T. Blencowe. 821. He had them under his consideration at that time? Yes.
 822. Do you think that if this line were constructed now it would give a return of £6,577 a year? No, I do not think it would.
 10 Feb., 1890. 823. Believing that the line would mean a large increase in a productiveness of the district how long do you estimate it would be before it would pay the interest on the capital and the working expenses? I think that it would pay in the course of two or three years.

Thomas Seery, Esq., J.P., timber merchant and farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- T. Seery, Esq., J.P. 824. *Chairman.*] Are you a resident in the district? Yes.
 825. What is your occupation? Farmer and timber merchant.
 10 Feb., 1890. 826. How long have you been engaged in the timber trade here? About seven years.
 827. Is the softwood timber of any commercial value? Yes, but there is very little of it now.
 828. Then as far as the brush land is concerned the timber trade is done with? Pretty well done with.
 829. Is the remaining timber, hardwood, growing on poorer land? Yes.
 830. How much of it is there left? A good deal if there was a railway we could shift back on the face of the mountain and get a great deal of hardwood there.
 831. And to what station on the proposed line would you draw that hardwood if the railway were constructed? To Robertson and Wilds' Meadows.
 832. What class of timber is remaining? Hardwood, gum, and messmate.
 833. How many years would it take to clear that off? That is more than I could say—perhaps a life-time.
 834. What quantity would you estimate that you would be sending down per annum? We are cutting about 4,000 feet a day.
 835. Would most of that find its market in Sydney? No; it would go up the country. We send timber to Young, Yass, Cootamundra, and Goulburn.
 836. Is there a good market? A fair market.
 837. Could you easily glut that market? We might, but there is a fair consumption at Moss Vale, Bowral, and Mittagong.
 838. If the railway were made, would that increase the cutting of wood in the district? I think it would increase it, because it would increase the population.
 839. Would that 4,000 feet of timber per day be carried by rail? Most of it.
 840. Say 3,000 feet? I think so.
 841. How much a foot do you pay? We pay 2s. 6d. per 100 feet.
 842. From where to where? From here to Moss Vale by road.
 843. Have you any idea what the cost would be from there per 100 feet? 100 feet of timber is about 6 cwt.; 1,000 feet is about 3 tons. We pay about 25s. for 1,000 feet by road to Moss Vale.
 844. Can you supply Sydney with hardwood from this district cheaper than it can be supplied from other parts of the colony? I do not think so.
 845. And you have no market in Sydney practically? I do not think it.
 846. *Mr. Dowd.*] What is the extent of this timber country? I could not say the number of acres, but there is a great deal of timber on the top and face of the mountain.
 847. Do you know anything of the timber reserves? Yes.
 848. Are they extensive? Yes.
 849. Is the quality of the timber good? In some places good and some inferior.
 850. If the reserves were thrown open, would a large quantity of timber be taken from them? I think so.
 851. Would you consider 10s. per 100 feet for the cartage of timber to Moss Vale an exorbitant price? I should think it high.
 852. How many thousand feet of timber per week are cut in the district now? We are cutting 24,000 feet a week. I do not know what the other mill is cutting.
 853. Do you think that if the railway were made the output of timber would reach 50,000 feet a week? I could not say.
 854. Is there any likelihood of an increase in the quantity at all? I think there is, because when you get more population there will be more building.
 855. Is there a probability of 50,000 feet of timber per week being cut in the district and being sent away? I think there is a probability of it.
 856. And at 5s. a ton the carriage would come to over £1,000 a year? Yes.
 857. Do you think the trade likely to get up to that amount? I do not think it will.

Mr. Charles Tilsley, storekeeper, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. C. Tilsley 858. *Chairman.*] What are you? Storekeeper, residing at East Kangaloon.
 10 Feb., 1890. 859. How long have you resided there? About sixteen years.
 860. How far is it from Robertson? About 2½ miles.
 861. If this railway were made, how far would it suit the people of East Kangaloon? Up to the Wesleyan Chapel, just on this side of West Kangaloon.
 862. And how far by the main road? About 3½ miles.
 863. Then between 3 and 4 miles from Robertson this railway would take the trade of East Kangaloon? Yes.
 864. West of that the trade would go to Bowral? Yes.
 865. Supposing the railway were made, as some suggest, from Bowral crossing at the Sheepwash, then crossing over to Burrawang, and coming on to Robertson, would a station at Sheepwash be any use to West Kangaloon? Yes.
 866. Is there any access? The roads are not good, but the traffic would go there.
 867. Is it a hilly road? Yes, very.
 868. Could it be made easy of access? Yes.
 869. Would it be of any use to East Kangaloon? No.
 870. Suppose that a railway were made to the Sheepwash, Burrawang, and Robertson, would Robertson accommodate the East Kangaloon district? Yes.
 871. And the Sheepwash the West Kangaloon district? Yes.
 872. And the Wild's Meadow Station would accommodate the southern side of the swamp? Yes.
 873. At present the West Kangaloon people are left out altogether? Yes. 874.

874. Do you think that that proposal would be more satisfactory to the West Kangaloon people? The *Mr. C. Tilsley*. Bowral route would.
875. While it would accommodate the people on the west side of the swamp the same as if it had started *10 Feb., 1890* from Moss Vale? I could not say that.
876. Would it not take all the Fitzroy traffic as if it came from Moss Vale? I do not think so.
877. Are not the Kangaloon people in a line from Moss Vale to Robertson? I cannot say.
878. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is the population of West Kangaloon? I could not tell.
879. Is it a large district? Yes.
880. Is the land there equal in fertility to that about Robertson? A great deal of it is.
881. And the principal industry is dairying? Yes.
882. Do they send milk or butter to Bowral? Butter.
883. Is there a factory at Kangaloon? Yes.
884. Do you think it would contribute largely to the freight on the railway at West Kangaloon? Not largely.
885. As much as Wild's Meadows? No, certainly not.
886. As much as Burrawang and Robertson? No.
887. As much as East Kangaloon? No.
888. But for the East Kangaloon people it would be better to have the junction with the main line at Bowral if it would save some miles of main line haulage? I dare say it would; but in any case East Kangaloon people would come to Robertson.
889. But if they should shorten their route to Sydney, would not that be to their interest? Yes.
890. Do the people of East Kangaloon bring their milk to the factory at Robertson? No; they make butter themselves.
891. Are there any other products there? It is a large potato-producing district.
892. Where do they take the potatoes to? Bowral.
893. What quantity is grown in a year? I do not know.
894. Is there any other produce? Large quantities of vegetables and fruit.
895. Which all go to Bowral? Yes; and some to Robertson. A great deal would go to Sydney if they could increase the area of the orchards, but that would not pay.
896. Would it pay if there was a railway to Robertson? Decidedly.
897. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you give the Committee any information in reference to the rates of carriage in the various parts of the district from Moss Vale to Robertson? Yes; from East Kangaloon we have to pay 15s. a ton to Bowral, and the same from Robertson in some instances, and in other instances £1 a ton.
898. Is that the average rate for potatoes and butter? No; they pay more for butter—9d. a keg.
899. What is the charge for pigs, cows, and calves? 1s. each.
900. And for market garden produce? There is a good deal grown, and it goes principally to Bowral.
901. Fruit? There are large quantities, and the charge is 1s. a case.
902. I believe you have done a good deal of carrying in the district yourself? Yes.
903. Do you think 15s. is about the average rate for potatoes? Yes.
904. From various parts of the district? It is much more from some parts.
905. Do potatoes find their way to Moss Vale and Bowral at a cost of 15s. a ton? Yes.
906. What is the rate from Wild's Meadows to Moss Vale? I understand that if they fetch the potatoes from the farms they get £1 a ton. From the store we generally got 10s.—that is, on the main road. I believe £1 a ton is the usual rate.

Mr. William Barrett, storekeeper and timber merchant, sworn, and examined:—

907. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Burrawang.
908. What are you? I am in the timber trade.
909. How long have you been resident there? Eighteen years.
910. How much timber a day do you saw? At present we are not sawing any; we were cutting *10 Feb., 1890* 4,000 feet a day, but we have closed the mill.
911. Where did you get your timber from? From the hills.
912. From the scrub land or the poorer land? From the forest land; it is mostly hardwood.
913. If the railway were made where would you put the timber on the line? At Burrawang.
914. Is the market as lively for the timber as it was when you began? No; there is more competition.
915. Can you get the same price? No.
916. There is not the same inducement to cut timber that there was? No.
917. Is that the reason why you have ceased? We are reserving the timber for better prices.
918. Is it on your own land? Some; and some we can easily buy.
919. Is there any Crown lands timber within reach of you? Yes, within 4 or 5 miles.
920. What does it cost to send your timber to Moss Vale? 2s. 6d. per 100 feet.
921. If you had a railway brought close to you do you think it would stimulate the production of timber? Yes; we cut such a quantity that it would make £1 a day difference.
922. Do you expect to get the timber carried for 2s. 6d. per 100 feet? I expect to get it carried for 1s., it would then pay us handsomely to cut it.
923. Do you mean that you would give part of the profit to your customers? We should be able to compete with the other mills. There is one at Gerald's Crossing, one at Barber's Creek, two or three mills between Moss Vale and Goulburn, and we have to pay so much for land carriage that we can't compete. Our principal trade is between Goulburn and Wagga Wagga.
924. And there are mills nearer to the market than you are? Yes.
925. You are handicapped by distance? Yes; and we have closed for the present.
926. If the railway were made you would save 1s. 6d. per 100 feet? Yes.
927. You could then sell timber cheaper? Yes, we could sell the timber as cheap as our competitors and get a fair share of the market. The oatmeal mills and the corn mills were closed because it did not pay owing to the expensive cartage.
928. You do not grow oats in the district much? We could grow ten times the quantity if we had better means of communication.
929. Do you think it would pay better to grow oats than to go in for dairying? I do not suppose that it would; but it would pay to occupy part of the land with oats.
930. Your market is up the line? The principal market is. We could send timber to Picton. There is a great demand for timber there, at Bowral and at Mittagong.

Mr. W. Barrett.

10 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. W. Barrett.
10 Feb., 1890.
931. Have not the other sawmills a larger area of hardwood to work on than you have? I do not know. I have been a storekeeper for eighteen years at Burrawang. We have done a large trade, and our average for years past from Moss Vale was 6 tons a week.
932. For the supply of your customers? Yes.
933. How much have you sent in? Not much. We only buy fowls and eggs from the farmers.
934. Is it a good poultry district? Yes.
935. Could you supply eggs to the Sydney market better than other districts? I do not think so.
936. Can you send poultry in cheaper? No. We cannot beat the northern rivers. The only advantage is that once the poultry leave this district they reach Sydney in a few hours, but from the northern rivers they have to go by steamers. Our eggs sell for fresh eggs, but the eggs from the northern rivers are only case eggs. At present we supply a lot of people in Bowral with eggs.
937. Are there many farmers round you who keep poultry? Yes, a great number.
938. Is there any difficulty in getting eggs from them? No.
939. Could they increase their produce? Yes.
940. How many sawmills are there in the district? Four.
941. Do you think that the sawmill proprietors will object to pay a shilling per 100 feet for the carriage of the timber? I think not.
942. Do you think that the output is likely to be increased if the railway is made? I believe that three times the quantity of timber that is sent away now would be sent if we had a railway.
943. That would make the quantity 50,000 feet a week? Yes.
944. That would give a revenue of £1,000 a year? Yes; and we have a grand district for making bricks. There is also freestone in the district, and if we had a railway any quantity of that would be sent away.
945. The Commissioners estimate that the goods passing through Mossvale and Bowral to the Robertson district would be only £2,504, and that the revenue from the produce of the land would amount to only £465—do you consider that an under-estimate? Certainly. If we had a railway it would create new industries. We should send away more timber.
946. Your estimate of 50,000 feet of timber would give £1,000 a year—a large estimate as compared with that of the Commissioners of £465? Yes.
947. Could that be kept up for a considerable time? I believe so.
948. Do you know anything about the timber reserves of the district? I do.
949. Are they extensive? I believe so.
950. Have you been through them? Not many of them.
951. What other sources of revenue would there be for the railway? There is nothing that would pay the railway so handsomely as the passenger traffic. The climate of this district is very healthy. I have heard many visitors say that if there was a railway to Burrawang they would prefer the place to Bowral.
952. Are there many passengers to Robertson and Burrawang? No. There is no accommodation there; no one will build.
953. Are the holdings in the district large or small? Most of them are small ones, from 80 acres to 100 acres.
954. Are the owners prosperous? Yes.
955. Are the improvements good and permanent? Yes. When I came to Burrawang you could buy land at £2 10s. an acre which will now bring £27 an acre at auction.
956. Would the proposed railway increase the value of the land? Yes; very much.
957. What is the value of the land in the district now? The average is about £25 an acre.
958. How much would the value be increased by the railway? I think by about £10 an acre.
959. Then taking into consideration the various resources of the district, you think that the Commissioners have very much underestimated the revenue that would be derived from the railway? I do not think that their estimate is a quarter of what it ought to be. There is another thing which I may mention. We are going to have a brewery at Burrawang, the water there having been found to be very good for brewing purposes. When the brewery is started it will materially increase the traffic.
960. How many tons a year do you think the brewery would cause to be brought to the railway? I could not estimate the quantity.
961. What is the quality of the water that makes it so suitable for brewing? I do not know. It will make excellent beer.
962. Has the district progressed during the last eighteen years? It has.
963. Has the population doubled itself? It has more than trebled itself.

Mr. William Saunders, senior constable, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. W. Saunders.
10 Feb., 1890.
964. *Mr. Dowel.*] What is your position? First-class constable in charge of this district.
965. So far as you have observed, is the population of this district industrious and prosperous? Yes.
966. What is the population of the district? 5,000 or 6,000.
967. Do you collect statistics here for the Government? Yes, the statistics have been collected, but not kept.
968. What is the area of your district? I take the district for 3 miles on this side of Moss Vale out to Kangaroo Creek up to Robertson, and half of East and West Kangaloon, also Yurrunga, Wild's Meadow, and Burrawang.
969. How long have you collected the agricultural statistics? I have collected them twice in this district.
970. Did they show a distinct increase on the second occasion? Yes.
971. Then your statistics show that the district is going ahead? Yes.
972. Was that general? Yes. There was an increase of fifty in the occupiers' schedule in two years.
973. How many butter factories are there in the district? Three, in my portion.
974. Does there appear to have been any increase in the stock of the district? Yes.
975. Are the stock pretty good? Yes; very good. There are about 9,000 dairy cows, showing an increase of about a thousand during last year.
976. Any increase in the orchards? Yes; they are extending the orchards.
977. Is there any increase in the land put under cultivation for vegetables? Yes, in vegetables, not including potatoes.
- 978.

978. Have you been able to compare this district with any other? Yes.
979. With what result? Rather in favour of this district. Potatoe-growing here is far ahead of that business in the Illawarra district.
980. What about cabbages? The cabbages grown here are far superior to any others. Everything in the market garden line produced here is of superior quality.

Mr.
W. Saunders.
10 Feb., 1890.

Mr. John Curtis, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined:—

981. *Chairman.*] Have you had anything to do with the butter factories in the district? Yes.
982. Which one? The one at Robertson; I managed it.
983. How long? Twelve months.
984. How many farmers send their milk to it? I think the number is thirty-two.
985. You are not now the manager, are you? No.
986. Do you know the quantity of milk per acre that the farmers send to the factory? No.
987. Do you weigh the milk as it comes in? Yes.
988. How much milk is there in each of the cans? About 11 gallons.
989. What does that quantity of milk weigh? The cans weigh about 116 lb. each when full.
990. How much butter would that quantity of milk produce? It takes from 21 lb. to 24 lb. of milk to make 1 lb. of butter.
991. Shall we say that the quantity of milk in the cans will produce an average of 22 lb. per can? Yes.
992. Is there any great difference in the supply in winter and in summer? Yes.
993. During how many months of the year are cows at their best? About six months.
994. They are worst in the coldest months? They give as much milk in winter as they do in summer, except that in summer they are generally newly calved, and that makes a difference.
995. Something is due to the fact that they are fresh in milk? Yes, and the grass is fresher too.
996. It is only cold weather that tells? Cold weather makes no difference. The cattle in this district will milk as well in winter as those in any other district.
997. Is the milk richer in winter than in summer? Yes.
998. Could the factory deal with more milk than it takes at present? Yes.
999. Do you think that one factory is sufficient for the district? Yes.
1000. What area of land do you think a factory serves? I should think that our area is $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles square. There are some farmers a little further away.
1001. One factory for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles would be enough? Yes.
1002. Have you calculated how many acres one factory would satisfy? No.
1003. Do people bring their milk a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles in each direction to the factory? Yes, some further than that.

Mr. J. Curtis.
10 Feb., 1890.

Mr. James Lackey, market gardener, sworn, and examined:—

1004. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a market gardener.
1005. Where is your market garden? At Burrawang.
1006. How long have you been growing market garden produce? About two years and five months.
1007. Is it your own land? No; it is rented land.
1008. Did you select the land as being specially suitable? Yes.
1009. Did you think the slope of a hill better for your purpose than the flat ground? In this district we get the water on the hill as well as on the flat ground. There is never as much frost on the hills as there is on the flat.
1010. Have you any spring in the side of the hill? Yes, we have springs all over the place.
1011. Do you water the vegetables by hand? Last year we did.
1012. In the dry season you could irrigate that slope? Yes. There is water running along the bottom which came out of the hill.
1013. But you want it on the top? We can send it up with a water-mill.
1014. You have no spring on the top of the hill? Yes, we have; but we could not get the same quantity of water there.
1015. Where is your market? Sydney is our principal market.
1016. What do you pay for the carriage of cabbages to Moss Vale? 10s. a ton. We formerly paid 15s., but, as we have been sending such large quantities, we got the charge reduced. The charge by railway from Moss Vale to Sydney is 8s. 8d. a ton, making altogether 18s. 8d.
1017. Can you pay those rates and sell your cabbages in Sydney at a profit? Yes.
1018. If the proposed railway were made, what would be your rate? About 2s. a ton.
1019. The 10s.-rate would be reduced to 2s. a ton? Yes.
1020. Giving you an advantage of 8s. a ton? Yes, and on the day that we cut the cabbages we shall be able to truck them if we have a railway. At present the cabbages are not trucked until the day after they have been cut, and this lowers their price in the market.
1021. What other garden produce can you grow? Peas, French-beans, potatoes, and parsnips.
1022. Any carrots? It would not pay to grow them at present.
1023. What will pay? Peas, beans, cabbages, cauliflowers, and potatoes.
1024. You have tried all these? Yes.
1025. Which is the most profitable? The cabbages.
1026. And which the next? Peas at this time of the year. They are dear in Sydney now.
1027. Are you a month behind the Sydney season? In the spring about two months.
1028. Then you have an advantage? We have an advantage from Christmas up to May. The gardens about Sydney from Christmas to May or June are without cabbages.
1029. Practically you have a different climate and can take advantage of the off seasons? Yes; cabbages grow better here in dry than in wet seasons.
1030. You have never had a drought? We have been two months without rain, with nothing but slight fogs from the coast.

Mr.
J. Lackey.
10 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. J. Lackey.
10 Feb., 1890.
1031. Do the fogs give moisture enough for the cabbages without watering? They do.
1032. Did you suffer from want of water in the dry seasons? We had a great deal more labour to do.
1033. In what way? We had to water the plants when they were put out. When they are established in the ground they require no more watering.
1034. How many crops of cabbage can you take off in a year? Two.
1035. Do you change the crops each year? Yes; we put the crops in in rotation.
1036. You do not put the same crop in twice? We have done it.
1037. But you do not think it a wise thing to do? The soil is very good, and at first it would do no harm.
1038. Suppose you could expand your cultivation tenfold, would you still have as good a market or would you flood the metropolis? I think we should get a better market. The Chinese are decreasing in number, and that makes a better market for Europeans.
1039. At present you are beating the Chinese? Yes. There is not a gardener in the colony who sends to market the sort of vegetables that we send. Since Christmas we have sent about 140 tons of cabbages alone.
1040. What is the area of your garden? About 20 acres.
1041. Is all that used as a market garden? Yes. We have 43 acres altogether, but we are cultivating only 20 acres.
1042. How much of this district is suitable for market gardens? A great deal. On the tops of the hills cabbages grow better than on the flats. It is difficult to make some of the land ready for vegetables. The stony ground is richer than the other.
1043. Is it better to leave the stones in the land? Stones will make the ground hold moisture, but you cannot cultivate where there are stones.
1044. Is the stony ground better for fruit-trees? Fruit-trees do not require rich ground.
1045. You say that you can grow vegetables and sell them to a profit, notwithstanding the heavy cost of carriage? We are doing it.
1046. Do you pay 10s. a ton for the carriage of your produce to Moss Vale? Yes. We are selling our potatoes in Sydney at 4s. 9d. a cwt.
1047. What do you reckon a fair crop of potatoes? Six tons an acre.
1048. Is that a fair average? Yes, on good ground. On very good ground we can get 8 tons or 9 tons to the acre.
1049. What does it cost you to get a ton of potatoes off your land? About 15s. for the labour, 10s. for the carriage to Moss Vale, and 8s. 8d. by the railway to Sydney. Of course we can take another crop off that land.
1050. Have you reckoned for the bags and commission? We sell the stuff ourselves.
1051. If you can make potatoes pay why cannot your neighbours? We have an advantage, because there is generally one of us in Sydney. When you sell your own stuff you get a better price than you would from an agent.
1052. You can do better for yourselves than anyone will do for you? Yes.
1053. Still it takes your time? Yes, but it pays.
1054. You think that potatoes could be grown here even under the present conditions? Most decidedly. The dairymen here have to keep hands to milk the cows morning and evening, and those hands could put the potatoes in in the middle of the day.
1055. The same hands could do the potato patch? Yes; and it would not make the area of grazing land any less. They have to grow green stuff for the winter; and they could have the potatoes out in time to put in the green stuff for the cattle.
1056. Would that not exhaust the land? No; they have manure.
1057. Do you think that if they had a railway it would stimulate the production of potatoes? Most decidedly it would. I do not think that there is a district in the country more suitable than Burrawang and Robertson for the production of potatoes.
1058. You think that many who are not growing potatoes now would grow them if they had a railway? Yes. At the present time potatoes from this district are bringing 15s. a ton more in the Sydney market than any other potatoes.
1059. Is that in virtue of their good quality? Yes, and their freshness.
1060. And could you keep up the supply of potatoes all the year round from this district? We could.
1061. Every month you could send something down? We do send stuff every month, but not potatoes.
1062. Could you keep up the supply of potatoes? No. We have not sufficient land.
1063. Could the district keep up the supply? Yes. We keep up a supply of vegetables. We are only growing 5 acres or 6 acres of potatoes.
1064. Do you grow cauliflowers? Yes.
1065. Do they fetch a good price? They do.
1066. Does the crop ever disappoint you? No; sometimes we are disappointed with the seed that we get.
1067. Mr. Dowel.] How long have you been in the country? Since 1882.
1068. Where did you gain your experience of growing vegetables? In Ireland.
1069. Are the potatoes in the Court here a fair sample of what you grow in this district? Yes.
1070. Would you consider them good enough for any market in the world? They are a little too large to bring the top price.
1071. Do you think you can grow all kinds of vegetables in the district if a railway is made and compete successfully with the Chinese? Yes; we are doing it now.
1072. Have you had any experience in the growing of fruit? Yes.
1073. Do you consider this climate suitable for fruit? Not for all kinds. It is suitable for pears, apples, plums, strawberries, gooseberries, currants, raspberries, and cherries.
1074. Do you think that orchards would be profitable? Yes, very profitable. A great number of people are planting orchards in the district.
1075. In anticipation of the railway? Yes.

Mr. George Schlaadt, dairy-farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. G. Schlaadt.
10 Feb., 1890.
1076. Chairman.] I understand that you have paid some attention to the minerals in this district? I have.
1077. Where do you see the minerals cropping out? About 2 miles from Robertson.
1078. Always in the gullies, is it not? Not always.

1079.

Mr.
G. Schlaadt.
10 Feb., 1890.

1079. What is the smallest depth below the surface of any coal-seam that you know of? 70 feet.
 1080. What is the thickness of the thickest seam? 16 feet.
 1081. What is the quality of the coal? It is good bright coal.
 1082. Not the same as the Illawarra coal? Better.
 1083. Do you know of any shale in the district? Yes, in one place.
 1084. What thickness is that? It is 16 inches at the outcrop.
 1085. Is it below the coal? Yes.
 1086. Is it in the same seam as the coal? No.
 1087. Would it be difficult to get it out? Not very.
 1088. Would you mine a 16-in. seam? No. I expect it would get thicker as I went further in.
 1089. Do you think that the coal-seams in the district will be worked by tunnels in the sides of the cliffs? Yes.
 1090. Will it be cheaper to take it to the upper or to the lower railway? It would be folly to take it to Sydney.
 1091. Is mining taken up in the district? I am waiting to take it up, and when I do so others will.
 1092. Will it pay to mine coal here and send it to Sydney? No.
 1093. Would it pay to mine the shale? Yes.
 1094. What is the quality of the coal? I have not tested it; it burns bright.
 1095. You cannot say whether it would find a market against the Newcastle coal? No.
 1096. It would do for locomotive purposes? Yes.
 1097. Do you know the Berrima and the Mittagong coal? Yes.
 1098. Is the coal here superior to the Berrima coal? Yes.
 1099. As far as you know the coal here is the best in the district? Yes.
 1100. Are there any bands visible in the 16-foot seam? None visible where I have seen it.
 1101. How far have you cut into it? I have not cut into it at all.
 1102. Then you have only seen the surface of it? I took some of the coal away in bags and burned it.
 1103. How far would the proposed railway be from the coal? About 3 miles.
 1104. A branch 3 miles long would take you to the mine? Yes.
 1105. Is it easy country in which to make a branch? Yes.
 1106. Do you think there would be a sufficient market in the town, and along the railway, to keep a mine going? Yes, on a small scale; and it would give a few families a good living.
 1107. But it would want certain appliances would it not? Nothing considerable; as the consumption increased the appliances would be increased.
 1108. Do you know that a small trade does not pay? It would not pay in some cases; but we should not go too elaborately into the business at first.
 1109. You would have to sink your pit? No pit would have to be sunk at all.
 1110. You would have to draw the coal up a distance of 170 feet? That would easily be done.
 1111. By an inclined railway? No; by water power—hydraulic lifts. We have the water power provided by nature, and the machinery would not cost much.
 1112. Have you that water power all the year round and in dry seasons? Yes.
 1113. The coal is sufficiently near the waterfall for you to get all the power that you want? Yes; there is another product of this district, a sample of which I have with me—chrome.
 1114. What is the value of it in the Sydney market? £1 per cwt.
 1115. Is there any large quantity of it? It is quite inexhaustible.
 1116. Is there any market for it? None until we can get it away.
 1117. Would this be saleable? Yes; it would go to England. They take chrome from New Caledonia.
 1118. Is this equal in quality to the article obtained from New Caledonia? Yes.
 1119. How far is this deposit from the proposed railway? 2 miles, and about 1 mile distant from the coal.
 1120. The same branch railway would do for the two? It would carry both.
 1121. How much could you supply? At present a ton a day. If there was a railway I could employ labour and get 30 tons a day.
 1122. Have you tested this deposit? It has been tested by the Government Analyst.
 1123. I mean as to the quantity? It actually lies there wasting away.
 1124. Is there enough of it exposed to enable you to fairly estimate the quantity? There is a reservoir where it comes; it is deposited in clear water. If you take out a ton, on the following morning there will be just as much more. The outcrop shows that it is inexhaustible.
 1125. You would take it from the deposit? From the original spring.
 1126. *Mr. Dowel.*] Are there any other minerals in the district? Any quantity of iron.
 1127. Is there much iron ore about here? Hundreds of acres of it.
 1128. All in close proximity to the coal? Yes. You can pick up ore containing 70 per cent. of iron.
 1129. There are large quantities of coal, ironstone, and chrome? Yes; and magnesia.
 1130. Do you think that any iron industry could be started here? The stuff is here; it only needs the expenditure of capital. I have been for years fossicking about in the district. The place is full of minerals. There are diamonds, but they are very small.
 1131. Have you ever obtained any diamonds? No; I thought I had one, but it turned out to be a garnet.
 1132. Is the ironstone chiefly in pockets or is there a mountain of it? It is an immense mass.
 1133. And there is no great distance between the ironstone and the coal? No; there is coal under this building 80 feet deep.
 1134. Is there timber in this district? Any quantity.
 1135. Is it good timber? Yes.
 1136. *Chairman.*] You know that this district has been formed very largely by dykes of basalt? Yes, it is all volcanic country.
 1137. Have you noticed whether there has been very much disturbance of the coal? In my judgment none, because it lies on the level.
 1138. Wherever you see the coal it is undisturbed? Yes.
 1139. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you had any analysis made of the kerosene shale? I sent some to Sydney, and we burned some on a candle.
 1140. What opinion is expressed about it? They say that the seam is too small, but I am in hopes of finding a better seam.

Mr.

NOTE (on revision):—For 12 miles the land is taken up for mineral leases—about 4 miles south-east of Robertson as coal lands—mineral lands on the north.

Mr. William Moses, auctioneer, sworn and examined:—

Mr.
W. Moses.
10 Feb., 1890.

1141. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Wild's Meadows.
1142. What is your occupation? I am an auctioneer.
1143. Do you sell produce and land? Land and stock, principally.
1144. What is the average value of farming land here? From £20 to £25 an acre.
1145. What does it fetch in its unimproved state? £15 an acre. Near the township here it has been sold at £70 an acre.
1146. What does it cost to clear the land? £10 an acre.
1147. It would come to £25 an acre before it was cleared, and take three years to do it? Yes.
1148. If the proposed railway were made would it increase the productiveness of the district? I believe it would very much.
1149. Would it increase the value of the land? Yes.
1150. How much? I believe it would make a difference of 50 per cent. on the average.
1151. More than that near the railway stations? Yes, 100 per cent. in some cases.
1152. How long have you been here? Twenty-five years.
1153. Has the quality of the dairy stock improved while you have been here? It has, and is improving yearly. People are taking more trouble in breeding and in the selection of their herds.
1154. Do you think that the district is in its fullest condition of productiveness? It is not.
1155. Would the productiveness of the district be increased by new land being brought under cultivation, or by the improvement of the land now held? It would be increased by new sources of industry on the land now held.
1156. The good land is taken up? It is occupied, but not all cleared yet.
1157. Do you think that a railway would greatly increase the productiveness of the district? I do.
1158. What would people go into in preference to dairying? I do not think they would relinquish dairying, but there are other things which could be carried on in connection with it—market-gardening and other things would be gone into. Market-gardening was never thought of formerly.
1159. Then the market-gardeners who came into the district have taught the old settlers something? Yes, as far as produce is concerned.
1160. Perhaps a few more immigrants would be an advantage? I have not the slightest doubt about it. The settlers have perhaps not had any opportunity of doing more than make a living by dairy farming. They probably have not been able to embark in any other enterprise.
1161. You mean that they have been struggling into a position? Yes.
1162. You think they are now able to go into other industries? Yes. If they had railway communication they would grow potatoes and go into market gardening. I do not think that those who are engaged in dairy farming would grow vegetables, but others would do so. Farmers can grow potatoes.
1163. Any ordinary dairyman could grow potatoes, but not cabbages and cauliflowers? They have not the knowledge and time for that.
1164. It would have to be done by special market gardeners? Yes.
1165. Do you think the fruit industry would stand on the same footing? Yes.
1166. You do not think the dairymen would have orchards? Not to any great extent.
1167. You think that that would have to be gone into by orchardists? Yes.
1168. What would you consider a fair quantity of land here fit for growing potatoes? I believe about three-fourths of the land is fit for that.
1169. It would pay better than dairying? Not better.
1170. What land do you consider to be embraced in the 50,000 acres of good land in this district? A portion of Kangaloon, Burrengarry, the portion within reach of the proposed railway line to the Pheasant Ground, and all the other country within easy distance of the line.
1171. You think that this line would accommodate about 50,000 acres of good land? Yes, about 500 holdings.
1172. What proportion of the land would be fit for orchards? If the orchards will grow as I have seen them, the whole of it. I believe that the meadow land is more suitable than the high land; but I have seen good fruit on the high land.
1173. Considering the present price of milk, do you think the farmers are acting wisely in turning their milk into butter? Yes, under existing circumstances. They have no proper means of transit between here and Moss Vale.
1174. Suppose that the railway only came to Burrawang or Wild's Meadows, would it pay the farmers to send their milk to Sydney at 4d. a gallon? It would not pay at 4d. per gallon. They get 3½d. and 4d. a gallon at the factories.
1175. The milk trade has gone off. Is that not owing to the competition of the Kiama line? I don't think so. It is owing to the difficulty the farmers here have in getting their produce to the market.
1176. Did they give up the Fresh Food and Ice Company or did the company give them up? I think it would not pay the company, the cost of haulage is too great.
1177. Did the company collect the milk? In some cases they did.
1178. In other cases did the farmer send it in? Each sent his own.
1179. Do you consider the roads bad in this district? Not at the present time.
1180. They have improved since you came here? Yes, very much.
1181. As far as you know the people here are fairly prosperous? Yes.
1182. And they are still prospering? Yes.
1183. The district is steadily going ahead? Yes.
1184. It is better now than it was two years ago? It is better than it was twenty years ago.
1185. Is it better than it was five years ago? Oh yes.
1186. And your business is increasing? It has increased.
1187. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do you know anything about the Kangaloon district? I do.
1188. Do you think that if the line was brought along the northern side of the Wingecarribee Swamp it would serve the West Kangaloon people? Undoubtedly.
1189. Would it benefit the people here more to have the connection with the main line at Bowral than to have it at Moss Vale? It would make very little difference. It will accommodate more people if the connection is at Moss Vale. It will pass through more populous country than it would by the Bowral route.

Mr.
W. Moses.
10 Feb., 1890.

1190. The country between Moss Vale and Burrawang is comparatively worthless? The country between Bowral and Burrawang is the same.
1191. The only difference is that a line starting from Bowral, traversing the northern edge of the Wingecarribee Swamp, crossing the Sheepwash going over to Wild's Meadows, would tap all the rich lands, leaving out only the inferior country between Burrawang and Moss Vale? There is very little difference between the two. The line from Bowral to Robertson would be half-a-mile longer than the other.
1192. Then, by having the connection at Bowral, 6 miles of haulage on the main line would be saved? It may be that a large amount of traffic will go up the country. To a great extent the Yarrunga traffic will.
1193. What is there at Yarrunga? A considerable quantity of good land. It is a large potato-producing district.
1194. It will be tapped nearly 5 miles from Moss Vale? No; at Wild's Meadows, 10 miles from Moss Vale.
1195. Then, if the line comes by Bowral, will it not do as well? Yes.
1196. At the Sheepwash we should catch the West Kangaloon traffic? Yes; Bowral gets that traffic at present.
1197. Would not West Kangaloon people sooner put their goods on the railway at the Sheepwash than pay for cartage? Yes.
1198. Then over that branch the traffic would go? Yes.
1199. Coming over the Sheepwash to where the line for Moss Vale is, it would catch the traffic you anticipate for the proposed line at Wild's Meadows? Yes.
1200. So that, in addition to the traffic you expect to get by the present route, it would take the West Kangaloon traffic? Yes.
1201. And all the Burrawang and Wild's Meadows people would be saved that 6 miles of haulage? Yes, in sending to Sydney.
1202. Is not Sydney the principal market? Yes.
1203. Would it not be better to take the Bowral route? It may be, but there is considerable difference of opinion about it.
1204. You have no interest in Moss Vale? At present I have very little interest in the district at all.
1205. I suppose that the people of the Robertson district do not love the people of Moss Vale any more than the people of Bowral? I do not suppose that there is any love lost among them. Moss Vale is our legitimate centre. The roads lead to it, and the Court of Petty Sessions and the Land Office are there.
1206. You want to get to Sydney as cheaply as possible? Yes.
1207. And you want to see as much traffic as possible for the local line to justify its construction? Yes.
1208. Do you think that the people will be prepared to pay on the branch line rates 25 or 50 per cent. higher than those charged on the main line rather than not get the proposed railway? Yes, I believe so.
1209. How long do you think it would be before the line would pay the interest on the outlay and the working expenses—£6,577 a year? I believe it would pay within two years.
1210. The construction of the line would lead to a great deal of trade and productiveness? To developments of all sorts.
1211. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know the route of the line? I do.
1212. Do you think that the line, as staked out, will serve most of the population? Yes, it will serve the bulk of the inhabitants.
1213. Are the people in favour of this line as it is staked out? I can say without hesitation that the great majority of the people are in favour of the line from Moss Vale to Robertson.
1214. Do you think that the Commissioners' estimate of £465 as the revenue to be derived from the goods traffic on the line is a fair estimate? No; I think it is an absurd estimate.
1215. What would your estimate be? I have not made any calculations.
1216. The quantity of goods to and from Moss Vale is estimated to be 2,504 tons? That is too low an estimate.
1217. What articles could you name that would increase it? Live stock. There would be about 1,500 pigs and 6,000 calves a year which at present are killed.
1218. What do you pay for calves? A shilling a head.
1219. What would these bring if carried on the railway at 3d a head? About £100.
1220. What would be your estimate for the carriage of live stock between Robertson and Moss Vale? I should say about £250 a year.
1221. I suppose there are storekeepers in the district? There are.
1222. And they take a considerable number of tons of stuff, don't they? Yes. Another source of revenue has been overlooked. In winter time a great deal of fodder is brought into the district, but not as much as would be brought if there was a railway. If we had a railway not only would fodder be carried but also large quantities of maize for pig fattening and manure for improving the land.
1223. Can you say how many storekeepers would be served by the line? Nine or ten.
1224. Do you think that on the average they pay £50 a year for carriage? I think they pay a little more.
1225. Do they pay £100? Yes.
1226. That would be £1,200 a year, would it not? Yes.
1227. At half rates the revenue would amount to more than the Commissioners' estimate? Yes.
1228. Besides the storekeepers' goods there would be a considerable traffic to the settlers, would there not? Yes.
1229. Do you think there could be a traffic in timber between Robertson and Moss Vale? I think there would considering the large output of timber at present.
1230. Are you satisfied that the route of the proposed line is the best that could be adopted? I am, taking all things into consideration.

Mr. W. R. Hindmarsh, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. W. R. Hindmarsh.
10 Feb., 1890.
1231. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided in this district? Seven years.
1232. I understand that you can give us some particulars as to the number of cattle in the district? Yes. At the present time we have in the district 9,097 milch cows, 2,696 ordinary cattle, 908 horses, and 1,800 pigs. There are four factories in operation in the district, producing 450 tons of butter per annum. Private dairies in the district are producing 130 tons of butter per annum, making a total of 580 tons per annum, or 61,986 kegs of 60lb. each.
1233. Is that without the weight of the keg? Yes. In twelve months we send out of this district 692 cases of eggs and 178 coops of poultry. Two-thirds of the calves from the 9,097 milch cows would be sent to Sydney if we had railway communication, but under present circumstances they are all killed.
1234. How many are killed each year? About 6,000.
1235. *Mr. Garrard.*] How did you get these figures? I collected the information from the statistics which have been taken.
1236. From the "Statistical Register?" I got part of the information from returns that were sent to the stock inspector.
1237. Does he provide the official statistics for publication? I do not know that he does.
1238. How does he collect his information—by going round to the farmers? The figures in regard to the butter were got from the factories and from the carriers.
1239. But a large quantity of the butter is the product of private farmers? We get the information about that from the storekeepers who carry it in.
1240. Can you rely on the figures as being correct? Yes; except some for the cattle in the Mittagong and Pheasant Ground districts. I had to make them up, as they had not been taken.
1241. What area does that embrace? Part of Kangaloon, Burrawang, Wild's Meadows, Robertson, and the Pheasant Ground.
1242. You have only included that district which will use the line if it is made? Yes.
1243. Had you anything to do with the Committee who conferred with Mr. Harper when he was collecting information? No.
1244. Do you know what is the Commissioners' estimate of the interest on the outlay and working expenses? Yes; £6,500.
1245. Do you think that the traffic would pay that? Not at present.
1246. How long would it be before it did? I should say from two to three years.
1247. Of course you are taking the most hopeful view of it? We have calculated what the increase would be if we had a railway.
1248. If you had a railway would the calves which are killed now be sent to Sydney? Yes; just as they are on the coast.
1249. We are told that the present cost of carriage for calves is 1s. a head;—if the railway carried them for 9d. would that lead to their being sent to Sydney? Yes; if we kill the calves we only get the skin.

Mr. Henry Kennedy, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. H. Kennedy.
10 Feb., 1890.
1250. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your occupation? Farmer, at Central Kangaloon.
1251. How long have you been residing there? I have lived in the district since 1862.
1252. What area of land have you? 150 acres.
1253. What are you engaged in? Dairying.
1254. Any cultivation? Yes; I have between 7 and 8 acres of potatoes in.
1255. Where do you find a market? In Sydney.
1256. What portion of the main line do you take them to? To Bowral.
1257. How many miles have you to go? About 11 miles.
1258. How far is the centre of Kangaloon from this place? 4 or 5 miles.
1259. Do you make your own butter? No; I send the milk to the factory.
1260. How many cows are you milking? Between thirty-five and forty.
1261. Did you at any time send milk to the metropolis? I supplied the Fresh Food and Ice Co., who took delivery at West Kangaloon.
1262. What did you get then? It is so long since that I cannot tell.
1263. The establishment of the factory has caused you to leave off sending milk to Sydney? The Fresh Food and Ice Company did not remain long in the district.
1264. If a line was constructed to Robertson by the route now before us would you send any of your produce to Robertson to go to the metropolis? No, if I was in the farming line I would not.
1265. Supposing the line was constructed to Robertson* from Bowral and the Sheepwash route and the station there, do you think the Kangaloon people would send their produce there? It is most likely that they would. If they had to go that far with the team they would, perhaps, almost as soon go to Bowral.
1266. How far is Kangaloon from the Sheepwash? About 5 miles.
1267. It is possible that a large number would avail themselves of a station at the Sheepwash? Yes.
1268. Do you know the district round here? Yes, all of it.
1269. Has there been a large increase in the productiveness of the district? Yes, and there would be a still greater increase if the farms were all thoroughly cleared, but they are not.
1270. Do you think there is sufficient trade in produce to justify the construction of a line, the annual expenditure in connection with which would be £6,577? I do not know.
1271. If the estimate of the Railway Commissioners, after due inquiry, is, that the present trade of the district would cause a loss of £4,000 a year, do you think that in the course of a few years the revenue would be increased up to £6,500 a year? I could not say.
1272. Do you think that the East Kangaloon people would bring their produce here if there was a railway to Robertson? I think some of them might; it is no great distance.
1273. How many miles is it? About 3 miles.
1274. You think that people 3 miles from Robertson would bring their produce here if a line was constructed? Some of them would.
1275. Do they bring it here now? No, it goes to Bowral.

Mr.

* NOTE.—The last clause of my reply refers to the present surveyed line from Bowral to Robertson.

Mr. Henry James Balch, grazier, sworn, and examined:—

1276. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided in the district? Twenty-eight years.
1277. I understand that you have given some attention to the character of the soil in the district? Yes.
1278. Are you a horticulturist? No; my horticulture is confined to the production of things for my own use.
1279. Can you speak as to the value of the soil for plants, flowers, and fruits? Yes.
1280. Is this a good district for fruit-growing? I am situated to the east of Robertson, facing the sea—our land is well suited for market-gardening.
1281. Do you think it is better than Wild's Meadows? It would be a month earlier, as we have less frost.
1282. Would you be earlier than the Sydney market-gardens? No; we should come in a little later.
1283. Then in this district you have practically two climates? Yes. Where I am situated the climate is something between those of Illawarra and Burrawang.
1284. It is not so warm as the Illawarra climate, but it is warmer than the Burrawang climate? Yes.
1285. The soil is the same as in the district generally? Yes.
1286. Have you experimented in the growing of vegetables? Yes; from the first for my own use, and to see what the land would do. The first thing that I grew was broccoli—that was in 1864. I took a couple of heads to Sydney, and showed them to a person there, and he said he had never seen anything like them before. He offered me 30s. a dozen for them. The heads which I took down weighed 9lb. each.
1287. Can you grow cabbages successfully? Yes.
1288. Can you grow endive? I have not tried.
1289. Parsnips? Yes.
1290. Can you grow spinach, onions, and lettuce? Yes, and asparagus. In England this article requires the highest cultivation, and you can get nothing like the result that we get here. I have never seen anything equal to it.
1291. Do you grow celery? I have not grown it, but it could be successfully grown. I have not succeeded so well with cauliflowers.
1292. Have you tried artichokes? Yes, with success.
1293. You can only speak as to the facilities for growing these things, not as to the chance of selling them at a profit in the market? Asparagus would be a most profitable vegetable to grow, and rhubarb also. I could grow it by the ton.
1294. How much per acre do you consider a fair yield for potatoes? I have grown 10 tons to the acre. I should consider 6 tons a fair average.
1295. Have you sent any to Sydney? No. Before the roads were opened here I grew a great many potatoes, and sold them in the district.
1296. Your land is dairy land? Yes; but at the present time I am fattening stock.
1297. Does that pay as well as dairying? No; but it suits me better, as I am getting advanced in years.
1298. Could your land be used profitably for fruit-growing? Yes; but the principal factor is left out in considering this matter. To attempt to grow crops without a liberal supply of manure is ridiculous.
1299. Even in this rich soil? It would be impossible to grow good potatoes without giving a liberal supply of manure.
1300. What manure do you think would be required? I should use as a compost bone-dust, lime, salt, and slaughter-house manure—2 or 3 cwt. to the acre.
1301. If a railway were made, and improved farming gone into, it is your opinion that manuring must be resorted to? Yes; it would be an utter failure without it.
1302. Do you think that those who have calculated the returns have made a fair allowance? I do not think they calculated it at all. If the railway were made we should send down a great deal more goods. It is not only the quantity of the produce, but also the quality that must be considered. Potatoes cannot be grown on exhaustive soil.
1303. *Mr. Garrard.*] We have been told this morning that with railway communication some things which it does not at present pay to send to market would be grown and sent to Sydney; do you think that is a fact? Yes.
1304. But if you were going to add the cost of manure, would not that swallow up the margin which the railway facilities would give? No; I think that if I spent 10s. in manuring I should get 20s. or 30s. back for it.

Mr.
H. J. Balch.
10 Feb., 1890.

Mr. Joseph Paul Lawler, builder, sworn, and examined:—

1305. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided in the district? About twenty years.
1306. What is your occupation? I am a builder.
1307. You are thoroughly intimate with the quality of stone and brick required for building purposes? Yes.
1308. Can you produce good bricks in this district? Yes, as good as can be got.
1309. What sort of soil do you make the bricks of? Almost from the surface—down 7 or 8 feet.
1310. Of this chocolate soil? No; from Moss Vale down to Burrawang.
1311. Of that inferior quality of land? Yes, the poorer land.
1312. They can make as good bricks at Moss Vale as you can make at Wild's Meadows, can they not? They can make a good brick at Moss Vale; there is no difference.
1313. Then the local demand can be supplied in Moss Vale? They have not a great supply in Moss Vale.
1314. Then there is no need for the railway to be made in order that Moss Vale should be supplied with bricks? No.
1315. The only demand for bricks here is for their use in the district? Yes.
1316. A brick-making company would not give much traffic? The only thing I was thinking of was that bricks might be supplied for the making of the railway itself.
1317. Would the brick industry supply business to the railway? It would from Moss Vale across the mountains.
1318. What about the stone in the district? It is equal to the Pyrmont stone.
1319. Has it a fine grain? Yes, and cuts well.

Mr.
J. P. Lawler.
10 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. J. P. Lawler.
10 Feb., 1890.
1320. Does it harden with exposure? Yes; it is harder than at first.
1321. How far is the quarry from the proposed line? There are several of them. There is one at Burrawang.
1322. There is only one on the line of route? Yes, on the reserve.
1323. This is in the sandstone? It is proper freestone, not sandstone.
1324. I suppose there are only patches of this superior stone? That is all. At the back of Robertson there is an unlimited quantity of stone on the top of the coal-measure.
1325. Have you worked any of this stone? Yes, a large quantity. A lot of it is used in Robertson, but it is got at Burrawang. Some has gone to Moss Vale. It wears better than the Sydney stone, and is more easily cut.
1326. Is the stone on private property or on Government land? On Government land.

Mr. Robert Mansfield Graham, auctioneer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. R. M. Graham.
10 Feb., 1890.
1327. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Robertson.
1328. What is your occupation? Auctioneer.
1329. How long have you been in business? Four years.
1330. Do you find that the value of stock is improving in the district since you have been here? Yes, very much.
1331. Do you find that the farm is improving? Yes.
1332. If you had to let a farm what rent could you get for it? A great deal depends upon the position of the farm. The usual rent of farms fairly well cleared is £1 an acre. They are not thoroughly cleared.
1333. Do you know what is the difference between renting here and renting in the Shoalhaven District? Yes. Rents are much higher in the Shoalhaven District—in some cases double what they are here.
1334. Would you think from that that the land in the Shoalhaven District is twice as productive as the here? No.
1335. Then the farmers there must be worse off than the farmers here? Yes.
1336. They must slave hard to make money? Yes; but they have water communication.
1337. If you had to sell a fairly-cleared farm, what would it fetch? I have been selling them at an average of from £22 to £25 an acre. We have sold them up to £27 10s. an acre.
1338. If a railway were made to Robertson, what additional value would it give to the land? From £5 to £10 an acre at least.
1339. What is the most? I have no hesitation in saying that if a railway were made good farms would bring £40 an acre.
1340. If you had a piece of original scrub still left, say a 40-acre patch, what would that fetch at auction? From £13 to £15 or £16 an acre, according to the position.
1341. Is it your opinion that this district is steadily improving? It is.
1342. And occupiers are prosperous? They are.
1343. Do you think that if the railway were made that dairying would be given up for market-gardening, orchard cultivation, or potato-growing? I believe there would be dairy-farming, because it is less expensive to the producers than anything else, but I have no hesitation in saying that fruit and potato growing would be much more extensively gone into.
1344. Suppose the railway were made to the foot of the good ground, say Burrawang or Wild's Meadows, do you think that would be sufficient to give a stimulus to cultivation? Yes.
1345. And that would be the cheapest part of the line to make? Yes.
1346. And if the country spend only the comparatively small sum necessary, that would be a great benefit? Yes, to Wild's Meadow, Yurrunga, and Burrawang residents.
1347. Would that railway do for the district? It would not be of great benefit to Robertson residents, because if the terminus were at Wild's Meadow the railway would then be 6½ miles from Robertson by the present main or mail coach road; and the cost of cartage is at present (and would be) 7s. 6d. per ton—the road is very hilly and only partly metalled.
1348. Do you think such a line would be a payable one? Not just at present, but I am perfectly satisfied that it would pay in a short time.
1349. Your knowledge of the district makes you say that confidently? Yes.
1350. *Mr. Dowel.*] Have you made yourself well acquainted with the district and the people? Yes.
1351. Do you know the staked line? I do.
1352. Do you know the end where it is staked out for a terminus? Yes.
1353. Is that a suitable place for a terminus? It was simply measured to the boundary of the township. It was afterwards thought of having the terminus further in the town.
1354. Do you know where the site of the terminus was to be? It was not decided upon.
1355. Do you think that the present terminus is a suitable one? I daresay it would be fairly suitable.
1356. Could it be carried further with advantage? It might be carried with advantage to the Government reserve at the back of the town—that site would be the most suitable for the majority.

Mr. James Alcorn, dairy-farmer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. Alcorn.
10 Feb., 1890.
1357. *Mr. Garrard.*] What is your occupation? Dairy-farmer, residing at East Kangaloon, about 3 miles from Robertson.
1358. What area of land have you? I have 200 acres of my own and I rent 100 acres.
1359. Do you use your land for grazing? I do at present; some time ago I was dairying.
1360. Are you fattening cattle? They are principally young cattle that I have. I sell them in spring.
1361. If this line was constructed to Robertson, do you think that the people of East Kangaloon would use it, or would they go to Bowral as they do now instead of coming to Robertson? It would depend a great deal on the difference in the carriage. We are much nearer to Robertson than Bowral.
1362. May I ask the reason why you left off dairying? There is not so much hard work in connection with what I am at at present.
1363. Then you think that if the railway rates were the same as they are on the main line the East Kangaloon people would come here? Most of them would.
1364. If a line were constructed from Bowral to Wild's Meadows and Robertson, *via* the Sheepwash, do you think that the people of West Kangaloon would send their produce to a station at the Sheepwash? I do not think it would be any improvement, where the line is surveyed.
1365. It would save 5 miles? The carrier would not make any difference, as he would have to go off the main line for a distance of one and three-quarter miles.
1366.

1366. How far is Kangaloon proper from the sheepwash? About 5 miles.
1367. And about 10 miles from Bowral? Not quite,—about 7 miles. It is 11 miles from Bowral to Kangaloon, and about 7 miles to the Sheepwash.
1368. You think the probabilities are that when the Kangaloon carriers have got their load on they would as soon go to Bowral as stop at a station at the sheepwash? Yes.
1369. Do you know the district about Wild's Meadows? Yes.
1370. Do you think that if a railway were constructed it would be likely to yield a return of over £6,000 a year? It might not at present, but if connected with the Illawarra line it would; I mean with the Illawarra line at Bottle Forest.
1371. Have you been over the land between here and the Forest? I have been half way.
1372. Does not that run through the Sydney water supply reserve? Some of it does.
1373. You could not get much from that to make the line pay? No; it would shorten the distance very much from Moss Vale to Sydney,—it is supposed to be 30 miles shorter.
1374. But if the country is not contributing revenue to the line it would be rather a dear line, would it not? I think it would more than pay the cost of construction in the shape of land which they would sell between here and the Forest.
1375. How could they sell the land if it was reserved for the water supply? The Government could easily revoke the reserve.
1376. *Chairman.*] Is the country level between here and the part you have referred to? Yes.
1377. Is it an easy route for a railway? Yes, as far as I have been.
1378. Is it not intersected with gorges? With very few—none, considering.
1379. How far have you been? Out on the mountains opposite Dapto.
1380. Have you any idea of the distance from here to Waterfall, on the Illawarra line? I cannot say.
1381. How do you know it will save half the distance? Surveyors who have been over it have reported so.
1382. What surveyor? I could not say just now.
1383. Do you know anyone who has ever been over the whole length of it? A man named Shipman, and a man named Coleville, have been right through it.
1384. And they have told you that there would be no difficulty in constructing a line? No engineering difficulties.
1385. Where do you send your produce now? I generally sell my stock to the auctioneer, or sell them privately in the neighbourhood.
1386. Do you think the district would by-and-bye be able to pay the working expenses of the line, and the interest on the cost of construction? I think it would increase the traffic very much.
1387. Would considerably more land have to be brought under cultivation before the railway would pay? More and more land is coming under cultivation, by clearing and so on.
1388. Do you think the Kangaroo Valley people would send their produce to the line at Wild's Meadows? It would be nearer to them than Moss Vale, of course.
1389. Where do they send it now, to the coast or to Moss Vale? Both ways.
1390. If the railway were continued from Kiama to Nowra would they take their produce there? Nearly half of it.
1391. You think that half the produce of the Kangaroo Valley goes to Moss Vale, and that if the railway were constructed it would go to Wild's Meadows? Yes.
1392. You do not think that, like the Kangaloon people, once having the load on they would go on to Moss Vale? I could not give an opinion on that question.

Mr.
J. Alcorn.
10 Feb., 1890.

Mr. J. W. Timbs, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined:—

1393. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At the Pheasant Ground.
1394. How long have you been there? Twenty-five years.
1395. To what use do you put your land? It is mostly used for dairy purposes.
1396. Have you tried potato-growing? Yes.
1397. Did it pay you? Oh, yes, except for the freights.
1398. Did potato-growing pay better than dairying? We can use some land for potato-growing and some for dairy purposes.
1399. How much land have you this year under potatoes? About 5 acres. A great many are rotting through this last rain.
1400. Do you feel that you have an inducement to extend your potato-growing as matters stand now? No; it is not advisable to grow many, the freight is so high. We have to pay over 30s. a ton for the produce that we send away.
1401. Suppose you were at Wild's Meadows and could get your potatoes carried for 10s. a ton, would it pay you to grow them then? No doubt it would. At present the storekeepers are the only carriers, and they do as they like.
1402. Would it pay you if your potatoes were carried for 10s. a ton? It would.
1403. As well as dairying? We could do a little of each.
1404. If you could be certain that you could get your potatoes carried for 10s. a ton, would you grow potatoes every year? Yes.
1405. How many? About 10 acres.
1406. How large is your property? 120 acres freehold, and 140 acres of leasehold.
1407. About one-tenth you put under potatoes? Yes.
1408. And you think that that is about what each farmer would do if the carriage were reduced to 10s.? No doubt.
1409. Do you think a farmer could carry on market gardening as well as potato growing and dairying? Yes, if he had any family.
1410. Do you think that growing vegetables for the market requires special skill? I think most farmers could do it if they liked to turn their minds to it.
1411. Do you think that if a railway were made any considerable number of farmers would put any quantity of land into market gardening? Yes.

Mr.
J. W. Timbs.
10 Feb., 1890.

- Mr. J. W. Timbs. 1412. Would you? I would put 10 or 12 acres in at least.
 1413. If you had railway communication would you put 20 acres of your land under cultivation? Yes, that would be as much as I could keep going.
 10 Feb., 1890. 1414. And other farmers would do the same? Yes.

Mr. Hugh Johnson, dairy farmer, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. H. Johnson. 1415. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? Two miles out of Robertson, to the east.
 1416. How long have you been there? Twenty-seven years.
 10 Feb., 1890. 1417. How much land have you? 250 acres, freehold.
 1418. To what use do you put it? Dairying and cultivation.
 1419. What do you cultivate? Potatoes.
 1420. Does it pay you to send potatoes to Moss Vale? Not at present.
 1421. How much have you lost by it? I cannot exactly say.
 1422. Did you pay for the carriage, or did you sell them in Robertson? Some I sold here and some I sent out by teams.
 1423. Which paid you best? Those I sent by teams.
 1424. Were they fetched from your farm or did you bring them into Robertson? If the carrier had come to my place the charge would have been £1 a ton?
 1425. Have you paid £1 a ton? Yes.
 1426. If you could get them carried for 10s. a ton would it pay? Yes.
 1427. What proportion of land will it then pay you to put under potatoes? It will be according to the inducement.
 1428. What would you risk? I would risk 10 or 15 acres.
 1429. And you could manage that, in conjunction with your dairy farming? Yes.
 1430. That would be as much as you could manage, I suppose? Yes, at present; but if there were more inducements, I would go into it more largely.
 1431. Suppose you had better inducements, how much more land would you cultivate? The whole of it except a few acres which are too rough to clean up.
 1432. How many years could you work without manure? I think, two or three years. The land would have to be occasionally manured.
 1433. Then the best way would be to cultivate a fresh 10 acres each year? That is what we do.
 1434. Then a certain portion of the land is fit for potatoes? But we do not account for more than that land being under potatoes every year. It would not pay to put the whole under potatoes.
 1435. Although the land here is good, only a portion of it would be under potatoes if the market were ever so good? Only a portion.
 1436. What else could you grow? We could grow hay.
 1437. Would it pay you better to grow hay than to grow grass? I think it would some years.

Mr. John Thomas Hayter, farmer, sworn, and examined :—

- Mr. J. T. Hayter. 1438. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Yurrunga.
 10 Feb., 1890. 1439-40. How much do you farm? About 100 acres.
 1441. If the railway were made what station on the line would you go to? No doubt there would be a station near Kelly's Creek.
 1442. The line goes right through your property, does it not? Yes, this does, and also the one from Bowral to Wild's Meadows.
 1443. That is a cross-line? Yes.
 1444. You know that country well then. Suppose that the cross-line instead of being where it is marked on the map were more to the east, would it not go on a more level route? No, on a rougher route.
 1445. Do you think that that connecting line between the two is the best that can be marked out? Yes.
 1446. Did you see the surveyor when he was marking that line? Yes.
 1447. You went and showed him what you thought would be the best line? Yes.
 1448. Suppose he came through Baxter's land would that be an easier route? No, it goes into a hill.
 1449. Is your farm on the rich land? No, it is on the poor land.
 1450. Have you any of the rich land? Yes, 500 acres.
 1451. To what use do you put it? Dairy farming.
 1452. You have not tried potato-growing? Yes, twelve years ago.
 1453. The roads were bad then were they not? Yes.
 1454. Do you find any inducement at the present time to grow potatoes? Yes.
 1455. Do you think you can grow them and make them pay? Yes, I have tried them and they have paid.
 1456. Do they pay as well as dairying? Dairying is not so laborious as growing potatoes. Potatoes will grow well and pay well, even at the present rates.
 1457. What does it cost you to get your produce to market? 10s. a ton from Yurrunga.
 1458. Have you grown potatoes at both places? No, only at Yurrunga.
 1459. Is it good potato land? Yes, it yields 6 tons to the acre.
 1460. And you are keeping up that industry? I have let it drop a good deal lately.
 1461. What are you doing? Auctioneering.
 1462. What do you mostly sell? Property and cattle.
 1463. Is there much property changing hands here? Yes.
 1464. Have you heard the evidence given here this morning? Most of it.
 1465. What do you consider to be the value of a cleared farm? From £20 to £25 an acre.
 1466. At what rate can it be improved? £10 an acre.
 1467. Is the quality of stock improving here? Yes.
 1468. And people have more money with which to buy? Yes.
 1469. And they will not keep inferior stock as they used to do? —

1470. Supposing the railway is not made in one direction will the improvements go? They will keep on dairy farming.
1471. Do you think the railway if made would be a good national investment? Yes.
1472. How soon would it pay the interest on the cost? Not for three years.
1473. Suppose the railway were made only as far as Wild's Meadows do you think that would give a stimulus to the district? I think it would, but the other 5 miles of it would go through richer land.
1474. But the other 5 miles are the most expensive. If the line went to Wild's Meadows would it be a benefit? Yes, it would suit Fitzroy and Barrengarry.
1475. And bring Robertson within 6 miles of a railway? Yes.
- 1476-7. Do you think that would pay? I think that a line right through would pay better.

Mr.
J. T. Hayter.
10 Feb., 1890.

Mr. William Rutter Hindmarsh, Senior, farmer, sworn, and examined:—

1478. *Chairman.*] Were you one of the early selectors in this district? Yes; I came from the Illawarra district.
1479. How much land have you got? About 1,200 acres.
1480. Do you farm yourself or let it? I farm about 500 acres, and the rest is leased to tenants.
1481. Did you let it on clearing leases? I let it at first on clearing leases, and now it is let on partially-cleared leases at a nominal rent, which with the improvements we consider will be equal to about 35s. an acre.
1482. Do your tenants consider it a nominal rent? They must or they would not have taken it.
1483. How much do you charge the tenants? We adopt a sliding scale—four years, 10s. an acre, and then up to ten years at 18s. an acre.
1484. You have no fully cleared land? Yes—a couple of hundred acres.
1485. What is the value of cleared land? Near the township about £30 an acre.
1486. What additional value do you think the railway would give you? From £10 to £15 an acre.
1487. Do you think that the additional productiveness of the land will enable the tenants to pay 10 or 15 per cent. more for it? I should imagine so.
1488. And for that reason you think that the landlords are in favor of a railway? Yes.
1489. And it would add from 10 to 15 per cent. to the value of every freehold? Yes.
1490. Do you think that the railway would pay? Yes, it will pay. I was one of the delegates in reference to the Illawarra line and also to this. It was my idea that the Illawarra line would pay from the commencement, and it has done so. I believe that this would pay too.
1491. Has not the Illawarra line taken some of the milk traffic from here? No; the main cause of that branch of trade being given up was the reduced price of the article. It was not worth the carriage.
1492. Was it not owing to the long land carriage? I believe it was.
1493. What is your idea of the distance that milk can be carried? About 5 miles; beyond that it is not good.
1494. There ought to be a factory within 5 miles of every dairy? If possible.
1495. Which pays best—to sell the milk or to make butter of it? I never sold the milk. As regards potato-growing, we can grow potatoes like these in the room in abundance, at least four months later than the potatoes grown in the hot climates, and they fetch a good price. If we had a railway here we could grow 2,000 acres of potatoes annually; that would give us 12,000 tons of potatoes, the carriage of which on the railway at 10s. a ton would yield a revenue of £6,000. We should require 1,000 tons of manure annually, which would be carried between Moss Vale and Robertson at the same price, giving another £500.

Mr. W. R.
Hindmarsh,
Senior.
10 Feb., 1890.

MONDAY, 10 FEBRUARY, 1890.

[*The Sectional Committee met in the Town Hall, Bowral, at 7 p.m.*]

Present:—

The HONORABLE ANDREW GARRAN (CHAIRMAN).

JACOB GARRARD, Esq.

WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Moss Vale to Robertson.

Mr. Copeland Bennett, station-master, sworn, and examined:—

1496. *Chairman.*] What is your position in Bowral? Station-master.
1497. How long have you occupied that position? Ten years here.
1498. You have watched the traffic coming into the station from Kangaloon? I have.
1499. During your time has it much increased? Not very much.
1500. Does the whole of the Kangaloon traffic come to Bowral? The whole of East and West Kangaloon does.
1501. How far do you penetrate into East Kangaloon? I think to Mr. Tilsley's and Mr. Alcorn's stores.
1502. How far from Bowral? I could not say. I think 12 miles to East Kangaloon, and about the same distance to West Kangaloon.
1503. If a railway were made to Robertson do you think you would lose some portion of the Kangaloon traffic to the station? I do not think it would affect us as far as East and West Kangaloon are concerned.
1504. Do you think that those living within 3 or 4 miles of Robertson would prefer to go to a station there? I think they would prefer to come here. The farmers would rather come here than go to Moss Vale.
1505. You mean that their ties at Bowral are such as would bring them here? Yes. They also say that they prefer the railway to be somewhere between Moss Vale and Bowral. They would prefer the junction to be midway between.
1506. On what ground? They say it would benefit the whole of the district much more.

Mr.
C. Bennett.
10 Feb., 1890.

1507.

Mr.
C. Bennett.
10 Feb., 1890.

1507. Suppose a line were made from here to the Sheepwash and across from there to Wild's Meadows, would a station at the Sheepwash be of any use to the West Kangaloon people? I desire to say particularly, that a station at Sheepwash would be of immense benefit to East and West Kangaloon.
1508. You do not know, as a railway officer, whether they would be likely to take the nearest station or to come on to Bowral? I should think they would take the nearest station.
1509. Would you recommend that the line be brought to Bowral, or that there should be a separate junction station? I should recommend a separate junction station.
1510. On what ground? I think the route would be much more favourable as regards gradients. I think that there might be a junction station between here and Burradoo.
1511. Could you tell us the quantity of traffic that comes in from Kangaloon? Yes, just now we are getting about 240 kegs of butter a week—about 180 kegs in winter; and at this time of the year we are getting about 16 tons of potatoes a day—about 100 tons a week.
1512. For what period of the year does the potato industry last? Another two or three months.
1513. They do not keep you supplied all the year round? No.
1514. Could they do that? I daresay they could.
1515. But this is the favourite season? Yes. The goods traffic inwards for East and West Kangaloon is very light.
1516. Are these potatoes grown on rich land? Yes.
1517. Are some of them grown before you reach the rich land? Yes.
1518. Which turns out the best potato? West Kangaloon. The whole district is very rich. The red soil produces the best and the largest crop.
1519. Do any of these returns of traffic relate to this side of the Sheepwash, or to traffic which would gravitate down to the Sheepwash Station? I think it might gravitate down to the Sheepwash Station.
1520. Is there any other traffic? A few pigs, calves, bacon, eggs, and poultry.
1521. What is the total value per week of these extras? About £25.
1522. Do you think that if a railway were made as far as the Sheepwash it would bring any more of the traffic on this side? I think it would encourage the farmers to do a great deal more than they are doing at present.
1523. You think it would increase your receipts? I think it would.
1524. Is there any considerable passenger traffic from here to Kangaloon? I cannot give any definite information as to that.
1525. There is no coach running from here to Kangaloon? No.
1526. Are there any carriers? Only those employed by the storekeepers.
1527. *Mr. Garrard.*] Where is Alcorn's store? That is in East Kangaloon.
1528. Is that where you get traffic from? Yes.
1529. Then if we have been informed that nearly the whole of the produce of East Kangaloon goes to Moss Vale, *via* Robertson, that is a mistake? I should think so.
1530. Do you think that if a railway was made, *via* the Sheepwash on to Robertson, the East Kangaloon people would go to Robertson, or would they come to the Sheepwash? I should think they would come to the Sheepwash.
1531. Why? I say that from conversations which I have had with the farmers.
1532. Does that apply to East Kangaloon? East Kangaloon people would never think of going to Robertson, as it would be out of their way to do so.
1533. Has there been an enormous growth of railway traffic at Bowral? Yes. In 1881 the coaching alone was £442.
1534. What do you attribute that to. Is it sentiment, as explained by some people, or is it the development of the district outside the town which attracts such a large number of passengers? I think that the principal cause is the development of the district.
1535. Merely as residential sites or the development of the agricultural and dairying interests? I do not think it is attributable to the dairying industry.
1536. More to the residential sites? Yes; the place has become a sanatorium. In 1881 the coaching revenue was £442, and now it is £4,000.
1537. *Mr. Dowel.*] What distance are the Fitzroy Falls from here? About 17 miles.
1538. Are there many tourists to that place? A great number.
1539. If a railway went within 2 or 3 miles of the Falls do you think there would be an increase in the number of the tourists? I think it probable that they would increase largely.
1540. And do fruit and vegetables come from any part of the Bowral district? No great quantity at present; but I believe that with railway facilities that sort of thing would increase.
1541. Can you inform the Committee what the railway rates are to Sydney for fruit and vegetables? To Sydney, 8s. 1d. a ton, but we send to Darling Harbour—8s. 2d.
1542. What are the railway rates from Bowral to Sydney? 8s. 1d. a ton.
1543. What are the rates from Moss Vale to Sydney? About 8s. 7d. a ton.
1544. Would that apply to potatoes? Yes, to produce generally.
1545. What is the charge for maize? 8s. 1d. a ton.
1546. What price do you charge for calves? So much per quarter of a truck—say 4d. a mile.
1547. How much a head would that be? We send a single calf at 1d. per head per mile.
1548. What is the charge for pigs? Half-penny per mile.
1549. What is the difference in the rates between Moss Vale and Bowral? The rates are the same, but there is a difference of 6 miles in the distance.
1550. Are you aware that if a railway is made *via* Bowral instead of Moss Vale it would shorten the distance to Robertson by 6 miles? I have heard it said so.
1551. It would rob the main line of a little traffic? Yes.
1552. Have you been over the surrounding country within a radius of 10 or 15 miles of here? I have been to Fitzroy Falls, East and West Kangaloon, and one or two other places.
1553. What is the character of the soil? Red soil, very rich.
1554. Have they a good rainfall? Fairly good.
1555. Are you aware that there are large crops growing in the district? From what the farmers say, with plenty of rain they could grow anything.
1556. *Mr. Garrard.*] Do the tourists to the Fitzroy Falls go principally from Moss Vale or from Bowral? I think they go from Moss Vale.

1557. Have you any idea of the number of tourists who go to the Falls during a year? I have not.
1558. I suppose that visitors to Bowral and Moss Vale go on to the Falls? —
1559. *Chairman.*] Have you any further statement to make? Yes. The goods traffic for the past twelve months has been £4,255 7s. 9d., but in 1886 it was £3,659 16s. 7d.
1560. Has the passenger traffic much increased? Yes, equally.
1561. Could you say how much? In 1881 the passenger traffic was £1,442 18s. 5d., but for the past twelve months it amounted to £3,333 3s. 1d.
1562. Is your passenger traffic greater than that of Moss Vale? Yes, and greater than Mittagong. We do a larger business in everything than Moss Vale and Mittagong, but Mittagong can show a larger outward traffic in shale and coal.
1563. *Mr. Garrard.*] 25 per cent. more? Yes, quite that.

Mr.
C. Bennett.
10 Feb., 1890.

John Joseph Campbell, Esq., late Mayor of Bowral, sworn, and examined:—

1564. *Chairman.*] Have you been Mayor of Bowral? I have.
1565. How long have you resided in Bowral? Twenty-six years.
1566. Then you are thoroughly familiar with the trade that comes in and goes out of the township? Yes; it passes my door.
1567. Are you familiar with the Kangaloon country? I am fairly well acquainted with it.
1568. Do you know the settlers in that part of the country? Yes.
1569. Do you know how far from here the settlers bring in their produce to Bowral? I think from 15 to 16 miles.
1570. Knowing the road as you do, do you think that the making of the railway from Moss Vale to Robertson would divert part of that trade from Bowral? I do not think they would go to Robertson.
1571. Do you not think that the people would go to Robertson, a distance of 3 miles, instead of bringing their produce over these hills? I have heard some farmers say that they would prefer to come into Bowral. They say that four horses bring more into Bowral than eight horses would take into Robertson.
1572. That is by the lower route, I presume? Yes.
1573. Do you think that the people of Kangaloon take any interest in this railway project? I am not aware.
1574. There have been no meetings in the district? None whatever.
1575. Do the people of Bowral take any interest in the project? I am not aware.
1576. Have there been any meetings in the district? None whatever.
1577. The people of Bowral are quite indifferent whether the railway is made or not? Quite.
1578. Or whether it goes from here or Moss Vale? Yes.
1579. They are happy whatever happens? I do not say that.
1580. Do you think that the junction of the railway at Bowral would increase the importance of the place? Yes. I understand that railways always increase the importance of the places where they go.
1581. You do not think it would damage Bowral as a place of business? I cannot see how it could.
1582. Do you know the country between here and the Sheepwash? Yes.
1583. Is it pretty level? Yes.
1584. Suppose a railway were made from here instead of Moss Vale, and were to cross the river at the Sheepwash and make for Wild's Meadows, and go round to Robertson, would not that accommodate the whole of this producing district? It would.
1585. Would not the traffic of West Kangaloon come down to the Sheepwash? Yes. And you would get the traffic of East Kangaloon too.
1586. A railway through there would practically secure the whole of the traffic of this rich country? I feel certain that it would.
1587. If it went from Moss Vale, how would the Kangaloon people benefit? They would not benefit at all that I can see.
1588. Do the people of Kangaloon take any interest in the matter? Not that I am aware of.
1589. Are the Kangaloon people particularly prosperous? They are.
1590. And they are getting on so well that they do not mind about the railway? Oh, yes; they want to get their produce away.
1591. Would they be satisfied to see the produce of Burrawang and Robertson carried at a fourth of what it costs them to get their traffic carried? I do not think so. If you had a station at the Sheepwash the railway would take the whole of the East Kangaloon traffic.
1592. Do you know the Sheepwash district? I do.
1593. Do you think that a better road could be made to the Sheepwash than the present road? Not to the Sheepwash station. You could only come along the edge of the flat.
1594. By doing that, could we get better access to the Sheepwash station? You could by coming further down on that round hill.
1595. Are you quite positive? I am positive that there could be a better road this way than the Moss Vale route.
1596. I meant the other way? No, I do not think so.
1597. If such a line as that proposed were made—and this is a line marked out by Allingham the surveyor, who surveyed the country—and you had a line to Wild's Meadows, the tourists could go straight to the Falls from here, could they not? I do not know whether the proposed line passes the Falls or not.
1598. It goes within a few miles of them? Then people all round the district would go direct that way.
1599. The tourist trade from Bowral and Moss Vale to the Falls would go direct? I do not think they go to Moss Vale—they hire vehicles here and go straight away.
1600. How far is it from Bowral? Sixteen or 17 miles.
1601. How far from Moss Vale? About 12 miles.
1602. *Mr. Garrard.*] How do the Kangaloon people who come into Bowral bring their produce? Right across the Upper Range road.
1603. The East Kangaloon people do not come that way, do they? Yes; all come along the Upper Range.
1604. Does not the East Kangaloon traffic come by the lower road? Sometimes.
1605. How do the Central Kangaloon people come? By the upper road. They are more on the top of the hill.

J. J.
Campbell,
Esq.
10 Feb., 1890.

J. J.
Campbell,
Esq.
10 Feb., 1890.

1606. What is the distance from East Kangaloon to Bowral by the lower road? I do not know.
 1607. Do you know whether there is much traffic between East Kangaloon and Bowral? Yes.
 1608. Do you think that more of the traffic of East Kangaloon comes to Bowral than goes to Moss Vale via Robertson? No; I think more of the produce of East Kangaloon comes here than goes to Moss Vale.
 1609. Do you think that if there was a station at the Sheepwash the East Kangaloon people would use that or go to Robertson? Of course, I believe they would. There are some steep hills between East Kangaloon and Robertson.
 1610. Is there not a steep hill going into the Sheepwash? No; they come down hill.
 1611. Do they not have to rise considerably before they get on to the upper ridge? They come on the upper road. Any one in East Kangaloon who has to pass that long hill of Alcorn's would go to the Folly Road, and come back round to the Sheepwash.
 1612. To some extent coming back on their road? Yes, but it is a more level road.
 1613. They would come that way? Yes.
 1614. But if the East Kangaloon people got as far as the junction of the upper road with their loads they would come right on to Bowral instead of going to the Sheepwash station? I think not.
 1615. You think they would go to the Sheepwash? I do.
 1616. To what do you attribute the progress of Bowral of late years? To the prosperity of the farmers out there, who own the land they occupy.
 1617. Do you attribute the wonderful progress Bowral has made to the development of agriculture in the outlying district of Kangaloon, or do you attribute it to its being a favourite place for city residents? I think it is attributable more to the city residents.
 1618. As a matter of fact there is comparatively little country to benefit above Bowral? Oh, yes, there is a good deal of country.
 1619. Productive country? Yes.
 1620. Where? Out here, at the back.
 1621. That goes to Mittagong? No; it comes to Bowral.
 1622. But Kangaloon is the country which backs up Bowral? Yes.
 1623. Do you know anything about the Wild's Meadows district? No.
 1624. Where do the Kangaloon people trade with? With the business people of Bowral.
 1625. Is there any fear on the part of the people of Bowral that if the railway is made, and the Kangaloon people are able to send direct to Sydney, it will diminish the trade here? I believe that that is the opinion.
 1626. Do you think that it would be likely to increase the trade of Bowral? I do.
 1627. What they would lose that way they will gain in freight from other places, such as Wild's Meadows and Burrawang? We receive no direct benefit from either Burrawang or Robertson at present, so that we could lose nothing.
 1628. *Mr. Dowel.*] Do you know the route of the proposed railway? No; I have not been over the country.
 1629. Do you know the country between Moss Vale and Robertson? No.
 1630. Have you paid any attention to the agricultural resources of the district? No.
 1631. Do you know the capabilities of the country? I know that Kangaloon is noted for its productive qualities.
 1632. Do you know whether the holdings are large or small? Some are large, some 200 acres, some 300 acres.
 1633. Can you say whether the selectors on these small holdings are fairly prosperous? To all appearances they are.
 1634. Can you say whether they have paid the Government their balances? No, I could not say; I believe they pay interest.
 1635. During your twenty-five years' experience, have you seen any marked progress in settlement in this agricultural district? Certainly. I knew the country when it was nothing but brush, which men must have had hearts like lions to tackle. Now the country is covered with grass.
 1636. Have you been to Robertson? I have.
 1637. Have you been many times to Robertson? Two or three times.
 1638. Do you think that that railway would serve the largest number of people? I do.
 1639. From Moss Vale to Robertson? No, from Robertson to Bowral, via the Sheepwash.
 1640. From your knowledge of the district, do you think that the proposed railway will pay the interest on capital and working expenses? That I could not say. I know that it would cost a great amount of money, but I know it is cheaper than the one proposed from Moss Vale.
 1641. Was a line ever proposed from Bowral? Yes.
 1642. You favour the route from Bowral to Robertson, I suppose? I should favour it.
 1643. Do you think that it would serve the largest number of people and be the most advantageous to be constructed? Yes.
 1644. Having fewer engineering difficulties? I believe so. It would go through more level country.

Andrew C. Alcorn, Esq., landowner, sworn, and examined:—

- A. C. Alcorn,
Esq.
10 Feb., 1890.
1645. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided in the district? Between twenty-seven and twenty-eight years at East Kangaloon.
 1646. Are you a landed proprietor there? Yes.
 1647. How much land have you? 300 acres; two blocks, one in East Kangaloon and one in West Kangaloon.
 1648. Was that scrub when you took it up? Yes.
 1649. Did you clear it yourself? I bought one part cleared, and the other I cleared myself.
 1650. Is the land used as a dairy farm? Yes.
 1651. Is there any other productive use that you could put it to? I think that dairying and potato-growing are the most profitable uses to which the land can be put.
 1652. Have you calculated the average profits of dairying? As a whole I think it would take about 3 acres to keep a cow, and we get about £10 a year from a cow.
 1653. What would the net profit per acre be? I do not know.

1654. We have had it in evidence that it is about £2 an acre;—do you think that is correct? Yes, A. C. Alcorn, Esq.
1655. Is there any ground in Kangaloon which is being let at £1 an acre? About that; I have 100 acres let for £90 a year. 10 Feb., 1890.
1656. What is the value of cleared land? Some of the Kangaloon land has been sold as high as £30.
1657. If a railway were made from Moss Vale to Robertson, do you think that would increase the value of the land at Kangaloon? I think not.
1658. Do you think it would add to the value of the land on the other side? Yes.
1659. As a proprietor of land at Kangaloon, are you prepared to see the land on one side go up in value, while on your own side it remains as it is? I would rather not. I think a railway could be made that would suit both.
1660. You have heard the description of a proposed route by Mr. Allingham, surveyor, from Bowral to the Sheepwash, and then across to Wild's Meadows? Yes.
1661. The country between here and the Sheepwash is level? Yes.
1662. And sufficiently above the swamp land? Quite so.
1663. Supposing there was a station at Sheepwash, would you send your produce there, or would you prefer to bring it straight on to Bowral? If there was a station at Sheepwash, I do not see why we should bring it on to Bowral.
1664. Some people have great doubts as to whether you would use the Sheepwash station? I have not the slightest doubt about it.
1665. You say you have property in East and West Kangaloon? Yes.
1666. How far is Robertson from East Kangaloon? Three miles.
1667. Is you were there, and a railway were made by the other route to Robertson, would you prefer to go to Robertson, or would you come by road to Bowral? I would still come to Bowral. There is a steep hill on the road to Robertson, and going that way would make it a distance of 20 miles round to Bowral. I draw the butter now for 9d. a keg, and I charge 15s. a ton for potatoes. The charge for butter from the Kangaloon Factory is 6d. a keg.
1668. We are told that they pay 1s. 6d. by the other route? I do not think they do.
1669. We have it in sworn evidence that the cost of the carriage of potatoes is from 20s. to 25s. a ton, and butter 1s. 6d. a keg? From Yurunga they are drawing produce at 19s. a ton.
1670. Do you know what they charge at present from Robertson? I am nearly sure that the charge for butter is 9d. a keg to Moss Vale. They were carrying produce at from 11s. to 12s. a ton, but when the wet weather came on the carriers gave it up.
1671. Do you know what the charge is for carrying potatoes from Robertson to Moss Vale? Very few are carried from Robertson.
1672. Very few from the south side of the swamp? And Wild's Meadows.
1673. The Kangaloon people have done more than the people on the other side in growing potatoes? Oh, yes.
1674. What is the reason of the difference? From Kangaloon to Bowral the road is nearly all down hill, and it is quite easy to bring the produce.
1675. Do you consider growing potatoes more profitable than dairying? It certainly cleans the ground for artificial grasses.
1676. When you have artificial grass, will it pay to dig it up and put in potatoes? Yes; every five years.
1677. Do you think it would be a good thing to take 10 acres every year for crop? Yes. Rye-grass will work out in five years in the best land. The conditions of the lease for our farm is that only two crops shall follow each other, and then put in rye-grass.
1678. After that year's change it is fit again for the grass? Yes.
1679. Without manure? No manure.
1680. You have not been in the habit of growing potatoes for two years running on the same land? I have not; some of them have done so.
1681. Does that exhaust the ground? Yes.
1682. Do you think this Kangaloon side of the district is good for orchards? Yes; they are growing apples; and in Kangaloon we used to grow good peaches, but lately we have not been able to grow them well.
1683. Have many gone in heavily for fruit? Some have as many as 100 trees to grow fruit for their own use.
1684. Do you think it pays to grow fruit for the Sydney market? I think winter apples would pay.
1685. Do you think this district could supply vegetables and market-garden produce? We have got a rainfall and land that will grow anything. A man at Kangaloon this year raised 14 tons to the acre. Several years ago Mr. Roberts grew 10 tons to the acre.
1686. We saw potatoes to-day;—can you tell us the difference between the yield in the inferior land as compared with the rich land? It is all good, you may say, till you come within 5 miles of Bowral.
1687. Have the Kangaloon people attempted to grow cabbages or cauliflowers? No; for the Sydney market they could not do it.
1688. Suppose that a railway were made as proposed, do you think that any number of people near the Sheepwash station would go in for market-gardening? I think so. They will go in for anything that will pay.
1689. You think they are wideawake to their own interests? Yes; but they have been backward about the railway. I think that all the produce from the top of Alcorn's Hill would come to Bowral if the railway to Robertson were made.
1690. *Mr. Garrard.*] That does not hold good as far as East Kangaloon is concerned? I do not know where the traffic from there would go.
1691. Do you think that the East Kangaloon people would bring their produce to the station at Sheepwash by the lower road? I think they would.
1692. It is a long way round, is it not? They would not go round; they would go over the top. I come that way two or three times a week.
1693. Is it not as bad as the hill to Robertson? It is not nearly so bad.

- A. C. Alcorn, Esq.
10 Feb., 1890.
1694. And you think that there would come to the station at Sheepwash not only the West Kangaloon people and the people from Kangaloon proper, but also the East Kangaloon people? I do.
1695. Do you send the largest quantity of produce from East Kangaloon? I draw all the butter. I have just sold the business.
1696. Does your successor? Yes; he is doing the same business at the same rates.
1697. And you feel sure that the traffic would go up to the Sheepwash if there was a station there? Yes.
1698. Do you know anything about the country on the other side of the swamp? Yes.
1699. What is the nature of the country between Burrawang and Moss Vale? From Wild's Meadows to Robertson it is the same country as this.
1700. Between Moss Vale and Wild's Meadows? Very inferior country.
1701. Is it worse than the country between Robertson and Bowral? I think it is a shade worse.
- 1702-3. And it is a greater distance from Moss Vale to Wild's Meadows than it is from Bowral to Robertson. It is 5 miles one way and 10 the other, is it not? That is somewhere near it.
1704. If we had it in evidence that the whole of the East Kangaloon produce and part of the produce of Kangaloon proper would be taken to Robertson if a railway were made there, that is wrong? No one could say that any of the traffic from Kangaloon proper would go to Robertson.
1705. Do you know the Wesleyan church? I do not think any one would go from the neighbourhood of the Wesleyan church to Robertson.
1706. If a witness said so, is it incorrect? I do not think people would go so far.
1707. Have you had experience in carrying? I have. I should never go from the Wesleyan church to Robertson if I could get as good a road to Bowral, and I could carry a load with two horses less to Bowral.
1708. You would have a shorter railway journey for your goods? If we go to Robertson we shall have 20 miles more railway carriage to pay for.
1709. If it is necessary to charge increased rates on the branch line to the Sheepwash, will people be prepared to pay them? You can form an idea yourself from the rates at which we are drawing goods.
1710. How would they compare with the main-line rates? It will take the traffic; the railway would knock the teams off.
1711. After you got as far as the Sheepwash, having good roads, would it not be just as well to carry your goods by road for the remainder of the distance? I think not.
1712. If some witnesses have expressed that opinion, do you think they are in error? Yes.
1713. Knowing the Kangaloon, Wild's Meadows, Burrawang, and Robertson districts, do you think that if this line were made, incurring an annual cost on capital and working expenses of some £7,000, it would pay? I do not know what the income would be from the traffic.
1714. Do you think that the trade of the districts I have mentioned would yield a revenue of £7,000 a year? I should think not.
1715. Do you think the district is capable of such development if a railway were constructed that within a few years it would reach that sum? I do not know, but I think there would be a great deal more produce grown everywhere.
1716. Have you any idea of the area of good land which would be served by this railway. It has been estimated by one officer that there are about 50,000 acres of good land which was brush land;—do you agree with that estimate? I think that is about it.
1717. If this line were constructed with a station or a platform at Wild's Meadows, do you think any Kangaroo Valley traffic would come there? My idea was that the proper way would be to bring the line out to the Sheepwash, strike straight on to Robertson Valley, keeping along the edge of the swamp on the Kangaloon side.
1718. I want to know whether any of the Kangaroo Valley trade would go to Wild's Meadows, or whether it would continue to go into Moss Vale? The traffic will go to the first station that they meet.
1719. Do you know where the trade of Kangaroo Valley goes to now? Some goes to Moss Vale.
1720. One-third to the coast, and the rest to Moss Vale? I should think about that.
1721. You think that if there was a station at Wild's Meadows the Kangaroo Valley people would go there instead of going to Moss Vale? Yes.
1722. *Mr. Dowel.*] Can you tell us what is the population of East and West Kangaloon and Kangaloon proper? No. They are nearly all small holders having 40 acres, 60 acres, 100 acres, and some 200 acres. I do not know of any farm in the Kangaloon district that exceeds 200 acres.
1723. Would you think there are 3,000 people in that district? I could not form any idea.
1724. What is the average yield of potatoes in this particular district? Taking one year with another, about 5 tons to the acre.
1725. I understood you to say that the rate for the cartage of potatoes was about 15s. a ton? That is from East Kangaloon.
1726. Do you know what average price your potatoes fetch? Our potatoes generally head the market. They can be shipped again, but the Warrnambool potatoes cannot be transhipped.
1727. They are of exceedingly good quality? Yes.
1728. Can you say what price they realized this time last year? Yes—£17 10s. a ton.
1729. What is the price this year? About £4 a ton.
1730. What would be a fair average price? We think we do well if we get £5 a ton.
1731. I suppose you have seen the rise and progress of the district which the railway is to serve? Yes. I came with a brushhook in my hand, and cut my way into the farm.
1732. Were there many settlers when you arrived? No; I was among the first.
1733. When was that? In August, 1862.
1734. What is the value of land in this particular district? Some of the farms in the Kangaloon have been sold at £30 an acre lately.
1735. Do you know the proposed route from Moss Vale to Robertson? Yes.
1736. Does the staked-out line pass Burrawang? Yes, through Wild's Meadows.
1737. What particular centres of population would that line serve as surveyed now? Wild's Meadows, Kangaroo Valley, and Robertson.
1738. Which route would you be prepared to advocate in the interests of the settlers? In the interests of the public, I do not think that the line from Moss Vale to Robertson is the best.

1739. What are your objections to it? It leaves Kangaloon out altogether.
1740. Any other objection? It leaves out half of the good country.
1741. What are your objections to the route from Bowral? It is better as far as Kagaloon is concerned, but if it was made as it was surveyed it will not go to the Sheepwash.
1742. What line would serve that district the best? I think one alongside the swamp, with a branch line from the Sheepwash into Wild's Meadow.
1743. *Chairman.*] If a line were made to the Sheepwash, as Mr. Allingham laid it out, could it at any future time be carried up the swamp? Yes; but if it was done that way it would not suit; we should have two lines running into Robertson.
1744. You know that the difficult part of the proposed line, as it has been laid out, is through the richest country. The line from Moss Vale is comparatively easy for 9 or 10 miles. Suppose the Government, for the sake of economy, were to make the line only for that 10 miles as far as Wild's Meadow, do you think that that would be enough to give great advantages to the settlers beyond? No; I do not think it would.
1745. How far would they have to travel from Robertson to Wild's Meadow? I suppose about 6 miles.
1746. Do you not think it would be a great gain to have to travel only 6 miles instead of 15? Yes; it would be better.
1747. You think that the policy of the railway cannot be tested unless it goes right through? If the line stopped at Wild's Meadow it would only be touching the good land. Every farmer would have to draw his produce to the station.
1748. It would bring the railway within 6 miles of Robertson instead of being 15 miles off? Yes.
1749. Would that not be an advantage to the people of Robertson and Wild's Meadow? Yes.
1750. And they would all make use of it? I think so.
1751. Have you any other statement to make? Mr. Roberts told me that he would give the ground free of expense if the railway is made through his property to the Sheepwash.
1752. How far does it go through his estate? I suppose close upon 2 miles.
1753. Do you know that under the Public Works Act the value which a railway gives to an estate through which it passes is taken into account by the valuator? I understood that the owners were paid for the land.
1754. Do you think that the additional value given by the railway to the estate would be greater or less than the value of the land taken for the line? I think it would be greater.
1755. *Mr. Garrard.*] You spoke about a line from the Sheepwash on the Kangaloon side of the swamp;—how far would you take it? Right into Robertson.
1756. But when you get to the head of the swamp you are still very much below Robertson? It is perfectly level into Robertson.
1757. You think the line could be taken right into Robertson very easily? Yes; there is nothing to stop it.
1758. Your scheme of going on to Wild's Meadow would leave Burrawang out? No; the line could go right through Burrawang.
1759. You are of opinion that it would be an easy thing to take the railway up the side of the swamp to Robertson? There would be no difficulty about it at all.
1760. How would the people of Kangaloon get to the swamp? There are good practical roads.
1761. As passable as those that we came over to-day? Equally so.
1762. And you could touch the railway at several points? Yes.
1763. The people of East Kangaloon would still have to climb, would they not? They would have to get up that hill.

A. C. Alcorn,
Esq.
10 Feb., 1890.

Mr. W. R. Hindmarsh, junior, farmer, sworn, and further examined:—

1764. *Mr. Garrard.*] You have heard the statement made by Mr. Alcock, that there would be very little difficulty in running a railway up the Kangaloon side of the swamp—do you know that locality? I do.
1765. How high do you think the butter factory at Robertson is above the swamp? It is a great many feet higher. Between the butter factory and the swamp there is a good sized hill in the forest by the creek.
1766. I thought the creek found its way down by easy descents to the swamp? Yes; if you were to follow all the curves.
1767. How far is the swamp from the butter factory? I suppose about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile.
1768. Is the country very rough there? Not very rough. It is intersected by one or two small gullies.
1769. What is the nature of the ground on the edge of the swamp—is it precipices running down into spurs, or is there any sort of a plateau above the swamp? Precipices in some cases; in other places flats.
1770. How far do you think it would be from the Sheepwash to the Robertson butter factory, skirting the Kangaloon side of the swamp? I suppose about 8 miles.
1771. Do you think it is practicable to make a line there that would serve the people of Robertson instead of a line to Wild's Meadow? It might serve Robertson, but not Burrawang and Wild's Meadow.
1772. Another part of the fork is to go across to Wild's Meadow—would that do? I think it would.
1773. If that fork could be constructed for less expense than the proposed line through Wild's Meadow to Robertson, would that be better? It would; but I do not think it can be constructed for less.
1774. If the proposed line is only constructed to Wild's Meadow for the purpose, do you think that that would be any benefit to the people of Robertson? It might on the western side; but those on the eastern side would have 8 or 9 miles to go, and on the Pheasant Ground 12 and 14 miles.
1775. You know that it has been an expensive line to make from Wild's Meadow to Robertson? Do you not think that rather than lose the railway altogether it would be better to try a section to Wild's Meadow first? I daresay; but the farmers would not go in for growing potatoes so extensively as they would if the line went in to Robertson. The railway would not get the extra traffic reckoned on.

Hindmarsh
junior.
10 Feb., 1890.

Mr. John George Morris, storekeeper and auctioneer, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. J. G. Morris.
10 Feb., 1890.
1776. *Chairman.*] You have been many years resident at Bowral? Yes.
1777. What are you? Storekeeper and auctioneer.
1778. You know most of the Kangaloon settlers I presume? Yes.
1779. How far does the produce from Kangaloon come in by this road? I should think the farthest would be about 16 or 17 miles.
1780. If a line were made from Moss Vale to Robertson how much of the Kangaloon traffic would it deprive Bowral of? I could not form an opinion on that matter.
1781. Of the two routes—Moss Vale to Robertson, and Bowral to Robertson—have you any opinion as to which would be the better one? I think that the Bowral to Robertson line would take a good deal of the Kangaloon trade.
1782. Would the people of Kangaloon use the station at the Sheepwash? Yes, a large proportion of them.
1783. Do you agree that good access could be obtained for that station? I am decidedly of that opinion.
1784. And you think that a station there would take a great deal of traffic? I do.
1785. Which do you think the better line—the one from Bowral to the Sheepwash, or the line from Moss Vale? I think the Bowral line, because it must catch a great deal of the Kangaloon traffic that would not go to Robertson.
1786. Even though it were 2 miles longer? Yes.
1787. If you were a speculator which line would you put your money into? The line from Bowral.
1788. All the settlers on the south side of the swamp would save 6 miles of haulage on the main line by coming to Bowral? Yes.
1789. You think the Government would make up what it would lose in that respect by the extra profit on the Kangaloon trade? I think they would.
1790. Looking at their project, do you think that the Government would find this a paying line? Not at present, I think.
1791. The mere dairy traffic certainly would not pay? No.
1792. Do you think there would be a sufficiency of potatoes to pay? I do not think that the whole of the present produce would pay the working expenses and the interest on the line.
1793. We have been told that if they had a railway the farmers would put 5,000 acres under potatoes? I could not form an opinion about that.
1794. You do not know enough of the working of the farms to say whether the railway would stimulate the production of potatoes? It would, but I do not know whether it would to that extent.
1795. You have sent many potatoes to Sydney have you not? In former years, not lately.
1796. Was it a paying trade? Yes.
1797. Do you think that if a farmer put 10 acres of land under potatoes it would pay as well as 10 acres of dairy grass? Yes; but I do not think that he would continue to cultivate the same 10 acres; if he did he would wear it out.
1798. That 10 acres would not be the least profitable of his holding? By no means.
1799. You think that the railway would stimulate potato growing? I do.
1800. Are these potatoes a first class article? The potatoes of this district are very good indeed. I never could get as good anywhere else.
1801. Have you ever exported fruit from here? No.
1802. Can eggs, bacon, and pork be sent from Bowral to Sydney? Decidedly.
1803. Can you compete with the steamers? I think water carriage is cheaper than railway carriage, but still a large quantity of eggs and bacon is sent down to Sydney from here.
1804. Is the price the farmers now get for eggs and bacon a paying price? Yes.
1805. Even without a railway? Yes.
1806. And these articles would pay much better with a railway? No doubt.
1807. What price would these scrub lands fetch in their original state? It is almost impossible to say what they would bring. They would bring high prices. Plenty of that land would bring £15 an acre, as brush land.
1808. What would you get for a well cleared farm? Good farms average from £20 to £30 an acre.
1809. Would a station at the Sheepwash improve the Kangaloon district? Yes.
1810. How much per cent.? I should think about 20 per cent.
1811. And if this line were to go through Moss Vale to Robertson what effect do you think it would have on the land on that side of the swamp? I think it would increase the value of the land proportionately.
1812. By 25 per cent.? Yes.
1813. And you think that the making of this railway would be a clear gain to all the land proprietors in the district of 25 per cent.? Ultimately I believe it would be.
1814. Have you ever forwarded any market garden produce from Bowral? No.
1815. Have there been any market gardens here? The Chinese are going in for that.
1816. Sending the stuff to Sydney? Yes, it pays them well.
1817. Is their produce a little behind the season at Sydney? Yes, their produce comes in when the Sydney crops are done.
1818. You are sure that they are working at a profit? I know it.
1819. Do you think that the European market gardeners could carry on the business at a profit? I believe they could if they understood their business and were industrious.
1820. Why do not more Europeans go in for market gardening? Because they are too lazy, I suppose.
1821. Do you think that a man who has cleared a lot of the scrub is a lazy man? No, but he takes his time over it.
1822. Have you ever cleared any of it yourself? No.
1823. You think there is an opening for market gardens here? I do.
1824. And you think that a railway would stimulate that business? I do.
1825. The railway would be a great benefit in every respect to the district? Yes.
1826. As a storekeeper and an auctioneer do you think that Bowral would be injured if a junction were made here? No.
1827. You would not be afraid of it injuring any business here? No. I should think it would tend to improve matters.
- 1828.

1828. You would rather see it here than at Moss Vale? Yes; for the benefit of the people of West Kangaloon.

1829. The people who do not want a railway are making a mistake? Yes.

1830. Do you know any such? No. We were to have had it, and the matter was as good as decided, and when it was thrown over the Bowral people seemed to lose all interest in the matter. They seemed to take it as a foregone conclusion that the railway will go from Moss Vale.

1831. Do you know why it was altered? Yes.

1832. *Mr. Garrard.*] What were the reasons? Interested reasons, I think, on the part of those who would personally gain by the railway going from Moss Vale.

1833. Does the produce of the district which will be benefited by the railway find a market at Sydney? Sydney is the principal market.

1834. Therefore, the quicker and cheaper people can get to Sydney with their produce the better for them? Yes.

1835. How far is it from East Kangaloon to Robertson? From Alcorn's store, about 3 miles.

1836. How far is it from Alcorn's store to the Sheepwash? Between 5 and 6 miles.

1837. From the Sheepwash to Bowral? $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

1838. So that if the East Kangaloon people were compelled to go *via* Robertson, they would have 3 miles to travel in that direction, 15 miles from Robertson to Moss Vale, and 6 miles from Moss Vale to Bowral, making a total of 6 miles, as against a total of 12 miles, by road and 6 by rail, if they went to the Sheepwash? Yes.

1839. Would not that be a pretty heavy handicap to the East Kangaloon people? Yes.

1840. If the Wild's Meadows and Robertson people are compelled to go to Moss Vale, and have 6 miles of extra running on the main line as compared with the Bowral route, they would be handicapped? Yes.

1841. Is there any timber from the Kangaloon district? Very little.

1842. Is any timber from the Robertson district sent away? Not that I am aware of. A mill at Kangaloon sends a little away principally up the line.

1843. I suppose it is a very small traffic compared with other products? Very small indeed.

1844. I suppose that all the timber is nearly done in the Kangaloon district? I should think so.

1845. Are there any Government reserves of good timber? Beyond Kangaloon there are; but I do not think there is any large extent of good timber country.

1846. In view of the line not paying for some years to come, would it be any benefit to the people of Robertson if the terminus of the line was at Wild's Meadows? It would bring them much nearer to a railway.

1847. Do you think they would use it? Yes.

1848. Do you know anything of the Kangaroo Valley trade? To a considerable extent their traffic goes to Moss Vale.

1849. Do you think half of it goes to Moss Vale? Yes.

1850. Do you think that if there is a station at Wild's Meadows the Kangaroo Valley people would go there instead of into Moss Vale? Yes, and save that distance of haulage by road.

1851. You have heard the proposition of Mr. Alcock about a line on the side of the swamp;—what do you think of that project? I am not sufficiently acquainted with the country to judge of it from an engineering point of view. It would serve a lot of people.

1852. From East, West, and Central Kangaloon, and also from Robertson? Yes.

1853. Do you know of many tourists visiting the Falls? There are a great many.

1854. Do people staying at Bowral go out there? Yes.

1855. *Mr. Dowel.*] How many years have you resided in this district? Permanently—about sixteen years; but I have known the district about twenty-two years.

1856. Then you remember the time when some of the selectors took up land in this brush country? Yes.

1857. Had they great difficulties to contend with? They had indeed.

1858. Do you know the grazing properties in this locality? Yes.

1859. Are there any large estates here? Yes.

1860. Have their properties been improved to an equal extent with the small properties? No, they have not.

1861. Do those large graziers keep as many stock to the acre as the selectors? I think not.

1862. They do not manage to get as much out of the soil, do they? Certainly not.

1863. Do you think that if a railway were constructed it would materially advance the interests of the selectors in the district? I do.

1864. That it would cause them to further develop their property? Yes, I think so.

1865. And it would be of considerable advantage to themselves and the State? Yes.

Thomas Rhodes Firth, Esq., Engineer-in-Charge of Trial Surveys, sworn, and examined:—

1866. *Chairman.*] What position do you hold in the Public Service? Assistant Engineer-in-Charge of Trial Surveys.

1867. Before you came with the Committee had you inspected the district? No; I was never over it before.

1868. Before coming to Bowral did you examine the plans and statements? Yes.

1869. And the line of route? Yes.

1870. From what you have seen now, what would be the relative cost of the line between Moss Vale and Robertson for the first 10 miles and the rest of the line to Robertson? The first ten miles from Moss Vale would be about as five to seven—say £5,000 a mile, making an average of about £6,000 a mile for the whole distance.

1871. Then the first 10 miles of the line could be made for £50,000? Yes; I believe it could.

1872. And the remaining 7 miles would cost about £49,000? Yes; about that.

1873. From what you have seen of the route do you think that if the line were made only as far as Wild's Meadows it would draw the traffic of the 5 miles beyond? I think there is no doubt about it.

1874. Would that be a fair test of what the railway is capable of doing in the way of earning? Not a full test. The further you carry the railway the greater the advantages and the greater the increase of traffic.

Mr.
J. G. Morris.
10 Feb., 1890.

T. R.
Firth, Esq.
10 Feb., 1890.

T. R.
Eirth, Esq.
30 Feb., 1890.

1875. But there must always be a large number of people who would be 3, 4, and 5 miles from the station? Yes; but the further you extend you afford accommodation to the greater number.
1876. But if you were making a railway at your own expense would you experiment on the first section as a test or go straight through? Well, I scarcely know.
1877. You have seen the character of the country to-day between Bowral and the Sheepwash Road? Yes.
1878. Would that make a fairly level line? Yes; tolerably level.
1879. Did you go down to the Sheepwash? Yes; I saw the crossing.
1880. Would it require a very extensive bridge? Not at that place; but I am doubtful whether we could get a line on this side as far as there. We should have to cross lower down.
1881. How much further? Probably we should have to cross 2 or 3 miles from here, otherwise we should be hugging the swamp and there are a lot of water-courses coming in from the right which would cost as much as the bridge lower down. I think the land on the other side seems more suitable for carrying the railway parallel with the river than this.
1882. But if you took your bridge lower down the line would be no use to the people of Kangaloon? By going along on the other side of the river you would still come to the Sheepwash.
1883. The crossing is a quarter of a mile long? The present one is half a mile long, but I think it possible to find a shorter one than that.
1884. You would still move your station some further distance from the Kangaloon people? I should have the station near the Sheepwash, but on the other side.
1885. You have heard what was said about having a railway on the Kangaloon side? Yes; but I do not think it would be a very simple matter to do it. It seems to me that the range runs down very steep into the swamp.
1886. If the railway were to stop in the first instance at Wild's Meadows it would be very easy for the Government to consider the expediency of continuing by the expensive route to Robertson, or even of making a line to the Falls from the top of Kangaroo Valley? It would be a little extra expense in the first instance having a terminal station there.
1887. But where the traffic is small the extra cost would not be large, would it? It would not be for the traffic alone, but you cannot always run an engine back again from the terminus of your line. Sheds would have to be provided for both rolling stock and goods. A larger goods shed would be required for a terminal station than would be required for an ordinary station. The extra expenditure would amount to £4,000 or £5,000.
1888. Have you formed any opinion as to the probable profit from the line? Only from the evidence I have heard.
1889. Do you think that the Commissioners' estimate is much out? I think that they have rather underestimated the probable revenue.
1890. From the passenger or the goods traffic? From the goods traffic.
1891. You think that the line would be a more promising one than their estimate shows? I think so.
1892. Do you think it could be made payable at all? Not with the present traffic.
1893. Do you think there is a reasonable probability of there being such an increase in the traffic as would make the railway pay? I think it would pay in four or five years.
1894. *Mr. Garrard.*] What was the estimated cost of the bridge across the Bong Bong River by the survey from Bowral to Wild's Meadows? I have not seen the detailed estimate. I should think it would be something over £20,000, looking at the difference in the total cost of the two lines.
1895. If it were possible to take the line along the Bowral side of the swamp as far as the Sheepwash, would that increase the total length of the line to Robertson by a mile or so? It would increase the length of the line by 2 miles. That is to go by Wild's Meadows.
1896. As against the Moss Vale route or the surveyed Bowral route? It might lengthen it half a mile as against the surveyed route from Bowral to Robertson, or 2 miles as against the Moss Vale route.
1897. Do you know the name of the surveyor who surveyed the Bowral line? No.
1898. What do you estimate that it would cost per mile for a line between Bowral and the Sheepwash? That is a very difficult question.
1899. Without the bridge? A little over £4,000 a mile would do it.
1900. Would it be cheaper than a line between Moss Vale and Wild's Meadows? Yes; I think it would be a little cheaper than that, but between the Sheepwash and Wild's Meadows there would be more expensive works, making the cost £5,000 a mile.
1901. That would leave you a little margin for any extra work that might be required to get to this side of the bridge at the Sheepwash? Yes, and I think it would run out pretty heavy. Several timber bridges would be required, and we could not get close to the Sheepwash without great expense. We might get within three-quarters of a mile of it.
1902. Having seen the country and heard the evidence, and having expressed the opinion that you do not think the line would pay for some time, do you not think it advisable to get all the traffic we can upon the line? By all means.
1903. And that it would be worth trying to get the traffic from Kangaloon on the line? I do. I think the route spoken of by the Sheepwash would be the best route for that district.
1904. But if the line is to be miles off you will not be likely to get the traffic? The line, as I propose, would be close to the Sheepwash, on the other side of the water.
1905. At all events you are of opinion that it is worth while to examine the country particularly about the matter? I do.
1906. *Chairman.*] You think that before coming to a decision on the subject it would be expedient to have the country near the Sheepwash examined? Yes.
1907. *Mr. Douel.*] Within the last day or two you have been over the country between Moss Vale and Robertson? Yes.
1908. From your observation do you think it likely that the engineer's estimate will be exceeded? No; I think the cost of the line has been fairly and fully estimated.
1909. Are you aware that some of the gradients are 1 in 40? Yes, some of the gradients near Robertson.
1910. Do you think it possible that some of them can be made easier? I doubt whether they can without considerably increasing the expenditure.
1911. You have had an opportunity of seeing what a large watershed there was in the vicinity of the proposed

proposed line—do you think that those 3-foot culverts will be large enough? I do not think that they will be in several places where I saw them marked.

1912. You would recommend that they should be increased in size? Yes, and put in timber.

1913. How many stations are there to be on the line? I think two, besides the terminal station.

1914. Would you recommend that some platform be put up for the convenience of settlers? Wherever there is a leading road I should recommend it.

1915. What would be the estimate of a line which would serve East and West Kangaloon, Wild's Meadows, and Burrawang, a distance of 10 miles? I don't know the estimate of the line that would go down to Wild's Meadows. I know the estimate of the line from Bowral to Robertson.

1916. You are of opinion that before any decision is arrived at it would be good policy to make another examination of the route from Bowral? Yes.

1917. *Chairman.*] With regard to the gradients—if this is only to be a branch line the gradients will not be very important? No.

1918. You have seen Robertson and the country beyond it—do you think there ever would be any extension beyond Robertson? No.

1919. You have heard what was said about the possibility of going down to Nowra? Yes, but I do not think that it is at all likely.

1920. You have heard what was said about the possibility of going to the Waterfalls? I do not think that is probable.

1921. Then the line will never be anything else but a branch line? No.

1922. And the traffic is not likely to be more than an ordinary engine can take up a gradient of 1 in 40? No.

1923. On a purely branch line of this sort a gradient of 1 in 40 is not very important? No.

1924. It being a short line, and the stiff part of it only in the last 7 miles? Yes; I think it would be bad policy to spend money in making easier gradients.

Mr. John George Morris, storekeeper and auctioneer, sworn, and further examined:—

1925. *Chairman.*] Are you well acquainted with the country between here and the Sheepwash? I am certain that a shorter route from Bowral could be got which would give sounder ground than that over which the proposed line goes. I do not think there would be any difficulty in getting to the Sheepwash from this side of the river.

1926. Do you think Mr. Firth's plan would be less favourable to the traffic—would the people cross the Sheepwash? It would be a decided disadvantage to the Kangaloon people. I should propose that the line should go between the road and the river.

1927. What route do you propose to take? Instead of crossing the river, as proposed by the red line on the plan, I should keep along between the road and the river, and I believe that there is quite a practicable route.

1928. Do you think the ground is sound enough to carry the railway? For the most part it is sounder than the ground over the river.

1929. Would you have very wide watercourses to cross where the water comes on the flat ground and spreads out? I know of only two considerable watercourses.

1930. You think that there would be no difficulties? There would be no difficulties that would not be encountered the other way.

1931. The other side is as bad as this? Yes. I should like to say, with regard to the Robertson people using the Wild's Meadows station, that my answer to that question referred only to the Robertson people proper. There are a number of Robertson farmers who would be more than 5 miles, in fact nearer 10 miles, from the station.

[Three plans.]

T. R.
Firth, Esq.
10 Feb., 1890.

Mr.
J. G. Morris.
10 Feb., 1890.

1890.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDICES, AND PLANS,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

MUDGEE TO GULGONG.

Presented to Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act,
51 Vic. No. 37, section 8.

SYDNEY : CHARLES POTTER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable JOHN LACKEY, Vice-Chairman.
 The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN.
 The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
 The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
 The Honorable GEORGE HENRY COX.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

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 JACOB GARRARD, Esquire.
 HENRY COPELAND, Esquire.
 JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esquire.
 WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esquire.
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esquire.
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 CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esquire.

MEMBERS OF THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

JACOB GARRARD, Esquire, Chairman.
 The Honorable FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.
 EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esquire.
 JOHN HURLEY, Esquire.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM MUDGEES TO GULGONG.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, and the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon the expediency of "constructing a line of railway from Mudgee to Gulgong," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is not expedient the proposed railway should be constructed, and in accordance with the provision of sub-section IV, of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

1. The proposed railway is described as a continuation of the branch line from Wallerawang to Mudgee, extending from Mudgee through fairly easy country, and across the Cudgegong River, to Gulgong, a distance of 18 miles 67 chains 55 links. The only expensive work on the extension would be the bridge over the Cudgegong River, and the principal difficulties along the route would be met with in crossing the range of hilly ground to the north of the river. The grade would probably be 1 in 75 or 1 in 80. Description of the proposed railway.

2. The estimated total cost of the line is £109,330, or £5,800 per mile. Originally the estimate of cost was £131,800, or £6,988 per mile, this estimate having been based on a trial survey made some time ago. Since the date of the original estimate the matter has been looked into more carefully, and it has been found that the line can be constructed for the reduced amount stated. Estimate of cost.

3. The report of the Railway Commissioners upon the proposed railway represents, in a comparison between the annual cost and the traffic estimate, an annual loss of £6,126, but the Commissioners say that as the district is adapted for agricultural purposes "it is only reasonable to anticipate that the construction of this piece of line would largely increase the area of land brought under cultivation, and so considerably augment the revenue of the railway." This traffic, they further state, while benefiting the extension would also bring an accession to the parent, or Mudgee to Wallerawang, line. Railway Commissioners' report.

4. Published with the evidence obtained on the proposed railway, and attached to this Report, will be found a *précis* of proceedings in relation to the line from as far back as 1883,—by which it will be seen that associated with the proposal to connect Mudgee with Gulgong, there has all along been a conviction that the line must not stop at Gulgong, but must be extended in order to join with the Great Northern, or the Great Western, Railway. History of the proposal.

5. The character of the country through which the proposed railway would go can be understood from the report of a Sectional Committee who visited the district. That report represents that the line would pass through some large estates in which Character of the country to be traversed by the railway.

which there is only limited agricultural settlement, the land being used chiefly for grazing purposes ; but that a few miles east of the surveyed route there is a tract of agricultural country known as the Canadian and Springfield, which is well settled and cultivated, and west of the route there are a number of agricultural holdings on M'Donald Creek. The land in these agricultural areas is of a superior kind, producing wheat to the extent of from 18 to 20 bushels per acre, and large quantities of maize and hay. Fruit growing is also followed, and dairy farming has been commenced and is likely to be extended. The grazing industry on the pastoral lands is carried on successfully, and the district is a favourite one for sheep in seasons of drought. Mining though in the past a very flourishing industry in and around Gulgong, at the present time is extremely depressed, but there is hope of improvement.

Traffic prospects.

6. Traffic prospects in connection with the railway do not appear to be satisfactory. The Sectional Committee are of opinion that the receipts from the line "would fall short of meeting interest on capital and working expenses, but would probably exceed the Railway Commissioners' estimate." That estimate was based upon information obtained by Mr. John Harper, Railway Goods Superintendent, who travelled from Mudgee to Gulgong for the purpose of collecting it. This officer was examined by the Committee, and he considers that by the construction of the railway "there would be an interchange of commodities between the two towns which does not take place now," together with a passenger traffic. He also contends, as the Railway Commissioners, in much the same terms, do in their report, that the present railway to Mudgee being a non-paying line all the traffic that can be brought to it, if it will only pay working expenses on the railway bringing it, will help to meet the interest and working expenses of the Mudgee line. At the same time, however, he admits that when at Gulgong it was represented to him that the best market for the district was westward rather than eastward, and that an extension of the railway from Mudgee to Gulgong and thence into the interior would be far more serviceable to the population in and around Gulgong than a railway which merely connected them with Mudgee.

Nature of the evidence respecting the railway.

7. The want of facilities for finding markets in the interior of the Colony westward of Gulgong is a prominent feature in the evidence given by most of the witnesses examined. To construct a railway from Mudgee to Gulgong and let it terminate there, it is emphatically stated, will not pay. It will be unprofitable to the State and of little use to the people of either Mudgee or Gulgong. What the population of Gulgong and the district surrounding it require is means for sending their produce into the interior, where, they say, they can supply less favoured districts with wheat and fodder, advantageously to those districts and profitably to themselves, as well as to the railway conveying the produce, and at the same time in successful competition with other agricultural centres already enjoying the benefits of railway communication with some of those markets. To merely construct a railway as proposed, from Mudgee to Gulgong, with no definite idea of carrying it further, would be to repeat the mistake apparent in the construction of the railway from Wallerawang to Mudgee. Evidence in plenty will be found as to the agricultural capabilities of the Gulgong district and of country within a convenient distance of it, and of the unprofitableness of sending produce to Sydney, and the effect of this in restricting the amount of production. Westward and north-west are the directions in which the people desire to trade, and only in these directions, they say, can they trade satisfactorily. Coonamble is a point which many persons in Mudgee and Gulgong regard as that to which a railway westward from Gulgong should be taken, but great advantages are also seen in an extension which, by connecting with a line from Werris Creek to Dubbo, would give to Gulgong and Mudgee the opportunity for sending produce both westward and north-west. In times of drought a suitable market could be found westward at Dubbo, or even as far as Bourke or Cobar ; and north-west, produce could be sent to districts less favoured by nature than that of Gulgong, and with which it is believed a profitable trade could be carried on. By railway facilities of this kind, it is urged, the people of Mudgee and Gulgong would be benefited, new country would be opened, settlement would extend and production increase, and the railway itself would undoubtedly pay.

8. The Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways has endeavoured to effect as much improvement as possible in the line as it was based on the original trial survey. Like many other surveys of the kind this one was made merely in order to show that the railway was practicable, and not with the object of laying down the best line; and since the original estimate of cost was submitted the country through which the railway would pass has been more closely examined with a view to improvement. In the improved line the earthworks are considerably less, the estimate for a bridge over the Cudgegong River has been very much cut down, and the grades have been reduced, without increasing the cost, from 1 in 40 to 1 in 80. The difference between the results of the examination with the object of improving the line, and the line as it was represented by the original trial survey, appears to have impressed the Railway Construction Department with the necessity for a change in the practice hitherto followed in connection with surveys of proposed railways. "The old method," the Acting Engineer-in-Chief says, in his evidence, "was just to run a trial line as quickly as possible, and leave it to the surveyors who did the permanent staking to improve it. . . . I am now adopting a different plan. . . . I see now that it is most desirable that the trial surveys should be conducted with as much accuracy as possible, so as to show what the country is capable of; but at that time it was not considered necessary. A trial survey was run only for the purpose of showing whether a line was practicable or not."

Improvements
in the con-
struction of
the railway.

9. In the course of the inquiry made by the Sectional Committee they became aware that a survey was in progress of a line from Gulgong to Wellington, and they came to the conclusion that as the construction of such a railway would be very expensive, while the line would not serve the interests of the Gulgong district, the survey should be discontinued. This conclusion they stated in their report, and subsequently, at the instance of the Chairman of the Sectional Committee, this portion of the report was forwarded in a letter from the General Committee to the Minister for Works, who expressed his thanks to the Committee for having drawn his attention to the matter.

Survey from
Gulgong to
Wellington.

10. The Committee, after carefully considering the evidence, together with the report of the Sectional Committee, are of opinion that the railway, as proposed, ought not to be constructed, and on Thursday, 24th April, 1890, they passed the following resolution:—

Resolution
arrived at by
the Commit-
tee.

Moved by Mr. Garrard, and seconded by Mr. Humphery,—

"That in the opinion of the Committee it is not expedient the proposed railway from Mudgee to Gulgong, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out, they being of opinion that any extension of the Mudgee Railway should form part of a more comprehensive proposal, the consideration of which should be deferred until after a suggestion for a connection of the Northern and Western systems by a line between Dubbo and Werris Creek has been dealt with."

The resolution was passed on the following division:—

Ayes, 10.
Mr. Lackey,
Dr. Garran,
Mr. Humphery,
Mr. Trickett,
Mr. Cox,
Mr. Garrard,
Mr. Tonkin,
Mr. Dowel,
Mr. Hurley,
Mr. Lee.

Noes, 1.
Mr. O'Sullivan.

J. P. ABBOTT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 6th May, 1890.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM MUDGEES TO GULGONG.

THURSDAY, 23 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).	
The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.	JACOB GARRARD, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.	EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.	JOHN HURLEY, Esq.
CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.	

The Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Mudgee to Gulgong.

Joseph Barling, Esq., Under Secretary for Public Works, sworn and examined:—

1. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You are the Under Secretary for Public Works? I am.
2. Will you give us the particulars relating to the proposed railway from Mudgee to Gulgong? Yes, I hand in the papers, a *précis* of the documents relating to the line, the Commissioners' report upon it, and the official description of the line. [*Vide Appendix.*]
3. *Chairman.*] That is an historical record of the action of the Department in reference to the line? Yes.
4. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Can you tell the Committee whether it is in contemplation to take the line beyond Gulgong? I am not in a position to say anything with regard to that. I shall be on a future occasion. I have not had an opportunity of consulting the Minister on it.

J. Barling,
Esq.
23 Jan., 1890.

TUESDAY, 28 JANUARY, 1890.

Present:—

JOSEPH PALMER ABBOTT, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).	
The Hon. JOHN LACKEY.	HENRY COPELAND, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN.	JAMES EBENEZER TONKIN, Esq.
The Hon. GEORGE HENRY COX.	WILLIAM SPRINGTHORPE DOWEL, Esq.
JACOB GARRARD, Esq.	CHARLES ALFRED LEE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Mudgee to Gulgong.

Henry Deane, Esq., Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, sworn and examined:—

5. *Mr. Tonkin.*] You are Acting Engineer-in-Chief for Railways? Yes.
6. Can you give us any information on this proposed line from Mudgee to Gulgong? Yes. I can give you the length of the line and the estimated cost. Since this estimate of cost was submitted I have had the country examined with a view to improvement. The estimate and description that were given were merely from a trial survey that was made some time ago.
7. What was the length then? About 19 miles.
8. And the estimate? The estimate then was £131,800, or £6,988 per mile.
9. Since that survey was made have you in any way altered the course? I have no detailed estimate made; there has not been time to do it; but I find that the estimate could be reduced to £109,330 for the total, or £5,800 per mile.
10. In what manner has that been reduced from the original estimate of cost? It has been reduced in two ways: the earthworks are considerably less, and the estimate for a bridge over the Cudgegong River has been cut down considerably.
11. What were the grades? The grades on the original line were, I think, without referring, 1 in 40, but on this line we can get 1 in 75 or 1 in 80 without difficulty. That trial survey was made some time ago, and like many of the trial surveys, it has been made just for the sake of showing whether the line was practicable or not, without regard to the object of showing what the best line might be.

H. Deane,
Esq.
28 Jan., 1890.

- H. Deane, Esq.
28 Jan., 1890.
12. Is the proposed line now before us less or more in distance? It is about the same distance.
13. Can you tell us where the material deviation takes place that alters the cost so much? It does not deviate very much from the present line. On this map the pale red line shows the line surveyed originally, and the dotted line shows the improvement proposed by Mr. Firth, who has recently been over the line.
14. Is this what you term a light line of railway? The permanent way is composed of 60-lb. rails, and so on.
15. Is it fenced? Yes; fencing is allowed for.
16. Are the reduced earthworks in this construction consequent on the deviations you have made? Yes, in some measure.
17. Have you been over the line yourself? No, I have not.
18. You do not know, of course then, whether material for the construction of the line can be easily got? I have only Mr. Firth's report.
19. Have you a detailed statement of the cost of this line which you could give us;—how do you reduce the cost of the bridge? I find that the cost of the bridge was put down at £17,500, at the original site, but on the plan there is a very bad crossing there. The crossing we can adopt on the improved line will very much reduce the length of the bridge, and make a better crossing altogether, and the bridge at that place could be made for £5,500.
20. When was the original survey made—the survey that makes this cost so much more—the first survey we have before us with grades of 1 in 40? I have not got the date here; it was some years ago.
21. How long is it since you made this alteration? I have revised it since Mr. Firth was over the line, and that was last month I believe.
22. Can you tell us how far the new site for the bridge is from the old site? About 1¼ mile. This is a map showing the deviation.
23. I suppose that that would be about the greatest deviation you have from the original survey? The line does not deviate from the other to that extent, and not more than a quarter of a mile, but by keeping on one side of the river and crossing higher up there is a difference of a mile and a quarter in the two crossings.
24. You have gone up on one side of the river with the new line, and were on the other side with the old line? Yes. The new line crosses the river sooner than the old line did.
25. Do you know who was the original surveyor of this line? Mr. Carter, who is not now in the service.
26. Was this deviation made at your suggestion from looking over the plans or the specification or anything of the sort? Yes. I examined these plans with Mr. Firth before he went over the line, and discussed the matter with him. I thought it was quite evident that the line could be materially improved; even without examination I was quite sure it could be done; in fact I have always thought so.
27. Do you know whether Mr. Whitton approved of this proposed line as surveyed originally? I do not think it was ever exactly approved of.
28. But it was accepted in the office, I suppose, as the proper surveyed line for that railway if one were to be constructed? No. The old method was just to run a trial line as quickly as possible, and leave it to the surveyors who did the permanent staking to improve it.
29. Has this permanent staking taken place? No, it has not. But I am now adopting a different plan, for I saw the necessity of it. There was not the necessity at that time; but I see now that it is most desirable that the trial surveys should be conducted with as much accuracy as possible, so as to show what the country is capable of; but at that time it was not considered necessary. A trial survey was run only for the purpose of showing whether a line was practicable or not.
30. Have we not had many lines constructed purely on the original survey without any alteration or attempts to reduce the grades? No, I do not think there has been one which has not been altered to some extent.

John Harper, Esq., Railway Goods Superintendent, sworn and examined:—

- J. Harper, Esq.
28 Jan., 1890.
31. *Mr. Cox.*] What are you in the Public Service? Superintendent of goods.
32. Have you visited the country between Mudgee and Gulgong on this proposed railway route? I have travelled from Mudgee to Gulgong for the purpose of gathering information for the Commissioners.
33. How did you gather the information? At the Mudgee station by an inspection of the books, and from local sources at Gulgong.
- 33½. Did you go along the surveyed line? No.
34. You are able to speak only as to traffic statistics? Yes.
35. Have you seen the Commissioners' report on the supposed traffic? Yes.
36. Was that taken from your report or was that an independent report? That report was made from the figures obtained by me.
37. Do you think that continuing the line from Mudgee to Gulgong would gather any more traffic than is already gathered at Mudgee? I think there would be a local traffic between Gulgong and Mudgee which does not at present exist.
38. What kind of traffic? Well, passenger traffic, and I also think that there would be an interchange of commodities between the two towns which does not take place now.
39. But the only means for the Gulgong people to get their produce to market is to take it to Mudgee to be transmitted on? Yes, to its destination.
40. Did you hear any of the inhabitants there say that their market was outside rather than to the coast? I heard a great many statements made there; I heard the inhabitants say they expected to get a market in the western interior if they had a railway.
41. And do they point to this proposed line with the idea that it would be extended hereafter to the western interior? That was the idea of those to whom I spoke.
42. Very few there would be inclined to support 19 miles of line unless it was the commencement of a railway to the western interior? I would not like to say that. I think they would be quite satisfied to get the line under any circumstances.
43. Which people? The Gulgong people.
44. What interchange of commodities do you suppose would take place between the two towns? At the present time the Gulgong people get their goods in bulk from Sydney, and we also find that where there is short railway communication between two towns like that there are interchanges of commodities carried to storekeepers, which would not occur with road carriage.
- 45.

45. Since the first estimate was sent in to the Commissioners are you aware that a new survey has been made very much lessening the cost? No.
46. Therefore if the cost is lessened something more than £1,000 per mile, it will make a great difference to the estimate you have formed of working expenses? I have not made any estimate of working expenses; that is the Commissioners' estimate.
47. You have merely estimated what you suppose would be a fair amount to put down for increased traffic on the line? I took the actual traffic which had been carried to Mudgee and districts, which would be supplied were Gulgong the terminus.
48. Have you heard that it was in contemplation to construct a railway from Gulgong westward, and in what direction? I have not heard it mentioned.
49. Do you think it would be desirable in the interest of the community that the railway should be carried from Mudgee to Gulgong and there remain a terminus for ever? My impression is that, the Mudgee line being a non-paying one, all the traffic we can bring to it, if it will only pay working expenses, will help to pay the cost of interest and working expenses.
50. How could the working expenses be lessened, say, on a railway from Mudgee to Wallerawang, if you only had traffic from Mudgee to Gulgong? Simply because we would expect to double the traffic of the 18 miles bridged over.
51. Would that help to pay for the non-paying railway between Mudgee and Wallerawang? Yes.
52. In what way? If it realised the average working expenses it would assist to pay it, because the extension of 18 miles would be a cheaply-worked line.
53. Do you know the country beyond Gulgong? No.
54. Did you travel much round Gulgong? No; my visit was purely for statistical purposes.
55. This estimate, sent in by the Commissioners, is dated 4th September? Yes.
56. We have just heard from another witness that the estimate has been very much reduced, by the re-marking of the line, consequently the estimate given here by the Railway Commissioners would not be of any value in estimating the probable receipts from a line so constructed? The receipts would be altered.
57. So much per cent. if the capital expenses and other expenses were lessened? I think that only working expense was given.
- 57½. Have you a copy of the Commissioners' report? Yes, it says that the permanent way expenses would be £1,900, the traffic expenses £750, and the locomotive expenses £500. The traffic expenses I do not think would be diminished in any way by any deviation, and the locomotive expenses I take it represent one-third of the working of a locomotive.
58. So the annual working expenses would be £3,150? Yes.
59. In trying to make a non-paying railway pay, you would do so by inducing traffic either to or from that particular point to which it then had arrived? Yes.
60. I asked you just now whether you were aware that people in the neighbourhood were very desirous to continue the railway on into the western interior; do you know in which direction they are most in accord that it should be carried? I heard so many different opinions expressed; one wanted to junction at Wellington, another at Dubbo, another wished the line continued out to Coonabarabran.
61. Was there a fairly universal expression of opinion that the market for that part of the country should be westward rather than eastward? That appeared to be the general impression.
62. Consequently, for any large extension of traffic the line should be continued westward in order to bring the products of an agricultural district into a purely pastoral district, and enable the products of the pastoral district to come in by the same line that took out the cereals? No doubt that was the theory of the supporters of the line.
63. You think that is feasible? Yes, it sounds feasible.
64. Do you think that that is the only way in which this line could be made to pay? I would not be prepared to say that. One strong argument at Gulgong was, that owing to such a large area of wheat-growing land being held under mineral lease, they were unable to produce as much as the district was capable of producing.
65. Do you know as a fact that a very large portion of exceedingly rich land round Gulgong is locked up as a gold-field reserve? I have heard it stated, and have no reason to doubt it.
66. Consequently the area under cultivation is very much less than it would be if this land were thrown open to selection? That is the statement.
67. Do you know the nature of the soil near Gulgong? Yes, I saw some good wheat growing.
68. It is what is called a chocolate soil? Yes.
69. At what season of the year were you there? On the 5th August.
70. I presume that in your travels about there you saw that a comparatively small proportion was under cultivation, compared with the large amount in a state of nature? Yes.

Thomas Rhodes Firth, Esq., Assistant Engineer-in-charge of Trial Surveys, sworn and examined:—

71. *Mr. Dowel.*] Are you in the Government service? Yes.
72. What is your position? Assistant-engineer in charge of trial surveys.
73. Will you be good enough to give the Committee any information you have respecting this proposed line from Mudgee to Gulgong; you surveyed the line I believe? I went over the line about six weeks since, with a view to see if any improvements could be made on the old line. I had nothing to do with the original survey.
74. What was the result of your visit? I found that the gradients could be considerably eased, and the works lightened altogether.
75. What did you find the gradients? On the original section there was a long piece—I think about 2 miles—1 in 40, up from the Cudgong River. That I could reduce to 1 in 80.
76. Without increasing the cost very materially? Without increasing the cost at all.
77. Did you propose to alter the curves as well? Not to make them any sharper. There will be a few more curves but none any sharper than in the old survey.
78. Did you propose to improve the line at all as regards excavations or embankments? In one or two places I noticed we could considerably lighten the earthworks, and ease the grades at the same time.
79. You went over the whole of the proposed route? Yes, as near to it as the fenced lines would allow me to go.

J. Harper,
Esq.
28 Jan., 1890.

T. R. Firth,
Esq.
28 Jan., 1890.

- T. R. Firth, Esq.
28 Jan., 1890.
80. What is the character of the country through which the line would pass? It is good soil.
81. What about the timber? In the close neighbourhood of the line I did not see any very good timber; fencing timber might be got, but I think that bridge timbers, and probably sleepers, would have to come some distance.
82. Did you make any exploration of the country any distance outside the proposed line? No; not any distance from the proposed line.
83. Can you give the Committee any information in reference to bridges on the line? The only bridge of importance is the one over the Cudgegong River, and another over the Three-mile Creek; the others will be 12-foot openings at the largest, I think.
84. What is the estimated cost of the bridge over the Cudgegong? I think that about £12,000 has been put down for that. A detailed estimate has not been got out of the cost of that, because the line I proposed to take has not yet been surveyed; but I am certain that amount can do for the bridge.
85. Of what material do you propose to construct that bridge? Timber.
86. As an engineer do you find any great difficulties in the construction of this line? No; no great difficulties.
87. Do you know what the estimated cost is per mile? The original estimate, I think, is £6,988.
88. And your proposed alterations will bring the amount down something like £1,000 per mile, will they not? About that.
89. Would you consider this really a branch line or a trunk line? At the present time, if it is not carried beyond Gulgong, of course it is a continuation of the branch line.
90. Does it not strike you that £5,000 per mile for a branch line is rather a large amount? Not for that country—not at all.
91. As an engineer, do you think that this Committee is warranted in recommending the Government to construct branch lines at a cost of £5,000 per mile? I do not know anything at all about that. You may call the line whatever you like; that would be the cost of it whether it is a branch line or a trunk line. A branch line to-day might be a trunk line next week.
92. From its position is it likely to be carried farther, so as to make it a trunk line (say) to Coonamble or some other route? I think it is very probable.
93. You think there is a probability of this line being extended from Gulgong, and that that will not remain a terminus? I do not think that Gulgong will remain a terminus.
94. Have you explored the country at all beyond Gulgong? I came across from Dubbo over the route now being surveyed; a trial survey was being made, and I examined that route.
95. Do you think it is likely that route will be adopted by the department? That I cannot say. I should look upon it as a political question.
96. What is your opinion with regard to the route; is it a practicable route? Yes, and it is a very good line. My estimate in going through without any figures or dimensions, but based on my own knowledge and judgment of the country, was that it would cost £5,800 a mile.
97. So even a probable extension would not be done under £5,000 or £6,000 a mile? To Dubbo.
98. In reference to ballast on this particular line did you find a sufficient quantity? I think that ballast could be got out of all the ranges—the different spurs that are gone through. I could find no real ballast pit but I do not think there would be any difficulty in getting ballast.
99. Is there not natural ballast through which the line would pass—gravel hills or stone? I do not think that there is much gravel about. There is some near Dubbo, but I do not remember seeing much between Mudgee and Gulgong.
100. How far do you anticipate that the cartage of your ballast would be? A mile and a half or 2 miles perhaps. I expect some ballast would be got in almost every hill.
101. How long were you employed in making this recent examination of the line from Mudgee to Gulgong? Three days.
102. Was there anyone with you assisting you in the matter? I had a surveyor with me. I brought him with me because it is very probable that if the survey is completed he is the one who will have to do the work, and he knows a little about that part of the country, and so I had him with me the whole of the time.
103. I presume that you are a railway engineer well accustomed to the usual modes of constructing railways? I have been constructing railways all my life.
104. Can you say whether the man who made the original survey was an engineer or a surveyor? I would not say that he was an engineer.
105. You would be inclined to say that he was a surveyor? Yes, I believe he was a surveyor.
106. Do you think it judicious on the part of the department to send these surveyors in the first instance to deal with such an important matter as the laying out of a line; don't you think it is more a matter for an engineer? Yes, I do. I may say with regard to this portion where I take out the 1 in 40 gradient and reduced it to 1 in 80, originally the line surveyed did not go through Gulgong but afterwards the survey was ordered to be made into Gulgong, and thus it was a branch from this other line. My alteration is that I go 2 miles farther back to start the branch, and then I get on to the same point and follow the same line as the other. I think it was through the surveyor being altogether in a hurry to get the work done that he started at the nearest point he could get to make a branch line. I think that was the reason.
107. As an engineer can you tell me what is the difference between the haulage power on 1 in 40 and on 1 in 80? I have not come prepared to give you correct figures as to the haulage power of any locomotive.
108. Is it a very difficult calculation for an engineer to make? No; it is not a difficult calculation to make but a formula that every engineer does not carry in his head when not accustomed to make use of it, and it is a calculation I am not in the habit of making and therefore do not carry in my head.
109. How long will it take you to make it? Not very long.
110. You say a reduction from 1 in 40 to 1 in 80 would not entail any great cost? I think not.
111. Who was the original surveyor? I do not know.
112. *Chairman.*] It was Mr. Carter? Mr. Carter is not now in the department.
113. *Mr. Dowell.*] You will furnish the Committee with a statement of the difference in haulage power on a grade of 1 in 40 and on a grade of 1 in 80? Yes.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Mudgee to Gulgong.

APPENDIX.

A.

PRECIS OF PROCEEDINGS IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED RAILWAY, MUDGEE TO GULGONG, AND EXTENSION TO DUBBO OR WELLINGTON.

THERE would appear to have been earlier action in this matter, but the papers in connection therewith are missing. The following is a *precis* of the papers which are now on the file.

The Municipal Council of Gulgong wrote to the Members for the district, requesting them to use their influence to obtain a survey of a line from Gulgong to Mudgee. A survey had already been made as far as Slasher's Flat, and they desired to have it completed. They added that the Mudgee and Coonamble people were agitating for a line to the latter place, via Gulgong. The Members were informed by the department that a survey to Coonamble had been authorized, and would go as near to Gulgong as possible. May, 1883

The Council Clerk wrote to the Engineer-in-Chief in connection with the statement last referred to, that if the survey then being made, via Rouse's Guntawang Paddock and the Cobborah Road, were adopted, it would place the station $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the town. Another route then in course of being marked out from Rouse's paddock to near the powder magazine, would bring the station within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of the town, and would pass nearly all the way through Government land. Again, if a line were surveyed from the back of Hutchinson's farm by the Three-mile to the cemetery, and thence to the powder magazine, the station would be close to the town. 15 Sept., 1883.

Subsequent to this other documents bearing on the subject were received, but are not now on the file. Mr. Wall, M.P., wrote to the Minister, reminding him of a promise made by him (as alleged) to a deputation which waited upon him the previous year, to the effect that he would instruct Mr. Townsend to carry out the Colo Valley survey to Wellington, and intimating that the persons concerned had it in view to form another deputation to wait upon the Minister to urge the performance of that promise. 26 Sept., 1883

Mr. Whitton, in reply to the Minister, stated that, unless expressly ordered by the Minister, he did not intend to carry out the survey in question. The report of the deputation referred to above is one of the missing papers, but on the paper now under notice the Minister's utterance on that occasion was quoted for the Minister's information. "He thought he could promise a continuation of the survey (to Wellington.) The country could not lose much by that. Whatever the result, the information thus gained would always be available." The Minister directed that the matter should stand over.

Mr. Wall, M.P., addressed Mr. Secretary Fletcher, pointing out that his predecessor had given a definite promise that he would authorize the completion of the Colo Valley survey from Mudgee to Wellington, via Gulgong, and pressing for early attention to the matter. The Minister minuted that, as he found by the papers that a promise had been given, the survey must be put in hand as soon as the business of the Department would admit. 17 Jan., 1889.

Messrs. Wall and Black, M's.P., waited on Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith to urge the same matter. They stated that the market for produce from the Mudgee district was up the Western Line, and that to reach Wellington by rail involved a detour of 220 miles, via Wallerawang and Bathurst, while the actual distance was only 47 miles. They had asked for this survey as a continuation of the Colo Valley route, but it was immaterial whether it were done so, or as an independent work. Mr. Whitton was of opinion that, if a line were surveyed from Mudgee to the Western Line, via Gulgong, it would be desirable to connect at Dubbo instead of Wellington, adding that, as a line had already been surveyed from Mudgee to Coonamble, via Gulgong, it would only be necessary now to make a trial survey from the latter place. The Minister, on the strength of this opinion of Mr. Whitton, authorized a trial survey from Gulgong to the Western Line at Dubbo. 22 Mar., 1889

Mr. Haynes, M.P., forwarded to the Minister resolutions carried at a public meeting held at Gulgong, to the effect— (1) that the Government be urged to put the work in hand immediately on the completion of the above survey; (2) that the proposed extension would be an important feeder to the Mudgee line, and make it a paying concern, while it would relieve the Western Line of a great part of the heavy traffic, and effect a saving in fares and freight for the people of the western districts and Bourke; and (3) that they were prepared to lay before the Railway Commissioners and the Public Works Committee statistics proving that the line would pay from the outset. 5 June, 1889.

A public meeting was held at Goolma, at which resolutions in favour of a line from Gulgong to Wellington via Goolma, and condemnatory of the Dubbo line, were carried. 15 June, 1889.

A public meeting was also held at Wellington, at which similar views were affirmed, and it was shown by a quotation from an official document that Mr. Commissioner Goodchap was in favour of Wellington as the point of connection with the western line. 14 June, 1889.

Mr. Ferguson, M.P., waited on Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith to advocate the Wellington route. He maintained that the adoption of that route would save 30 miles of railway construction, and that the quality of the land was not surpassed in the whole Colony. He urged that a surveyor might be sent to examine the two routes, and report which of them was the preferable one. The Minister promised to confer with the Engineer-in-Chief, and to consider the question of having an alternative survey made—Gulgong to Wellington. Mr. Deane reported that no survey had been made from Gulgong to Wellington, but that only 20 miles of survey would be required to connect with the line already surveyed from Wellington to Werris Creek. Recommended that that survey should be put in hand on the completion of survey Gulgong to Dubbo. It was most desirable to have full information as to the best route before adopting any. The Minister approved, and the surveyors on the Gulgong-Dubbo survey were instructed accordingly. 25 June, 1889.

Mr. Haynes, M.P., wrote, urging early action in connection with the extension to Gulgong.

Mr. Deane reported that the survey from Mudgee to Gulgong was completed, but before anything further was done the two surveys—Gulgong to Dubbo, and Gulgong to Wellington—must be finished, as the connection of Mudgee with the western line would have to be considered as a whole. They would be completed in about five months, when a full report would be submitted. 4 July, 1889.

The Railway Commissioners were asked to report on the line Mudgee to Gulgong, and, in anticipation of their own visit, they despatched Mr. Superintendent Harper on a tour of observation over the district. Mr. Harper reported that besides Gulgong the settlements of Coolah, Cobbora, Mundooran, Denistown, and Coonabarabran would be served by the proposed line. The following were particulars of traffic which passed through Mudgee from and to these districts in the most favourable season (1887-1888).

To—	360 tons special class traffic.
	1,000 tons 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th classes.
From—	750 tons wheat, flour, &c.
	50 trucks hay, straw, &c.
	100 tons skins, hides, &c.
	60 tons 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th classes.
	500 trucks cattle.
	400 trucks sheep.
	1,250 tons wool.

These

These goods, if carried the whole distance of 18 miles, would bring us £912 13s. of additional revenue. He estimated the passenger traffic at £425, and adding £300 for possible increase of local traffic we had an estimated total traffic, amounting to £1,637 13s. The district was a good one, having large areas of fine land, and well-known mineral resources. Opinions (locally) were divided as to the course which any extension beyond Gulgong should take. Until the northern system was connected with the south and west the question of the direction the traffic would take must remain an open and debatable one. The population of Gulgong was said to be 1,200.

The Railway Commissioners submitted a report on the line, but as the document itself will be laid before the Committee it need not be condensed here.

C. A. B.,
22/1/90.

B.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 4 September, 1889.

Proposed Line of Railway from Mudgee to Gulgong, 18 miles 68 chains.

IN accordance with section 13 of the Public Works Act, 1888, we beg to report as under :—

Cost of Construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief estimates the cost of constructing the line (exclusive of land and compensation), at £131,800

Annual Cost—

Capital expenditure, at 3½ per cent. £4,613

The estimated cost of working would be as under—

Permanent way expenses	£1,900
Traffic expenses	750
Locomotive expenses	500
	£3,150

Total annual cost £7,763

Traffic Estimate—

Coaching and mails	£525 0 0
Goods and live stock	1,112 13 0
	£1,637 13 0

It will be seen from the foregoing figures that the extension of the line from Mudgee to Gulgong would not, if based on present number of passengers and tonnage of goods passing through Mudgee *en route* to Gulgong, and places beyond, pay even the working expenses of the line, but as the district passed through is adapted for agricultural purposes, it is only reasonable to anticipate that the construction of this piece of line would largely increase the area of land brought under cultivation, and so considerably augment the revenue of the railway.

The Mudgee line does not pay its working expenses, and there is no immediate prospect of it improving, except by its extension in the direction indicated, as most of the expected increased traffic would not only benefit the proposed extension but would also pass along the line at present in use, and so bring an accession of revenue to the parent line.

The Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereunto affixed this 4th day of September, in the year of our Lord 1889, in the presence of,—	}	E. M. G. EDDY,	(L.S.)
		Chief Commissioner.	
		W. M. FEHON,	(L.S.)
		Commissioner.	
		CHARLES OLIVER,	(L.S.)
		Commissioner.	
H. M'LACHLAN.			

C.

OFFICIAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

Mudgee to Gulgong; length, 18 miles 67 chains 55 links.

The estimated cost of constructing a single line of Railway is £131,800, or £6,988 per mile, exclusive of cost of land and compensation.

THIS proposed line is a continuation of the branch line from Wallerawang, which is now terminated in Mudgee, at 189 miles 13 chains 15 links from Sydney.

The proposed line is terminated alongside Caledonian-street in Gulgong, at 208 miles and 70 links, being a length of 18 miles 67 chains 55 links.

The country traversed is fairly easy throughout. The only expensive work would be the bridge over the Cudgegong River, which is crossed at 199 miles; and the chief difficulties on the route are the crossing of the range of hilly ground to the north of the river.

A trial survey is now being made to connect Gulgong with Dubbo. The extension northwards from Gulgong to Coonamble, and also a branch from this at Mendoran to Narrabri, *via* Coonabarabran, have already been surveyed.

August, 1889.

D.

[*To evidence of T. R. Firth, Esq.*]

LOCOMOTIVE HAULAGE AND GRADIENTS.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch,
Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Sydney, 29 January, 1890.

MEMORANDUM.

I HAVE the honor to inform the Committee, in reply to a question asked me yesterday during my examination respecting the line from Mudgee to Gulgong, that a locomotive will haul a gross load of 74 per cent. more on a gradient of 1 in 80 than on a grade of 1 in 40, all other things being equal.

The Chairman, Public Works Committee.

THOMAS R. FIRTH.

APPENDIX.

7

E.
MUDGE TO GULGONG RAILWAY.
Book of Reference to Parliamentary Plan.

Name of Parish.	No. on Plan.	Description of Property.	State of Cultivation.	Names of		Remarks.
				Owners.	Occupiers.	
County of Wellington.						
Mudgee	1	Church street		Crown		
"	2	Town allotment		"		
"	3	"		"		
"	4	"		"		
"	5	"		"		
"	6	"		"		
"	7	"		"		
"	8	"		"		
"	9	"		"		
"	10	"		"		
"	11	"		"		
"	12	Perry-street		"		
"	13	Town allotment		Abel Woodcraft.	Vacant.	
"	14	"		"	Wm. Hedley.	
"	15	"		— Burns	Vacant.	
"	16	"		E. A. Nardin	"	
"	17	"		Jas. M'Grugan	"	
"	18	"		"		
"	19	"		Abel Woodcraft.	Vacant.	
"	20	Town allotment and house		W. J. Stewart	W. J. Stewart.	
"	21	Town allotment		"	Vacant.	
"	22	"		George Scott	"	
"	23	Douro-street		Crown		
"	24	Town allotment		"		
"	25	"		"		
"	26	"		"		
"	27	Lane		"		
"	28	Town allotment and house		Edward Perran	R. Crawford.	
"	29	Town allotment		"		
"	30	"		Geo. Rochester	Mrs. Shipway.	
"	31	House and town allotment		"		
"	32	Town allotment		"		
"	33	"		"		
"	34	Court-street		"		
"	35	Inglis-street		"		
"	36	Town allotment		"		
"	37	"		Emma King		
"	38	"		"		
"	39	"		— Cox	— Cox.	
"	40	Lane		Crown		
"	41	Town allotment		"	F. MacIntosh.	
"	42	House and allotment		F. MacIntosh		
"	43	Town allotment		"		
"	44	"		"		
"	45	Horatio-street		"		
"	46	Cox-street		"		
"	47	Town allotment		Peter Rheinberger	Vacant.	
"	48	"		"		
"	49	House and allotment		J. Bayley	H. Pye.	
"	50	Lane		Crown		
"	51	Bush land		Sam Blackman	Vacant.	
"	52	"	Partly cleared.	Mrs. A. Cox	"	
"	53	Road		Crown		
"	54	Bush land		— Smith	— Smith.	
"	55	Grazing land		"	"	
"	56	Cleared land	Cultivated	"	"	
"	57	Road to Hill End		Crown		
Munna	58	Grazing land	Cleared	H. Crossing	H. Crossing.	
"	59	House, &c., and grazing land	"	George Crossing	George Crossing.	
"	59a	House, &c., garden	"	Mrs. Crossing	Henry Crossing.	
"	60	Road to Pinebone		Crown		
"	61	Bush land, reserve for travelling stock.		"		
"	62	Bush land		Henry Crossing	"	
"	63	Occupation Road		Crown		
"	64	Bush land (grazing)		— Cox	— Cox.	
"	65	"		"	"	
"	66	Road to Gulgong		Crown		
"	67	Cleared land	Cultivated	Jas. Atkinson		
County of Phillip.						
Galimbene	67a	Cleared land	Cultivated	G. H. Cox		
"	67b	Public school and grounds		Crown		
"	68	Bush land		"		
"	69	Cudgegong River		"		
"	70	Cleared land		Jas. Atkinson	Jas. Atkinson.	
"	71	Bush land		Crown		
"	72	Gulgong Road		"		
"	73	Bush land		"		Gold-field reserve
Guntawang	74	Bush land (grazing)		Richard Rouse	Richard Rouse.	
"	75	Bush land		Crown		Reserved for town common.
"	76	Guntawang Road		"		
"	77	Town allotment		"		Gulgong.

H. DEANE.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

RAILWAY FROM MUDGEE TO GULGONG.

REPORT.

THE Sectional Committee of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, for whose consideration and report was referred, on the 13th March, 1890, the examination of local witnesses, and the inspection of the route of the proposed railway from Mudgee to Gulgong, beg to report to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works:—

That they left Sydney on Friday, March 21st, 1890, and opened proceedings at the Mudgee Court-house on Saturday, March 22nd, by examining the following witnesses:—Messrs. J. Atkinson, D. Cassin, G. Crossing, J. Loneragan, J. Janes, J. Barry, J. W. Townsend, J. Parker, T. W. Connelley, C. J. Horsley, E. Daley, and J. C. Carter. On Monday, March 24th, the Committee left Mudgee for Gulgong at 9 a.m., accompanied by Mr. Kennedy, railway surveyor, by the road nearest to the amended route of the proposed line, examining the site of the proposed bridge over the Cudgegong River, and arriving at Gulgong at noon. The Committee took evidence in the Court-house from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., examining the following witnesses:—Messrs. C. Zimmerler, T. Kennedy, J. F. Plunkett, R. Rouse, jun., Sergeant Steele, J. Tuxford, A. C. Garling, J. Hollow, F. Gilbert, C. Young, R. Stear, W. F. Russell, W. Fletcher, H. D. Voss, and K. Heard. On the following morning the Committee left Gulgong at 9 o'clock, and inspected the route of the surveyed line to Dubbo, as far as Wialdra or Reedy Creek Bridge. Subsequently—at 11 a.m.—the Committee met in the Court-house, Gulgong, and examined Messrs. R. Rouse (“Guntawang,”) J. F. Baylis, F. Taylor, W. R. Benson, A. Cross, J. Curran, and T. F. Fletcher. The inquiry was closed at Gulgong at 1 p.m. The Committee returned the same day to Mudgee, *via* Canadian and Wilbertree, and concluded their inquiry at Mudgee in the evening. The Committee left Mudgee for Sydney at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 26th.

The Committee observed that the proposed line from Mudgee to Gulgong passes through a few large estates where there is but limited agricultural settlement, the land being chiefly used for grazing purposes, and portions of it being adapted for agriculture. A few miles east of the surveyed line, however, is a tract of agricultural land known as the Canadian and Springfield, which is well settled and cultivated. To the west of the proposed line are a number of agricultural holdings on the M'Donald Creek. The line, therefore, although passing through private estates, will serve the areas referred to upon either side. The agricultural land is of a superior character, averaging, in a fair season, from 18 to 20 bushels of wheat per acre. Maize and hay are largely cultivated, whilst a variety of fruits are successfully grown.

Dairying has been entered upon, and is likely to be extended. The proprietor of the Guntawang estate intimates his intention of offering facilities for the development of that industry, and has established a butter factory upon his property with that object in view.

Grazing is carried on successfully in the district. A considerable number of cattle are raised and fattened, whilst the horses are of noted excellence. In seasons of drought sheep are brought down to the district from less favoured country.

The mining industry is in a condition of extreme depression, but there is hope of a revival. Efforts are being made to trace the lost leads, and there are anticipations by the mining community of a successful development of the mineral resources in the vicinity of Denison town.

Evidence pointed to the fact that Gulgong is a trading centre for a number of outlying localities in which agriculture and grazing are combined. It may also be noted that timber, suitable for railway and general purposes, has been obtained, and still is obtainable, within 15 miles of the town.

It was confidently asserted that the extension of the proposed line would provide a market for the productions of the district.

The Committee are of opinion that the receipts from the proposed railway, if constructed, would fall short of meeting interest on capital and working expenses, but would probably exceed the Railway Commissioners' estimate.

The Sectional Committee do not recommend the construction of a railway from Mudgee to Gulgong, as proposed, being of opinion that any extension of the Mudgee railway should form part of a more comprehensive proposal, the consideration of which should be deferred until after a suggestion for a connection of the northern and western systems by a line between Dubbo and Werris Creek has been dealt with.

The Committee are of opinion that the survey of a line from Gulgong to Wellington should be discontinued. The line would be a very expensive one to construct and would not serve the interests of the district.

March 26th, 1890.

J. GARRARD,
Chairman.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM MUDGEE TO GULGONG.

[TAKEN BEFORE THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.]

SATURDAY, 22 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Mudgee, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

JACOB GARRARD, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY. | EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee proceeded to consider the proposed Railway from Mudgee to Gulgong.

Mr. James Atkinson, grazier, sworn and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided in Mudgee and district? Thirty years.
2. What is your occupation? A small grazier.
3. How far from Mudgee is your holding situated? In two or three small places, from 10 to 12 miles from Mudgee.
4. In what direction? Partially towards Gulgong, but principally between here and Bathurst.
5. Would the proposed line, if constructed, be of any advantage to you in connection with your holding? I do not know whether it would or not. I notice from the map that the railway would run right through my holding, and it would be a disadvantage to cut me off from the water.
6. How many acres do you possess? 960 acres.
7. How many acres are devoted to grazing purposes? About 80 acres are cultivated.
8. What is the nature of the product? Lucerne.
9. Where do you find a market for it? I use it principally for my own stock.
10. What market do you send your stock to? Principally to Sydney, when I send anything at all.
11. Do you use the Mudgee line for that purpose? Yes.
12. Do you know the country between here and Gulgong? Yes, intimately.
13. Is it good country or indifferent country? Very good country.
14. Is it good grazing country or fit for agricultural purposes? Nearly all of it is fit for agricultural purposes.
15. Has much of it been taken up for agricultural purposes? A fair amount has been taken up, but on account of the reserve of a mile on each side of the trial survey line, it has only been taken up under conditional purchase.
16. Are there a large number of reserves immediately adjacent to the trial survey? There are none, with the exception of a few small stock reserves.
17. What was it that first brought Gulgong into existence. Was it on account of its good land, or on account of the mining mania? It was brought into existence by a large amount of gold being obtained there, in the first instance. That, however, is now pretty well exhausted, and it is the farming interest which now supports it. There is very little mining about the place.
18. We may consider, then, that as far as mining is concerned, Gulgong is dead? Yes; if it were not for farming pursuits there would be a very small population indeed there.
19. But there is a large area of good ground fit for agricultural purposes which would suit a large population? Yes.
20. Do you think, if the line were constructed, that it would give an impetus to settlement in the Gulgong district? It would to a certain extent; but the line would require to be extended still further. I am intimately acquainted with the country beyond Gulgong—between Gulgong and Dubbo, and between Gulgong and the Talbragar. The country beyond Gulgong is equally as good as it is about Gulgong itself. About 30 miles beyond Gulgong the valley of the Talbragar opens out, and there is more agricultural land in that valley than there is round about Gulgong.
21. What is the nearest point of any existing railway to this place? Mudgee, at present.
22. Then whatever produce goes from there at present finds its way to Mudgee? Yes, principally.
23. If the railway is taken 18 miles further, the produce would still go to Mudgee, and the construction of the line would probably lead to greater production? Yes. I cannot speak too highly of the country in the Talbragar district. It is excellent land, and it is quite as good as any in the Mudgee district.
24. Is it true that the people of Mudgee do not look upon the proposal to extend the line further west as one of benefit to themselves? I was chairman of the Railway League from the time of its initiation until

Mr. J.
Atkinson.
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22 Mar., 1890.

- until the railway was constructed to Mudgee. The people of Mudgee are decidedly of opinion that unless the line is continued out north-west it will never pay. The extension to Gulgong will be a step in the right direction; but if it is to stop at Gulgong it will be of very little service. I do not think the line would pay any better from here to Gulgong than any portion of the line between here and Wallerawang.
25. You were chairman of the old Railway League? Yes.
26. Did you and the members of that league advocate the extension of the line from Wallerawang only as part of a further extension? Always.
27. Did you never say that if the line were extended to Mudgee it would pay? No.
28. No such representations were ever made by the league? No. We looked upon it that our market for produce would be outwards—to the west. We considered that if the line were extended there would be a better chance of getting a fair price for our wheat than if it stayed at Mudgee. At present we have only the Sydney market to depend upon.
29. According to that the line was started at the wrong end—it ought to have started here and gone out west? But we still want it to be connected with Sydney.
30. Then this railway, which has been constructed at such an enormous expense, and which is a white elephant to the State, is a mistake altogether so far as to the giving you access to your markets, which are all out west, is concerned? It would have paid to construct the line from Mudgee outward.
31. Do you think that if the line is only taken from Mudgee to Gulgong it will assist this non-paying line from Wallerawang to Mudgee? If it stops at Gulgong I do not think it will materially assist that line.
32. Will it assist it at all, or be an additional drag on the State? I do not think it would pay any better if it were extended from here to Gulgong alone.
33. Where do you think it should be extended to? There have been some surveys made of lines to connect the northern with the western systems between Dubbo and Wellington. Such a line must necessarily come down the valley of the Talbragar. If the line were carried on beyond Gulgong, and were connected with the rich country of the Talbragar, a cross line from the Northern line could come into it at right angles. The whole of this rich district would then be connected with the west.
34. If the line were carried out in the direction referred to, it would not benefit Mudgee at all, because the good land of the Talbragar would come into competition with yours, and being so much nearer the western markets, the settlers there would cut you out altogether? I think there is room for all.
35. Do you think there is a sufficient market to the west to take all the products of the Mudgee, Gulgong, and Talbragar districts? In a great measure.
36. Are there many settlers in the district you speak of? There is a large number, but they are so taxed by dray carriage that they cannot compete with those who send to Sydney. They have to carry about 50 miles by road, and that would be reduced to 30 if the line were extended to Gulgong. Even that 30 miles is a heavy tax upon them. Before I came to Mudgee, thirty or forty years before the line was constructed, I paid a charge of £1 per ton, or 6d. a bushel, for carrying grain from Windsor to Sydney. Under existing arrangements I can send grain or maize from here to Sydney, a distance of 185 miles, at 3½d. per bushel. From Windsor, which is less than 40 miles distant, it used to be 6d. per bushel.
37. But still, you do not use the Sydney market very much? We do use it.
38. But not sufficient to make the line pay? No.
39. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You are aware that one of the reasons for the proposal to construct the line between Mudgee and Gulgong, is to assist the present Mudgee line? I think it will only do so to a certain extent, unless it is carried further out.
40. You tell us that the Mudgee people look to their market in the west and north-west? As their best market.
41. If their produce goes out that way, it cannot assist the line between here and Wallerawang? Sometimes the produce will go to Sydney. The most profitable way for us would be out west.
42. That being so, the major portion of the produce would go out west? I anticipate so.
43. Which line would be to the best interests of your district? A line from here to Coonamble, or to connect with a line which would run between Dubbo and Werris Creek, and give access to the western and north-western markets. We have endeavoured to get an extension from here to Coonamble, and have failed. The interests of other people were very much against it. The best thing, as an alternative, would be to connect the line between the cross line which runs from the northern line to somewhere about Dubbo. If it were carried as far as Talbragar, it would be 50 miles towards Coonamble.
44. You are aware that the Railway Department entertains the idea of constructing a line between Dubbo and Werris Creek? Yes.
45. That being so, a line running from Mudgee and touching that line, would be of great assistance to the people of this district in getting their produce to the north-west? Of great assistance indeed.
46. You do not suffer so much from drought in this district as they do in the back country? No.
47. You are able to produce fodder? Yes; if we had a market for it.
48. Then there would be good markets for the fodder in the western and north-western districts if you had access to them? Yes, we could produce more than we do at the present time.
49. A line from Mudgee, touching the Dubbo and Werris Creek lines, would be likely to develop a large fodder trade in the north and north-west? Yes; a large amount indeed. At one time, when the drought was severe at Coonamble, hay was selling there at £35 per ton, and here it was only from £3 to £4 per ton.
50. If the Dubbo to Werris Creek line is not carried out, which is the best point on the western line for the line under consideration to touch at? Somewhere close to Dubbo.
51. Between Dubbo and Wellington? Yes.
52. Then the Gulgong route would be available? Yes. At the same time, if it were determined to make the most direct route from Mudgee to connect with the western line, it would leave Gulgong considerably to the right. It would mean a distance of from 5 to 6 miles being added to the line from Mudgee to Dubbo, *via* Gulgong.
53. Is there any agricultural settlement between Dubbo and Gulgong? Yes; principally small sheep farmers.
54. Is the land good along that route? Not so good as it is about Talbragar.
55. Would a line to serve the Talbragar district come to Gulgong? Yes; but still there would be the dray cartage to contend with.

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56. You are aware that the probable working expenses of this line will be £7,130 per annum. That includes £1,900 for permanent way expenses; £750 for traffic way expenses; £3,150 for annual working expenses; and locomotive expenses, £500. The probable receipts, as stated by the Commissioners, are, for coaching and mails, £525; goods and live-stock, £1,112 13s. 6d.; or a total of £1,637;—you see that there is a great disparity between the probable receipts and the probable working expenses? Yes.
57. Do you think we would be justified in recommending the construction of a branch line to Gulgong, knowing there would be a loss of nearly £5,000 a year upon it? Not unless it were determined to carry the line further. I do not think the Government would be justified in constructing the line, unless it were intended to extend it.
58. Then you only recommend the line to Gulgong with a view to its future extension? Decidedly.
59. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you know that a survey was applied for between Gulgong and Wellington? Yes.
60. Are you familiar with the country between the two points? Yes.
61. What is the distance? Nearly 50 miles.
62. What is the distance between Gulgong and Dubbo? Between 60 and 70 miles.
63. Dubbo is 20 miles further than Wellington? Yes.
64. Do you know the character of the country between Wellington and Gulgong;—is it superior to that between Dubbo and Gulgong? The country between Wellington and Gulgong is superior to that between Gulgong and Dubbo, unless it is on the cross route from the northern to the western line. That line would come down the valley of the Talbragar, which, as I have already stated, contains a large amount of good agricultural land.
65. Has the Talbragar land been taken up by small settlers, or is it all in large areas? There are some large settlers, but there is a great number of small settlers upon it.
66. Would the Talbragar district be served by a line between Gulgong and Wellington? No; the Talbragar district would not be within 20 miles of the line.
67. What distance would the Talbragar district be from the nearest station on a line between Gulgong and Wellington? Gulgong would be the nearest point to the Talbragar country which I speak of.
68. What is the nearest station at present to the Talbragar? Mudgee.
69. Is there any settlement between here and Gulgong? Only ordinary farms.
70. Where the railway is accessible to within a distance of 5 or 6 miles, would not that sufficiently serve a farming population? Yes. There is a great farming population within 5, 6, or 10 miles, and even further than that.
71. Is there much land under cultivation? A great deal.
72. For what? Grain, in small portions. Wheat is principally grown, and corn, maize, and oats.
73. *Mr. Hurley.*] You recognise the fact that you require a larger population in the district to create a revenue for the railway? Yes.
74. Do you know whether there is any land between here and Gulgong available for the agricultural traffic? A large amount. The difficulty has been on account of the different trial surveys, and on account of the reservation of a mile on each side of the trial survey line.
75. Do you look upon those reservations as a wise provision? Undoubtedly.
76. The reserves would be readily taken up in the event of the railway being constructed? Yes; in the event of the line being decided upon.
77. What is the value of land within 5 miles of Mudgee? It all depends on the description.
78. Agricultural land? On the flats, between here and Broombee, it is worth between £30 and £40 an acre. Between here and Gulgong the land would be worth at least £2 an acre.
79. If the Government were to offer the land for sale by auction, would it readily realize that amount? Yes, close to the line.
80. You have some knowledge of the country between here and Dubbo? Yes; I have been over the country frequently.
81. And the proposed survey line from here to Dubbo? I do not know whether there is to be a line to connect the Western, or Dubbo line. I know a survey has been made from Dubbo to Gulgong, and also from Wellington to Gulgong.
82. But, knowing the country through which a line to Dubbo would pass, and knowing the Gulgong district, do you think there would be sufficient trade in Gulgong to cause the Department to recommend a detour of something like 5 miles in order to reach that place? The line would serve a larger amount of agricultural land by going to Gulgong. I think they would be justified in making the recommendation, although the people of Mudgee want to be connected with the Western line. It would suit them better to be connected between Dubbo and Wellington, rather than go to Gulgong at all.
83. You were chairman of the Railway League for some years? Yes.
84. I suppose you have always had the idea that the railway should extend further west than Gulgong? I have never had any doubt but what it will be necessary to extend the line, to make it pay.
85. Have you ever given any consideration to the question of connection with the metropolis, through the Colo Valley route? Yes; but the expense would be a great objection.
86. Have you taken the question of expense into consideration? Yes.
87. You are aware of the congested traffic on the mountains at the present time? Yes. The line would be a very desirable one indeed, were it not affected by the question of expense. It would be an advantage to the whole of the western interior if the Colo Valley line could be carried out, because it would lessen the distance for all the western traffic to Sydney from Dubbo.
88. What are the industries which would be benefited by an extension of the line beyond Gulgong? The farming interest, principally, which would have a command of the country to the westward and northward.
89. Would it cause any other resources to be developed? I do not know that it would. It would increase cultivation, which is of paramount importance to this place.
90. Have you any knowledge of the grades between Lithgow and Orange? No.
91. You have not studied the question of grades on the railway there? I have only read communications on the subject.
92. Have you heard anything as to the advantages likely to accrue to the Cobar copper-fields and to the Barrier, in the event of the railway being constructed from Nyngan to Cobar, and from Cobar to Wilcannia and Broken Hill? We have large coal-fields within 30 miles from here, and there is an immense coal-field close to Rylstone.

- Mr. J. Atkinson.
22 Mar., 1890.
93. On this side of Rylstone? Yes, and on the other side also. There are unlimited seams there. I have seen one or two of them 8 or 10 feet thick.
94. And that would be on the falling grade westward? I do not know that it would; but I presume that it would, on account of the westward district being lower.
95. It would be to the advantage of the coal industry if the line were constructed to Dubbo? Yes.
96. And there is every probability of a good trade opening up west, especially for coal measures? I think so.
97. Do you know anything of the gold-field reserve around Gulgong? There is a large amount of gold-fields reserved. I find that the miners almost prefer to dig upon private land rather than upon Government land. They are surer of the private land. If the Government land turns out rich, there are always disputes. I think the Gulgong reserve is monstrously large.
98. Do you consider the land would be suitable for other purposes than searching for precious metal? Undoubtedly. It would be better for agricultural land; but at the present time it is shut out from occupation.
99. If the reserve were thrown open, do you think it would be readily sought after by agriculturists? Yes; the whole of it would be at once taken up for farming purposes.
100. But, in the event of no railway being constructed to the district, it would be utterly valueless for farming purposes? Not altogether. It would pay well to grow wheat at 4s. a bushel.
101. In your opinion, the construction of a railway solely to Gulgong would be a national mistake and a waste of public money? I do not think the country would be justified in going to the expense of taking the line to Gulgong and stopping there.
102. You look upon it as a greater national incubus than the line from Wallerawang to Mudgee? You put words into my mouth which I do not utter. It is true that the line to Mudgee may not pay directly, but indirectly it does pay. I am able now to send grain to Sydney by rail, a distance of 180 miles, at 3½d. per bushel; whereas in years gone by, before the railway was constructed, I had to pay 6d. a bushel for carrying it a distance of 40 miles—from Windsor to Sydney.
103. Are you not aware of the fact that, with the exception of the Junee-Hay railway, the line from Wallerawang to Mudgee is the worst paying line in the country? It may be. I do not know whether it is, or not. I believe it pays indirectly, though not directly.
104. If the line were extended to Gulgong, you would look upon it as a still further national loss? It would be, directly, but not indirectly.
105. Mr. Humphery.] Would there be a considerable saving in haulage between Bourke and Sydney if a line were constructed between Dubbo and Mudgee? Yes. It would be at least 20 or 30 miles shorter than by the present route.

Mr. Daniel Cassin, flour-mill manager, sworn, and examined:—

- Mr. D. Cassin.
22 Mar., 1890.
106. Mr. Humphery.] What is your occupation? I am manager of a flour-mill.
- 106½. How long have you been in this district? Upwards of forty years.
107. Have you examined the map showing the proposed extension? I have.
108. Can you say whether any deviation in the proposed route is desirable in the interests of those who are settled on the land between here and Gulgong? I do not think so. I think the line, as proposed, would suit the district.
109. You think the line, as proposed, would suit the district? I do.
110. Do you know how many settlers there are along the proposed line of railway? I could tell you how many landowners there are.
111. About how many holdings are there? About 1,559 holdings, and the greater part of them would be benefited by the construction of the line between Mudgee and Gulgong.
112. Are there 1,559 holders, or a population of 1,559? There are 1,559 holders. I give you the information as it has been given to me. It is Government information. There is also the acreage which is held.
113. Can you verify that statement from your knowledge of the district and the people who are settled on the land? I should not like to do so, because this information is obtained by the aid of the police—the officer in charge.
114. Then it would be better for the officer to give evidence, instead of yourself? Yes.
115. Do you know Gulgong? I do.
116. Do you know how many acres are under cultivation between Mudgee and Gulgong? I could not tell you, but I could tell you what there is about Mudgee, and what there is about Gulgong.
117. It is desirable to ascertain how many people will be served, and the area of good land which will be brought under cultivation, in the event of the railway being so constructed? It would be difficult for me to say.
118. Can you state approximately? A portion of Gulgong, leaving out Tallewang, has 1,826 acres under wheat, yielding 35,009 bushels.
119. That is an average of about 19 bushels to the acre? Yes. Our average this year, notwithstanding the rust, is close on 20 bushels. One-third of the crop has been destroyed.
120. Does the whole of that wheat come into Mudgee? No doubt.
121. Has it to go to Sydney? Some of it.
122. Does not local consumption absorb a portion of it? Yes.
123. Do you know what is the cost of carriage for wheat from Gulgong to Mudgee? That will depend upon whether the carriers could go back loaded. We send flour out for 10s. 6d. per ton from Mudgee to Gulgong, and I imagine it would not be more than 10s. 6d. to bring wheat back.
124. That would be a little over 6d. per bag? Yes. I have known 1s. a bag to be paid for wheat.
125. What has been the price of wheat in Mudgee this year? 2s. 10d. and 3s.; less for wheat that has been injured.
126. Do you know what other crops are grown in the district? Hay is largely grown between Mudgee and Gulgong, and around Gulgong.
127. Has any fruit industry been established? Yes. There are fine vineyards all along the Pipe-clay road, leading to Home Rule and Gulgong. One man—Mr. Bucholtz—is making excellent wine, which will rank with any in the colonies.
128. Where is his vineyard? 7 or 8 miles from Gulgong.

Mr. D. Cassin.
22 Mar., 1890,

129. On this side of Gulgong? Yes.
130. Do you know how many acres are under vine cultivation? I could not tell you, but there is a large quantity.
131. Do you know the district between Gulgong and Dubbo? I know something of it.
132. Have you ever been over it? No.
133. Do you know the district between Gulgong and Wellington? I do not.
134. Your knowledge is confined to Gulgong and Mudgee? Yes.
135. Are you prepared to confirm the evidence given by Mr. Atkinson that it will not be desirable to construct a railway to Gulgong, unless it is extended to Dubbo? The opinion of the men of Mudgee has been expressed by a resolution at a public meeting.
136. I would rather have your own opinion? My opinion is, that it would be of very little benefit to carry the line to Gulgong and leave it there. As a section of the extension, it would be exceedingly desirable. I am one of the old members of the league, and formed one of a deputation to wait on the Minister. I assured the Minister that if the railway were commenced at Mudgee, and carried to Coonamble, it would answer the interests of this district, and the colony in general. You will find, from an article written in the *Herald*, that a deputation advocated the extension of the line outwards from the very first. We never pretended that it would pay, unless it was carried to Coonamble and Walgett. During the time I have managed a mill—upwards of thirty years—I have seen flour trucked to Walgett, and have supplied Coonamble and other places. The Dubbo railway cut off my connection. In 1878, hay was selling here at £3 4s. to £4 per ton, and it was worth £30 to £40 in Coonamble, and we could not get it there. In a season of that kind the carrier would have to carry large quantities of forage and water, and it is impossible to travel. The *Herald* admitted that our argument in favour of carrying the line to Coonamble was more in the interests of the country, than it would be if carried from Wallerawang to Mudgee. We never contemplated that the line should be left at Mudgee. The expense of the line to Mudgee is due to faulty construction. There is no question about that. Six miles away from Mudgee Hunt's cutting fell in, and it took £30,000 to clear it. Within a fortnight the contractors ran the line round the base of a hill, showing that there was no occasion for the cutting at all. Again, a short tunnel at Broughton's Creek would have saved a distance of 5 miles of railway. That can be proved by documentary evidence. Therefore the cost of the line is in a great measure due to its faulty construction.
137. Are you of opinion that the line should be taken from Mudgee to Gulgong, and on to Coonamble, or on to Dubbo? If the line were taken from Mudgee to Coonamble, *via* Gulgong, it would be one of the best paying lines in the country.
138. You think that would be a better route than the line to Dubbo? No doubt of it. At Tallewang there is the finest wheat growing soil in the colony, and it is lying there without being cultivated, because we have not a market.
139. What is the distance of Gulgong from that district? About 6 miles.
140. Is there a large area of land of that description? I believe there is about 20,000 acres.
141. You think the residents would be likely to benefit by the construction of a line from Gulgong to Coonamble? If we got to the outside districts, where they want agricultural produce, we would be benefited. At present we have to send our produce to Sydney to contend with the whole of the colony, and the neighbouring colonies around. You can see the disadvantage at which we are placed. If we had this outside market, we should have it pretty well to ourselves.
142. Then the traffic along the railway would be confined to the line between Mudgee and Coonamble? Exactly; or you could connect it with Dubbo.
143. Would there be any increase in the traffic along the Northern line, or between Mudgee and Sydney? No doubt there would be. In the first place it is 22 miles shorter from Coonamble to Sydney, *via* Mudgee.
144. Would not it lessen the results of traffic if you diverted the goods and passengers from the existing line to the Mudgee line? I do not think it would interfere with them.
145. Would it increase the revenue of the railway? I am satisfied it would.
146. What, by taking the traffic from one line and carrying it on another a shorter distance? It would benefit the community, and the Government would not lose, because if they did not carry it on the Dubbo line they would carry it on the Mudgee line. Besides, if we had a railway outside, the Government could supply all their stations from our place with coal. We have coal in abundance.
147. How far from Mudgee is the nearest coal-field? We have it at Tongbong, on the other side of Lue Station.
148. How far from Lue Station? About 10 miles.
149. Has it been developed at all? Yes; it supplies all the mills here, and our gas-works.
150. *Mr. Hurley.*] How far is Coonamble from Gulgong? The distance from Coonamble to Sydney is 283 miles, against 383 by Dubbo. It is 190 miles from Sydney to Mudgee.
151. What is the distance from Mudgee to Coonamble? 175 miles.
152. You formed one of a deputation to wait on the Government in regard to the construction of a line of railway from here to Coonamble, and you were pretty well supplied with statistics to back up your arguments in favour of that line? Yes.
153. You formed calculations and produced statistics to prove the productive character of the line, if constructed? There can be no doubt about it. The Minister we waited upon admitted them, and the survey was ordered.
154. How could he admit them when he could not have been in possession of the facts you were seized of. You must have based your calculations upon information gathered from some source? Sir John Robertson, from his personal knowledge, was able to tell the character of the country through which the proposed line was to run.
155. You went to Sydney seized with certain facts. You state that an article appeared in the *Herald* in advocacy of the action of the deputation. I want to be told what were the facts which resulted in that article being written, and what induced the Government to give a favourable reply to the deputation? The statement that a large tract of country, including Coclah, Denison Town, and all that country would be benefited by railway construction.
156. Is not the district you have mentioned sparsely populated? There were, at that time, 5,000 souls between Gulgong and Coonamble.
157. Were not the majority of them of the migratory class—nomadic in their habits? I do not think so.
158. The population you mention—which was then very large—would include the population of the district of Gulgong? There was not a large population then. If we had gone to the Government when there was a large population in Gulgong we should have carried our point.
- 159.

- Mr. D. Cassin. 159. Do you believe the population has increased above the number you have mentioned? I do not think it is much below it. It will be about the same.
- 22 Mar., 1890. 160. But it would be necessary to increase the population in order to make a railway productive to the State? No doubt you will be able to ascertain the exact population at Gulgong.
161. You think the non-productiveness of the line from Wallerawang to Mudgee is attributable to the fact that the engineers made mistakes? There is no doubt about the large cost of the line being attributable to mistakes. Hunt's Gap is a standing evidence of that.
162. Have the people of Mudgee, or the Railway League, ever taken any interest in the survey and probable construction of the Colo Valley line, to relieve the congested traffic of the Western line? I believe if that line can be constructed it will be a national benefit.
163. As well as a great advantage to this district? Yes.
164. You look upon the extension of a line westward as an immense advantage to the mineral resources of this district? Yes; and to the agricultural district.
165. You have heard what has been said about the value of agricultural land in the immediate vicinity of Mudgee. Can you give us an idea as to what rental is being realised per acre in this district at the present time? On an average, about £1 per acre per annum.
166. Has the land been held under lease for many years? A great many.
167. So that the rental gives a high percentage upon the first principal cost of the land? There is no doubt about it. I believe myself that the average value of agricultural land under cultivation will be £6 per acre.
168. And the land between here and Gulgong, which is held in reserve, would, if thrown open for selection, be readily seized by agriculturists? There is no doubt about it, if we can get a market outwards, but we are confined to Sydney, and have no other place to go to.
169. What would be a fair price to pay for the land, if thrown open for selection? I am satisfied there would be no difficulty in getting 35s. or £2 an acre.
170. Are not the holdings generally of a large character around Mudgee? There is no doubt about it.
171. Held by monopolists? That is a strong term. We do not begrudge the land to men who have been good men to the district.
172. You are aware that if a railway is constructed to Gulgong it will be a national loss? Knowing the traffic between Mudgee and Gulgong, I do not think it could pay.
173. Therefore if the line were to go to Gulgong only, you would not recommend it? I certainly would not.
174. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Can you state whether this line is likely to serve the agricultural population, or only a few of these large land monopolists? You cannot well serve one portion of the population without serving the others in some measure, but there is no question that our farming interest is the poorest and the lowest, and that arises from the fact that we have no market but Sydney.
175. Then the Sydney market is not of much use to the people here? No, it is ruinous. I have sent 700 tons of flour in one year to Sydney market, and it has scarcely paid; but I had to send it away, because I could not let it perish.
176. Has the proposed line between here and Gulgong been laid out in the interests of the farmers, or in the interests of a few land monopolists? Some of the land on the surveyed line belongs to a large land proprietor, but I do not think it would be difficult to come to terms with him. I refer to Mr. Cox.
177. What I want to arrive at is whether you think this line is laid out in the interests of the people? I do, on the whole.
178. It has been stated in a letter to the Committee, that there are 300,000 acres of agricultural land around Gulgong? I have no doubt of it.
179. Is this land owned at the present time by anyone? There are a number of small farmers, some of whom grow 1,000 bushels of wheat in a year. Others do not grow quite so much.
180. What I want to arrive at is whether much of this 300,000 acres of agricultural land is still available for settlement? A large portion of it.
181. Is it Crown or private land? A good deal of it is Crown land.
182. Can you tell us whether the intervening townships of Canadian, Home Rule, and Slasher's Flat are thriving? No; they are not. They are falling away.
183. I suppose Canadian and Home Rule simply depended on the gold diggings? No. They depended a good deal on the agriculturists around. Of course there are some fossickers who get a little gold now, but as an industry it is very poor.
184. But still you say there is a little settlement along the proposed route? No doubt about it.
185. The country is admirably suited for agriculture and vineyards? Yes.
186. Are there many vigneron like Mr. Bucholtz? Yes. The Germans are all engaged in the trade. Mr. Wirth, for instance, makes wine. He has a fine place for wine.
187. There is an extensive gold-field reserve around Gulgong? Yes.
188. Is that reserve held in the interests of the people, or of a few monopolists? I do not think it should be held at all. I think it should be thrown open for the public.
189. You think it ought to be thrown open for selection? I do.
190. Do you know of any auriferous country in this neighbourhood which would probably attract population? There is no telling when a fresh field may be discovered. There are lots of gold about there, which have not been discovered.
191. There are indications of gold all round? Yes.
192. It has been stated as an argument in favour of the construction of a railway, that it will lead to an exchange of commodities between Mudgee and Gulgong. What commodities are likely to be exchanged? Butter, eggs, poultry, &c.
193. You have referred to the railway as being likely to prove of assistance to pastoralists in relieving stock in times of drought? Yes.
194. Is there any land available here to which starving stock could come? No; but if we were connected with either of the other railways, they could be sent to land which would be available.
195. Then your argument is that this line will afford a quicker transit to the mountain runs? Yes.
196. Would not it be more to the interest of the Mudgee district to have a line running from Dubbo to Werris Creek, and connecting with Mudgee by railway through Gulgong, than to have a straight line through

- through to Coonamble? I would rather go to Coonamble. If you take us to Werris Creek you bring us into connection with the Northern line. We could not send our produce there, and do not want to. During Sir John Robertson's time we could have been connected with Willowtree, but we did not go in for that, for the reason that there is a large agricultural community living on the northern side, who could not send their produce here, and we could not take ours to them.
- 196½. Would it not give you access to two markets instead of one—the north-western and the western markets? No doubt; and I am quite sure that the people in this district will be satisfied if you carry us to that proposed cross route, or to Dubbo. You must take the railway out of Mudgee, if you want it to pay. It will not pay if it is taken to Gulgong alone.
197. You are strongly of opinion that if the railway is to pay it must give you access to the north or north-western districts? That is so. It would be the salvation of the district, and a benefit to the colony at large.
198. Do you grow lucerne out here? Yes.
199. And a great deal of oats, wheat, and hay? Yes.
200. These would be valuable, as fodder, to the pastoralists in the interior? Yes.
201. Do you know the site of the proposed bridge—the original survey—across the Cudgong? No.
202. Were you connected with the Railway League at the time of the agitation for the construction of the line to Mudgee? Yes.
203. Have you any other statistics which were worked up at that time to induce the Government to construct the line? I could give you Mr. Lackey's statement, as submitted to the House, and the speeches made on the occasion.
204. But statistics were furnished by the League, were they not? Yes.
205. And they were coloured up by the League? No. They were honest and truthful. They were not coloured up at all. Neither Mr. Atkinson, nor myself, ever made a coloured representation.

Mr. D. Cassin.
22 Mar., 1890.

Mr. George Crossing, miller, sworn and examined:—

206. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? A miller.
207. Have you been long in the district? Over 30 years.
208. Are you a landowner? Yes.
209. Do you own a large area? Not very large.
210. Give us an idea as to the acreage you hold? About 190 acres.
211. Does the proposed railway pass through any of your land? Yes, right through.
212. Then you are an interested party in the construction of the line? I do not know; but it will pass through my land.
213. How far is the land from here? About 2½ miles.
214. It would be an advantage to you to have the line constructed past your door? I daresay it would. It will be a decided advantage to me in other respects, independent of the increase in the value of my land.
215. It would give an increased value to your land? No doubt it would.
216. By 25 per cent.? I could not tell you. The land is not very good.
217. Is it grazing or agricultural land? It is only grazing. It is not fit for agriculture.
218. You are conversant with the quality of the land between here and Gulgong? Yes.
219. Can you say what it is suitable for? I think the greater portion of the land suitable for agricultural purposes has already been taken up.
220. If a market were available, it would give an opening for increased population? No doubt, but not to a great extent, between this and Gulgong.
221. Can you speak as to the quality of the land about Gulgong, and especially in regard to the gold-field reserve? The land is very good about Gulgong, and also about the reserve.
222. Have you formed any opinion as to the paying qualities of the line, if constructed? I do not think it would be of any great advantage to the Government to construct it from here to Gulgong only, for all the traffic from Gulgong comes to the railway now.
- 222½. You have heard it stated that the cost of working the line, including permanent-way traffic and locomotive expenses, would be over £7,000, and that the revenue would be a little over £1,600. Considering these figures, could you say that the Government would be justified, even in view of the probability of an increased population, in constructing the line? Not if it were to remain at Gulgong terminus.
223. What do you think would be the most beneficial thing to do in regard to the construction of a line westward? My idea is to construct it direct to Dubbo, and then on to Coonamble. I have entertained the idea for a long time that it should go right on to Coonamble. It would open up a large country, and benefit a large population. By going to Dubbo first it would give an opening to the farmers of this district to send their produce, in times of drought, to that place, and on to Bourke and Cobar, and it might even eventually tap Broken Hill. I think it would be a wonderful help to the farmers in this district.
224. You could not speak as to the advantages which would accrue from the connection of a line from Werris Creek across to Dubbo, and the extension of a line from here to Dubbo? There is no doubt that a line from Werris Creek to Dubbo would be a great advantage to stock going towards Melbourne.
225. Leaving the various stations westward, in order to get their stock to the mountain runs of the north in times of drought? In times of drought it would be a great convenience.
226. Can you give us any idea as to the timber districts between here and Dubbo? The timber would be good, and the country is fairly good. The line I would propose would go through Two-mile Flat, across Yamble, and would touch the Western line a little to this side of Dubbo. You would find the country travelled through very fair, and there would not be many engineering difficulties to encounter. There would only be one large bridge at Yamble.
227. Would the line go chiefly through Government land? I think it would pass through Government land, principally.
228. Suitable for agriculture? It would be suitable for agricultural purposes.
229. Have you been to Coonamble? I have.
230. What is the character of the country between here and Coonamble? Good country, especially near Warrunbuncl.

Mr.
G. Crossing.
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G. Crossing.
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231. Do you not think that the lack of success in regard to the development of these districts is the want of population? That is all that is required, and until we have the means of bringing it here we shall never thrive. The country is fit to maintain a very large population. There is land in the district almost equal to anything on the Hunter flats.
232. Is the land well timbered? Yes; all through there are patches of valuable timber.
233. Is the railway likely to open up any other resources in the Coonamble district? I think it would principally advantage the grazing and agricultural interest.
234. Were you connected with the railway league which agitated for the line from Wallerawang to Mudgee? I was not. I was rather young at the time.
235. You do not know anything about the statistics which were gathered at that time in order to induce the Government to construct the line? I do of the statistics compiled in 1884, when the line was opened. I have a carefully compiled comparison with other districts written by Mr. Clark. It gives a comparison of Mudgee with Orange.
236. Can you say whether the representations made by the agitators have been borne out by facts since the railway was constructed? Well, yes. The representations made by the agitators were in favour of an extension of the line. It never was intended to leave it at Mudgee. It was never thought that it would pay if left at Mudgee. The object was to connect it with Coonamble.
237. You believe that if the line were extended westward, and not left at Gulgong, it would be of a productive character? I do.
238. Having this land in such close proximity to the town of Mudgee, what would you be prepared to take per acre for rental if you were about to let it? There are about 160 acres, for which I am getting £53 a year.
239. That is for grazing purposes only? Yes.
240. What would be a fair and equitable price to place on your agricultural land? About £6 or £8 per acre.
241. So that the early settlers of this district have made a good investment by getting such land from the Crown, and receiving such dividends from it? Yes.
242. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is the rainfall of this district? This year it has been very heavy; I think the average is about 20 inches.
243. Then this is a more moist district than that about Dubbo, or anywhere else north of Wellington? During the droughts we always seem to have abundant produce, but no means of sending it to where it is required.
244. Do you grow produce here, when it fails in Wellington? Yes.
245. If you were connected with Dubbo by rail, you could, in the event of a drought, send your fodder to Cobar, Wilcannia, and Louth, and all along the western line? Yes, that is the idea.
246. So that, notwithstanding that a little might come from the Orange and Wellington districts, you would still have a fair market for the fodder grown in the Mudgee district? We can compete favourably with Orange and Wellington. Wellington, of course, is not so reliable as this district in times of drought.
247. Your position appears to be that although you have a fine district which will grow wheat and fodder, you cannot find an outlet for it? Yes. You would find that a great many more acres would be put under cultivation if we could find a profitable outlet.
248. Your natural market appears to be away to the west, where there is little or no competition for produce in dry seasons? Yes. Yesterday a farmer showed me his returns upon a truck load of pumpkins sent to Sydney, which will give you some idea of the small profits which the Mudgee farmers have to put up with.
249. *Chairman.*] Do you mean to say there is any man insane enough to grow pumpkins, and to send them from this town to the metropolis. If he does he ought to suffer? Yes, he did. He cleared 7s. 1d. out of the truck load.
250. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] It evidently does not pay to grow pumpkins here, but would it pay to grow fodder for the stations in the back districts, if you could get an outlet for it? Yes.
251. The desire of the people here appears to be to have cheap and speedy means of access to those districts? Yes.
252. Which, in your opinion, would suit best, connecting the line between Dubbo and Werris Creek, or a line straight to Coonamble? The Dubbo and Werris Creek line would be of no benefit at all, unless we were connected with it.
253. I am presuming you to be connected by rail to that cross line? It would be better for us to go right through to Coonamble.
254. Why? Because it would open up a lot of really good country, and would serve a lot of stock and people who require fodder in times of drought.
255. But there is not a great population out there? When you come to look at all the little centres you will find that there is a great population. If you pass through Gulgong, you come to Cobbora and Denison Town. There is a great future before Denison Town. It is now being opened up for mining purposes, and I am satisfied there will be a large population there. From there you go on to Mundooran. Then there is the Myall Plains, where there are a number of small settlers, squatters, and farmers. There is no mountainous country to travel through, and there are no engineering difficulties to face, excepting the river.
256. And you think it would be better for this district to have the monopoly of the Coonamble market, than to have the chance of serving the western line, and a fair share of the traffic of the northern line through Dubbo, and then on to Coonamble? If we had the Werris Creek line, and the line to Coonamble, it would decidedly be of benefit to us.
257. You evidently want both lines? Yes.
258. If you had to make a choice between the Coonamble line, direct from here, and a connection between Dubbo and Werris Creek, which, in your opinion, would be most advantageous? I think the line to the cross-line—Werris Creek and Dubbo—would be best.
259. Is the land towards Coonamble very good? Yes.
260. That being so, it will, in the course of time, be cultivated, and you may have competitors for the Coonamble fodder trade? Yes.

- 261-2. So that, if you get a line out there, you are not certain of a monopoly of the trade? No; but I think there is room for all in times of drought.
263. Do you fatten any stock in this district? Yes; bullocks and sheep. It is a famous district for wool.
264. Where do you send your fat stock to? Mostly to the Sydney market. I may mention that we have sent fat stock to Wellington from this district.
265. Is there much wool coming down this way, from the back district? Yes, a great quantity.
266. Does the Coonamble wool come this way? No; it is mostly taken to Dubbo. It used to come this way.
267. I suppose the extension of the line to Gulgong would tend to draw a little of the wool traffic back in this direction? No doubt it would lessen the distance.
268. What is the distance between Gulgong and Coonamble, and the distance between Dubbo and Coonamble? The distance between Gulgong and Coonamble is about 140 and 150 miles, and the distance between Dubbo and Coonamble is 30 or 40 miles less.
269. Is there not a strong agitation to take the line from Dubbo to Coonamble? Yes; in the Dubbo district.
270. And the line has been surveyed from Dubbo to Coonamble, has it not? I believe it has.
271. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is there any timber between Mudgee and Gulgong suitable for fencing, sleepers, and bridge construction? I think it has been pretty well culled out. There is timber, but you would have to go beyond Gulgong to get it.
272. How far would it be necessary to go? To Tallewang, 12 miles on the other side of Gulgong.
273. That would be 32 miles from Mudgee? Yes. There is plenty of timber out there.
274. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Who owns the good agricultural lands at Tallewang? A great deal of it is Government land. I do not think much of it has been taken up.
275. These lands, then, which are fit for agriculture, are not held by private persons? Not by monopolists, towards Tallewang.
276. And there is room there for agricultural settlement? Yes.
277. Do you know the country between Gulgong and Coonamble? Yes.
278. Could you say, as a layman, whether there would be any difficulty in constructing a line there. Would it be as expensive as the line between Mudgee and Wallerawang? No, the country is very much flatter.
279. Is it liable to flood? There is only one part they would have to contend with, and the only river would be the Castlereagh River.
280. There would be a number of creeks to be bridged? There are places which could be bridged.
281. You think the line could be constructed at a less cost than the line between here and Wallerawang? Yes.
282. And that the mistakes Mr. Cassin spoke about on that line could be avoided? Yes.
283. How often do they have such a drought in the Coonamble district that they are compelled to use your fodder—once in five or ten years, or what? They may have three or four good seasons, and then a season in which we can supply them.
284. We may assume that a line, if constructed to Coonamble, would be used during drought, and that for the rest of the time the people would see the trains passing to and fro? The line would always be paying when we used it. When we were not placing stock upon it we could be sending produce.
285. During bad seasons they would be sending their stock to a more favourable locality, and you would be supplying their absolute necessities? Yes.
286. Do you think there would be sufficient trade to pay interest on working expenses on a line out there? I am satisfied it would spring up, because the country is so good.
287. Do you know that it is estimated that there will be an absolute loss on a line between Mudgee and Gulgong of £5,490 per annum? I would not be at all surprised if there was a loss on a line between this and Gulgong only.
288. Do you think that by extending it to a district which only occasionally interchanges its products, there would be any reason to hope it will pay better? In the first place, is that estimate reliable. £7,000 seems a tremendous cost for running a line 19 miles long.
289. It is very reliable. It is the estimate of the Railway Commissioners themselves. The line originally was to be constructed for £131,800, and it has been reduced to £109,330. The Commissioners allow capital expenditure at the rate of 3½ per cent., which amounts to £4,613. The estimated cost of working the line is as follows:—Permanent way expenses, £1,900; traffic expenses, £750; locomotive expenses, £500; total, £2,150; or a grand total for the annual cost of working, and interest upon capital, of £7,763. The estimate of traffic is as follows:—Coaching and mails, £525; goods and live stock, £1,112 13s.; making a total of £1,637 13s., or a loss of £5,363 per annum. This estimate is made after careful examination on the part of special officers sent to inquire as to the amount of trade between Mudgee and Gulgong; and it also takes into consideration a liberal allowance for increased productiveness, which would follow upon the construction of the railway? I never anticipated that the line would be to Gulgong only.
290. In view of this loss, do you think there is likely to be a similar loss on the line from Gulgong to Coonamble? I am satisfied that the cost of the construction of the line beyond Gulgong would not be anything like the cost of construction between here and Gulgong.
291. But the country between here and Gulgong is more expensive, from a railway point of view, than that beyond? Yes.
292. You know that from actual observation? Yes.
293. You told Mr. O'Sullivan that you were of opinion that, in the interest of Mudgee and the colony generally, it would be better for a line to go from Werris Creek to Dubbo, and a line from Mudgee on to Coonamble, making a cross line? Yes.
294. That would give you access to the more western markets, if necessary? Yes.
295. And you would then come into competition with Molong and the other fertile districts out there. What would you do there? I think we can compete with them.
296. You have the New England table-lands to compete with in the northern district? I remember the time when we have sent produce from here to Forbes.
297. That was when yours was an old settled district, and there was no settlement on the Molong lands? Yes.

Mr.
G. Crossing.
22 Mar., 1890.

- Mr. G. Crossing.
22 Mar., 1890.
- 298-9. How long is it since you sent them produce? 1871.
300. *Mr. Humphery.*] In expressing an opinion that the cost of constructing a line between Gulgong and Coonamble would be less than between Mudgee and Gulgong, have you taken into consideration the bridges which would have to be erected? There would only be one bridge of any magnitude.
301. Would it be an expensive bridge? I think it would be fairly expensive. It is rather a large river, and is of a sandy nature.
302. If that were added to the cost per mile, do you think the average cost per mile would be less than £5,000? Yes; I think they could construct that line easily, because material is so convenient. Timber is very handy all along the line.
303. What is the exact distance between Gulgong and Coonamble? Between 140 and 150 miles.
304. The cost of constructing that line at £5,000 a mile would be £700,000. The interest alone would be about £24,000. Do you think the traffic between Gulgong and Coonamble would cover the working expenses, and £24,000 of interest? I look at it in this way. There are certain towns in the centre which must have railway communication,—towns such as Coonamble, Walgett, and this place. I think it would be cheaper to connect them with this district than with other districts. I think the cheapest line which could be constructed would be here to Coonamble and Walgett. In the course of time, there is no doubt the mountain line will have to be duplicated, or the Colo Valley line will be constructed. According to the present estimates of haulage upon that line, one engine will take 500 tons gross, as against 150 on the mountain line, and the grade will be 1 in 100, as against 1 in 30, or 1 in 33 on the mountains, and a curve of 20 chains radius, as compared with one of 8 chains radius. That would bring us closer to the metropolis. If connected with Dubbo, it would bring Bourke closer to Sydney by 30, 40, or 50 miles.

Mr. James Loneragan, storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. Loneragan.
22 Mar., 1890.
305. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What business do you follow? A storekeeper.
306. You are pretty well acquainted with the condition of the farmers out towards Gulgong? Fairly well.
307. Do you consider the settlement in that neighbourhood to be of a permanent character? Yes.
308. I suppose the holders are likely to remain there, even as they are? I think so.
309. Would a railway between here and Gulgong materially aid them in developing the resources of the soil? No; not if it stops at Gulgong; but I think it would be of benefit if constructed beyond.
310. Are you of opinion that a line between here and Gulgong could be made to pay? I do not think so.
311. You do not see any prospect of making up the difference between £1,600 receipts, and £7,000 working expenses? I could not offer an opinion; I really do not see how the traffic could be increased to make the difference between the two amounts less.
312. Is there any interchange of commodities between here and Gulgong? There occurs, at times, an interchange of produce.
313. Gulgong is pretty well supplied with the same agricultural products which you have around Mudgee? Yes.
314. In your opinion the line, to be made profitable, should be extended beyond Gulgong? Yes.
315. In what direction do you think it should go? Now that I have heard of the possibility of this cross section of the railway from Werris Creek to Dubbo, I should be an advocate of going on with that.
316. You know that such a line has been mooted? Yes; I heard Sir John Robertson make reference to it on the hustings, in Mudgee.
317. Then you think the line from Gulgong could be taken on to connect with that line, when it is constructed? I think it will be beneficial to the district; even if it were constructed at a loss and went ultimately to Dubbo, it would give us an interchange of commodities between these places and beyond.
318. There would be an exchange of commodities if you could obtain access to the western district and the north-western district by means of this proposed railway? Yes, a great exchange.
319. You would have an excellent market out there for your produce? Yes.
320. What products would you receive in return? In return, we would receive live stock.
321. I suppose the chief commodity you would receive in return would be hard cash? Yes; or wool and sheepskins.
322. There would be a little trade in store stock to be fattened in this district? I look upon it in this way—that instead of being of benefit for the interchange of commodities, it would open up a market which we do not at present possess. We are shut out. We are not in the position of the farmers in the Dubbo district or the Maitland district. We have no market but Sydney, which is open to all the world. Dubbo has a market. In every direction they can find an open market for any commodities which they can produce. We have not the same facilities which they have. Therefore, I argue, it would be of benefit to this district and the places which we would be able to approach by railway communication.
323. Your district is exceptionally situated, inasmuch as it is able to supply fodder and agricultural produce to the dry districts at the back;—do you think you would be able to compete with other districts, such as Molong, Orange, and Dubbo? I am decidedly of opinion we would be able to compete with them. We can grow the stuff as cheaply as they can; and, having the same facilities of transit, we could deliver it.
324. Do you think there would be room for the three districts in the market? Yes; because the country, when it becomes opened out between here and there, will increase in population. Population is bound to grow along the line.
325. You are aware that, every dry season, enormous sums of money are spent on fodder to be sent to the western districts? Yes.
326. Have you heard of fodder having been brought even from the coastal districts and from Victoria? I have got fodder myself from Kyneton, Victoria, and have sent it to Bourke. When the railway was being constructed to Bourke I held a contract, and I had to get fodder from Kyneton and have it shipped to Sydney, and then sent on to the nearest place to Bourke by rail.
327. The fodder came by water from Victoria to Sydney, and was sent to the Western district? Yes.
328. That implies that there is room in the western market for the produce of the Mudgee district? I think there is a large extent of territory which would supply the trade if we could open up the line through that territory.

329. Do you think you could obtain a foothold in the markets of the north-western district? I am not very well acquainted with the northern route; but I should say that in times of dry seasons we would have a good trade round by Coonamble.

330. Do you suffer very much in this district from the effects of drought? Yes; last year we lost the whole of our crops.

331. But you do not suffer to the same extent as the districts more to the westward? No; the seasons here are not so exceptionally dry but what we can produce something.

332. Your sheep and cattle do not die in thousands, as in the west? No.

333. Therefore, there is not the same severe strain on you, even in the worst seasons, as there is in a district like Dubbo? No; because Dubbo has less water.

334. Dubbo, although a fine agricultural district in a good season, is not a reliable one in a bad season? No.

335. Therefore, in time of drought, the western graziers would have no assistance from Dubbo? Very little. As a matter of fact they do not get it. Dubbo is not to be considered in the same category as Mudgee. The crops are not so reliable.

336. If the line were run from Dubbo to Coonamble you would be able to command the Coonamble trade, or a share of it, in a dry season? We would be in as good a position in trading with Coonamble, even if the line went round by Dubbo, as the Orange or Bathurst farmers who grow large crops.

337. That being so, it would be more to the interests of this district to have the connecting line between Werris Creek and Dubbo, than a direct line to Coonamble? I think so, although I formerly held a different opinion; but since the cross line has been talked about, I think it would be better to be linked on to it than to go to Dubbo and on to Coonamble.

338. This connecting line would give you access to three markets, instead of one? Yes.

339. Therefore it would be more advantageous to the producers of this district? It would.

340. Your misfortune is, that although you have a splendid district around Mudgee, you are so isolated by heavy railway expenses on the one side and want of access on the western side, that you cannot get a sale for the produce you are able to grow? That is an unfortunate fact, as far as Mudgee is concerned. The markets we had a few years ago, before the line was opened to Dubbo, are shut up to us, and the grass is growing on the track we used. Between Coonamble and Munderooran there is little traffic, and we have to wait, probably for a fortnight, for a team. Our trade is limited, and anything produced in the district must be sent to Sydney, to compete with the open markets of the colony and the world.

341. Are you a buyer of produce as well as a merchant? Yes.

342. What produce do you generally buy? Wheat, corn, and all kinds of cereals.

343. Any tobacco? Yes.

344. Is that grown here to any extent? Very largely.

345. Any maize? Yes; it is grown very largely.

346. We may look upon this as an exceptionally favoured agricultural district, producing almost all the agricultural products? Yes; except potatoes.

347. I suppose you do a considerable trade with the farmers around the district and in some of the outlying towns? Yes.

348. What is your opinion as to the commercial condition of this place? The commercial condition of this district is very bad, for the simple reason that we have not any market. I think the annual value of cereals in this district is something like £75,000. The wheat averages about 200,000 bushels per annum in the Mudgee district alone, and the only market we have is Sydney; and when the price is low there we have very little value for it; whereas, if we had an outside market to which we could send our ground wheat or flour, we would be in the same position as the farmers in Orange, Wellington, or Dubbo, who are in a far better condition at present than we.

349. Directing your attention to the probable annual cost of working this proposed railway, and the probable annual receipts, the difference betwixt the two being about £5,000, do you think we would be justified in recommending the construction of this line? I do; and I form that opinion upon these grounds; that if there is a district opened up in any portion of New South Wales, that district should be connected with the markets by a road of some kind. Large sums of money have been spent on macadamized roads throughout the country, and, although they cost the country a lot of money we get nothing from them, so that they are an absolute loss. Take, for instance, the road from Wallerawang to Mudgee, before the line was built. It cost not only a large amount to build, but a large amount to keep in repair, and the country received no benefit, and the State got nothing in return for the money expended. I maintain, then, that if there is a loss between here and Gulgong, or beyond, it will be of benefit all round to the colony generally.

350. I take your argument to be this, that railways are only iron roads, and that they should be constructed more with the view of giving accommodation to settlers than with a view to commercial profit? I would go further, and say that they should be constructed with a view of opening up country from which large sources of wealth are likely to be derived by people living somewhere in those districts.

351. Then you hold that although the construction of the line would not pay working expenses the indirect advantages would be so great as to justify the expenditure? I am strongly of that opinion.

352. You think there would be a probability of it paying in time, if it connected with the Dubbo and Werris Creek line? We can justify that opinion by taking the line constructed to Bathurst. At first there was a great loss upon it—as heavy as upon the Mudgee line. It is now, however, a paying line. If a line is constructed to a remote district, and opens it out and aids commerce, it will, I think, in a few years pay a fair interest on the cost of construction. I do believe that at present there would be a considerable loss upon the line, but even if there should be, I think it is only fair to this portion of the country that it should be constructed.

353. *Mr. Humphrey.*] Will you specify the indirect advantages which you think will be derived from the construction of the line in the direction of Gulgong? It will open up an extent of country which will offer great inducements to people to settle upon it. It must benefit the colony generally to open up the country and offer means of settlement to the people.

354. Are you speaking of agricultural land? Yes, of agricultural and pastoral country. I think it is more suitable for pastoral than agricultural land, because 50 or 60 miles beyond Gulgong you get into a warmer climate, something like Dubbo, and it is not so suitable then for the growth of cereals. The crops are not so reliable. You get into the warm, dry country, which requires more moisture than it seems to get.

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355. Is it not a fact that in all pastoral districts the population is small? Generally speaking, but we have the experience of places increasing in population by the opening of railways. For instance, take Bourke, and Nyngan, and many other places.
356. Can you say that Nyngan has increased in population by reason of the railway being opened? I think so. It has received a benefit through the Cobar mines and in other ways.
357. But that would not be in consequence of the line passing through a pastoral district;—it is in connection with the mineral resources of the district? Yes, of course.
358. Are there any other indirect advantages you can name besides the increase of population in the pastoral district? It would open up trade between here and there, and would allow of an increase in our farming population, and would enhance the value of the holdings of the people. For instance, if farmers are now dissatisfied with 50 acres of cereals under present conditions, they will, by having the line constructed, be able to produce cereals of different descriptions, which would pay better than by having only one market to send to. It does not pay to grow lucerne hay in this district.
359. Where would you find a market for lucerne hay, if the railway were constructed to Gulgong? It would not be of any benefit to construct it to Gulgong. I would argue that it should be constructed beyond.
360. In what direction beyond Gulgong? On to Dubbo, by means of the cross line, and then on to Bourke and the Queensland border.
- 360½. If the railway were connected between Dubbo and Werris Creek, would you not come into direct competition with all the northern and western farmers? Yes.
361. Would you get a better market for your produce? Yes; we would have the same markets to supply which they would have, but we have not them now. The only market we have now is Sydney.
362. You think you would get a better price from Dubbo and Bourke than from Sydney? Yes. There are several things we grow here which they cannot grow at Dubbo, and they depend upon us for the market, notably lucerne seed, of which there are tons grown in the district. I have no doubt factories of various kinds would spring up in the district, if we had outside communication. For instance, a jam factory would be helped to the extent of about 1s. per lb., which means the cost of the carriage from Sydney to Mudgee, so that if we have access to those other places which use fruit largely, we could preserve the fruit and send it out.
363. You say you would get live stock in return for the produce sent out? Yes.
364. Do you mean live stock for the consumption of the population here? Yes.
365. Do not you raise sufficient for your own consumption? Ordinarily speaking we do, but not always. We often had to truck fat cattle from Sydney here.
366. When do occasions arise when you require fat cattle to be brought to this district? In times of drought.
367. And then you would get the cattle from Sydney? No; from the outside.
368. If you were suffering from drought here, would they not suffer from it at Coonamble or Dubbo? No, not always. Travelling fat stock are brought through Mudgee in dry weather from the Queensland border, where there may have been a large amount of grass, and they are well fattened. I have known the Dubbo district to be in a flourishing condition, and the Mudgee district starving for want of water.
369. Is there any other traffic which would yield a return to the railway besides live stock? Yes. There would be a large quantity of traffic in coal. There are large coal-mines near the town, and if the line were opened out to Dubbo, ours would be the nearest coal-pits. The nearest they have on the Dubbo side are those of Lithgow. A large trade in coal would be opened for us, and it would annually increase.
370. Are you aware that the price of coal in Lithgow is 3s. 8d. a ton? Yes.
371. And you think you can compete against that price? I think so, and reap a good profit.
372. *Mr. Hurley.*] Are you interested in the coal mines? Not at all.
373. I suppose you are conversant with the principle which induces American railway companies to stretch out their railways into an unpopulated country, with the object of inducing population to follow? Yes. I think that is exactly what we want here.
374. Are you interested in carrying? No further than the transport of my own stuff.
375. What is the freight of carriage from here to Gulgong? Generally about 12s. 6d. a ton.
376. And from here to Coonamble? It is difficult to fix a price, because there is no traffic; but in ordinary seasons the price would be about £4 10s. or £5 a ton.
377. Are you interested in any land through which the railway would pass? No.
378. You believe the fruit in this district would be helped by increased population and the extension of the railway? Yes. Fruit is one of the most prosperous industries in this district. I have known the grape to be grown here within the last three years, and sent to Sydney and sold at 1s. per lb. Generally it is sold at 6d. 8d., and 10d. a lb. One small vineyard, on one occasion, benefited to the extent of £200 by the high price obtained for grapes.
379. What is your idea of the price this season? It is low, because the grapes are not so good, on account of the wet. We are in a position of advantage, because we are able to send grapes and other fruits into market, when other portions of the colony fail.
380. What class of persons are engaged in that industry? Generally Germans.
381. Do you know anything about the existence of shale in this district? Yes, 16 or 18 miles from here.
382. And you are using it in your local gas-works? I think we are trying it; but on account of the mine not being opened out, it is of no advantage to us.
383. Have you obtained an analysis from it? I cannot speak from my own knowledge.
384. Have you been over the route of the proposed railway? No.
385. Have you been to Coonamble? No; I have been to Dubbo, and know the country right down to Bourke.
386. You practically follow the course of the Cudgegong from here to Dubbo? No; the road from Werris Creek to Dubbo would take us out to Tallewang, which is a rich district, and which will be a great help to the railway as a feeder, because it will be a large agricultural centre. I do not think agricultural settlement is much carried out there now, because it is too far from the market. This is the only market they can send to, and to Sydney. Therefore the farmers have to carry their produce in from Tallewang, a distance of 50 miles.
387. Have any of the farming population from Victoria come over to this portion of the district searching for land upon which to make a home? I am not aware of their having done so.

388. Have you heard of any? No.

389. Do you think the throwing open of these reserves is likely to bring about an increase of population? I do; I believe, if the land could be thrown open for the production of cereals, and for pastoral pursuits, it would be likely to lead to a large increase of population.

390. What would you consider a fair value for land suitable for cereals? Close to the railway, I consider it would be quadrupled in value. For instance, land which would be worth £1 per acre to the State, should be worth £4 or £5, when they had the advantage of railway communication.

391. You look upon the railway as increasing the value of land 300 per cent.? I hold the opinion that if the line is constructed from here to the cross section, there are enough lots on the road, which, if secured in time, would pay to the Government the whole cost of construction.

392. Are you not aware that the reserves made on either side of the line are for the purpose of returning to the State the cost of constructing? Yes.

393. You look upon it as a wise provision, and likely to give a large amount of money to the Government, and pay them for the cost of construction? Yes, if advantage is taken of it.

394. *Mr. Humphery.*] You have mentioned a loss to Mudgee of the Coonamble trade. How did it come about? By the railway line being opened to Dubbo.

395. Has the trade of Coonamble gone to Dubbo now? Yes.

396. *Chairman.*] You mentioned just now that the railway, if constructed, would bring grist to the Government mill, and that the expenditure on roads did not do anything of the kind. As an instance, you referred to the road from Wallerawang to Mudgee. Is it not a fact that that road is still maintained for use? Yes.

397. There is no saving, then, in the road vote? The roads have to be maintained in the same way as a person finds it necessary to try and keep good an old suit of clothes, in case they should be required. I maintain that if a certain amount of money were not spent on the road between here and Wallerawang, it would fall into such a state of repair that it could not be used at all. It was required to be used the other day.

398. That goes to show that there is no saving to the State by the construction of a railway. You inferred that if we constructed a railway, we should save money spent on roads. Does not your experience lead to the conclusion that the construction of railways renders necessary a larger expenditure, in order to give access to those railways from different points? Not necessarily. It does not cost the same amount of money to keep the road in repair between here and Wallerawang that it used to cost.

399. But have not other roads to be made to give access to the railway? That is a necessary consequence, as the country becomes populated.

Mr. James Janes, produce dealer, sworn and examined:—

400-1. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? A produce dealer.

402. Residing in Mudgee? Yes.

403. How long have you resided here? Seventeen years.

404. Do you know the details of the proposal to construct a line from Mudgee to Gulgong? Yes.

405. Do you think it will be of benefit to the district of Mudgee, and the people generally? Not if it stops at Gulgong.

406. It will be of benefit to the people of Gulgong, but not of benefit to the people of Mudgee? I do not think it will be of benefit to either.

407. If the people of Gulgong have to travel 19 miles to get to the railway station, would it not be more convenient to them to have a station at their door? I do not think it would be of much benefit.

408. If you had to use a railway station, would it not be better for you to be close to it, instead of 19 miles away from it? Yes.

409. You do not think the line would pay unless carried further than Gulgong? No; I think it would be of great benefit to this district if it were extended. We would have a market all along the Western line.

410. Where do you think it would be best for it to go to? I think one part of it should join the Western line at Dubbo or Wellington.

411. *Via* Gulgong? As near to Gulgong as possible, but I have not thought much about that.

412. You think the line, to be of most benefit to the Mudgee district, should go to Wellington or Dubbo, to give access to the Western line, instead of going down to Wallerawang? That would save us a distance of nearly 100 miles.

413. What would you send to the western district if it were opened? I am at present sending eggs and butter, *via* Wallerawang.

414. Does it pay you to do that? I make it pay me, but the question is whether it pays those who get the goods, through their having to go so far down.

415. You can successfully compete against those who occupy fertile districts nearer this place, such as Molong? Yes.

416. How long have you had the Bourke market open here? I have been sending to Bourke for five or six years, ever since the line was opened. In fact I was carrying from Nyngan to Bourke before the line was open. I was carrying also to Bourke and Cobar.

417. Have you a regular trade? They only get stuff from me when they cannot get it from anywhere else. I have a regular trade, of course, but when they are pretty well off in other districts they do not trouble me so much.

418. If there were cheaper means of getting to market you would be able to supply large quantities? Yes.

419. Do you know of any other produce in the district which would go there? I have mentioned the chief articles I send away. We cannot compete with Orange in chaff, corn, cereals, or flour.

420. If a line were constructed you could compete with them? Yes.

421. You think there is a large trade between Bathurst and Orange, and the more western districts? Yes.

422. Only on occasions of drought, I suppose? Yes.

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- Mr. J. Janes. 423. All the year round? Butter, eggs, and poultry are sent all the year round, whether there is a drought or not.
- 22 Mar., 1890. 424. But chaff and corn only goes when there is a drought? Yes.
425. You know it will cost a large sum of money to make a line to Dubbo? Yes.
426. If it will take £7,000 to pay working expenses and interest on a line 19 miles long to Gulgong, it will take a larger amount on a line to Dubbo;—do you think there is trade enough to pay the interest on capital and working expenses? It may not be a question as to whether there is trade at present, but whether it will be of benefit to the whole of the community to construct a line. I have no doubt it will pay eventually.
- 426½. How can it be of benefit to the whole of the community to lose £7,000 a year? I think, in time, there will be no loss. Population is bound to increase.
427. You do not believe in a line going straight from here to Coonamble, but rather from here to Dubbo? I think we ought to join the western line somehow.
428. You are clearly of opinion that, unless the proposed line goes further than Gulgong, either to Dubbo or Coonamble, it would be folly to construct it? I think it would. I also think it should go to two places—to Dubbo or Wellington, and on to Coonamble.
429. Do you know the country between here and Dubbo? Yes.
430. Is there much Crown land unoccupied? I could not say.
431. The value of land would be increased by the construction of the line? Yes; double, or more.
432. *Mr. C'Sullivan.*] You do not appear to trade in cereals? No; I buy quinces.
433. You appear to trade more in the delicacies rather than the necessaries of life? I do, if you call butter a delicacy and not a necessary.
434. From what you know of the district and its productions, are you of opinion that, with a line running from here, and somehow connecting with Dubbo, this district could compete in the market with the agricultural districts of Molong and Orange? Yes.
435. You think there is room for more than what Molong and Orange can supply? Yes.
436. Have you ever heard that in the Nyngan district fodder has been brought from Victoria and New Zealand? No; I heard what Mr. Loneragan said about that, and I agree with him.

Mr. John Barry, mail contractor, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. J. Barry. 437-8. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? Mail contractor and publican.
- 22 Mar., 1890. 439. Have you been long in the district? About twelve years.
440. Are you acquainted with the proposed line of railway from Mudgee to Gulgong? Pretty well.
441. You know the route through which the line travels? Yes; I have seen the land which it goes through.
442. As one of the taxpayers of the country, do you think it is a wise investment on the part of the Government to construct a railway from here to there? No.
443. What is your reason for saying no? Because it will not pay by itself.
444. A line by itself, as a feeder to the railway at Wallerawang, is not, in your opinion, a line which will warrant the expenditure of money? No.
445. Will not the construction of the line give facilities to increased settlement? No.
446. Why? There is no land between here and there for settlers.
447. Is it all taken up? Yes; anything that is of any good.
448. Will not the persons possessed of that land devote the land to agricultural pursuits, supposing a railway is made to carry their produce to market? The line, as surveyed, will go through private property.
449. Do you not recognise the fact that if facilities are given for reaching market, the owners are likely to let their land, or develop it themselves? I do not know whether they will develop it or rent it, but there is nothing for a poor man to settle down upon along that road.
450. If the gold-field reserve around Gulgong were thrown open for settlers, do you think it would be taken up? I daresay it would.
451. If it were limited to certain areas—say, half a section, do you not think plenty of persons would avail themselves of the opportunity of securing it? I daresay they would, but a poor man would not get it.
452. You are firmly of opinion that the construction of the railway is not likely to bring about a settled population? Not between here and Gulgong.
453. Or beyond Gulgong? Yes; beyond Gulgong.
454. What do you say about Coonamble? I say that a line from here, to hitch on to Dubbo, and from there to Coonamble, is the only one; but you must liberate Mudgee from bondage.
455. You are running a line of coaches between here and certain places outside? Yes.
456. Where do you run to? From here to Cassilis, from here to Gulgong, from Gulgong to Coolah, from Gulgong to Cobbora, from Coonabarabran to Gunnedah, and from Gunnedah to Walgett.
457. Do you do this as a matter of philanthropy or a matter of speculation? Everything is a speculation in this country.
458. Do you look upon the railways as interfering with your right as a speculator? Not at all. I consider the railways open up the country.
459. Give us an idea of your year's takings? I produce my returns of traffic and receipts from the 1st of December, 1889, between here and Gulgong.
460. Do you look upon it as a payable speculation? I do not, if I were dependent upon the traffic between Mudgee and Gulgong. I depend on the outside traffic.
461. That is between Gulgong and other places? Yes.
462. Is the traffic increasing at all? Not at all.
463. Has it fallen off? Yes.
464. What is that attributable to? The traffic is not so large on account of the weather at present. It may improve by-and-bye, but we must take one month with another, and strike an average.
465. Where do you get your fodder and home stores from? Here, and in Gulgong.
466. Do you ever have to bring it up the line from any other place? No.
467. There is sufficient grown in the district to supply you? Yes.
468. And to supply all the wants of the district? Yes.

469. Have you any knowledge of the various mineral deposits in and around the district? The miners say it is very rich.
470. You do not know much about it yourself? No.
471. But you look upon the introduction of a railway over the routes you travel as a very destructive competitor? Yes.
472. Therefore, you will be much injured by the introduction of a railway? I would like to see a railway, because it would open up the country.
473. But you do not believe it would be productive, or pay interest on the cost of construction? Not between here and Gulgong.
474. Have you any land between here and Gulgong? No.
475. Have you any beyond Gulgong? I have a little, but it is too far away from Dubbo or any of those places to do me any good.
476. Have you any knowledge as to the value of land immediately around Mudgee through which this railway will pass? That all depends. People put different prices on their land.
477. I am speaking of agricultural land? I could not form any opinion. Some people say it is worth £7 an acre when it is only worth £2.
478. Were you connected with the railway league, which was instituted some time ago? No.
479. Have you ever heard any persons holding land through which the railway would pass say whether they were favourable to give that land in exchange for the benefit and advantages which the construction of a railway would give them? No.
480. You have never heard the matter discussed amongst those who were advocates of the line? No.
481. You cannot form any idea as to the probability of the increased trade which would be given by the construction of a railway beyond Gulgong towards Coonamble, or towards Dubbo? A line from Gulgong to Coonamble, or Dubbo, is the best which can be constructed.
482. Upon what grounds? All the traffic from Wallerawang goes through Mudgee, and all the produce of this district goes right on to Walgett; and then there is a large amount of sheep on the line between Walgett and Coonamble and between Coonamble and Dubbo. If the sheep came this way it would ease your line at Dubbo. At one station last year there were 250,000 sheep shorn, and 3,500 bales of wool were obtained. Sheep have actually to come to Mudgee, because they cannot put them on the trucks at Dubbo. They are smashed about and shunted from one end of the country to the other.
483. Would they not meet with the same abuse by a line connected with Dubbo? No.
484. Why? Because we would have a separate line. In going through Wellington you would find that there is more travelling-stock than what the line can carry. They are shunted about from one station to another, and are knocked about and reduced in price in the market. If a line ran from Dubbo to this place, we might pay a little more for stock carriage, but we would realise more for them in the market.
485. Have you ever given any consideration to the probability of cattle being killed in the country and the meat being brought down by cool cars; would not such a system favour the grower as well as the consumer? I agree with you that it would, if it were done higher up. There is nothing better than the cattle killed on the stations.
486. Do you think the small farmers would take advantage of such a process if it were instituted in this district? I am sure they would.
487. It would be better for them and the consumer in Sydney? Yes.
488. Does all the wool you speak of come through this place? It goes through Dubbo.
489. Instead of through here? Yes. When I ran the mails from here to Walgett, I had eight teams on the road. As soon as the Dubbo line was opened we lost all that trade. I had to pay £30 a ton for chaff in Coonamble, when I could have bought it here for £4. If we had a line from here which would carry us on to Dubbo, we could supply all the back country. The best of wheat and chaff is grown in this district, and we have no means of disposing of it. We have to go from here to Wallerawang, then up to Bathurst, Blayney, Orange, Wellington, and down to Dubbo, when we could get to Dubbo direct—a distance of 70 miles.
490. You think that the high freight charges, and the circuitous route to market are an incubus? Yes.
491. Are you one of those who advocated a line to Mudgee in the first instance? I was dead against it.
492. On what grounds? On the same grounds that I am dead against the extension to Gulgong only. Messrs. Cobb & Co. produced their books of traffic, but the merchant people of Sydney said we must have a line to Mudgee.
493. You looked upon the construction of that line as a national mistake? Decidedly.
494. And the returns prove your opinions to be correct? Yes. Until you extend the line further out it will never pay.
495. Can you give any idea as to the position of farmers in the district;—as to whether they are in a healthy financial position or not? I think they are.
496. Notwithstanding the difficulties they have to contend with in reaching market? If we had a market for produce, Mudgee would be the best inland town in the west.
497. You are totally opposed to Gulgong being the terminus of the line? Yes.
498. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Is there an opposition coach to Gulgong? Yes.
499. And they get a share of the traffic as well as you? I allow them to take just one-half.
500. Are the people of Gulgong in the habit of travelling here by their own buggies? They may be; but that will not bring revenue to the railway.
501. By travelling in their own buggies, do they save the necessity of paying you coach fare? Yes.
502. Would not the people who owned buggies, and who run by the opposition coach, be likely to form customers for the railway? No.
503. Do you mean to say that people would rather travel to Gulgong by buggy than by railway? The people who come in by buggy are from Home Rule and Canadian.
504. How far would these people be from the line? 6 miles.
505. And how far from Mudgee? About 17 miles.
506. Would not they go to the railway and save a 10 miles drive? They might.
507. There is a probability that the figures you have put in do not represent the actual traffic between here and Gulgong? They only represent the people who travel by my vehicles.

- Mr. J. Barry. 508. And that is half of what goes by the opposition coach? Yes.
- 509-10. The return makes no allowance for those who travel by buggies and other vehicles? No.
- 22 Mar., 1890. 511. *Chairman.*] Did you give Mr. Harper, the Railway Inspector, any information when he was down here collecting statistics, as to the probable traffic? No; he did not communicate with me.
512. How long have you been running a line of coaches between Mudgee and Gulgong? Eight or nine years.
513. Are you always in Mudgee, or are you sometimes on the road? I am on the road sometimes.
514. Do you know of anyone connected with you, or the firm you represent, who gave any information to Mr. Harper? No.
515. Do you think the other line of coaches between Mudgee and Gulgong carries as many passengers and parcels as you? Yes.
516. How long has the other line been running? Perhaps twelve months.
517. Does it make a daily journey, the same as yourself? Yes.
518. One journey each way? Yes; his goes through Canadian, and I go along the main road.
519. Would the Canadian population use the line if it were constructed? No.
520. How far would they be from the nearest point of the line? 5 or 6 miles.
521. How far is that from Mudgee? About 16 miles.
522. Would not they travel the 5 or 6 miles to the nearest station, instead of travelling 16 miles by road to Mudgee? They might.
523. What would you do, supposing you were residing at Canadian, and wanted to come in to Mudgee or Sydney, and were 6 miles from the nearest railway-station;—would you not go to the nearest station? I would take my buggy and drive in.
524. That is because you have plenty of horses? Yes.
525. But the usual run is one buggy and one horse? If a man went across to the station he would have to take his servant with him to bring the buggy back.
526. Your estimate of receipts is £291 Os. 7d. for the year? Yes.
527. You estimate that the other coach proprietor realizes the same amount? I do not; I consider he only gets one-half of that.
528. Then £450 would be the total realized by both coach proprietors? Yes.
529. If the Railway Commissioners have made inquiry, and have arrived at the conclusion that the coaching and mails per year would realize £525, they are not under the mark, but a little over? The contract for the mails is under £100 per year.
530. Then this does not include the mails? No.
531. What are the mails? £90 a year.
532. Then £90 is to be added to this return? Yes.
533. That will equalize your estimate with that of the Railway Commissioners? Yes.
534. You do not think the Railway Commissioners have under or over estimated it? No; they have given a fair estimate.
535. Do you think their estimates for goods and live stock between Gulgong and Mudgee would reach £1,112 during the year? I do not think so.
536. You think they have over estimated the traffic? I am confident of it.
537. You are not biassed in the matter? Not at all.
538. You really think an over estimate has been made, and that the country between here and Gulgong could not improve to such an extent that it would give the return estimated in a very short time—that is for live stock and goods? I would not say about goods. They get their goods from here to Gulgong by carriers, at 7s., 8s., and 9s. a ton.
539. Can you give an estimate of the amount of tonnage which goes from here to Gulgong by carriers? I cannot.
540. I understand you are in favour of a line from here to Dubbo rather than from here to Coonamble? I am in favour of a line from here to Dubbo, although there is no line in the country which would pay better than a line direct from here to Coonamble, and then to Walgett.
541. Would not Walgett be better served by being attached to the Northern line than to this? No; they condemned that line.
542. Who? The Commissioners. They never can get a line down there. If we had a line from here to Dubbo or Coonamble, we should get all that trade. We have all the northern members boxed up against us, and they say we must lose our trade if Mudgee gets a line out. Therefore we want to hitch on to Dubbo.
543. Do you think if a line were constructed from Mudgee to Dubbo, or Coonamble, there would be a reasonable prospect of its paying interest and working expenses? I do.
544. Even if the interest on cost of construction and the working expenses amounted to over £40,000 per annum, you think there would be sufficient trade to pay that? I do. I can assure you there is no line in the western district which will pay so well.
545. You must have been altogether overpowered in connection with the agitation for a line from Wallerawang to Mudgee? I was dead against it.
546. And they would not allow you to have a show? No, they would not. They know the mistake they have made now.
547. You referred, just now, to being connected with a firm running several lines of coaches—one to Cassilis? Yes.
548. You do not go from Gulgong to Cassilis? No; we go from Gulgong to Coolah.
549. If a line were constructed to Coolah, and on to Coonamble, would the Coolah people be benefited by it? Yes.
550. What other line do you run? To Coonabarabran. That is further on still.
551. Do I understand you to leave Mudgee to touch at Gulgong, that you then go to Coolah, and that your terminus is Coonabarabran? No. We leave Coolah on the right, and go into Redbank. That is 6 miles from Denison Town, and it is 20 miles from Denison Town to Coolah. We go right on, and cross the Castlereagh, to Coonabarabran.
552. Then you urge that the line should be constructed direct from Mudgee to Dubbo, or Coonamble? Yes.
553. Which one do you prefer? I prefer the one direct to Coonamble.

554. But that would not give you any access to any surplus trade with the western district? We shall have quite enough if we get the Coonamble trade. Mr. J. Barry.
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555. What is to come from Coonamble? All our surplus stuff, grown in this district, could be sent there.
556. But they grow enough for their own requirements, except when there is a big drought? How do they grow it.
557. Who supplies them now? They get it all from Orange and Bathurst.
558. Do not they grow anything for themselves? Sometimes.
559. Do they not meet their own requirements, except in dry seasons? No.
560. They are always dependent, more or less, on somebody else for supplies? Mudgee is the place they always depended upon, until the railway went to Dubbo, and then they went to the nearest place.
561. And is that the reason why Mudgee has not progressed? I consider that it is dead against our interest.
562. That is to say that trade has been taken from you? Yes.
563. Is it not a fact that the reason Mudgee has remained at a standstill is because the Gulgong gold-field has fallen away, and where there were thousands of people whom the Mudgee farmers used to supply there are only hundreds now? Nothing of the kind.
564. Did not the Mudgee farmers supply that large gold-mining population at Gulgong some years ago? I suppose they did.
565. And now that large mining population is gone, Mudgee has been deprived of those consumers? Yes. They have only one market now to go to. You give other parts of the country means of going to the back country. You give them railways to enable them to go out to Cobar, Bourke, and Wilcannia, and you shut Mudgee out.
566. If a line were constructed to Coonamble or Dubbo, we should construct a line to enter into competition with the Great Western line? I do not think so.
567. You have told us you wanted to sneak away some of the trade from Dubbo? We do not want to sneak away the trade from Dubbo.
568. Well, then, to share it with them? We will share it with them.
569. And your share would of necessity take away from them? If I were sending stock from Coonamble I would truck them *via* Mudgee, because they would not get knocked about so much.
570. If the construction of this line would lead to a very large trade, would not the trade on the new Mudgee-Dubbo line be so great that stock would be subject to the same knocking about as they are on the Western line? No, because you would avoid the traffic at Dubbo.
571. I understand, then, that all the people between Wallerawang and Dubbo would be prepared to let their passenger traffic stand on one side, and their ordinary produce stand on one side, to allow of these poor beasts from the north and north-western portions of the colony to be taken to Sydney without shunting? Most decidedly. When they cannot send them on by trucks from Dubbo, they cannot send them on at all. I have seen cattle in the trucks for a day, because they could not be sent on.
572. And the people between Wallerawang and Dubbo would be prepared to put up with any inconvenience to allow the stock to go right through? I can assure you that Dubbo is prepared to join hands with us to-morrow to have a line constructed to Dubbo.
573. *Mr. Humphrey.*] Is there any other traffic, excepting live stock, from Coonamble to Mudgee? Only live stock.
574. For what period of the year would that traffic continue? Three or four months.
575. What would the traffic be for the other eight or nine months? Look at all the stuff which goes to Coonamble and on to Walgett.
576. What other traffic would there be from Coonamble for the remainder of the year? They would be sending their cattle and sheep. Every week of your life you can see thousands of sheep going from Coonamble to Sydney.
577. But that only lasts four months of the year? That is for the wool trade.
578. The live stock goes over the whole of the year? Yes. There is not a more prosperous district in the country than Coonamble.
579. What is the distance from Gulgong to Mundooran? 53 miles from here.
580. What is the distance from Mundooran to Coonamble? I think about 120 miles. At any rate it is 100 miles. The distance from Gulgong to Coonamble will be about 150 miles.
581. Then a railway at £5,000 a mile would cost £750,000? Yes.
582. Do you think the Government would be justified in incurring an expenditure of three quarters of a million, to construct that railway, when the only traffic between Coonamble and Gulgong, and Mudgee, would be live stock and wool? I consider that until you make a line from here, the Mudgee line will never pay. It is bound to pay, if you go out into the back country. Look at the population there now. Hundreds of men are coming from Victoria every day, and are taking up land along those roads. Four men from Victoria the other day took up 20,000 acres of land.
583. And you think it is advantageous that the land should be taken up in large areas? I think, if a man can get hold of a large piece of land, he should settle upon it.
584. Would that land be taken up for agricultural or pastoral purposes? For whatever they can grow upon it. I have seen some of the finest wheat in the country grown between Nevertire and Warren, by a man from Victoria.
585. What increase of population has there been between Gulgong and Coonamble within the last five years? I could not tell you. I know that within the last five years a mill has been put up at Mundooran, and a couple of public-houses, and five or six private buildings have been erected. It is the same all along the road.
586. In reply to Mr. O'Sullivan you said that there are no holders of small areas between Mudgee and Gulgong who would be served by the proposed railway? According to the present survey, I do not believe any man can take up a piece of land for the benefit of himself between here and Gulgong.
587. Are there not a considerable number of holders of small areas within a radius of 10 miles of Gulgong? Yes.
588. Would not they be served by the railway? Of course they would.
589. How do you reconcile that answer with the one given to Mr. O'Sullivan? I meant between here and Gulgong.

- Mr. J. Barry. 590. Are there no holders of small areas within 5 miles of the line between here and Gulgong? I do not know. I think there must be between 4 and 5 miles.
- 22 Mar., 1890. 591. Do you know Guntawang? Yes.
592. Are there any small holders there? Yes.
593. Who does it belong to? Mr. Richard Rouse.
594. Do you know Wilbetree? Yes.
595. Are there any small areas there? Yes; there is any number of farmers about there.
596. How far is Wilbetree from the proposed line? 6 or 7 miles.
597. If they are 6 miles from the railway, will they not be served by it? I do not think so. It would be easier to come to Mudgee than to cross over there to bring their produce.
598. How far is Wilbetree from Mudgee? 10 or 12 miles.
599. And you think the farmers would prefer to go 12 miles into Mudgee, than to go 6 miles to the nearest point of the line? It would be cheaper for them to do so. They would have to go to Gulgong with their produce, or come in here.
600. Do you know Eurunderee? Yes.
601. How far is that from Mudgee? About 5 miles.
602. Would the railway serve any settlers there? Not at all.
603. Do you know Barragandoon? Yes.
604. To whom does that belong? To Mr. Richard Rouse.
605. How far is that from the proposed railway? Alongside of it.
606. That has not been thrown open? No; it is private property.
607. Do you know that run? Yes.
608. Is it good land? Yes, pretty good.
609. Is it fit for agriculture? Yes.
610. Do you know the extent of agricultural land there? Yes.
611. Do you know Home Rule? That is still further on to the right. It is within 6 miles of Gulgong.
612. Is there any good land there? Yes.
613. About what area? I could not say. Mr. Rouse has the greatest part of it.
614. Are there any holders of small areas? Yes.
615. Would not they be served by the railway? Yes; they would go to Gulgong.
616. Gulgong would be 6 miles away? Yes.
617. Would the line be more difficult to construct between Gulgong and Coonamble, than between Mudgee and Gulgong? There are only one or two difficult places on the road. It is level country all the way.
618. Do you think it would be less expensive? I do.
619. Do you know the country well? I have been over a part of the line, which was surveyed right through to Walgett.
620. Assuming that the line between Mudgee and Gulgong would cost £5,500 a mile, what should be the cost of a line between Gulgong and Coonamble? It would be less.
621. Do you think there would be a large passenger traffic between Coonamble and Mudgee? I do.
622. How is Coonamble supplied at the present time? There are two lines of coaches running. A daily mail runs to Warren. There are these coaches on the road, and they go right across to Nevertire. Another daily mail goes from Dubbo to Coonamble.
623. What is the distance from Dubbo to Coonamble? About 100 miles.
624. Do you think Coonamble would prefer to be connected with Dubbo or with Mudgee? With Mudgee.
625. What is your reason for saying so? Because they can buy their produce cheaper in Mudgee, and they can depend upon our seasons more than in the other district.
626. Would it not suit Coonamble equally well to be connected between Dubbo and Wellington assuming that the line could be carried from Gulgong to that point? Not to Wellington, because the distance would be shorter, but between Coonamble and here it would be shorter than going the other way, and when you came to reckon up at the end of the year the extra haulage which you would have to pay for your goods, and the fares of passengers, you would find it would be cheaper to come this route than any other.
627. Would it not be an advantage to Coonamble to be connected with the northern line as well? I do not think so.
628. Assuming it probable, or possible, for Dubbo to be connected with Werris Creek, would it not be to the advantage of Coonamble to be connected with Dubbo, rather than with Mudgee? It may be; but they have no connection up north. Their business goes between Sydney, Coonamble, and Walgett.
629. Do you give it as your opinion that the railway should be carried from Mudgee to Coonamble? I do. Otherwise, get on to the Dubbo line. Get on to Dubbo at the nearest point, and then we will get the Cobar trade and the Bourke trade. The day has come when we must get a line from Dubbo to Coonamble. If we have a separate line for ourselves, all the better.

George William Townsend, Esq., C.E., sworn and examined : --

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630. *Mr. Hurley.*] You are a civil engineer? Yes.
631. You were under engagement to the Government some time ago? I was employed in the Railway Department for thirteen years.
632. You were sent out to do some special work in connection with the western survey? The Colorado Valley survey.
633. You sent in your reports in regard to the class of grades, &c., and they were printed? Yes; in a Parliamentary paper.
634. You made up your quantities and ascertained the exact cost of the construction of the line? Yes; and in the same paper is a statement, which has never been disputed, as to the amount of traffic which would be likely to be carried.
635. Has anything occurred since you made up those quantities, and gave in your returns, which has altered your opinion in regard to the suitability of the line? Not as to the suitability of the line. The recent slips, during falls of rain, have forcibly impressed upon my mind the necessity for that line. I was very

very careful throughout the whole of my survey, wherever any dangerous ground was crossed, to throw the line back into gallery tunnels—traversing the face of the hill and keeping on the sound ground, instead of having cuttings in the open ground.

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636. If I remember rightly, in your report there were many miles of tunnels? Nine miles of tunnels were put on the section, for the purpose of avoiding which I could have shown moderate cuttings and banks, which could have been made for from £10,000 to £12,000 a mile; but instead of cheapening the estimate by showing that, I threw the line back into tunnels over nine miles—the object being to secure ground free from landslip. That is what increased the estimate beyond what I first anticipated. I was for three years in the valley, and saw a great deal of the ground. One day my camp was nearly swept away by a landslip, so that the necessity for some protection was forced on my mind.

637. Am I correct in anticipating that you made out that you could make a gross haulage of 74 or 75 per cent. more on the gradient you had made, than on the gradient on the Western line? More than that—nearly 300 per cent. The amount one large engine will take from Dubbo to Lithgow is eighteen loaded trucks. The same engine will take thirteen trucks from Lithgow to Penrith. On the Colo Valley line, it would take, from Dubbo to Penrith, fifty trucks, if my gradient were adhered to.

638. *Chairman.*] By your line you pass by the worst grades on the Wallerawang-Mudgee line? Almost all the heavy grades are about Penrith, and do not touch the Western line again until near Dubbo.

639. You do not avail yourself of the Wallerawang and Mudgee line further than in its best places? No, and that only at the Mudgee end.

640. There are some heavy grades there? Yes; 1 in 40.

641. *Mr. Hurley.*] Coming up the Colo Valley to the east of Rylstone, which part of the Cudgegong do you touch first? Near to Fitzgerald's station.

642. How far is that from Rylstone? $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

643. You are aware that there has been a great deal of controversy in the Department in regard to your calculations of cost? Yes. I can explain how those figures were swollen to such an extent, and the Parliamentary papers will bear out my statement. When I submitted my estimate, Mr. Whitton also submitted one. Mr. Sutherland, the Minister for Works, asked him whether it was for a double or a single line, and he said for a double line. Mr. Sutherland then asked me what my estimate was for, and I said for a single line, except in regard to the bridges, which were for double lines. To prevent confusion, I distinctly stated that although there were many miles of viaducts, they were not to be confounded with the bridges, the viaducts being for a single and the bridges for a double line. Mr. Whitton then said he was quite sure I originally intended to estimate for a double line, and he persisted in doing so.

644. So that that increase on the estimate is through Mr. Whitton's intervention? Yes; estimating for a double instead of a single line, as I did. Taking his figures for a double line, and mine for a single line, you will find that mine is the more liberal price of the two.

645. Did you provide for double lines in the tunnel? No, single; intending in case of duplication to have a duplicate tunnel running parallel with the other one.

646. Looking at the line over the mountains, and the line surveyed by yourself, you are aware of the release it will be to the congested traffic of the Western line? It will be an enormous release to the Western line. It will take the whole of the western and the north-western traffic, no matter how largely it becomes developed hereafter.

647. You are conversant with the necessity of a duplicate or separate line? Yes; a separate line.

648. Looking at the high grades on the Western line, it would be madness, in your opinion, to attempt to duplicate it? Nothing short of that.

649. Have you given any consideration to the Southern line, *via* Blayney? I surveyed that bit from Carcoar.

650. But you have not given that consideration to it which you have given to the other, believing it did not deserve it? No; I do not think it did.

651. Looking at the line surveyed by yourself up to this point, have you given any consideration to the probabilities of trade accruing by the construction of a line beyond this point, westward? Yes.

652. What is your opinion, or advice, as to what would be the best course to take, to get out of this place, westward? I think we should go from here to Gulgong, and from Gulgong to Dubbo. From Dubbo, I would extend to Coonamble, and thence to Walgett. From Dubbo, I would also extend, *via* Parkes and Forbes, to Young, and would so connect the Southern district. From Nyngan, I would extend to Cobar, Wilcannia, Broken Hill, and Silvertown, making a complete system, centering on the Colo Valley. Further, I would connect somewhere from Coonamble with the Northern system, so that we should have a complete connection from south to north, without going across the Dividing Range more than once.

653. Why would you make the detour from Gulgong onward to Dubbo? Because the people would have it so. A better line could be made without touching Gulgong.

654. Would you always bend to public clamour? I would not, if I could help it.

655. In this instance you are prepared to give way because the public require it? My first idea was not to take in Gulgong; but I found it necessary, in the interests of the people. I think it is wise for an engineer, in designing lines, to take into consideration the greatest amount of good to the greatest number.

656. Where do you propose to touch the Northern line? I do not say where; I merely mention the fact that I would have a connecting line from one point to another.

657. Have you given any consideration to a proposal which has been submitted and spoken of, for a line from Werris Creek right across? It would be well if Werris Creek were connected with Dubbo. It would be a good line by which to take the traffic from Bourke to Newcastle; but it would not be a good line to take the southern traffic north, because it would come too far east. You would be making too much of a base of a triangle, instead of the hypotenuse of the triangle. I would go further north—north of Armidale—somewhere Tenterfield way.

658. Do you think, viewing the circumstances of the Western line round by Orange, and looking at all the circumstances of the probable progress of the country and increase of population, that the country would be warranted in constructing the Colo Valley route, and making it the Western line out to Dubbo? Yes, no doubt about it; so much so that if that line were made, it would pay to take traffic from Wellington back to Dubbo and along the Colo Valley, and it would be shorter than from Wellington and over the mountains.

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659. Have you given any consideration to the freight now chargeable upon those heavy grades, as against the freight chargeable on heavy loads on easy grades? Yes; it is contained in my report in the Parliamentary paper; but as I have not looked at it for eighteen months or more, I could not say anything about it.
660. To the producer inland, and to the agriculturist and pastoralist, it would be an advantage of at least 50 per cent.? Yes, at least that; and it would leave a large profit, instead of a loss, over the mountains. Every ton carried over the mountains is carried at a loss. With the other light grade line we could pay expenses, reduce freights one-half, and in time pay for the line. In my estimate I stated that the line would be paid for in forty years.
661. You made that estimate after careful examination? Yes; and it was never contradicted by Mr. Whitton, anxious as he was to contradict everything I said. Mr. Goodchap bore me out entirely.
662. Having in view the probability of the construction of the Colo Valley line, do you think it would be wise to defer any extension westward until the completion of that route to this part of the district? No; I would push forward the extension westward as rapidly as possible. A place like Mudjee would be largely benefited by intercourse with the west and north-west. Another thing, as soon as we get to Mudjee, we get into what may be termed the bottle-neck system of the present westward line. Still, it would be an advantage to have the traffic from Mudjee to the west and north-west, and it would be a portion of the line made. It would also have a further advantage, because it would impress on the minds of the authorities the necessity of making the Colo Valley line. They would find such a constriction of traffic on the Blue Mountains that they would be obliged to make another line.
663. Am I right in thinking you spent a great number of months in the Colo Valley? About three years.
664. Therefore you are in a position to give an opinion as to the various deposits of coal? Yes.
665. Have you any experience of minerals? Yes; I practised as a mining engineer for about ten years.
666. What is your opinion as to the probability of petroleum existing there? I do believe there is petroleum there; and I will tell you why: There is a hole on the river called the Bubble Hole. When my attention was drawn to it, I observed it frequently. I have spent half a day closely observing it. There is an oblong sunken island (the top of which comes near the surface of the water) of fine silt, 50 feet in length, and about the centre it comes up to a high ridge. This ridge is in the centre of the hole, exactly in the place where any light deposit would be swept away by flood. All along the centre ridge there is a constant line of bubbles. I swam off on one occasion with a bottle to the bank, but the soil was so soft that I could not get a foothold. I endeavoured to get some of the gas in a bottle, with the object of having it analysed, but failed. I feel certain it is natural gas coming from some petroleum spring.
667. How is the country timbered? In some places there is very good timber; in others it is very scrubby. Upon some of the hills there is remarkably good timber.
668. Any cedar? Very little; nothing to speak of. Out on the Bulga track there is magnificent timber.
669. Any coal? Coal is very common there. You can get chunks of coal and shale all down the river.
670. Of good quality? Some good and some poor.
671. Have you any knowledge of the mines within 18 miles of Mudjee? I have been in Mr. Standish Cox's place.
672. What are the measures? I cannot tell you.
673. What class of coal is it? It is of good quality.
674. What would you call it? It is good cooking coal and good gas coal; but they are spoiling it. It is an immense seam, 22 feet, and they were putting in bands. If they dressed it better, it would have a better market value. I know the gas works were refusing to take it on that account.
675. Have you been over the district between here and Coonabarabran and Coonamble? No.
676. Between here and Dubbo? Yes; the Minister for Works is in possession of a letter from me, written about the time the survey was started, in which I offered to make that survey as portion of my Colo Valley survey, adhering to the same grades, none above 1 in 100, and the cost per mile from Mudjee to Dubbo not to exceed £7,000. I offered to make the survey for £1,200, being paid £600 whilst the work was going on, and leaving £600 as a guarantee that I would carry out what I stated. I had an acknowledgment of the receipt of the letter, and no more.
677. Is the land suitable for agriculture between here and Dubbo? Some of it is very good.
678. Can you give an idea as to its value? About £2 10s. per acre.
679. And the price, if the railway were constructed? It is hard to say.
680. It may be quadrupled, at all events? Certain to.
681. If they put all the available labour possible upon the line, in what length of time could it be constructed—that is, the Colo Valley line? About six years.
682. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What is the distance between Dubbo and Sydney, by the Colo Valley route? 237 miles, as near as I recollect.
683. What is the distance from Dubbo to Sydney by the present line? 278 miles.
684. It would therefore be 41 miles shorter by the Colo Valley route? Yes.
685. Has not Mr. W. E. Abbott made a proposal to run a line from Dubbo to Cassilis, and Muswellbrook, on to Newcastle? Yes.
686. What is that distance? 237 miles to Newcastle.
687. That would be the same distance as the Colo Valley route to Sydney? Yes.
688. There would be this advantage in favour of the Colo Valley route, that the distance would be shorter between Sydney and Newcastle? Yes.
689. What is the distance to Sydney by Newcastle? By Mr. Abbott's proposal to go by Newcastle to Sydney it would be, as near as I recollect, 331 miles against 278 miles by the present route to Sydney from Dubbo.
690. Therefore this proposal of Mr. Abbott's is not likely to successfully compete against the Colo Valley route? I do not think so.
691. Has not Mr. Gipps made a proposal for a line *via* Blacktown on to Cook's River? Yes; and to Blayney.
692. Is that a feasible route? I have not been over it. I have had a talk with Mr. Cummings about it. He went to inspect it with Mr. Gipps, and after that nothing more was said about it.
693. If your proposal *re* the Colo Valley route were carried out as far as Dubbo, it would conflict with the

the proposal for a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek? No; I do not say it would. From Dubbo to Werris Creek would be a connection from the north.

694. Is there any likelihood of both lines being given? No.

695. Could not your proposal for a line from Penrith to Dubbo be fitted on to the connecting line between Dubbo and Werris Creek, going from Gulgong to some point on the connecting line? I do not know enough of the country to say; but I think not.

696. Why not? You would get into some very rough country, and it would be very expensive.

697. If a line can be taken from Gulgong to Coonamble, can it not cross the proposed line? The dividing ranges to the north run very flat.

698. But there is no occasion to go to the north? But you are going to the north, going to Coonamble, and the range is low and flat there.

699. Is there no other point to the south where you could join this connecting line? I do not know enough of it to say.

700. If the connecting line between Dubbo and Werris Creek is carried out, as it probably will be, you are not likely to get your line from Dubbo to Gulgong, and therefore I ask you whether you can fit on the Colo Valley line, running through Mudgee and Gulgong, to the connecting line between Dubbo and Werris Creek? Yes; but I do not think it would be less distance than you could get by connecting with Dubbo.

701. It would probably be more, but even so, it will be shorter from Dubbo to Sydney than the present route? Yes; but I fail to see your object. If I can get to Dubbo by a more direct and shorter route, what is the good of joining to the Werris Creek line.

702. The Government is not likely to give both lines;—if they construct the line from Dubbo to Werris Creek they are not likely to construct another line from Dubbo to Gulgong, when they get so near to Gulgong? But how near do they get?

703. I cannot exactly say, but it is not very great.

704. *Chairman.*] 20 miles.

705. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Then I should say it would certainly be wise to connect with the other, although it would make it rather longer in the through distance;—had not you better be prepared to modify your scheme in that direction? Yes.

706. *Chairman.*] That is, instead of going from Gulgong to Dubbo, you go to some point on the Western line? Yes.

707. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] And by that means have access to Dubbo on one side, and Werris Creek on the other? Yes; that is to the west and to the north.

708. Do you think there is a probability of the Colo Valley line being carried out? I should like to see it, but I am afraid somebody's carriage blocks the way for the time being.

709. In plain terms, you want a new Engineer-in-Chief? That is about it.

710. The necessity will become so strong for a relieving line for the mountain line that some line must be adopted? Yes. That is why I should be anxious to see the line made from Mudgee to the north-west, because it will emphasise the necessity for the Colo Valley line.

711. Coming back to the line under consideration, I understand you to be of this opinion—that it will be wise, pending a decision in regard to the Colo Valley line, to proceed with this line as a portion of the Colo Valley line of the future? Yes.

712. *Mr. Humphery.*] You estimate the cost of construction will be £7,000 a mile between Mudgee and Dubbo? Yes.

713. What grade do you estimate for? A ruling grade of 1 in 100, and no curve sharper than 20 chains.

714. What would be the difference in the haulage power of a locomotive over a grade of 1 in 40 and over one of 1 in 100? The ruling grade from Dubbo to Lithgow is 1 in 40, and upon that a large engine will take eighteen loaded trucks. Upon a grade of 1 in 100 the same engine will take fifty trucks.

715. What would the haulage be over a grade of 1 in 80? About thirty to thirty-five trucks.

716. Nearly double? Nearly double the 1 in 40.

717. You do not know the country between Dubbo and Gulgong? I have been over it, and know it pretty well.

718. Do you know if the land is fit for agriculture? A good deal of it is.

719. Is there any timber suitable for sleepers? It is sometime since I was over it, and I could not say.

Mr. James D. Parker, manager for Wright, Heaton, & Co., sworn and examined:—

720. *Chairman.*] What position do you hold? Manager for Wright, Heaton, & Co.

721. How long have you held that position? Twelve years.

722. You are intimately connected with the trade of the district? Yes.

723. Did Mr. Harper obtain information from you, when he was making up his reports as to the probable traffic on the line? He came to me, but I do not think the information obtained was of much use, because we did not go into details.

724. Are the goods which come from Mudgee station for Gulgong addressed to Gulgong, and sent direct by carriers, or is bulk broken here? It is sent direct to Gulgong.

725. Do the goods go in the name of the person they belong to? The bulk goes direct to the consignees.

726. Do they use firms such as yours to get them carried? Yes.

727. Any knowledge you have of the quantity of goods sent would not embrace the whole of the goods which have gone from Mudgee? No.

728. Can you give an estimate of the tonnage inward and outward passing through your hands to Gulgong and the district which would be benefited by the line under consideration? I could have given the information if I had known it was necessary.

729. How far distant would people be benefited, if the line were made to Gulgong;—do you think people living 10 miles further north-west of Gulgong would be benefited by it? Decidedly.

730. How far do you think the influence would extend? As far as Coonabarabran.

731. Does the Coonabarabran trade now come to Mudgee? Yes; a lot of it.

732. And some to Quirindi? Yes; on the Northern line.

733. How far is Coonabarabran from the nearest point on the Western line? Dubbo will be the nearest station.

Mr.
J. D. Parker.
22 Mar., 1890.

- Mr. J. D. Parker. 734. If the line were made to Gulgong, you think the Coonabarabran people would avail themselves of it? Yes.
- 22 Mar., 1890. 735. Is there much trade from Coonabarabran to the metropolis? We cannot tell. We get a lot of it, but not the bulk.
736. If this line were constructed, and the Coonabarabran trade came through Mudgee, *via* Gulgong, it would rob the Northern line? Of course, but the Railway Department would obtain a great advantage.
737. How? Because a lot of the wool taken by the Northern line is taken direct to Newcastle.
738. But is not the haulage much smaller from Quirindi to Newcastle, than it would be from Gulgong to Sydney? It would be a longer distance from Gulgong to Sydney.
739. What is the distance from Quirindi to Newcastle? 144 miles.
740. And what is it from Gulgong to Sydney? 210 miles.
741. Do you think it likely that the Coonabarabran people would come to Gulgong and pay for the extra carriage? They would gain over the road carriage.
742. What is the distance from Quirindi to Coonabarabran? 100 miles, I think, and from Gulgong it is less.
743. And from Coonabarabran to Gulgong? About 90 miles.
744. There would not be much difference between the two in the way of land carriage? I go by the rates. It would be 10s. difference.
745. How do you form an opinion—from figures, or from conversation with the people in the Coonabarabran district? I take it more from carriers' rates. You are taking the Newcastle distance against the Sydney distance for Mudgee.
746. But is not Newcastle as good as Sydney for a market for wool being sent home? It should be. It is only a question of extra mileage.
747. It is only a question of cost as to whether people would send it these extra miles? With a very little difference they would.
748. Can you give us an idea of the goods, inward and outward, to the district beyond Mudgee? I have not the total tonnage.
749. The estimate of the Railway Commissioners is that coaching and mails would give a revenue of £525 per annum, and goods and live stock £1,112 per annum, or a total of £1,637;—do you think that is an under or over estimate? I should take it to be an under estimate.
750. Even if they tell us they have taken into consideration a possible trade from Coolah, Cobbora, Munderoran, Denison Town, and Coonabarabran? Of course, they get the Coolah and Cobbora trade now.
751. The railway people are of the same opinion as you, namely, that they would get some of the Coonabarabran traffic, and, taking that into consideration, their total estimate is £1,637 per annum;—do you think that to be an under estimate? I should think so.
752. I suppose you do not think the total revenue would reach £7,000 per annum? I should think it would.
753. If the line were constructed between Mudgee and Gulgong, it would tap a trade sufficient to give a revenue of £7,000 a year? I think it would.
754. Do you know anything of the country between here and Gulgong, and beyond? Yes.
755. Have you been as far as Coonamble? No.
756. Do you think if the line were constructed to Coonamble the trade would come this way? I should think so.
757. What is the nature of the trade at Coonamble? It is out of our line.
758. You think, at all events, that the line, if constructed to Gulgong, would in all probability give a revenue of £7,000 a year, owing to its tapping an enlarged district to what the present line will do. I think so.
759. Are there any other carrying agents besides yourself? Yes; Tarrant & Crossing.
760. Do they do as large a business as you? Hardly, I think.
761. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Does much wool traffic come into Mudgee from the back districts? A good deal.
762. What districts does it come from? From Coolah, Coonabarabran, Munderoran, and all round there. Two years ago we had some from Cassilis, but not since.
763. How was it you got the Cassilis wool? On account of the bad roads between there and the Northern line.
764. Do you think that the natural route for the wool traffic is through Mudgee? Yes.
765. What is the value of the wool freight per year? The total number of bales which passed through here last year, would be between 11,000 and 12,000. 1,500 bales would be for the stations around about Mudgee.
766. Can you give an idea as to what that would amount to in freight to the Railway Department, if carried to Sydney? The trainage is £2 14s. 5d. for greased, and £3 11s. 9d. per ton for washed wool.
767. If the line went to Gulgong, you would open up a still wider region for wool traffic? Yes.

Thomas Willans Connolly, Esq., Government Surveyor, sworn and examined:—

- T. W. Connolly, Esq. 768. *Chairman.*] You are a Government Surveyor? Yes; located at Mudgee.
- 22 Mar., 1890. 769. How long have you been here? Four and a half years.
770. Can you furnish the Committee with parish plans of the country between this and Wellington, *via* Gulgong; this and Dubbo, *via* Gulgong; and this and Coonamble, *via* Gulgong? I have no parish maps out of the Orange Land Board District.
771. How far does your district extend? To Reedy Creek, at Gulgong.
772. Are your office maps charted up to date? No. Information, as I require it, is supplied by the district office at Orange.
773. Cannot you furnish us with parish maps as far as your district extends in the direction of Wellington, Dubbo, and Coonamble? I have not anything which would be reliable.
774. Do you know anything of the country between here and Gulgong? Yes.
775. Is it good country, or what? Two-thirds of it is agricultural country.
776. In the hands of a few holders? I think, perhaps, one-third is in the hands of a few.
777. Is there much Government land between here and Gulgong? Not much, except the gold-field reserve at Gulgong.

778. Is there any recommendation that the reserve be cancelled? It has been several times recommended.
779. Do you think it would be advisable to do it? Yes.
780. Would it be advisable to make it a special area, if it were cancelled? Yes.
781. Will not the cancellation of it limit the mining community somewhat? The areas which were proposed by our Department for cancellation were not occupied by miners. No objection was raised by the Mining Department, or their officers.
782. *Mr. Humphery.*] Did you hear Mr. Barry's evidence? Yes.
783. Is it a fact that between here and Gulgong, there are few holders of small areas who would be served by the proposed railway? The line, as laid out, passes chiefly through the large estates; but I think one-half the area is held in small holdings not immediately adjacent to the line—say within four to five miles of the line.
784. What will be the average of the small holdings, say within 4 or 5 miles of the line, on either side? I should say one-half of the land is held by small holders, who hold from 160 acres downwards.
785. Are they occupying the land and cultivating it? Yes.
786. They are *bona-fide* settlers? Yes.
787. Can you say what the small holders would aggregate within 4 miles of the line? About 20,000 acres.
788. What proportion of that do you think is suitable for agricultural purposes? I would hardly venture to say. Taking the district generally I know what the proportion is, because I had to work it out.
789. Is this land similar to the land you refer to? The farming land is better away from the railway line—to the east, chiefly.
790. The railway would not pass within 4 or 5 miles of the best land between here and Gulgong? Yes; that is held by small farmers.
791. Have you examined the proposed line between here and Gulgong? Yes.
792. Can you suggest any deviation or alteration which you think would be advantage us? I could not. I do not know what engineering difficulties there would be.

T. W.
Connolly,
Esq.

22 Mar., 1890.

Charles John Horsley, Esq., Crown Lands Agent, sworn and examined:—

793. *Chairman.*] You are Crown Lands Agent in the district of Mudgee? Yes.
794. How long have you occupied that position? Since February, 1885.
795. Could you furnish the Committee with parish maps within your district which would embrace a proposed line between here and Wellington, *via* Gulgong, the same to Dubbo, and the same to Coonamble? I may be able to furnish some within my district, which ends at Reedy Creek. I have not all of them. The Railway Department applied for some the other day, and I sent some.
796. There is not a great demand for land in your district? No.
- 796½. Then, if you are tied up for one or two plans;—if anyone came in for a parish plan you could not furnish it? Most of them, but not all.
797. Do you not generally keep a larger stock? Yes; I am told to apply for what are in demand, and it is impossible to say what is the demand.
798. Then Mudgee is dead, so far as applications for land are concerned? It has been for some time.
799. You could not furnish us with a complete set? No; not unless they are the office set, which are not supposed to go out; but I could give you all but one.
800. Will you produce that—starting from Mudgee towards Gulgong;—give us them in the order in which they should be? In the county of Wellington you take a portion of the parish of Mudgee, and then the parish of Munna. These are the two parishes immediately on this side of the river, the river being the boundary of the county of Wellington. The portions marked with green are all reserves. [*Witness indicated on the plans the position of the proposed line.*]
801. Have you estimated the quantity of unalienated land which would be served by this line? No; it is a matter of impossibility to do so at so short a notice.
802. I suppose what lands are remaining are principally reserves? A good deal. A good portion is held under annual leases, for grazing purposes.
803. Is there much demand for Government land in the district? There has not been since I came here.
804. Have any special areas been put up here? Yes.
805. They have been taken up? Yes.
806. What has been the price realized? 3s. an acre in the parish of Wilbetree and Eurunderree. Special areas have been opened out, and that is the best land in the district for wine-growing.
807. Do you think if the large gold-field reserve were thrown open there would be any demand for it? I believe every inch of it would be taken up.
808. Do you think it ought to be made a special area of? For settlement, I should decidedly say no.
809. Do you think if it were made a special area it might be taken up? If the ground is allowed to be taken up by 40 acres, it might all be taken up.
810. Do you think, if the railway were constructed, and the reserves were not cancelled until after its construction, it would add materially to the price they would bring? It should do so.
811. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] This district is in the Eastern Division? Yes.
812. And the leasehold areas for that division will be thrown open for selection on the 1st July next? I believe so.
813. Have you any leasehold areas here? No.
814. This is one of the old nineteen counties in which grants were given in the early days? Yes.
815. I suppose there never was much land up here for selection? The principal land has been taken up years ago by grants on both sides of the river, leaving only the poorer class of land available.
816. It was all taken up under the Act of 1861? The lands I speak of have been taken up since the Act of 1862. An area of about 33,700 acres has been taken up under conditional purchase.
817. So that we can hardly gauge the prosperity of the district by the demand for land during the last fifteen or twenty years? The best of the land has been held under large grants.
818. The best of the land was given away in the early days under grants? Apparently so.
819. And the remainder was taken under the Land Act of 1861? Yes.
820. So that, beyond the reserve and the large common near Gulgong, there is very little land to obtain? Very little.

C. J. Horsley,
Esq.

22 Mar., 1890.

821.

- C. J. Horsley, Esq.
22 Mar., 1890.
821. *Mr. Humphrey.*] How many acres do you think would be served by the proposed line from Mudjee to Gulgong? The line would hardly hit the land people could get hold of. It is nearly all through the property of individuals who have got it by grants.
822. Then do you confirm the evidence of Mr. Barry and Mr. Connolly, that few owners of small areas would be served by the proposed railway? I think so, unless the gold-field reserve is thrown open.
823. Can you say how many *bona-fide* settlers there are between here and Gulgong, within 4 miles of the side of the proposed line? Not exactly. I have taken the railway line as a centre, and going 8 or 10 miles on each side, it gives an average of 34,700 acres taken up under conditional purchase. The majority of these areas are 40 acres. Put it at 60 acres, and it will give from 300 to 400 people.
824. And they, you think, are not within 4 or 5 miles, but within 10 miles of the line of railway? Some are nearer, but the majority are 3, 4, or 5 miles away.
825. Would half the number you mention be within a radius of 10 miles of Mudjee? I think so.
826. So that the proposed railway would be of very little benefit to them? I do not think so.
827. Do you know the country beyond Gulgong, towards Mundooran? Yes.
828. And from Mundooran to Coonamble? Yes.
829. Can you speak as to the character of the soil and its suitability for grazing purposes? From Gulgong to Mundooran—the way, I suppose, the line would go—the country, generally, is poor. From Mundooran to Coonamble—the way the railway would also probably go—the country is very good.
830. What is the character of the country between Gulgong and Dubbo? A small part of it is good for agriculture—from Sandy Creek to Gillis's, 40 or 50 miles—but the general run of the country is not good until you come close to Dubbo. It is scrubby and hilly.
831. Do you think the cost of constructing a line between Gulgong and Dubbo would be greater per mile than constructing a line between Mudjee and Gulgong? The distance is greater, and the cost of constructing to Gulgong would be very short of what it would be from Gulgong to Dubbo.
832. The cost per mile from Mudjee to Gulgong is estimated at £5,800;—do you think it would cost more, or less, to continue the line from Gulgong to Dubbo? Less, I should think, judging from the nature of the country.
833. Very much less? I am not prepared to say, but there are not many difficulties in the way.
834. Is it pretty level, or undulating country? It is undulating, right into Dubbo.
835. Do you know whether there is plenty of timber between Gulgong and Dubbo suitable for railway purposes? I should think from Gulgong to Larry's Creek the timber would be difficult to get, but from there on to Dubbo, I think the timber would be fairly good. It would be larger and heavier.
836. *Mr. Hurley.*] What is the sum you received last year for lands taken up under conditional leases, from all sources? I have not made up my return.
837. What is the approximate value? It would be impossible to tell, but I will furnish you with the amount. [*Witness subsequently handed in the following statement*]:—

	1889.	£	s.	d.
Conditional Purchase Applications		788	10	8
Interest, Instalment, and Balance.....		4,182	11	9
Auction Sales.....		246	6	10
		5,217	9	3

Mr. James D. Parker, sworn and further examined:—

- Mr. J. D. Parker.
22 Mar., 1890.
838. *Chairman.*] The £7,000 to which you referred, as being likely to be derived as revenue, was an estimate of traffic from Sydney, right out, and not merely from Mudjee to Gulgong? Yes.
839. What do you think of the estimate of the Railway Commissioners of £1,600 per annum as the earnings of a line between Mudjee and Gulgong? I think that would be nearer the mark.
840. You do not think they have formed an under-estimate? No; I think not.

Mr. Eugene Daly, butcher, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. E. Daly.
22 Mar., 1890.
841. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Butcher.
842. Where do you reside? In Mudjee.
843. How long have you resided in Mudjee? Thirty-three or thirty-four years.
844. What is the nature of the evidence you desire to give to the Committee? I have not heard anything said about the stock travelling from the outlying districts to Sydney by rail. People would not put their cattle in trucks, when they could come through this district.
845. Are we to understand that there is a large amount of stock which is at present driven to Sydney, and does not avail itself of the railway at all? Yes.
846. Would the construction of this extra 19 miles of rail induce them to avail themselves of the railway, instead of travelling by road? Yes.
847. Why? Because they would only be a short time in the train. They would be put into the train at dinner-time, and on the following morning they would be at Sydney. They will travel through the night. If the market is good, they would truck at Gulgong, and send cattle by rail. If the market is bad, they crawl along the road to Sydney, until the market gets good.
848. You mean to say that if, upon reaching Gulgong, it is found that there is a good market in the metropolis the sheep would be at once trucked, but if the market is not good they would continue their journey by road? Yes.
849. They do that now, so far as Mudjee is concerned? If the market is good, they truck at Mudjee.
850. It will only be the cattle at present trucked at Mudjee which will be trucked at Gulgong? If the line went further on, they would be trucked further on.
851. The Railway Commissioners, in forming their estimate of traffic, have taken these matters into consideration. They estimate that from goods and live stock they will receive £1,112 a year? I do not see how they can form an estimate at all. There are a number of cattle along the road which they cannot calculate upon at all. They only know of the cattle which come upon the lines. There are sheep which never go on the line at all.
852. Would the construction of this line cause any more sheep to be carried to market than are carried now? I believe it would.

853. *Mr. Hurley.*] Do not you think you have made a mistake in asserting that the construction of the railway would increase the stock traffic to the metropolis? It would not increase, but they would go by rail.
854. As a butcher, if you bought a lot of stock beyond Gulgong, and there was a railway, and if you had a good road, would you put your stock in the train in preference to driving? Certainly I would, for a day and a night.
855. Is not the meat better after being driven than after being trucked? It depends on the distance travelled.
856. Say between here and Sydney? The cattle would be better trucked here, and would arrive in better condition in Sydney.
857. Do you think it would be to the advantage of the consumers in Sydney, as well as to the producers, if the cattle were killed inland, and sent to market in cool cars? Certainly.
858. Do you think this system would be taken advantage of, if facilities were given for reaching market? I am sure it would.
859. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] I understand you to say that, if a line is taken to Gulgong, it will be used by stock-drovers, because it will save them two days' journey on foot, and thus enable them to take advantage of a rise in the market? Yes.
860. What district do these cattle come from? Off the Macquarie and the Castlereagh, and from Queensland.
861. Is this the regular stock route? Yes; this was the principal stock route in the colony until the Western line was opened.

Mr. E. Daly.
22 Mar., 1890.

George Chapman Carter, Esq., Inspector of Police in the Mudgee District, sworn and examined:—

862. *Chairman.*] You are Inspector of Police in the Mudgee district? Yes.
863. How long have you been in the district? Fifteen years.
864. And you are intimately acquainted with it? Yes.
865. How far does the district extend? I go to Mundooran, which is 70 miles north from here.
866. And that includes Gulgong? Yes.
867. Has the population of Gulgong receded of late years? Considerably.
868. Is it still receding, or is it at a standstill? I think it is at a standstill.
869. I suppose the character of the population has changed; at one time it was a purely gold-fields' population, and now it is an agricultural one? Yes. A great deal of land has been taken up during the last five or six years. Large families are settling down where there was no one before.
870. Are the large areas being utilised for agricultural and grazing purpose? To a large extent. Ten years ago there was hardly any agriculture about Gulgong, and now there is a good deal.
871. Is it good land? Very.
872. Do you know the route of the proposed line to Gulgong? Yes.
873. Do you think it takes a good course for serving the people at present in the district? I should say it does.
874. Do you know anything of the country between Gulgong and Dubbo? Yes.
875. Is it good, or indifferent country? A great deal of it is good country.
876. Is it difficult country through which to construct a railway? I should imagine it is very easy.
877. Is it as difficult as between Mudgee and Gulgong? I do not think it would be so difficult.
878. Do you know the country between Gulgong and Coonamble? Yes.
879. What is the nature of that country? Some good, some fair grazing country.
880. The character of the country for the construction of a line would be similar to that between Gulgong and Dubbo? It would even, perhaps, be easier.
881. Easier than it is between here and Gulgong? About the same. There would be one or two bad places, and then it would be almost a dead flat.
882. Would there be many creeks to cross? Very few, excepting the Talbragar.
883. Has the population of the district advanced, or has it receded? On the whole, the population has grown larger within the last five years.
884. If the line were extended to Coonamble, would it benefit both Coonamble and Mudgee? I think it would.
885. There are two lines of coaches between here and Gulgong? Yes.
886. They are not extensively patronized? Not to a great extent.
887. Do many people use their own vehicles? A great many. In fact, the Gulgong people usually come to Mudgee by their own vehicles, and have someone to drive them out again.
888. Do as many people come in to the railway station by private as by public vehicles? More, I think.
889. How often are the statistics of population compiled? We compile them for our own purposes.
890. How is the statistical register made up? A register of the stock crops, &c., is collected every year, but the population is not collected.
891. Is it not included in the statistical register, based on your previous census returns? It is only on the census returns.
892. The District Registrar gives an account of the births and deaths in the district? Yes.
893. *Mr. Humphery.*] Are there many small holdings between here and Gulgong, within 4 or 5 miles of the proposed line? A good many.
894. Do you know what the proposed area will be? 50 or 60 acres.
895. What means have they at the present of earning their living? The farmers do a little dairying business.
896. Do they grow wheat? Yes, pretty largely. It is a good wheat-growing district about Gulgong.
897. Do you know what is the population? I make the population of Gulgong to be altogether about 2,300.
898. Within what radius of the town? 10 miles, or something like that.
899. What population do you think there is between here and Gulgong—say 10 miles out from Mudgee? There is Canadian and Home Rule—fully 1,000, I should say.
900. And you think 3,000 passengers would be served by the proposed railway? I think so.
901. But if you go a little further to Talbragar, there would be a larger population, but that is more than 10 miles away? Yes.
902. There would be 3,000 people within 10 miles of the proposed railway from Mudgee to Gulgong? I think so.

G. C. Carter, Esq.
22 Mar., 1890.

MONDAY, 24 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Gulgong, at 2 p.m.]

Present:—

JACOB GARRARD, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY. | EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.
JOHN HURLEY, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Mudgee to Gulgong.

Charles Zimmer, Esq., chemist, sworn and examined:—

- C. Zimmer, Esq.
24 Mar., 1890.
903. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? A chemist. I am secretary of the Gulgong Railway League.
904. How long have you been residing in Gulgong? Since 1870 or 1871, when it was opened.
905. Then you have seen Gulgong in all its varied stages? Yes.
906. What is the present population? From 1,200 to 2,000.
907. What is the largest population you have seen in the district? The largest population which has been here amounted to about 14,000.
908. How long ago? Fourteen or fifteen years ago.
909. If a railway had been constructed there, it would have had a greater chance of paying than now? It would, and it will pay now, in my opinion, if it is properly put before the House.
910. Do the people of this district look upon the proposed railway from Mudgee to Gulgong as likely to remain at Gulgong? We do not wish it to remain here. We mean to have it extended to the west—to Coonamble, Dubbo, or Wellington. The produce of this district, which is very great, cannot be got away unless we have an outlet to the west.
911. Where does the produce of the district at present go for a market? To Mudgee. Five-eighths of the produce, which is now sent from the Mudgee railway station, comes from around Gulgong and the north-west. It would all go to the Gulgong station, if one existed.
912. Do you know whether the Mudgee line is a white elephant, and is not paying? Everyone knows that, and if it is left at Mudgee it will never pay.
913. Does Mudgee get the whole of the produce from this district? No.
914. Where does it go to? It goes to Muswellbrook, Wellington, and Dubbo. Some of it goes to Cassilis. Some of the people come here, and others go and take it to the Dubbo station. The Coolah and Munderooran people would bring their produce here, if there was a station.
915. How do you know that? Because it is nearer for one thing, and the people would prefer it.
916. If the line were constructed through Gulgong only, from how far do you think people would bring their produce—10, 15, or 20 miles? All the people come here from Uarabry.
917. How far is that? 25 or 30 miles.
918. In which direction? Towards Cassilis. The people from Eulon, Green Hills, Reedy Creek, and Talbragar, all come here. There is a numerous population between here and Coolah, Cobbora, and Dubbo. Some part of their produce would go to Dubbo, but the rest would come here. People on the Cudgegong, Two Mile Flat, and Spicer's Creek, would come here, whereas now they go to Wellington. This station would be nearer, because Wellington is 50 miles away.
919. Do you think people living 20 miles to the north and north-west of this place, would, if there was a station here, bring their produce here instead of going to Cassilis, or the Western line? Undoubtedly.
920. Would you fix 20 miles as the radius within which the trade would be attracted to Gulgong? More.
921. How much more, taking Gulgong as a centre, and making a radius? 35 miles.
922. How far is it to Dubbo? 70 miles.
923. Then you think that, from a distance of more than half way between here and Dubbo, people would bring their traffic to Gulgong? Half way between here and Dubbo there is a country which is far away from Dubbo. There is the country between here and Coonamble, Munderooran, Coolah, and all round the Talbragar.
924. But you state that Dubbo is 50 miles from here, and that if there was a line to Gulgong, people would bring their produce from within a radius of 45 miles. In other words, people would, for the pleasure of dealing with Gulgong, travel an extra distance of 5 or 10 miles, rather than go to Dubbo? I did not mean to say that. Those who live at Talbragar, Munderooran, and Coolah, and between Cassilis and Dubbo, would prefer to come here because it is a shorter route.
925. We understand then, that Dubbo would be the depôt for people within a radius of 30 miles north and north-west? Yes.
926. What is the nature of the country you have included within the 30 miles radius? It is splendid country for grazing, or agriculture.
927. Do you know of any railway, constructed to grazing land only, which has paid? No; but there are squatters living out towards Coolah and Munderooran, and towards Slap Dash Creek, and in that direction. I know of one station alone which sends over 6,000 sheep and 900 cattle to the Mudgee railway station. They would be brought to Gulgong if there were a station, because they would not take the trouble to drive them to Mudgee.
928. What proportion of the land in the district you have referred to is good agricultural country, and what proportion is grazing country? I could not tell you; but I am prepared to say, that within a radius of 10 or 12 miles there is a population of 183 farmers.
929. That radius includes the east, as well as the north and south? Right round Gulgong.
930. You are including the people away to Mudgee, as well? No; Mudgee is 20 miles from here. I only take them on this side of the bridge about 7 or 8 miles.
931. The people living 7 miles in the direction of Mudgee would not come to Gulgong railway station? Yes, they would. They would not travel 12 or 13 miles to Mudgee.
932. They would not come to Gulgong if they could tap the line nearer? There are very few living there. Most of the people are living around here, and most of them would come to Gulgong.
933. Will you enumerate the districts in which these knots of people reside? Some of them are living at the Canadian.
934. But that is between here and Mudgee? It is only 5 miles from Gulgong. 935.

935. And how many from Mudgee? About 14.

936. How many miles would they be, in a direct line, from the nearest point of the railway, if constructed? About 3 miles. Then there are the farmers round about Springfield.

937. Where is that? Three miles from here, north-east of the line. There is a number of farmers within 5 miles of Gulgong, down by Reedy Creek and Stubbo.

938. You wish to hand in a list of the names of *bona-fide* farmers resident within a radius of 10 miles of Gulgong, and who would be benefited by, and would use the railway, if constructed? Yes.

939. You referred just now to the people at Canadian, which is about 5 miles from here in a south-east direction, and then you came to a place called Springfield, about 3 miles in the same direction;—what other places are there? Reedy Creek and Wyaldra Creek.

940. Reedy Creek runs past what is known as the Wyaldra Township? Yes.

941. What is there past Reedy Creek? There are a number of farmers at Stubbo.

942. That is on the other side of Wyaldra Creek, going further north? Yes; it is not much more than 7 miles.

942. Is there much settlement at Stubbo and Wyaldra Creek? Yes; a good many farmers.

944. What other settlements are there, or what other population is there which would feed the railway? There is Sandy Creek, on this side of Cobbora.

945. Is it anywhere near Slap Dash Creek? No; it is further towards the north-west—towards the Werris Creek line. Then there is a number of farmers on the Cudgegong Creek, which is about 12 miles from here, and there is a number of farmers who come in from Spicer's Creek.

946. Where is Spicer's Creek? Close to Two-mile Flat, near Wellington? Then there is a number of farmers within a radius of 2 or 3 miles. Their names are all on the list handed in. Surely, when there are 188 farmers within 10 or 12 miles, the reserve should be thrown open. There are 50 or 60 square miles of country from Pinebone to the Talbragar River. It was wise to keep it locked when there was gold, but it has all been proved. There is a common of 33 square miles around this town.

947. Is it good land? Yes; splendid.

948. Is the common all around the town, or away to the westward? It is right round for 33 square miles.

949. How about the gold-fields' reserve? That is further. It is splendid land all about Reedy Creek. It is also splendid land from Home Rule to Guntawang and towards Talbragar. You could not find better land in the country. If that were thrown open there would be room for more than 1,000 families. The extent of the municipality is 33 square miles. The value of the property in the municipal area is assessed at £87,000. The population in the municipality is estimated at 2,000. We have mails running here three times a week. When you look at the extent of the country to the back, there should be no hesitation whatever on the part of the Government in granting a line.

950. Do you know the estimated cost of constructing a line between Mudgee and Gulgong? I have heard that it would be something like £100,000.

951. It is estimated to cost £109,300, and the interest upon capital, and the working expenses, would entail an annual loss of about £5,400. The total expenses will be £7,130, and the estimated revenue is £1,637, leaving a total loss of £5,400? How did they arrive at the estimate of revenue?

952. You know Mr. Harper? Yes.

953. Did he get any information from you when he was here? Yes; and he took all his information from the Mudgee railway station. He had not any of the returns which will be handed in here.

954. But you tell us that all the produce of the district goes to Mudgee; and if he took his figures there, and credited you with the trade done here, he would be pretty correct? He took it for last year from the Mudgee station. The information he obtained will be supplemented by what will be handed in, and it will put a different complexion on the result of the estimated revenue.

955. I think you will find that Mr. Harper was looking at things as they exist, and you were looking at them in the light of the future? I am looking at them as they exist.

956. Mr. Harper estimates that £525 will be derived from coaching and mails. The Committee have assured themselves, from evidence, that that estimate is correct;—do you think it is a fair estimate? There is nothing said about private teamsters, and private conveyances.

957. You think, then, that it is an under estimate? I think so.

958. You think that more than £525 per annum would be obtained from coaching and mails? I could not say so, of my own knowledge, but a railway is not made to pay at a jump. If the railway were extended, the revenue would be better.

959. Do you think the estimate of £1,112 for goods and live stock is excessive? There are plenty of storekeepers who will be able to tell you. I know what I am paying per ton to get goods from Mudgee. I do not think any storekeeper pays less than 15s. or £1.

960. You would not pay that if the railway were constructed? No; we pay that from Mudgee, and the railway would get the benefit of it.

961. But it would not get the benefit of 15s. a ton;—you would not be prepared to give 15s. per ton if the railway were constructed? Was not evidence given in Mudgee that goods could be carried to Gulgong at 8s. or 9s. a ton.

962. Who told you that? I only heard of it.

963. According to the estimate of the Commissioners, there would be an enormous loss on the line. Then there is the loss on the Mudgee to Wallerawang portion of the line. It therefore becomes a serious matter for the taxpayer? Yes; but the question is, "Will the extension of the line make the Mudgee line pay better?" and I am sure it will.

964. Where do you think this line should be extended to—to Dubbo, or straight to Coonamble? I would not like to say. The line could be extended from Gulgong to Mudooran and Coonamble. A branch line could be constructed from Mudooran, by Coolah and Coonabarabran. That would shorten the line to the metropolis by 30 or 40 miles. The line to Mudgee is acknowledged to be a white elephant and a national loss. If it is not extended it might just as well have never been made at all.

965. Do you think, if the line is constructed, more people will settle in the district, and more produce will be grown, and that competition will be entered into with the producers nearer the metropolis? Certainly.

966. If there is the same character of land nearer the metropolis, and the producers have only half the distance to carry their produce, will not the producers in your district be heavily handicapped, or do they expect to find a market in the opposite direction? They will find a market both ways, towards the west, and towards Sydney as well.

- C. Zimmier, Esq.
24 Mar., 1890.
967. What market is there west? Right round from Cassilis, Coolah, Muntooran, and Coonamble.
968. But the people there are producers, and want a market themselves? There are few agricultural districts round about there, except Cassilis.
969. Then you think the railway should be extended towards Coonamble? Towards the north-west.
970. So that in time of drought you could supply the district with the necessaries of life? Yes. Besides that the country would be opened up, and it would be a national benefit even if there were a little loss.
971. *Mr. Humphery.*] You believe the railway will create a traffic which, in the course of a few years, would pay working expenses and interest on the cost of construction? I think it would.
972. What would be the immediate source of revenue to the railway? I cannot tell you. The construction of the railway would cause a great increase of population in the district.
973. *Chairman.*] Of navvies? No, not navvies—farmers.
974. *Mr. Humphery.*] Is there any vacant land within a radius of 10 miles of Gulgong available for occupation other than the reserves you have mentioned? There is some, but the reserve would have to be thrown open to make anything of it.
975. Are the holdings in the immediate vicinity of Gulgong in large or small areas? Some of them have 640 acres, some 320, some 80, some 40, and so on.
976. What use do the holders of 640 acres make of their land at the present time? I cannot tell you.
977. Is there much cultivation close to Gulgong? The 188 names on the list handed in refer to farms which are cultivated.
978. Do you say all these farms are under cultivation? The greater part of them are, but other witnesses will swear to that.
979. Then you do not know if they are under cultivation? The greater part of them are.
980. What do they grow? Wheat, maize, potatoes, and hay.
981. Do they keep live stock in connection with their agricultural holdings? Yes.
982. Then a portion of the holdings are under cultivation, and the rest are used for grazing? Statistics will be put in which will give you the information.
983. *Mr. Hurley.*] You were chairman of the Railway League? No; I was the secretary appointed by a public meeting.
984. You gathered all the statistics possible to warrant the construction of the line? I and others gathered them.
985. You have been associated with the Railway League for a long time;—have you made inquiries in regard to the land through which the line would pass between here and Mudgee? I have inquired about the land all about Gulgong.
986. Do you know whether the line passes through private or Crown lands between here and Mudgee? From the bridge to Gulgong it passes nearly all through Government ground, excepting, perhaps, at two small places.
987. Have you consulted the owners of that land as to whether they would give it to the Government, in view of the immense value the construction of the line would add to their property? I could not say.
988. You said just now that the project would pay from the start? That is my opinion.
989. Upon what do you base it? Upon the statistics gathered by the police.
990. Can you tell us whether the farmers you have referred to are residing on their own land, or leased lands? They mostly have free selections.
991. Are there any lands in the district within a distance of 10 or 15 miles, held under lease from any landlord? I cannot tell you.
992. Is the land suitable to the growing of vines? There are any number of vineyards about here now.
993. Are they making wine? Some of them are.
994. Do I understand you to say that all the alluvial ground about the district has been proved, and that it was not good for anything else but agriculture? The diggers have been proving the mining reserve for the last eighteen years.
995. You consider the field exhausted? The miners, or the greater part of them, have left. I think if the reserves were thrown open, they and their families, would select for themselves.
996. You believe there is no further use for it as a gold-field? I do not think so, except in the very deep ground, where there is very wet sinking. It would have to be put into companies. The individual miner would not touch it. On the other side of Reedy Creek the body of water is very great, and it would take a large amount of money to prospect.
997. You believe that in the interests of the public those reserves should be thrown open to induce agricultural settlement? Yes.
998. Do you believe it would be readily taken up? Yes, all taken up.
999. What will it be worth per acre? Some of it from £1 to £2 per acre. I think it ought to be thrown open under the special area clause.
1000. You believe the land is admirably suited for agriculture? Yes.
1001. And yet you believe it is only worth from £1 to £2 per acre? Yes.
1002. You know that for that kind of land you have to pay from £4 to £10 per acre? That may be in some places, where there is a larger population.
1003. Will not the throwing open of the reserves, and the construction of the railway, and its extension further west, give increased population? I am sure it would.
1004. Would not that give an advanced value to the land? I am sure it would.
1005. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] If the gold-mining is nearly exhausted around Gulgong, what sustains the town? The back country, the agricultural settlement, the squatting, grazing, and agricultural population.
1006. You think there is room for the extension of agricultural settlement around this town? Yes.
1007. On the gold-field reserve and the common? Yes.
1008. Do the large landowners show any desire to give up their properties and let their land on lease? I do not think they would do that.
1009. Do you think all the gold has been got out of the private properties around Gulgong? No.
1010. Are you aware that an Act was passed last Session giving the right to mine on private property, by giving notice, and paying for surface damage? Yes.
1011. Are any miners likely to avail themselves of this Act? It wants a large amount of money to find the deep leads. There is one company in Rouse's paddock, where they have been working for the last ten years.

1012-13. Then you think the mining around Gulgong in the future will be deep leads? Yes; by companies. Twenty-five of us have made application, and have found a syndicate to pay £1 a week for twenty weeks, to obtain a diamond-drill to prospect the leads.

C. Zimmer,
Esq.
24 Mar., 1890.

1014. There is not likely to be any further rush of settlement, on account of alluvial fields? No.

1015. Whatever development takes place will be through deep sinking? Yes.

1016. And will require capital? Yes.

1017. If a line were constructed from Dubbo to Werris Creek, which would suit you best—to go out and touch that line, or to go straight to Coonamble? I think the Coonamble line would open the country better. If the Werris Creek line were joined to the Mudgee line, and the Werris Creek line came into Gulgong, it would shorten the distance wonderfully.

1018. But you are aware that a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek, connecting with a line into Mudgee, would give you the command of markets on the Western line, and also on the Northern line. Would not that be better for this district, than having one market at Coonamble? Certainly; if the line is extended to Gulgong, it does not matter where it goes to afterwards.

Thomas Kennedy, Esq., Railway Surveyor, sworn, and examined:—

1019. *Chairman.*] What is your position in the Government service? A railway surveyor.

1020. You are engaged on the survey of the proposed line from Gulgong to Wellington? Yes.

1021. You have already surveyed an extension of the line from Gulgong to Dubbo? I have.

1022. Has that survey been completed? Not yet. I think it will be in a few days. We are making a few alterations at the Dubbo end.

1023. That survey was commenced at both ends—you at Gulgong, and other surveyors at Dubbo—you have finished your portion of the work and the other is nearly finished? Yes.

1024. Can you inform the Committee what is the length of the line from Gulgong to Dubbo? About 67 miles,—I did not finish up to meet the other surveyor.

1025. What is the ruling grade upon the line? 1 in 80.

1026. Would it be an expensive line to construct in the way of viaducts, tunnels, or cuttings? No. The deepest cutting would be a little over 30 feet.

1027. Would the country be somewhat similar, so far as works are concerned, to that between here and Mudgee? It would be easier country.

1028. So that if the line between here and Mudgee is estimated to cost £5,800 per mile, this line will probably not exceed £5,000? No.

1029. Does the survey from Gulgong to Dubbo go in a straight direction to Dubbo, or does it tap what is supposed to be a probable line of the future, between Werris Creek and Dubbo? It utilizes about 22 miles of the proposed Werris Creek line.

1030. So that if the Werris Creek to Dubbo line were constructed, this branch from Gulgong would tap that line at 20 miles from Dubbo? Yes.

1031. If that line was not constructed, and it was determined to construct this line from Gulgong to Coonamble, would you take the same route up to the intercepting point of that line, or would you come further north-east? It could be tapped further out to the north-east.

1031½. So as to make a straighter line? Yes; straight to Coonamble.

1032. That would be 40 miles from Dubbo? Yes.

1033. Would the country on that more direct line be easier than the country you have passed over to within 20 miles of Dubbo? I should think so. There is nothing after you cross the Goodaman Range.

1034. What is the nature of the country on the line you have already surveyed;—how far from Gulgong did you go on that line? To Spicer's Creek, 35 miles from Gulgong.

1035. What is the nature of the country along there? Grazing country.

1036. Good, or second class grazing country? Good, excepting a portion about the head of Sandy Creek, where there are some ironbark ranges; 5 or 6 miles off it is sour country.

1037. Is there any considerable area of agricultural country on that line? Very little where I went, except towards Cudgebong, which is 3 or 4 miles off the line.

1038. Is it alluvial flats or chocolate soil? Good chocolate soil and wheat-growing land.

1039. At present there is little settlement? There is a good deal of settlement in Cudgebong.

1040. Where do the people bring their produce to? To Gulgong. They generally bring in wheat, and it is ground in the mills here.

1041. Are there mills in Gulgong? Yes; Mr. Rouse has a mill, at Birangambil Station, and I think there is another small one in the town.

1042. The survey of the line from Gulgong to Wellington makes use of the proposed line from Gulgong to Dubbo, for some miles out of Gulgong? No; it leaves it at the town.

1043. And strikes out towards Wellington? Yes.

1044. How far are you out? About 16 miles.

1045. Is the country, so far as you have gone, more difficult than on the Gulgong-Dubbo line? Yes; much heavier.

1046. Consequently, it is less valuable for agricultural or grazing purposes? Yes. Following the Cudgegong River for 8 or 10 miles there is good land, but it is of no width, being short flats. It opens out into better country after going 15 or 16 miles.

1047. Do you anticipate coming on to better country;—had you explored it before? I had explored it. There would be 8 or 9 miles of good country, and then you get into rough ranges again, about Spicer's Creek.

1048. Expensive to construct? Yes; I think there will be two tunnels upon it.

1049. Have you been through from Gulgong to Wellington? No; I have been to the second crossing on the range.

1050. How far is that from here? 27 or 28 miles.

1051. Then the country along there is rather rough? Yes.

1052. And expensive for railway construction? Yes.

1053. What is the best grade you have, so far? 1 in 80, but I have been following the river round, and have not gone on to very rough country.

1054. Do you anticipate you will have to give up that grade? I have a tunnel to get it.

1055.

T. Kennedy,
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24 Mar., 1890.

- T. Kennedy, Esq.
24 Mar., 1890.
1055. That will be expensive? Yes; because we are keeping the grade to compare with the Dubbo line.
1056. So far as you can see, the line to Dubbo will be constructed for less than the one to Wellington? Yes, at per mile.
1057. What is the distance from Gulgong to Wellington? About 50 miles.
1058. It is a shorter line than the other? 17 miles shorter.
1059. And the country it passes through is less valuable—less suited for population and settlement than the country between Gulgong and Dubbo? Yes.
1060. Have you had anything to do with the survey of the line from Mudgee to Gulgong? I went over it with Mr. Firth when we were examining the plans, and saw where the grades could be reduced and the line improved.
1061. Mr. Firth and yourself suggested improvements, as to a dotted line on the plan? Yes.
1062. The improvements suggested by Mr. Firth and yourself show a considerable reduction in the cost of the line, and reduced the grades? Yes; we reduced from 1 in 40 to 1 in 80, and we do away with the crossing at Macdonald's Creek.
1063. That is about half way between here and Mudgee? Yes.
1064. And the bridge over the Cudgegong is in a different position, and it will be constructed at less cost? It is a shorter crossing than the other.
1065. Are you aware of the estimate of cost of the original survey for the bridge—£17,000? Only from what I read in the papers.
1066. And you know Mr. Firth has estimated the cost of the bridge on the new crossing at about £5,000? I only read it in the papers.
1067. Do you think the bridge could be constructed over the crossing for £5,000? I could not say.
1068. If Mr. Firth has made that estimate, he will not be far out? He would know very well, having had a lot of experience.
1069. Have you been anywhere else about this district, except on the lines you are now surveying, and have surveyed? I have been to Home Rule and Canadian.
1070. What sort of country is that? Around Home Rule and Canadian, there is good farming land.
1071. Do you think the people in those districts, if the line were constructed, would use it by going to Mudgee, or tapping it at some intervening place between this and Mudgee? I think they would come in here, because they would have good loads, and would be able to load goods better than at the platform.
1072. Do you not think they would soon begin to agitate for a direct road to the nearest point of the railway? I do not think so. If you take Home Rule as a centre, Gulgong would be as near as any place on the line. They are only 5 miles from Gulgong, and they would be 5 miles from any point of the line.
1073. You know nothing about the Colo Valley route? No.
1074. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Has a line from Mudgee to Coonamble been surveyed? Mudgee to Gulgong, and Coonamble—yes.
1075. Has a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek been surveyed? I do not know about Dubbo to Werris Creek.
1076. *Mr. Humphery.*] How far is Canadian from Mudgee? It is opposite Home Rule—about 16 miles I should say.
1077. Is it correct that the line by way of Wellington would be 30 miles nearer than by way of Dubbo? Would the route to Wellington, instead of to Dubbo, save 30 miles of railway construction? No; it would save the difference between 50 and 67—17 miles.
1078. Is it correct that the land is superior to any land which the railway would pass through by any other route between Gulgong and Wellington? No; it is not superior.
1079. Neither of these statements would be correct? No.
1080. What would be the distance from Sydney to Dubbo, by way of Mudgee, if a line were constructed between Gulgong and Dubbo? One is 274 miles and the other 276 miles.
1081. What is the distance by the present route from Sydney to Dubbo? I fancy it is 276 miles; but I am not sure.
1082. It would make a difference of 2 miles? Yes.

James Francis Plunkett, Esq., sworn and examined:—

- J. F. Plunkett, Esq.
24 Mar., 1890.
- 1082½. *Mr. Hurley.*] You have been a long resident of Gulgong and district? About thirty-five years.
1083. You are conversant with the country within a radius of 50 miles, I suppose? I am.
1084. You have taken part in the agitation for the construction of a railway from Mudgee to this place? Yes.
1085. Do you think the construction of a line solely to Gulgong would, as a national investment, be of a productive character? I think the construction of a line solely to Gulgong, or solely to Mudgee, would be a complete mistake. I have always considered that it has been a public calamity that a railway should be constructed to Mudgee and end there. Although it has been called a political railway and a white elephant, it has only been made that by being allowed to remain in rusty idleness where it is.
1086. But as one of the advocates for the extension of the line, you have been advocating its extension solely through Gulgong? Certainly not. We want an outlet for produce.
1087. Where do you think the line should be extended to beyond Gulgong? I produce a map, issued under the authority of the Government, showing projected lines of railway westward.
1088. Will you point out which, in your opinion, is the most beneficial line as a national investment? If the railway is to be considered from a national point of view, it would most decidedly be best to go to Walgett, touching at Coonamble by the way.
1089. You believe, looking at the matter from a national point of view, it would be a mistake to construct a railway from Mudgee to Gulgong? If I said yes it would not convey my meaning, and if I were to say no it would not. If you ask me whether it is to remain at Gulgong for all time, I should say it would be a great mistake. Every mile of this railway constructed outwards from Mudgee will be an advantage.
1090. What population is an extension of the railway westward likely to serve? Since the discoveries of gold in the district a great deal of land has been taken up by free selectors for farming purposes. Settlement on the soil has gone on slowly, because, with bad roads, it did not pay the farmer to bring his produce to market. Although I fear to touch a political question, I may say that without protection to the farmer, it will not pay them.
1091.

J. F.
Plunkett,
Esq.
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1091. The construction of a railway from Mudgee to Gulgong westward would benefit the pastoralist as well as the agriculturist? Largely.

1092. The difficulty of reaching market at the present time is the reason, I suppose, in your mind, why there is not a larger area under agriculture? If there were more access to market the area would be quadrupled.

1093. You know that the land about here is suitable for agriculture? I know every acre of it.

1094. What value should be placed upon the land? I value the land around Gulgong, at present, at £4 or £5 per acre.

1095. You are aware that there is a large area of land held in commonage and under the gold-field reserve, and in proximity to the town? Yes.

1096. Do you think if the commonage and reserve were thrown open they would be readily taken up? I do. There is also a travelling-stock reserve, extending from Reedy Creek, within 3 miles of this town, to the Talbragar River, 25 miles in length and 5 miles in breadth. That is magnificent land, fit for agriculture, and if it were thrown open it would give room for a large population.

1097. If this large area of land were thrown open for selection, are there people in the district who would readily secure it? Yes, and people would come from other places.

1098. Seeing that you have a difficulty in reaching a market, and that there is practically no market for you, how do you make it out that a large population is ready to seize the land for agriculture? I know that for years people who made money on their gold-claims waited with the view of securing homes and farms, and could not do so because the land was locked up.

1099. You look upon this district as a future agricultural and pastoral district? And a mining district.

1100. You are of opinion that there are still payable leads, or portions of land suitable for mining? I am of opinion that there is payable gold. I produce a map drawn by the Geological Surveyor, Mr. Wilkinson, who was sent up here. It is dated the 11th March, 1889. This is a geological map of a portion of the Gulgong gold-fields. Upon this map there are fifty-two quartz reefs marked and laid down. The majority of them have not been tried. I know from my own knowledge that some that have been tried have varied from 7 to 8 dwt. to 5 oz. per ton. It is the opinion of most people that those alluvial leads had their source in the reefs, and that the source which fed them still remains, and though the valley may have been scooped out and denuded of its gold, the reef which supplied that gold still exists. Taking that as data, or evidence, it satisfies me that the source which supplied the gold still exists, and that so far from being exhausted as a mining centre, it is simply in its infancy.

1101. Shortly put, you anticipate future successful developments in regard to the gold deposits of the district? I do.

1102. Do you know anything about the land held by freeholders or private monopolists in the district? I do.

1103. Have you ever heard owners say they were willing to give the land through which the railway would run, in view of the increased price which would be given to their property by the construction of the line? I have never put that question to them.

1104. In advocating the construction of the line, and in obtaining all the favourable estimates to lay before the Government, would it not have been wise to have obtained that information? I do not know.

1105. Do you not think it would be an inducement to the Department? I think it ought not. I think it would be an improper proceeding. I do not see why the Government should beg the land from them.

1106. There are many instances in which people give their land in return for the advantages which railway construction brings them. Therefore it was that I asked whether you had ascertained that the land through which the railway would pass would be given to the Crown? I made no inquiry. If it were my land I would not give it.

1107. Do you know anything about any other cereals, besides wheat grown in the district? Maize and oats are grown.

1108. Is there any fruit within 16 miles of the district? Yes.

1109. Is the fruit-growing industry entered upon systematically as a speculation? In a small way, but not for export or canning. We cannot do it, and I could tell you the reason why, only I should enter into politics.

1110. Have you heard pastoralists say whether, in the construction of a railway westward, they would take advantage of the opportunity of sending their stock by rail instead of by road? They do that now. They send to Mudgee.

1111. Do you not know that a large number of stock finding its way to Sydney is driven by road? I do not know otherwise.

1112. Do they not prefer travelling by road, if the road is favourable? I do not know. I think they would take advantage of the rail, if there were proper facilities for trucking.

1113. Have you contemplated the construction of the line *via* Gulgong to Dubbo or Wellington? I have.

1114. What is your opinion in regard to that? I should advocate the Coonamble line, from a national point of view; but of two choices I should say Dubbo.

1115. You know the locality of Dubbo, Mudgee, and Gulgong? I do.

1116. You are aware that in the construction of a line to Dubbo you would have to make a detour of some miles in order to reach Gulgong? I have no knowledge as to how the line may go, but I have a knowledge of the country. For instance, you have surveyed a line from Mudgee to Gulgong through the very worst portion of this country. I do not say it is not the best route, but had it come through Canadian it would have come through magnificent country.

1117. You think the best route has not been secured? It may be the best route to construct a line; I do not say it is not.

1118. Knowing the locality of Gulgong, Mudgee, and Dubbo, and the detour which a railway would have to make to reach Gulgong, do you think Gulgong is of such importance, and likely to bring such an amount of trade to the railway, that the Department would be warranted in making that detour? I think they would.

1119. Why? If the farmer is connected with the Western line, he will have a market out at Bourke and other places.

1120. You look upon Gulgong as a place centrally situated for the establishment of a large population? I do.

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1121. And you think it is likely to increase in the future? I think it has a great future before it.
1122. Is the town well supplied with water? Badly with water, but we have an abundance of underground supply.
1123. One of the necessities for the building up of a town is, of course, the water supply? Certainly.
1124. Where would you get your water from? I am not an engineer. There is an abundance of underground streams.
1125. Is there a permanent river or creek? No, excepting the Cudgegong, and, of course, that would be a sewer in the course of time.
1126. Have you any knowledge of the timber country between here and 50 miles westward? I have.
1127. Is it good? In parts.
1128. What class of timber is it? Ironbark, blue-gum, slaty-gum, box, stringy-bark, and some pines.
1129. Timber favourable to settlement, and for sleepers, in connection with the railway? Very good for sleepers.
1130. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] I understand you hold the opinion that if the railway is constructed, it will stimulate agricultural settlement? I do.
1131. Amongst the places likely to be taken up by the agriculturist you mentioned a travelling-stock reserve? I have.
1132. Is not this a travelling-stock route? No; a little stock comes, but very little. I think that reserve was made in the interests of an individual some years ago, as travelling-stock reserves frequently are.
1133. Is that reserve used much now by travelling stock? Very little.
1134. You think it is required for travelling stock coming this way? I do not.
1135. Has not this long been a route for travelling stock, to be trucked at Mudgee, or lower down the line? Of course, stock travelled for many years before we thought of having a railway that way to Mudgee. I have been an old grazier myself, and we were never very particular to half a mile as to the country we travelled. When the runs became fenced, and stock owners had to keep to the road, it was considered that there should be travelling-stock reserves, but the quantity of travelling stock coming that way now is not very large.
1136. In your opinion, that travelling-stock reserve might well be thrown open for settlement? Yes.
1137. You think it is good agricultural land? I know it is.
1138. In addition to that there are 50 square miles of gold-field reserve? I believe so.
1139. In your opinion, should that land be no longer reserved for gold-mining purposes? In view of the passing of the Bill which you referred to a short time ago, I think it should. At the same time I am not one of those who think the miner should be shut out from the small privileges he possesses.
1140. Do you think the large common you have around Gulgong could safely be curtailed? I think so.
1141. If the travelling-stock reserve were thrown open to the public, and the gold-field reserve was also thrown open for settlement, and the common curtailed, there would be ample room out here for the settlement of 700 families? Yes.
1142. What would be the available area for settlement? It would be very large, but I have not gone into the matter.
1143. What are the agricultural productions of the district? Wheat, corn, oats, oaten hay, and the other kind of hay.
1144. You produce all the ingredients for fodder? We do.
1145. And if you had access to the western and north-western districts, you could do a large business in fodder? Undoubtedly.
1146. I presume that, like the Mudgee people, you look to the west for a market, rather than to the metropolis? Yes.
1147. And that is one of the reasons why you continually agitate for a line to Coonamble? Yes.
1148. You mentioned just now that the line ought to go to Walgett? Yes, from a national point of view.
1149. Are you aware that a line has been surveyed from Narrabri to Walgett? Yes.
1150. You are also aware that a line has been surveyed from Dubbo to Coonamble? Yes.
1151. There is a strong agitation to obtain that line? It has been strong.
1152. If the Walgett line were carried out from Narrabri, and the Dubbo to Coonamble line was also carried out, and a line was taken from Mudgee to a cross-line between Werris Creek and Dubbo, would not that line be more advantageous to this district than any other? I cannot say.
1153. A line from Mudgee to the cross-line to Dubbo from Werris Creek would command all the trade on the Western line, and if it were running to Coonamble it would give you the Coonamble trade as well. A line running to Werris Creek would give you the north-western trade, and a line from Narrabri to Walgett would give you the Walgett trade also? Yes.
1154. Would not that be more advantageous to you than a straight line to Coonamble? We may be all dead and in our graves before that is carried out. Of course, if it were done, it would be admirable.
1155. Is not there a stronger probability of the line from Dubbo to Werris Creek being constructed than one round to Coonamble? I do not consider that at all.
1156. It is absolutely necessary to connect the Western and Northern lines, and to give access to Broken Hill by the Broken Hill line. Is it not more likely that a cross-line will be constructed first, than a line to Coonamble? Very likely, but if it is necessary to connect the western with the northern system, connect Mudgee with somewhere.
1157. If you were connected with the cross-line you would achieve all your objects? I think so.
1158. Then you would not require the line to be taken to Dubbo or Wellington? I do not say so.
1159. You would achieve all your objects by the cross-line to Dubbo? Precisely; only I hope this line will not be held in abeyance.
1160. You said that the line from Mudgee to Gulgong, as proposed, would come through the worst country? Yes.
1161. Is that because it is a straighter line, or has been taken away to serve private property? I suppose it was taken away from an engineering point of view.
1162. *Mr. Humphery.*] You say that if the line is not constructed beyond Gulgong, it will serve very few people, and will not serve the township of Gulgong much? It will serve Gulgong. At present we have to go 20 miles to a station.

1163. If the line were constructed from Mudgee to Gulgong, would it not serve the residents within a radius of 20 miles of Gulgong? Yes, within a radius of 50 miles, right up to Coonabarabran.
1164. Would not it serve the whole of the people between Gulgong and Mudgee,—Canadian and Home Rule? Certainly.
1165. You think Gulgong and the surrounding district will be served if this line is constructed? Yes.
1166. Even if the Government does not contemplate extending it? Certainly.
1167. You are not in favour of the non-construction of the line to Gulgong? Certainly not.
1168. Even though it were to stop at Gulgong? For a short time, but not as has been the case at Mudgee, that it should stop here for years.
1169. Did you mention that there would be any wool carried by railway, in the event of a line being constructed to Gulgong? No.
1170. Would there be any? Yes.
1171. Where would it come from? From the outside and around here.
1172. Will you name the places? It will come from all the farmers round about. They have all more or less sheep. In the valley of the Talbragar the farmers have from 1,000 to 3,000 sheep, and all the little settlers have 50 sheep. They will come and dispose of their wool to Mr. Young, Mr. Tuxford, and others.
1173. Are there any large stations which would be served by the railway? Yes, Biragambil and Guntawang.
1174. The wool would come from Biragambil to Gulgong? Yes, certainly.
1175. Are there any stations in the direction of Coonamble which would be served? Yes, the whole of them would be served.
1176. Do you think the wool would be sent by way of Gulgong, instead of Dubbo? Yes.
1177. What distance is Coonamble from Gulgong? About 140 miles.
1178. What is the distance of Mundooran from Gulgong? About 50 miles.
1179. And from Mundooran to Coonamble? About 100 miles.
1180. What is the distance of Coonamble from Dubbo? About 100 miles.
1181. Do you think it probable that Coonamble would trade with Gulgong in preference to Dubbo, the distance between Coonamble and Dubbo being so many miles less than between Coonamble and Gulgong? I cannot answer that. They would trade wherever it would suit them best.
1182. We want your opinion? I cannot answer.
1183. It is necessary to ascertain, as far as we possibly can, what sources of revenue there will be for the railway, in the event of the Government deciding to construct it. The Commissioners have represented that the probability is that there will be about £500 obtained from passengers fares, and about £1,000 from live stock and goods. We wish you to show us, if you can, all the sources of revenue, in order that we may ascertain whether the Commissioners have been accurate in their estimate, or whether they have under-estimated the probable sources of revenue? I have not collected any statistics at all.
1184. Have you any knowledge of the probable quantity of wheat grown in this district? Only from the estimate I have seen taken by the police.
1185. *Mr. Hurley.*] Are you interested in, or have you in your own right, any land through which this railway will pass? Not enough to bury me.

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Mr. Richard Rouse, junior, sworn and examined:—

1186. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Where do you reside? At Biragambil.
1187. What are you? A grazier; I am acting as executor in my father's estate.
1188. Do you desire to make a statement in regard to the prospects of the railway paying, if constructed to Gulgong? I was asked to produce some statistics from our own books in regard to the produce and stock sent by us from the district and brought to it. In 1889 we sent, from Biragambil to Mudgee, 738 bullocks, 39 calves, and 6,256 sheep.
1189. *Chairman.*] Was that sent to Mudgee for the purpose of being carried from there by rail to the metropolis or other places? Yes. A few might have been sold, but the bulk went on to Sydney.
1190. If the railway had been here, they would have been sent by rail from Gulgong? Yes. Of wool, we sent 34 tons 3 cwt. 2 qrs. There were 379 bales of wool and 33 bales of sheepskins. We also received in Mudgee, by rail, and carted to Biragambil, 34 tons 3 cwt. 2 qrs. of goods in the same year. In 1888 we carted from Biragambil to Mudgee 22½ tons of bran, 20 tons of pollard, and 30 tons of flour. These goods would have gone by train from Gulgong if there had been a line. In 1889 we carted from Biragambil to Mudgee 4,345 bushels of wheat, of a gross weight of 117 tons 7 cwt. Of mill produce, we carted from Biragambil to Mudgee about 829 bushels of wheat, 58 tons of flour, and 5 tons of bran and pollard. The amount of mill produce carted from Mudgee to Biragambil, Guntawang, or Gulgong during 1889 was 118 tons of flour and 2 tons of bran and pollard.
1191. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do these returns give a fair indication of the trade your station does, or would do, with the Gulgong line, if the railway were brought here? I think so.
1192. And yours is only one of several stations in this district? Yes.
1193. I presume you always truck your stock from Mudgee? Yes.
1194. Do all the other graziers in the district do that? No; but fully two-thirds do.
1195. And the other third, I suppose, travel on to Sydney? Yes; some to Sydney, and some to Wallerawang.
1196. I suppose a good deal depends on the state of the market? Yes; and the grass on the road.
1197. If there is a good market and little grass, they will truck? Yes.
1198. But if there is plenty of grass and a low market, they will travel with them? Yes.
1199. Is this district a natural travelling-stock route for the stock of the west? Yes. A number of stock come by Gulgong, and others go by Rylstone, and truck there.
1200. But do the stock about Coonamble and Coonabarabran come this way? Yes.
1201. And this is their natural way to the Sydney market? Yes.
1202. I presume, if the railway were opened to Gulgong, it would carry a considerable proportion of the travelling stock? I certainly think advantage would be taken of the line.
1203. Do you know whether the graziers out towards Coonamble send their wool this road? Some do, and others do not. They send it to Dubbo. Others send to Wellington.

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1204. It is 30 miles nearer from Coonamble to Dubbo, than from Coonamble to Mudgee? Yes.
1205. A line brought to Gulgong would shorten the distance by 20 miles. Do you think that would induce them to come this way? I do, because it is a better travelling road.
1206. I notice you have given a high return for wheat. Do you cultivate much yourself? Not a great deal. We have two mills—one in Mudgee, and a small one at Biragambil, about 5 or 6 miles from here.
1207. You buy wheat from the surrounding farmers? Yes.
1208. What is your opinion as to the character of the agricultural settlement around here;—is it likely to be permanent? At present the farmers are almost in a state of distress. I think, if they had a market open for them in the north-west, we would have a larger population. For my own part, we have lands which we would be glad to lease to the farmers, but if we did so under existing circumstances, we would have great trouble in collecting the rents, and it is a question whether grazing sheep upon them will not pay us better.
1209. Do you think that is the reason why the large landowners prefer to carry on grazing to letting the land? I think they would go in for what would pay them best.
1210. Do you think if a cheap and speedy access to a market in the west and north-west were given, it would lead to the large landowners letting their lands to tenant farmers? Probably such portions as would be suitable for agriculture.
1211. It would pay better to do that than to carry on grazing? I think so. I must explain that a farmer is scarcely likely to give more for land than the squatter can make out of it with sheep or cattle, when the farmer can conditionally purchase land at 2s. per acre deposit.
1212. You know there is very little land to be selected in this district? There is a fair quantity yet, and if some of the reserves were thrown open, and a portion of the common curtailed, you would find a good many agriculturists would settle upon it.
1213. Do you think the travelling-stock route is required for travelling stock? I do not think there are many stock travelling by that route now.
1214. Do you think it would be in the public interest to cancel that reservation, and throw it open for settlement? No inconvenience would be felt by its being cancelled. It is made use of now by private individuals.
1215. Would the bringing of the line to Gulgong obviate the necessity of retaining the reserve? I think it would almost increase the necessity for retaining it, because, if quantities of stock come here, they will require some place upon which to graze whilst waiting to be forwarded to the agents.
1216. How far distant is that travelling stock reserve from the town? I scarcely know the boundaries of it. I suppose it would be 5 miles to where it commences.
1217. Could not a portion of the gold-field reserve be kept for that purpose? Yes.
1218. If that were so, the travelling-stock reserve might be thrown open? Yes.
1219. *Chairman.*] Did Mr. Harper, the goods superintendent, obtain any information from you? No.
1220. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you know the gold-field reserve—the 50 square miles referred to by Mr. Plunkett? I have a fair idea of it.
1221. What is the character of the land? Certain portions would be good for agriculture. There are many other portions which would not be so good.
1222. Can you say, approximately, what area would be suitable for agricultural settlement? I should not think more than one-tenth.
1223. That would be about 3,000 acres? Yes.
1224. How many acres do you think would be sufficient to support a family? It all depends on whether they went in for agriculture, or whether they combined it with a little sheep-farming.
1225. Assuming that they used it for agricultural purposes? About 100 acres.
1226. Some thirty families could settle on the reserve? I should think so.
1227. Is the common included in the 150 square miles? Yes.
1228. What is the area of the travelling-stock reserve? I am not certain about that.
1229. Is it all good land? Fully two-thirds of it is.
1230. Have you considered in which direction it would be advisable to extend the line from Gulgong? My idea would be to tap the North-western line at Dubbo. Whilst the grass is growing the horse is starving, and if we were joined to Dubbo we might at once open a market for produce to Bourke and those out-lying districts. We hope that the line, about which I heard you speak a short time ago—the connection between Dubbo and Werris Creek—will also open up another market to us. Therefore I doubt very much whether individual interests in this district would not be much more benefited by that line than any other. At the same time I agree with Mr. Plunkett's idea, that the country would be more opened up by a line from here to Coonamble and Walgett.
1231. Coonamble, *via* Dubbo? No; straight on.
1232. In that case would not you be deprived of the Northern line? Yes. As I said before, I think our individual interests would be more benefited by our being tacked on to the North-western line, at Dubbo, or wherever it might be thought necessary.
1233. If connected at Dubbo, and continued to Coonamble, you would have two markets? Yes.
1234. What area of land do you hold in connection with the family estate? There will be about 20,000 acres freehold.
1235. How far is the most distant portion of it from Gulgong? I ought to explain that we have property also at Cobbara—5,000 or 6,000 acres freehold.
1236. How far is that from Gulgong? 32 miles.
1237. Say within 10 miles of Gulgong, on the proposed line between Gulgong and Mudgee? It all lies adjacent—within 15 miles.
1238. What proportion of that is suitable for agriculture? 5,000 or 6,000 acres, I should think.
1239. What portion of it have you under cultivation? What do you mean by cultivation. We have some under artificial grasses.
1240. Under cultivation for wheat or oats? 100 to 150 acres.
1241. In the event of the line being constructed between Gulgong and Mudgee, would you be prepared to lease the 5,000 acres suitable for agricultural settlement? Perhaps not the whole of it, but a very considerable quantity, if we could get anything like fair rentals.
1242. What would you consider a fair rental for it? It would depend on the locality—from 5s. to 10s. an acre.
- 1243.

1243. Supposing there may not be land suitable for agricultural purposes within easy distance of the railway, do you think settlers would be able to make a living? I think so, if favoured with fine seasons.

1244. Have you any idea of the yield per acre of the agricultural land in this district? 18 bushels to the acre.

1245. Would that be the average yield, or a yield only in good seasons? Taking one season with the other, I think the Gulgong district would yield 15 to 18 bushels to the acre.

1246. Is much hay sent from this district to Mudgee? I believe so. I think it has been sent away more in the form of chaff.

1247. You mentioned, in reply to Mr. O'Sullivan, that you received a quantity of wheat from Mudgee during the year, and at the same time you sent a large quantity to Mudgee? We received flour. The wheat is really in excess of what we can grind at our small mill with one pair of stones. At Mudgee we have five pair of stones, and send our surplus wheat to be ground there.

1248. I did not understand why you should send wheat to Mudgee and bring it back to Gulgong? That is the reason. Last year, owing to the drought, we could not keep the two mills going, so we closed the Biragambil mill, and sent the wheat to Mudgee, and after being ground, the produce was brought back.

1249. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you any miners on any of your 20,000 acres? No.

1250. But you had some time ago? Two or three parties of men.

1251. Not a large number? We have never been sufficiently successful in inducing them to go there. They are perfectly welcome to go.

1252. I understand you have a lot of your land under grass? Yes; lucerne and prairie-grass, and Italian rye-grass.

1253. Have you practised ensilage at all? No.

1254. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Do you think this line will aid in the removal of starving stock to the better grass districts of the south? I think they would be benefited by being brought to this district. I contend we have never suffered from extreme drought in this district. When we have suffered heavy losses on the Macquarie and the Castlereagh, we have had 15,000 sheep extra here, and have pulled through without serious loss. The fact shows that we could not have suffered very severely here.

1255. To a certain extent the Mudgee and Gulgong district would serve as a relieving ground for the stock in the west? Yes.

1256. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you know if any farmers are engaged in dairying? A few are. My cousin, at Guntawang, has a butter factory, and might give you some information.

Sergeant Steele, sworn and examined:—

1257. *Chairman.*] You are Sergeant of Police, stationed at Gulgong? Yes.

1258. How long have you resided in the district? Three and a half years.

1259. Is it part of your duty to collect the statistics of the district? Yes.

1260. What does your district embrace? Rather a small area. We have a small portion of the Mudgee electorate.

1261. And how far towards Mudgee do you go? About 8 or 10 miles—that is south-east.

1262. How far north do you go? To Reedy Creek—3 miles.

1263. How far west? About the same distance—3 to 5 miles. We go east 12 miles.

1264. Have you a return as to the number of farmers in your district? Yes; I compiled a return for the Statistical Registrar, and I made up the return I now hold in my hand for the local Railway League.

1265. It is not the Government return then? I copied it from the Government return.

1266. Which you furnished to the Registrar-General for statistical purposes? Yes.

1267. When was that taken? In January last.

1268. What population does it show within your district? I have not taken the population. I have only taken the acreage.

1269. Have you any means of knowing the population? Within that area it will be about 2,500.

1270. Within the whole area? Yes.

1271. Has the population of the town itself decreased or increased during the last year or so? It has increased slightly.

1272. Although the gold-mining section of the town during that time has not? It is in about the same condition now as it was when I came to the district.

1273. Then the increase will be in those who have gone into agricultural pursuits? Yes; when I came to the district first I took an actual return of the population in it. There were about 1,000 in the town and about 1,500 outside, within the electoral roll area.

1274. Will you read the statistics you have collected? [*Witness put in statistics collected during the month of January, 1890.*]

1275. You have reason to believe these statistics are correct? Yes.

1276. How far is Denison Town from here? 30 miles north.

1277. In the direction of Coolah? Yes; Cobbora is about 30 miles west from here, and Mundooran is about 50 miles from here. Coolah is 50 miles north.

1278. How did you gather the statistics? From each individual.

1279. You visited almost every man in the district? Yes, personally.

1280. Did you find a tendency to magnify belongings or to increase them? They did not magnify them. In some instances they decreased them. In large stock they decreased them as much as possible.

1281. The districts referred to in the statistics you have put in are within a distance of 20 miles of Gulgong? No; Coolah is 50 miles from here.

1282. But the produce of these different places would come to Gulgong for transhipment? Yes; they all have a trade connection now with Mudgee or Gulgong.

1283. The returns are applicable only to the places which would send their produce here, and which would receive their supplies from Gulgong if a railway were constructed? Yes; but there is a large area in the Cassilis district—Uarbry, Uhlan, Sportsman's Hollow, &c.—which is not included, and which would be served. At present they trade with Gulgong and Mudgee.

1284. But some of them at present trade with other places—with Cassilis for instance? No; I believe they all come this way.

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1285. You believe that they send their produce, and that if a railway were constructed, the circle might be extended? Yes.
1286. That is to say, that if the line is brought 20 miles nearer, a larger circle will be embraced? Yes.
1287. Are the people engaged in agricultural pursuits in a fairly prosperous condition? No.
1288. Owing to the difficulty of getting to market? Yes.
1289. Do you know anything of the country between this and Coonamble? Yes.
1290. Is it good land? Yes, as you go far out it is very good. After you get to Cobbora the land is good.
1291. Is it good between here and Cobbora? There is a great portion which is not very good about the Goodaman Ranges; it is only fit for grazing, and not very good for that.
1292. Do you agree that the gold-field reserve and travelling-stock reserve might well be cancelled and throw open for selection? Yes.
1293. Do you think they would be taken up? Yes.
1294. Even with the railway only as far as Mudgee? Yes.
1295. Would they take it up for speculative purposes, or *bona-fide* settlement? All the land selected here is within a radius of 10 miles, and it is pretty nearly all farms. A great portion is cleared, and some cultivated. Some of it is not cleared yet.
1296. *Mr. Humphery.*] Did you hear the evidence of Mr. Rouse? Yes.
1297. Do you confirm what he said in regard to the area of land within the gold-field reserve which would be suitable for agriculture? I do not know the boundaries of the gold-field reserve. I know the boundaries of the commonage. I could not tell you the exact acreage.
1298. Mr. Rouse said he thought about one-tenth of the reserve, or 3,000 acres, would be suitable for agriculture;—do you think that is a correct area? I should imagine, including the commonage, that there is more than that.
1299. How many acres do you think would be suitable for agricultural settlement? 3,000 to 5,000.
1300. What area would be sufficient to support a family? I could not say.
1301. What is the average size of the small holdings of the district? A great number have only 40 acres.
1302. Supporting a family? Yes; they make it a home, and those who are able to go out labouring and shearing do so. They take contracts on the road, and so on.
1303. You stated that in gathering the statistics you visited the whole of the farmers, from whom you received information? Yes.
1304. What did you find most of them engaged in? As a rule, they were harvesting.
1305. Wheat cultivation? Yes, principally wheat.
1306. Where did you find most of the farmers living—how far from Gulgong? Springfield and Canadian.
1307. Within what distance of Gulgong? 7 or 8 miles.
1308. Would they be served by the proposed line from Gulgong to Mudgee? I think they would.
1309. Do you know the country between Mundooran and Gulgong? Yes.
1310. Is much of that fit for agricultural settlement? I should say that about Cobbora there is a lot fit for agricultural settlement, and also about Mundooran.
1311. How far from Gulgong? Mundooran is from 40 to 50 miles.
1312. Then the land nearest to Gulgong is not fit for settlement? No.
1313. Where is the good land? About Cobbora.
1314. How far from Gulgong? 30 miles.
1315. Then, between Cobbora and Gulgong the land is not very good? A few miles out it is fair. I suppose there will be 15 or 18 miles which is not very good between here and Cobbora. You go over the Goodaman Ranges.
1316. Is the land about here suitable for fruit-growing? Yes.
1317. Are many people engaged in fruit cultivation? Yes; there are a great number of small orchards.
1318. Can you say what kinds of fruit are grown? Apples, peaches, nectarines, apricots, plums, quinces, and so on.
1319. Has the business of Gulgong increased during the last five years? I think it is better than when I came here.
1320. How many storekeepers are there? Five.
1321. How many public houses? Eight.
1322. How many were there when you came? Nine.
1323. How many were there in the early times, during the gold rush? I was not here then, but almost every second house was a public-house or a shanty.
1324. How many banks have you? Two.
1325. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Did you notice, when you took the last electoral roll, if there was an increase? A slight increase.
1326. Of how many? About 20.
1327. Did any of the miners of this district go to Peak Hill, or any of the new fields, last year? Not many.
1328. So that the increase on the roll was a natural one, and there was no loss? No.
1329. Did you gather the statistics for the league in the ordinary way in which you gather them for the Government? Yes.
1330. I understand these figures are taken from the figures you compiled for the Government? Yes.
1331. Therefore, you can swear to them as being correct? I can swear to them as being the same figures which I obtained from the different owners and occupiers.

Mr. John Tuxford, produce dealer, sworn and examined:—

Mr. J.
Tuxford.
24 Mar., 1890.

1332. *Mr. Humphery.*] What is your occupation? Produce dealer, in the town of Gulgong.
1333. How many years have you been here? About sixteen.
1334. Do you wish to make any statement to the Committee? No.
1335. Are you in favour of the construction of the line from Gulgong to Mudgee? Certainly.
1336. Have you seen the proposed route? Yes.
1337. Can you suggest any deviation or alteration which would be to the interests of the people to be served by the railway? No.
- 1338.

Mr. J.
Tuxford.

24 Mar., 1890.

1338. Can you say what quantity of wheat has passed through Gulgong to Mudgee during the last year? No.
1339. Do you know anything about the position of the farmers in the district? Yes.
1340. How many holdings are there? About one hundred and eighty.
- 1341-2. How are the majority of them occupied—in pastoral or agricultural pursuits? They combine the two occupations.
1343. What is the average return from the wheat land? 18 to 20 bushels per acre.
1344. What price do you give for wheat? From 2s. 8d. to 2s. 10d.
1345. What do you pay for carriage to Mudgee? 2½d. per bushel, or 10d. per bag.
1346. Where is your market for wheat? Sydney.
1347. Is that where you send your wheat to? Yes.
1348. What other markets have you? Mudgee.
1349. There is a local demand at Mudgee? Yes.
1350. Did you hear the evidence of Mr. Zimmler to the effect that five-eighths of the produce from Mudgee to Sydney came from this district? Yes.
1351. Do you think he has under-estimated or over-estimated the quantity sent from this district through Mudgee? I can tell you what I sent during the last two years. [*Witness put in the following statement*]:—

	Tons	cwt.	qr.	lb.
Goods received from Sydney, 1888 and 1889.....	247	7	2	23
Chaff sent to Sydney, 1887 and 1888	113	0	2	0
Corn sent to Sydney, 1887 and 1888	64	12	3	18
Wheat sent to Sydney, 1887 and 1888	55	10	1	0
Wool, sheepskins, sent to Sydney, 1887 and 1888.....	31	15	3	15
Wheat sent to Mudgee, 1887 and 1888	70	11	2	15
Corn received from Mudgee, 1888 and 1889	57	10	1	7

1352. Is most of the produce of the district purchased at Gulgong and sent on to Mudgee? No.
1353. Is there anyone besides yourself engaged in the purchasing and forwarding of produce? Yes; Mr. Young is a larger dealer than I am.
1354. Do any of the farmers send their produce direct to Mudgee? Yes; even from Tallewang, which is 12 miles out.
1355. That is surplus produce? Yes.
1356. Is there not a large local consumption? Formerly, before the railway went to Wellington and Dubbo, we used to send our wheat in, and bring it back in the shape of flour. I send it to Coonabarabran, and as far as Coonamble, but since the railway has gone to the other side we have sent none out to the north-west.
1357. Your principal trade has been with Mudgee? It has been diverted to the Dubbo line.
1358. Before the line was open, what price did you get for produce. I have got as high as 15s. for chaff at Coonabarabran.
1359. Deprived of the north-western market, the produce fell in price? Yes.
1360. Do you think it would be in the interests of Gulgong and Mudgee if the line were carried from Gulgong to Dubbo, instead of being carried, as has been suggested, from Gulgong to Coonamble direct? It would be an advantage, both to Gulgong and Mudgee, if it were carried to either place.
1361. Which line would best serve the district—direct to Dubbo, where you would command the western and northern markets, or from here to Coonamble, without touching Dubbo? I could not tell you.
1362. You do not know sufficient of that district? No.
1363. Do you think this district will be served by the construction of the proposed line as far as Gulgong, even if it is not extended beyond? I do, considerably.
1364. Do you think there is any prospect of the earnings of the railway covering the expenses and the interest upon the cost of construction within a few years of its completion? Yes, I believe there is.
1365. Do you think the railway would create a traffic which would largely increase the returns? It would create a traffic even from the outside. You would get the benefit of the wool traffic even from Coolah and Coonabarabran.
1366. You think that wool would be sent by way of Gulgong? Yes.
1367. How is it sent now? A great deal comes to Mudgee now, and some goes to Dubbo.
1368. Of course the wool that goes to Dubbo would not increase the traffic returns of the railway, because it would be simply taken from one line to another, but would the additional 20 miles of railway be a source of revenue for the carriage of wool? Yes.
1369. You think the wool now going by road would go by rail? A great deal of the wool that goes to Dubbo would come here.
1370. *Mr. Hurley.*] Are you a landowner? Yes.
1371. What acreage do you hold? 150 acres.
1372. Under cultivation? Yes.
1373. What value per acre do you put upon it? I could not say. If I were parting with it I should value it at £10 per acre.
1374. Is there any other land in the district equal to yours? Yes.
1375. A large area? There are small farms. There is no large area of ground here cleared and under cultivation.
1376. You have heard what has been said about the commonage and the gold-field reserve? Yes.
1377. Is there any land there equal to yours? Yes, plenty.
1378. If it were thrown open, do you know whether there are persons who would avail themselves of the opportunity of securing land? Yes.
1379. Do you think they would pay anything like the price you are willing to sell at? No, I should say not, when they can get it for less.
1380. But how do you know it would be got for less? They must get it for less. If it were thrown open for selection it would cost £5 to clear it.
1381. But if it were a special area, do you think they would be willing to pay £4 an acre for it? That depends on its position.
1382. Do you think they would take it up at anything like £3 and £4 an acre? I do not think they would, but they would take it up at £1 per acre, in a very few days, if it were thrown open. 1383.

- Mr. J. Tuxford.
24 Mar., 1890.
1383. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] If you had access to the west, what would be the chief product you would be likely to sell out there? Chaff and corn.
1384. Would you do any trade in wheat and flour? Yes, in flour.
1385. You are aware that, sometimes in a dry season, the graziers have to send long distances to get chaff? Yes.
1386. Have you heard of chaff being brought from Wangaratta, in Victoria, and from New Zealand, and sold at Cobbara and Nyngan? I have had chaff from New Zealand myself.
1387. Does it pay better to send to that country for chaff than to send to Mudgee for it by vehicle? Yes.*
1388. You think if the railway were opened up to give access to the western districts on the one side, and the north-west on the other, and out to Coonamble, you would be able to supply all the fodder required there in dry seasons? Yes. We would be able to compete with Bathurst, Blayney, or Orange, because we would have the same market as they have at present.
1389. You are aware that Molong and Orange are nearer the Dubbo district than you? Yes.
1390. Can you compete with them? Yes.
1391. Do you think they supply all the demand? They supply a good deal.
1392. Do you think they could supply all the demand on the Western line? I could not say.
1393. Do you think you could keep up competition with them if you had to pay more for railway freights than they had? We would be able to compete with them.
1394. Which, as a business-man, would suit you best—a line running away to Dubbo, a line running to Coonamble, or a line touching a cross-line between Dubbo and Werris Creek, and giving you access to the Western and the Northern line? I could not say.
1395. Which would be the best outlet for your trade? There would be little difference between Dubbo and Coonamble.
1396. Do you think you would be able to serve the Coonamble trade from Dubbo? I believe so.
1397. Would not it be an advantage for this district to have a connection with the cross-line, which would give three markets instead of one? Certainly.
1398. Should not that induce you to give a preference to the cross-line from Dubbo to Werris Creek? Yes.
1399. You think that a line would give you a greater outlet for trade than any extension of this line to Coonamble? I believe it would.
1400. You say you send your produce to Sydney? Some of it.
1401. Do you always get any profit upon it? Not always.
1402. Have you heard of cases of men sending produce to Sydney, and being let in for expenses? Yes. I have known of it myself.
1403. Do you know that chaff and hay has been sold in the open market, and expenses have had to be paid upon it? I have sent 23 tons of chaff myself, and I was £18 in debt after I had sent it.
1404. Therefore you cannot look upon Sydney as a certain market for the sale of your produce? The difficulty we have to contend with is the carriage from here. We have 20 miles of carriage. We have to pay 15s. a ton for chaff, and that is a great drawback.
1405. What I want to know is this,—you do not look to the east or south for your market, because there is no certainty of a profit; but you do look to the west, where there is a good outlet for the produce of this district? I look to Sydney for a market, too. If we have a low rate of transit, we can compete with the Victorian market.
1406. Have you not often heard of Mudgee farmers and dealers losing by sending consignments to Sydney? Yes.
1407. Might not the same thing happen to you? Of course.
1408. Which is your more important market—to the west or east? I cannot tell you. There is no market for us now.
1409. Which would be your market, if you had access to the Northern district? It would be best for us if we had the two markets.
1410. *Chairman.*] Your experience is not singular. Every man of business I suppose makes bad bargains? Yes.
1411. What will it cost to clear this land of yours which you spoke of just now? £5 an acre.
1412. Is it heavily timbered? Fairly.
1413. Did you sell the timber which came off it? No.
1414. And you think all this good land in the district would cost £5 an acre to clear? Yes, to clear and fence it.
1415. You think all this best land in the colony should be sold at the ordinary rate, 20s. an acre? I do not think so, but I say it would be better to be thrown open and sold. At present it is of no good at all, even to the Crown.
1416. It would be of no benefit to anybody if you cannot get to market? But if we have a railway we will have a market.

Mr. A. C. Garling, farmer, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. A. C. Garling.
24 Mar., 1890.
1417. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? A farmer.
1418. Where do you reside? At Springfield, about 5 miles from Gulgong.
1419. Have you many acres under cultivation? One hundred and twenty.
1420. What does it give you per acre? From 17 to 18 bushels. This year I averaged 29·18 bushels. I have had as high as 35 bushels.
1421. Where is your market? Mudgee and Gulgong—principally Gulgong.
1422. Do you find your calling remunerative? Not for the last few years.
1423. What is the drawback? The want of cheap carriage to Sydney.
1424. Does the projected railway pass through any of your land? Three lines have been surveyed.
1425. How about the eastern line? It runs about a mile from my ground.
1426. You have heard the evidence in regard to the projected railways westward; would the opening up of the western interior be of advantage to you as a grower? Yes.
1427. It would enable you to increase your acreage of agriculture? Yes.
1428. Are you engaged in anything else, such as dairy-farming? A little. 1429.

* NOTE (on revision):—Meaning July, 1882.

1429. Where do you find a market for your dairying? We have a little market here.
1430. Owing to the difficulty of reaching market you find it non-productive? Just so.
1431. Have you any knowledge of the land immediately surrounding this district? Yes.
1432. Is it similar to your own? Yes; most of it is fine chocolate soil.
1433. Have you any knowledge of mining? Very little.
1434. You cannot say whether the country is likely to develop into anything which would be beneficial to the mining industry? I should imagine there are some very good reefs, but the alluvial is nearly all done, because it is well prospected.
1435. Have you met anyone in the district searching for land in order to enter into agriculture? Yes; I am frequently asked if I know of any ground open for selection. It has all been locked up in the Gulgong reserve and the common.
1436. If that were opened it would be taken up? Very quickly.
1437. What do you think that land is worth per acre? £1 to 25s. The expense would be in clearing and fencing it.
1438. If you were parting with any of your land which is not improved, what per acre would you ask for it? 25s.
1439. Then you do not place a high value on your land? Yes, on part of it. That which I have not cleared is hill land, unfit for cultivation.
1440. You would be satisfied with 25s.? Yes, for the hill country. The ground I would take 25s. for is not fit for cultivation. It is only quartz and rocks.
1441. Do you look on the construction of the railway as likely to increase population, and be beneficial to the place? Yes.
1442. As a taxpayer, do you think it would be to the interests of the general community that such a line should be constructed? Yes.
1443. Upon what grounds? On account of the great area which will be thrown open for occupation. Population would settle in the district.
1444. If the place remained as it is now you could not anticipate a fair return? No.
1445. Eighteen miles of railway would not give you that facility for reaching market which would enable you to increase your agricultural acreage? No.
1446. But you are looking ahead to the probability of a market westward and northward, and an increased population? Yes.
1447. Have you suffered from drought at all? Very severely. Last year, out of 120 acres of ground, I had not a straw of hay or wheat.
1448. Then you had difficulty in keeping live stock? Yes; I had to travel them about.
1449. Have you any knowledge of ensilage? Yes, from reading.
1450. Has the advantage of that system never forced itself upon you? It has of late. It is only recently that it has been brought forward. I believe most of the farmers will enter into it.
1451. Then you think you will adopt the system for the purpose of saving your stock in the future? Yes.
1452. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] I gathered from your evidence that you consider that though the line will not pay, commercially, for some time, the indirect advantages it will confer upon the district will justify its construction? Yes.
1453. What are the indirect advantages, outside the probable further agricultural settlement upon the reserves? The great advantage will be to the farmers already on the ground, who will obtain an outlet for their produce. They will enter more largely into sheep and cattle rearing and dairying.
1454. Do you think the Government would be justified in constructing the line to Gulgong alone, seeing that your market is not down to the south or east? No.
1455. I understand your opinion is expressed contingent on the line going further to the west? To the west or north-west.
1456. What do you grow generally? Wheat, corn, potatoes, hay, and grain of all kinds.
1457. And your neighbours grow the same? Yes; and vines and fruit. If we had a better outlet for fruit more would be grown.
1458. Do you consider this a good fruit-growing district? Magnificent; especially for apples and grapes.
1459. Do you think it is likely to be a wine-producing district? I do.
1460. Which of the lines would you prefer to see carried out, as the best means of extending the trade of the district? The one to Coonamble; but it would not matter whether we tapped Dubbo first, and then Coonamble. As long as we get away north or north-west we shall have a market.
1461. Would it not be better to have a line connecting you with the Narrabri district as well? Yes; if we could get it constructed in a reasonable time.
1462. Do you not think you are more likely to get a cross-line from Dubbo to Werris Creek than a straight line to Coonamble? I am not acquainted with the country.
1463. But you know that urgent necessity exists for connecting the Western with the Northern line? Yes.
1464. And if a line be constructed from Nyngan to Broken Hill, a short cut will be made from South Australia to Queensland; therefore this connecting link will have to be carried out? Yes.
1465. Would it not be of advantage to you to be connected by rail from Gulgong to the cross-line, and to have your western markets at Nyngan, Bourke, and Cobar on the one side, and from Dubbo to Coonamble on the other? Undoubtedly.
1466. *Chairman.*] You say you reside at Springfield? Yes.
1467. How many miles from Gulgong? Five, and 1 mile from the line.
1468. Is there much settlement about? Yes, on pretty nearly all the land within 2 or 3 miles. There will be 2,000 acres fit for cultivation.

Mr. James Hollow, farmer, sworn and examined:—

1469. *Mr. Humphery.*] Where do you reside? On the Canadian.
1470. What is your occupation? A farmer.
1471. How many miles from Gulgong is your land situated? 5 miles.
1472. How many acres have you? 180.
1473. Are you in the centre of the settlement known as Canadian? Yes.

Mr.
A. C. Garling.
24 Mar., 1890.

Mr.
J. Hollow.
24 Mar., 1890.

1474.

- Mr. J. Hollow.
24 Mar., 1890.
1474. How many acres have you under cultivation? Nearly 100.
 1475. What quantity of wheat did you produce last year? Between 400 and 500 bags.
 1476. How many bushels? About 1,700.
 1477. That is about 17 bushels to the acre? It was not all under wheat.
 1478. What average did you obtain? About 20 bushels to the acre.
 1479. Where was your market? At Gulgong and Mudjee.
 1480. What price did you obtain? I have not sold yet. It is about 3s. per bushel now.
 1481. Would you be served by the proposed line from Mudjee to Gulgong? I should.
 1482. Which would be the nearest point on the railway which you would touch? Gulgong.
 1483. Do you find a good market for your produce at the present time? Not so good as it would be if we had the railway.
 1484. Would the railway be the means of giving you a better market? Yes.
 1485. In what direction? We would have cheaper carriage.
 1486. You would not obtain any better price for your produce? No.
 1487. But you would pay less in carriage? Yes.
 1488. What do you pay now for sending produce to Mudjee? 3d. or 4d. a bushel.
 1489. Is your produce sent on to Sydney, or is it sold in Mudjee? I have had it sent on to Sydney, and sometimes it has been sold in Mudjee.
 1490. Have you seen the surveyed route of the proposed line? I know exactly where it is.
 1491. Do you think the best line has been selected? I cannot say.
 1492. Can you suggest any deviation or alteration, which you think will be more beneficial to those whom the line is intended to serve? No.
 1493. How many farmers do you think there are within 5 miles of your holding? Over 100.
 1494. Are they all growing wheat? Yes.
 1495. Do you keep any live stock? Cows.
 1496. Do you do any dairying? Yes.
 1497. What is your experience of dairying—has it been profitable? Yes, during some seasons.
 1498. Where has your market been? Gulgong.
 1499. What price have you been obtaining for butter? From 6d. to 2s. per lb.
 1500. Sixpence per lb. in the summer? Yes, and 2s. in the winter.
 1501. Have you grown any fruit? Yes.
 1502. What kind? All kinds; I have an orchard of 5 acres.
 1503. Have you grown any quantity of grapes? Yes.
 1504. How many acres? About half an acre—they have had the disease this year.
 1505. What disease? The blight odium.
 1506. You are favourable to the construction of the railway, as proposed? Yes.
 1507. *Mr. Hurley.*] Have you gone in for the jam industry? Not yet; I am going to do so.
 1508. Are you aware that a large quantity of fruit is imported into the district from California and the Colonies? Yes.
 1509. If you went into the local stores, you could find fruit from America, as well as from Tasmania? Yes.
 1510. Do you think you can compete with those importations? Yes, when we get protection.
 1511. Seeing that you have such a large acreage under cultivation, do you not think you might successfully enter into that industry? I will by-and-by, when I get a little older.
 1512. *Mr. Humphery.*] Without protection? Yes, I am going to have a try.
 1513. *Mr. Hurley.*] Do you know anything as to the quality of the land in the district, within a circumference of 15 miles? I believe it is very good.
 1514. For carrying out the same pursuits as you follow yourself? Yes.
 1515. Your chief difficulty is the want of a market? Yes.
 1516. Annual expenses, charges levied upon you by Railway Department and by agents, prevent you from competing with other places? Yes.
 1517. Is it not a fact that the heavy freight charges upon our railways act as a preventative to your competition with persons outside the colonies? I believe so.

Mr. Francis Gilbert sworn and examined:—

- Mr. F. Gilbert.
24 Mar., 1890.
1518. *Mr. Hurley.*] What have you been engaged in? Mining, chiefly.
 1519. For how long? For twenty years,—for nearly nineteen years in this district.
 1520. What is your opinion as to the future mining outlook of this district? The shallow alluvial workings are pretty well worked out. There are several leads within a few miles around Gulgong which have never been prospected.
 1521. The shallow mineral deposits are all exhausted? I would not say they are. We are prospecting now for a deep lead.
 1522. Is much gold being obtained in the district now? Not a great deal.
 1523. Can you give an idea as to the amount? No.
 1524. Can you give an idea as to the acreage held under gold-mining lease? I believe 100 acres have been taken up on the Black Lead and some four or five leases on the Star by the late John Sutherland.
 1525. Are these leases lying idle, or are the labour conditions being enforced? The Sutherland leases are lying idle.
 1526. Then they ought to be cancelled? Yes; the Black Lead has only just been taken up.
 1527. Do you hear many complaints as to the non-enforcement of the labour conditions? Yes; frequent complaints have been made about the Star Lead, because it is supposed to be one of the best about here.
 1528. Then some action should be taken by the Mining Department in order to destroy the monopoly of the mining leases? Yes; certainly.
 1529. Are you prospecting out of your own pocket? Out of our own pockets.
 1530. Do you look on the district as one worthy of an attempt on the part of the Government to render assistance to the development of the deep leads? Undoubtedly. The lode deposits are much after the style of the Lucknow. We find the gold associated with pyrites. Most of the rock formation about here is diorite. From what I have seen, and from what I have read, all the diorite formation is associated with pyrites. At Wentworth they are still getting very rich deposits. I think we have the same descriptions of mines about here.

1531. Are there any bonanzas amongst the lode formation? Yes; where the first gold was obtained on the Red Hill.

Mr.
F. Gilbert.

1532. Then your reef formations are of a fractious character? Yes—difficult to treat. That is one reason why I am so much in favour of the railway. If we can get the deposits treated, there must be some way of sending them to Sydney.

24 Mar., 1890.

1533. Have you attempted chlorination at all? No; the gold is of a coarse nature.

1534. Have you heard any complaints amongst the mining community as to the way in which grants have been given to the various districts by the Mining Department, and as to the way in which the money has been spent? The Mining Board was to have been here three or four months ago.

1535. Do you think the Mining Board satisfactory? No.

1536. Would it be more satisfactory if persons were elected by the miners to recommend the expenditure of Government money? Undoubtedly.

1537. Do you think that system of expending public money would meet with general approval? I may state that when the second amount of money was to be voted, we had a large meeting in the Municipal chamber. It was unanimously resolved to write to the Government to ask them to expend a certain portion of the votes—under the supervision of the miners, or those who might be appointed by them—the money to be left in trust with the Municipal Council.

1538. Do you think that would be likely to lead to more beneficial results than from the way it is expended now? Yes; because the miners living about here have a better chance of knowing the country than people who come from Sydney.

1539. Are there any crushing batteries in the district? None.

1540. Therefore mining is at a standstill? It is, but I have still great belief in Gulgong. I have been here for nineteen years, and I have seen most of the gold-fields of New South Wales and Queensland, I believe there will be a revival before long. When they hear of one or two good things about here we shall find any amount of capital to come in.

1541. I suppose the construction of the railway would, in the event of the mining industry progressing, be of immense advantage in bringing coal from the eastern parts of the country? Undoubtedly.

1542. How far is Denison Town away? To the Mount Stuart mine it is 26 or 27 miles.

1543. They have had satisfactory returns from some of their prospects? Yes. I was managing a silver mine near there myself, and the lode I was trying had a fair show of silver and gold. The money of the syndicate was partly expended when they stopped operations, although it was well worth developing.

1544. It only requires knowledge and capital to bring the matter to a successful issue? I think so.

1545. Do you know of any other minerals within a radius of 50 miles which are likely to be developed? There is gold on the other side of Denison Town, and silver and lead within 7 miles of Gulgong.

1546. To what do you attribute the non-development of the various deposits? I think there is very little capital in the district. We have only a few storekeepers, and the miners as a rule are poor. Want of capital is the cause of the present state of affairs. A short time ago I was speaking to a gentleman from Victoria, who said that if they had this district in Victoria they would be rushed with capital.

1547. Are you not aware that all Victorians say that? They say so. At any rate, I am satisfied that it is worth spending capital to develop the field.

1548. Is any land held by miners on lease from any landowners in the district? Yes; a company is at work now.

1549. Upon what royalty do they work? I could not say.

1550. About what percentage? About 10 per cent.

1551. Are you aware that the mining community have complained for many years of the difficulty of getting on lands, other than Crown lands, for the purpose of mining? Yes.

1552. Have you known of the privilege which has been given them by law recently? This is the first time I have heard of it.

1553. Therefore, they have not been made conversant with a law actually passed for their advantage? I never heard of it before, and I know of no one in this district who has heard of it.

1554. As a miner, you believe that the construction of this railway will be of immense advantage in developing the various mineral deposits of the district, including Denison Town and other places? Certainly. I may also mention there are two antimony mines near the town.

1555. What width of lode? Not very wide.

1556. What percentage? 60 or 70 per cent. of antimony.

1557. That is a very high percentage? It is. Another one has been started at Goodaman, where there have been some grand assays, not only of antimony, but of gold.

1558. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] How many miners are working in the neighbourhood? They are very scattered.

1559. Cannot you give an estimate? Some time ago, when an attempt was being made to get certain land thrown open for free selection, I got up a petition which was signed by over 200 men in a very short time. There must be between 150 and 200 men at work.

1560. Seeing that an Act was passed last Session providing that any miner may, upon giving notice to a landowner, go upon his land and prospect, paying for surface damage, is there any necessity to keep the gold-field reserve closed against settlement? Not the slightest; but I will tell you what we object to. Under the 14th clause of the Act you had to get permission from the Minister for Mines. A party of men sent down for permission to mine on a property between here and Home Rule, and it was nearly twelve months before permission was obtained.

1561. Was that on Crown lands? On lands under the selection Act. It was land taken up by a selector. We want someone on the ground to give permission to mine on the land, without sending to Sydney. The miner wants to get to work at once without waiting for six or twelve months.

1562. Of course he would have to give such notice that no expense or inconvenience might be caused. For instance, it would not be right for him to stick a shaft through a person's parlour-floor? But this is a gold-field, and there is a right which the goldminers ought to have. The goldminers made this place.

1563. All you want is the gold? Yes.

1564. If you can get gold upon any man's property upon compensating him for surface damage, there is no necessity for the remainder of the reserve to be locked up? The question arises as to what damage would have to be paid.

1565. That would be settled by arbitration in a fair way. The Act makes provision for it. You are evidently

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evidently desirous of securing what is already law. Having the right to mine on private property, I ask you whether there is any necessity for keeping this great reserve shut up from agricultural settlement? With the exception of a small portion, which could be easily mapped out and defined, I believe most of it could be taken up. The exception includes the lode formations, of which there are not many.

1566. If a fair reservation is made of the probable rich lodes, the miners would have no objection to the reserve being thrown open to the farmers for settlement? No.

1567. You are aware of a clause in the last Land Act providing that any miner may get a lease of 10 acres, upon which he may build his house, and reside there, upon paying a small rental? Yes.

1568. I suppose this reserve could be opened under that condition? It is opened now, but it is no good.

1569. Why? A man may go to the expense of building a place upon the 10 acres, and at the end of the time he has taken up the ground for he can be thrown out without any compensation for improvements.

1570. Do you mean to say that a man who took up 10 acres for fifteen years, and occupied and improved the ground during that time, would obtain no benefit? The rent he would pay would be almost as much as he would pay for any other land.

1571. Have you read the clause in the Act? I have read the clause relating to the 10 acres.

1572. Do you mean to say that it would not be a boon to the miner to have his home settled here? We would rather have 2 acres. It would be much better if we could only get that and be certain of it.

1573. *Mr. Humphery.*] Will you state, briefly, in what manner the construction of the railway between Gulgong and Mudgee will stimulate the mining industry of this district? I am informed, on good authority, that Sunny Corner and Lewis Ponds could take all the galena we could get together. There would be a chance of selling this galena to different companies if the railways were pushed out. Another thing—we shall have an opportunity of sending pyrites to Sydney for treatment. I do not suppose the deposits are big enough to justify people in erecting furnaces to deal with it here. Again, I think the deep leads must eventually come to the front, and there would be a better chance of getting our machinery cheaper from Sydney. It would be a great benefit to us to get everything we required from Sydney. I was in Mudgee the other day, and heard some of the evidence given there. One gentleman stated that there were no farms between here and Mudgee which would be benefited by the railway. I was assessor for this municipality last year, and, as such, I know there are fifty-seven farms within a radius of 5 miles which would be benefited, and which would use the railway if constructed.

1574. *Chairman.*] Has not Gulgong had assistance from the Mining Board in years gone by? Every year there has been a vote.

1575. But you are aware that it is not possible to give assistance to every place which requires it in the shape of prospecting? We were informed we would get a certain amount this year.

1576. Then you think you are on the list as a permanent endowment? Those who have sent in applications have been told they would be dealt with.

1577. There are other fields which have applied for help, and which have not had a penny spent on them, whilst you seem to have had a fair share spent upon you? Promise of aid was given.

Mr. Christopher Young, storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

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1578. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What are you in business? A storekeeper.

1579. Do you deal in produce? A little in wheat and cereals.

1580. How do you get your stores to Gulgong? *Via* Mudgee, by railway.

1581. I presume all the other storekeepers do the same? Yes.

1582. You say you deal in wheat? I would like to make a few remarks before you ask me any question.

1583. You may make a statement, and I will examine you upon it? I have had the privilege of listening to most of the evidence. It has been held that Mudgee is the market-town for Gulgong, but I beg to dispute it. Mudgee is an agricultural district. The Committee arrived in Mudgee, but saw nothing of its agriculture. In coming to Gulgong the Committee travelled merely on the verge of the Mudgee agricultural district. You are only on the verge of it now. The evidence has been given in a weak spirit. Within the municipality of Gulgong there will be 5,000 acres taken up and fit for agriculture. I have heard several questions asked as to the competition between Dubbo, Gulgong, and Molong. I have heard that the distance from Molong to Dubbo is more than from Gulgong to Dubbo, but I say it is nearer. The wheat in this place, and I say it without romancing, is worth 3d. a bushel more than the wheat from the Orange or Molong district, but we will put it at 2d. I do not include this year, as we have had a wet harvest. I think you have been led astray in Mudgee. They call Mudgee the agricultural district, but this is the agricultural district.

1584. *Chairman.*] But you are not in a position to know what we heard at Mudgee unless you were there? I have read the newspapers. The Railway League had a reporter in Mudgee. Mudgee is not the market-town for Gulgong.

1585. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You say you are a produce dealer? I am a storekeeper, and I deal a little in produce.

1586. Am I right in saying you are a storekeeper and wheat-buyer? Yes.

1587. Which is the natural trade centre for the farmers of this district? Gulgong.

1588. Do the people obtain their stores from Gulgong? Yes.

1589. What is the area of your municipality? About 5 miles by 6 miles square; 30 square miles.

1590. Which is the area of agricultural land within a radius of 15 miles of Gulgong? If you want to know the radius of agricultural land which does business with Gulgong, I should put it at 30 miles.

1591. What is the area of agricultural land within a radius of 15 miles of Gulgong? I do not know.

1592. How many farmers do you think have holdings within 15 miles radius? About 200.

1593. What outlying districts trade with Gulgong at the present time? Cobbora, Munderoran, and Coolah.

1594. Does Denison Town trade with you? Yes.

1595. Have you regular communication with it by mail? Yes.

1596. Are the people there in the habit of sending to Gulgong for stores? Yes.

1597. And they sell produce in Gulgong? Yes.

1598. We may look upon Gulgong as their trade centre also? If you will ask me the question I will tell you who sells the produce going along the Cobbora-road. I would like to correct some of the evidence which has been given. I heard Sergeant Steele say there was no good land between Cobbora and Munderoran.

1599. But he corrected that evidence? There are rich farmers from the Talbragar to Denison Town.

1600. How far is Talbragar from Gulgong? 30 miles.

1601.

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1601. Are Denison Town and Talbragar one and the same place? Denison Town is on the Talbragar River.
1602. In speaking of Denison Town we are speaking of Talbragar? Yes.
1603. Is there a large agricultural settlement there? Yes.
1604. Is there more land available? Yes.
1605. What is your opinion of the financial condition of the farmers? They are in a grand condition.
1606. You consider the financial position of the farmers is a sound one? As sound as a bell.
1607. Have many farmers left the district within the last five years? About one. There is not a farmer to my knowledge who, within the last five years, has gone insolvent.
1608. I presume you deal here, as in other agricultural districts, on the credit system? Yes.
1609. And the farmers pay up at harvest time? Generally, when they get their crop.
1610. Therefore you have reason to know they are in a sound financial condition? There is no one better.
1611. You tell us Gulgong is nearer to Dubbo than Molong? I am sure it is.
1612. Do you know the exact distance? I think it is 70 or 80 miles to Molong.
1613. Between Molong and Dubbo lies the thriving agricultural centre of Wellington? Not very thriving.
1614. It is a fine agricultural district? Yes, on this side of it.
1615. Could Gulgong compete with Wellington in the Western market? Easily, if we have the railway here.
1616. You tell us that the quality of the wheat here is so good that it is worth 2d. a bushel more than the Molong and Orange wheat, which has a good reputation in the markets of New South Wales? Yes.
1617. What leads you to believe that? From selling it.
1618. What are you giving for wheat here? Up to 2s. 10d. and 2s. 11d.
1619. Do you give 2d. a bushel more than the buyers at Molong and Dubbo? I do not know.
1620. Then it is only your opinion that it is better? I know it is better on the Sydney market.
1621. It will sell 2d. a bushel better than any wheat in the Sydney market? I think so, as previous years have shown.
1622. Are you in the habit of dealing in chaff, or hay, or produce? Not much.
1623. Do you know the district away to the west? Yes.
1624. Do you think that the surrounding district, including the old Mudgee district, is naturally fitted to provide fodder for the western district? Of course.
1625. Do you suffer from drought here to the same extent as they do further west? No.
1626. What is the reason? Because we are blessed with thunder storms. We have grass here when outside people have to bring in cattle and stock. A lot of money is made here in paddocks, by people agisting stock from the outside.
1627. You have a more moist climate? Yes.
1628. The mountains and the hills have to do with that? Yes, the average rainfall is far more than outside.
1629. *Chairman.*] What is the rainfall? The average is about 24 inches. This year we have had our average already.
1630. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You have constantly flowing streams? Yes.
1631. And fairly good grass, even in dry seasons? Yes.
1632. Therefore, you are exceptionally situated for the growth of fodder for the parched districts at the back? We have proved that for twenty years.
1633. That being so, a railway from Mudgee to Dubbo would open up a splendid market for your fodder? Undoubtedly.
1634. Do you look upon the fodder trade as likely to make the line a productive one? Yes.
1635. Do you think the line is likely to pay if it is not extended beyond Gulgong? The line to Mudgee has stopped at the beginning of civilization. Speaking allegorically, you might sink a shaft 300 feet deep, at a cost of £300, and you might get an ounce of gold from it, but that would not pay for sinking the shaft. Drive out and get the gold. Every mile you add to the railway must tend to make this white elephant a shade darker.
1636. You think that the only way of making the Mudgee line pay is by extending it to the western district? Yes.
1637. You are aware that the working expenses of the line to Gulgong are estimated at £7,000 per annum, and the probable receipts at only £1,600? Yes.
1638. Do you think that estimate of £1,600 is a true one? It would be much larger if the line is extended.
1639. It is an under estimate? Yes.
1640. By how much? About £1,000 to start with.
1641. Do you think the receipts would be more than £1,600? I know that every mile added to the Mudgee line must make it less of a white elephant.
1642. Do you think the receipts on a line between Mudgee and Gulgong would amount to more than £1,600 per annum? I am sure they would.
1643. How much more? That is a matter of calculation. You do not wish me to jump at conclusions. It is under-estimated by a tremendous lot.
1644. You are not prepared to say how much? Speaking outside my oath, I would say it is under-estimated to the extent of £2,000 or £3,000—that is taking into consideration the advance of trade.
1645. You tell us that estimate of £1,600 is below the mark? Yes.
1646. And you think the receipts would amount to a certain sum more, which you are not prepared to mention? Yes.
1647. Do you think, if the line were extended to Dubbo, or to the cross-line between Dubbo and Werris Creek, it would pay within a reasonable period? I am sure of it.
1648. You think that such a trade in produce would be opened up with the western district, and that such a number of stock would be brought down, that the railway would be kept busy? Yes.
1649. And within a reasonable period it would pay working expenses? I am sure of it.
1650. Putting aside the immediate prospect of the payment of working expenses, do you consider that the indirect advantage to be given to this district in the way of promotion of settlement, the opening up of new country, and the improvement of trade, and the prosperity of the people, would justify the construction of the line to Gulgong? I am positive of it.

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1651. *Chairman.*] Did the representative of the Railway Commissioners interview you when he was here? I met him.
1652. Did Mr. Harper, the goods superintendent, obtain any information from you? No; I introduced him to Mr. Zimmler, and he obtained what information he wanted from him.
1653. How many tons of goods do you send annually to Mudgee, and what do you receive from there? I think I receive between 400 and 500 tons from Mudgee, and send about 200 tons to Mudgee.
1654. To make use of the line? Yes. Of course, a lot of our wheat goes to Biragambil to grind.
1655. Do each of the five storekeepers in Gulgong do as much trade as yourself? I do not think so.
1656. Do you do the principal trade? I think so.
1657. Do you think you do one-half of the trade of the district? No.
1658. One-third? No.
1659. A fourth? Perhaps a fourth of the total.
1660. What do you pay per ton for carriage to Mudgee and backward? From 10s. to 15s., and £1.
1661. Do you think the Government would be justified in constructing a line to Gulgong? I would say yes, undoubtedly, with the prospect of it being extended west or north-west.
1662. Do you consider the Government would be justified in constructing to this place a line, which, according to the estimate of the Railway Commissioners, would involve a loss of £5,000 per annum? Yes.
1663. Then you think the general taxpayer has a perfect right to bear this burden for the benefit of the people of Gulgong? I do.
1664. You would have no hesitation in saying that, even though you might have no interest in Gulgong, but formed one of the general community in another place? I would say the same; I have more property in Mudgee than in Gulgong. It is part and parcel of the grand trunk line. Every mile constructed from Mudgee must lessen the whiteness of the elephant I have heard you speak of.
1665. You have already admitted that there is a great loss on the line from Wallerawang to Mudgee, and it is estimated that there will be a loss of £5,000 per annum on the line from Mudgee to Gulgong if constructed;—how can you, by adding to your loss, decrease your loss? On the principle that the postal service does not pay the country. It accommodates the country. We each contribute towards the revenue to pay for the service. We ought to be accommodated, as well as any other part of the community. The railway ought to be made, even at a loss, because that loss will be made up by further extension.
1666. Are you in favour of an extension of the line to Coonamble, or to Dubbo, *via* Coonamble? I am in favour of the line going direct to Dubbo.
1667. That would only give you access to the western markets then? No. I know the survey strikes the Werris Creek to Dubbo line, and that will give us two markets.
1668. The Werris Creek to Dubbo line is not an existing fact;—it is only on paper? It is surveyed.
1669. As the matter stands now, are you in favour of an extension to Dubbo or Coonamble? I would say the same as Mr. Plunkett—from a national point of view, go straight to Coonamble.
1670. You are in favour of the line going to Coonamble? Yes, from a national point of view.
1671. I suppose that will give you a better market in the upper district? Well, we will have the two lines the other way.
1672. But you have discarded the other two lines? I would say that I wish the railway to come to Gulgong, and to go out further; I do not care where you go to, so long as you give us another market.
1673. *Mr. Humphery.*] What quantity of wheat did you purchase this year? About 10,000 bushels up to date.
1674. Do you think that would represent one-third of the wheat purchased in Gulgong? I do not know what has been purchased in Gulgong.
1675. Can you say what quantity of wheat has been sent from this district to Mudgee this year? Not much wheat has been sent yet. The wet weather set in, and the threshing operations did not come off.
1676. The wheat has not yet been taken away? No.
1677. How many bushels have been grown? I could not say.
1678. Have you any idea of the quantity of wheat which has been grown this year? I could not tell you. I would not like to implicate myself.
1679. Have you any idea as to how many tons of loading passed through Gulgong to Mudgee during 1889? I could not answer that question properly for the simple reason there were no crops last year. For the first time in twenty years they missed. I should say myself that I sent 200 tons in 1889.
1680. Would that be one-fourth of the total tonnage? I think so.
1681. So that from this district about 800 tons were carried between Gulgong and Mudgee? Yes.
1682. Would that include wool? Yes; that is from Gulgong direct, not from the outside district, or what came through Gulgong.
1683. I want to know what came through Gulgong, also? I cannot tell you what passed through Gulgong. The railway statistics will tell you. I was at the railway station one night with Mr. Harper. We had a conversation, and judging from the fact that Mudgee has not an acre of agricultural land, I came to the conclusion that Gulgong contributed 99 per cent. to the Mudgee trade. Nearly all the trade from Mudgee to Sydney comes through Gulgong.
1684. From Gulgong and the surrounding district? The trade of the Talbragar River comes to Gulgong, and we have also the trade of Mudooran. Since the railway has been opened some of it has gone to Dubbo, but we shall have it here if the railway is opened to this place.
1685. Does the greater portion of the trade and produce between Mudgee and Sydney come from and beyond Gulgong? Yes; 75 per cent. of it.
1686. Then three-fourths of the whole of the produce sent from Mudgee to Sydney comes from and beyond Gulgong? Yes.
1687. Do you send much flour from Gulgong? There is no market in Mudgee for wheat, flour, barley, or cereals. We send our surplus to Sydney. We send all we cannot use to Sydney, because we have no other market.
1688. What do you pay for freight from Mudgee to Sydney for wheat? Current rates; about 16s. 2d. per ton.
1689. How much a bushel will that be? We put 6 tons in a truck. There has been a little reduction since the first of this month.
1690. Are you right in saying you pay 16s. 2d. per ton? I think so.
1691. Then you pay about £8 for a truck load? I will not be positive as to the amount.

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1692. Have you not made a calculation as to how much a bushel it costs you to send wheat from Mudgee to Sydney? About 5½d. to 6d. or 7d. altogether, with commission.
1693. It costs you 7d. a bushel to send your wheat from Gulgong to Sydney? Yes.
1694. Does it cost the people at Inverell and Glen Innes less than that? I do not know.
1695. Do you know the distance of Glen Innes from Sydney? No.
1696. You know that it is greater than the distance from Mudgee to Sydney? Yes.
1697. Can you compete against Glen Innes and the New England district in the Sydney market? We can compete with any one, for the simple reason that we must get rid of our surplus at any market.
1698. Would you not find a better market for your produce in Sydney, carried at 7d. per bushel, than the people of Glen Innes, who are some hundred of miles further from Sydney than you are? We are glad to get what we can in Sydney. That is the position we are in now.
1699. What price are you getting in Sydney this year for wheat? The top price is 3s. 7d.
1700. Does that leave you 3s., less agents charges? No.
1701. What does it leave you nett? 2s. 10d. and 2s. 11d.
1702. What price per bushel will pay the farmer for growing wheat? It depends on the crop.
1703. Your average crop is stated to be from 18 to 25 bushels to the acre? Then it depends on the size of the farm.
1704. Do not you desire to assist us in arriving at some conclusion? I do.
1705. What price in an ordinary season will pay the grower? I desire to explain that there are farmers and farmers. There are farmers who spend their time, between the planting of the crop and the harvest, in shearing or fencing, and they make it pay. I have heard it said that the farmers here are in a poor condition; but I say that they are in a sound condition. They make wheat growing pay, at 2s., 2s. 9d., and 3s. a bushel. Of course, if they get 4s., they are "in it," and they make money at it.
1706. Do you purchase any butter from the farmers in the district? Yes.
1707. Can you give an idea as to the quantity of butter which is made in the district? It is not a thriving business, although it used to be. Of late Mr. Rouse, of Guntawang, has started a butter factory. The butter coming in now is worth about 6d. a lb.
1708. Is much land used for dairying around the district? Not much.
1709. Do you think the establishment of butter factories would lead to increased dairying in the district? It would.
1710. Is the district suited for dairying? It is.
1711. Do you think it will be a profitable industry here? It will.
1712. That is if the farmers have facilities for sending butter to Sydney and outwards, west? Of course.
1713. Is the land between here and Mudgee, say, in the direction of Home Rule and Canadian, suitable for dairy farms? Yes.
1714. Do you know if many farms have been put under artificial grasses? Not many, unless you go down to the river towards Mr. Rouse's.
1715. How far is that from here? 5 or 6 miles.
1716. Do you know what extent of land has been laid out? On the Guntawang estates there are large paddocks. They have started a dairy there, and it is paying well.
1717. *Mr. Hurley.*] I understood you to say there were 5,000 acres of land under agriculture in the district? Yes, taken up and fit for agriculture, within six miles of Gulgong, towards Mudgee.
1718. Can you give an idea as to how many bushels per acre the land will give? 14 or 15.
1719. That would be 75,000 bushels? There is more than that grown here. But what do you mean by the district?
1720. I took the statement from you that there were 5,000 acres under agriculture in the district? There are 5,000 acres on the Mudgee side of Gulgong, within the municipality, taken up and fit for agriculture.
1721. What did you mean by saying there were 5,000 acres under agriculture within the district? I meant within the municipality.
1722. With an average of 15 bushels to the acre, that would yield 75,000 bushels? Exactly, providing it was all under crop.
1723. You believe you could quadruple that by taking in a circumference of 15 miles? I think so.
1724. You have heard what has been said in regard to the locked up areas on the gold-field reserve and the common? Yes.
1725. Do you think, if they were thrown open for selection, applicants would be found? It would increase the population twofold.
1726. That would be an advantage to you as a populous, and a source of revenue to the railway? Yes.
1727. What value do you place on the land per acre already under cultivation? I do not think Mr. Tuxford was far out when he said £10. I think the lands which are exempt now will be worth from £3 to £4 per acre.
1728. And the lands are equal to those already under cultivation? Yes. Mr. Rouse said one-tenth was fit for agriculture, and I say one-half.
1729. You are prepared to verify Mr. Tuxford's statement as to the value of the land? He said £10 an acre, but I do not suppose he would take £10 an acre for what he has.
1730. That is the improved value? Exactly.
1731. What is the unimproved value of the other lands? £4 an acre.
1732. And there would be ready applicants for it? They would rush it.
1733. Are there any other industries, besides farming, in the district which would result in revenue to the Railway Department? If you see Mr. Clark, in Mudgee, he will tell you all about a lead mine in Denison Town.
1734. Have you any knowledge of minerals yourself? Yes.
1735. Can you say whether there is likely to be, in the future, a mining population within 15 miles of this place? Something great will be turned out from Denison Town district; the prospects are good.
1736. Putting aside the probability of the developing of the mineral resources of the district, are there any other sources of income which will prove remunerative to the Railway Department? There are the vineyards and the fruit industry.
1737. Have you been over the country between here and Coonamble? Yes.
1738. Is the country similar to that which you eulogise so loudly around Gulgong? Do you mean on the route of the railway track?
1739. No; but taking in the circumference of 10 miles alongside the line? To tell the truth, you have not seen the agricultural country of the Mudgee district.
1740. Have you any land on the proposed line of railway? Not an acre. 1741.

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24 Mar., 1890.
1741. Are you interested in land between here and Coonamble? No.
1742. You are not interested in any land? I may have liens on land.
1743. You are no further interested than that? Not at all.
1744. Putting aside all local prejudices, do you think the Government would be justified in constructing a line, at a cost of some hundreds of thousands of pounds, through this district? I do, honestly, if I died to-night.

Mr. Richard Stear, baker and produce merchant, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. R. Stear.
24 Mar., 1890.
1745. *Mr. Humphery.*] What is your occupation? A baker and produce merchant.
1746. Have you been long in the district? Nineteen years.
1747. Can you speak as to the area of land within a radius of 10 miles of Gulgong under cultivation for wheat? I have a pretty good idea.
1748. How many bushels of wheat do you think are produced annually within an area of 10 miles of Gulgong? I may say that, taking the proposed line back towards Mudgee, to the boundary of the municipality, which is about 5 or 6 miles away, and taking 6 miles to the eastward, which will give about 6 square miles from here towards Mudgee, there are within that area fifty-seven farmers, with 5,207 acres of cultivated land.
1749. Would the whole of those fifty-seven farmers be benefited by the construction of the proposed line between Gulgong and Mudgee? Undoubtedly. They are within 6 miles of where we are standing, and their trade connections are principally with Gulgong.
1750. How many will there be to the north and west—within 10 or 15 miles beyond Gulgong? My trade connections—and I am only a small man—extend as far as Coolah, 50 miles in a northerly direction.
1751. Is wheat brought 50 miles beyond Gulgong? No.
1752. How far beyond Gulgong does it come from? About 35 miles.
1753. Can you say what quantity of wheat is brought in? I should think that, within an area of 15 miles from where we are standing, omitting the country between Gulgong and Mudgee, there will be at least 400 or 500 farmers. I think I could name that number within an area of 15 miles, without going back towards Mudgee.
1754. Would all those producers be served if the railway were constructed to Gulgong? They would. They come here now. Some might not stay, but would go through to Mudgee. Some of them have their trade connections with Mudgee, and might go there.
1755. The whole of the producers have trade connections with Gulgong or Mudgee? Certainly.
1756. And their produce at the present time passes through Gulgong? Yes.
1757. Do they take their stores from Gulgong? A good many of them.
1758. The stores come either from Mudgee or Gulgong? Yes.
1759. And would be carried by the railway between Gulgong and Mudgee? Yes; there is no other possible way for them to go.
1760. Do you know the district beyond Gulgong, in the direction of Coonamble and Dubbo? I have been a good way out—30 or 40 miles.
1761. Can you say whether the land is suitable for agricultural settlement? Ten or eleven years ago I used to drive a baker's cart for 25 miles in the direction of the proposed line. There was scarcely a farm to be seen at that time. Twelve months ago, when I went that way, I found it was nearly all farms for the 25 miles.
1762. For wheat? Principally wheat.
1763. Are there any mills in that direction? No, none nearer than Mundooran, which is 50 or 60 miles from here. It has been built within the last year.
1764. If the wheat were required a greater distance than 25 miles from Gulgong, would not the districts requiring it be supplied by the farmers you speak of, who have settled about 25 miles from here? It is seldom a mill of any size is erected, excepting at a railway town.
1765. Would not growers of wheat, a considerable distance from Gulgong, come into competition with Gulgong for the trade beyond? They may.
1766. They would hardly send their wheat to Gulgong, if it were required in Coonamble? They would send it where they had the best market.
1767. What produce would be placed on the railway from Coonamble and the district between Mundooran and Coonamble? Wool and sheep skins.
1768. Do you think any cattle or sheep would be trucked? Thousands. There are thousands of sheep and cattle passing here every week. 10,000 sheep passed through during the last three weeks.
1769. Do you know whether they went by rail from Mudgee? I think they trucked at Rylstone.
1770. Do you think that the railway, if constructed to Gulgong, and ultimately extended, would obtain the benefit of any live stock freight? There is do doubt about it. Most of those who have stock about here truck them direct from Mudgee. Of course some still adhere to the old style of travelling, but it is very difficult to travel during wet weather and in times of drought. The probability is that three-parts of the stock would be taken by train.
1771. From Gulgong, if the line were constructed? Yes, or further.
1772. The Railway Commissioners; in making an estimate of the probable earnings of the railway, have given the following figures:—360 tons special class traffic; 1,000 tons 1st 2nd, 3rd, and 4th classes; 750 tons wheat, flour, &c.; 50 trucks hay, straw, &c.; 100 tons skins, hides, &c.; 60 tons 1st 2nd, 3rd, and 4th classes; 500 trucks cattle; 400 trucks sheep; 1,250 tons wool;—that is an estimate of traffic which passed through Mudgee from and to these districts in the most favourable season—1887 and 1888? I think I sent ten trucks to Mudgee myself last year.
1773. Do you think that is a fair, excessive, or under estimate? I think it is considerably under-estimated.
1774. Will you state which of the classes of goods enumerated are under-estimated? There are 750 tons of wheat, flour, &c. I do not know how anyone could possibly calculate it without inquiring from all the people in the town.
1775. It is assumed that the agent who prepared the statistics obtained information in the district? I am aware that Mr. Harper came to Gulgong, and went back.
1776. Why do you think he has under-estimated the quantity of wheat and flour which would be sent by

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by rail from Gulgong? These quotations mentioned 750 tons of flour, wheat, &c. I suppose that means wheat, flour, corn, bran, pollard, barley, and oats. Taking one year with the other, I have 200 tons of flour brought to my store, and I am only in a small way of business, and the quotation only gives a full total of 750 tons. It would be impossible for Mr. Harper to know anything about that 200 tons without coming to me.

1777. How would he get that information? I do not know. I do not think anyone in the world knows it but myself.

1778. Do you get flour from Sydney, or Mudgee? I have had some from Sydney, but I do not get it from Sydney when I can get it in the district.

1779. Do you have 200 tons brought from Mudgee to you? I get it from there or Biragambil.

1780. We want to know whether this is a fair estimate? I do not think it is, because I would carry almost half of the amount mentioned myself, if the railway were constructed.

1781. You think the return is very much under estimated? The portion I have referred to is ridiculous.

1782. If a railway were built between here and Mudgee, would it not render unnecessary the forwarding of wheat to Mudgee for grinding? Certainly. There would be double the traffic if a large mill were erected here, because we would send flour to Sydney as well as any other place. If the wheat grown here could compete with other mills, I am certain there would be four times the amount of traffic referred to between here and Mudgee.

1783. You would send it to Mudgee, instead of having it brought from there? We would send it to Sydney and the westward.

1784. If the wheat were ground in Gulgong, you would not want to get 200 tons of flour from Mudgee? No.

1785. Therefore there would be no traffic for the railway for that 200 tons? No. I would buy the wheat here, and have it ground and sent to Sydney.

1786. What, in your opinion, would be a fair estimate of the number of tons of wheat, flour, &c., carried by the railway, if constructed to Gulgong? I feel certain, from the amount of business I do myself, that the 750 tons could be increased to 2,000 tons.

1787. Take the next class of goods—"fifty trucks, hay, straw, &c."? I have sent hay to Sydney four or five different times, and I have always obtained the top price, but it does not pay. It has to be sent to Mudgee, and transhipped there, and you must send a truck load at a time. I have no doubt, if the railway is constructed, that the 50 tons estimated will be increased to 500 tons. The hay is here to be sent at any time.

1788. Do you think it would be sent? I feel quite certain of it.

1789. What is the freight for hay from Mudgee to Sydney? £2 12s. per truck.

1790. And from Gulgong to Mudgee? 15s. per ton.

1791. How many tons go to the truck? A good deal depends on the quality of hay; but you can say from 3½ to 4 tons.

1792. The distance between Gulgong and Mudgee is 19 miles, and between Mudgee and Sydney 190 miles? Yes.

1793. Then it would cost you more to send your hay from Gulgong to Mudgee, than from Mudgee to Sydney? Yes; and then there is the difficulty of shipping it.

1794. Take the next item—"100 tons, skins, hides, &c."? I do not know anything about that.

1795. Take the next item—"500 trucks, cattle"? I am aware that most of the cattle trucked in Mudgee come through Gulgong.

1796. How many cattle do you think would be sent by railway if the line were constructed? The quantity mentioned in the estimate. The closer the railway gets to the various stations about here, the more likely are they to take advantage of the market.

1797. Do you think the Commissioners' estimate is correct? I think it might be increased, but I would not be certain.

1798. How many cattle would 500 trucks represent? They put about nine in a truck.

1799. That would be 4,500 head? Yes.

1800. Do you think more than that number would be sent? I do, because I am aware that the business is one which several are entering into around here.

1801. What increase do you think might fairly be made in the Commissioners' estimate of cattle? I should say 750 trucks, instead of 500.

1802. And sheep? I do not know. I have no knowledge of the sheep business any further than that there is a great number of sheep to the westward and that there are some hundreds of stations between here and Coonamble.

1803. You think you have now given us a fair estimate of the probable traffic between Gulgong and Mudgee, in the event of the proposed railway being constructed? I think the item of wool would be increased a great deal if the railway were extended 20 miles further.

1804. Why? Because it would be 20 miles nearer to the stations towards Coonabarabran.

1805. Is not the wool already sent to Mudgee? Where there were twenty-five loads of wool sent nine years ago before the railway was made to Dubbo, there are not above fifteen loads sent now.

1806. You say there would be a considerable increase of traffic over the line between Mudgee and Gulgong, because it would be 20 miles nearer to the stations? Yes; the nearer it gets to the producers the greater the traffic will become.

1807. If there could be a saving in haulage to the producers the wool would come this way instead of by Dubbo? Yes.

1808. Can you state anything as to the probable passenger traffic, which is estimated by the Commissioners to return between £500 and £600 a year? I do not think it would be possible for the Commissioners to form an estimate.

1809. Do you know how many passengers travel between Gulgong and Mudgee weekly, at the present time? I know two coaches are running.

1810. How many passengers would they carry? I have seen them carry ten or twelve, and at other times I have seen them empty. They both seem to do about an equal trade.

1811. Do many passengers come into Gulgong from Coonamble, Mundooran, and Talbragar? Yes.

1812. Do they come through Gulgong to get to Sydney? Yes.

1813. They do not go to Dubbo? Of course they do not like travelling by coach, if they can possibly travel by rail. 1813½.

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- 1813 $\frac{1}{2}$. Do you think there would be a considerable increase in the passenger traffic? I do.
1814. Do you think, in the event of the railway being constructed, that the earnings within a few years would be sufficient to cover the working expenses, and the interest on the cost of construction, the whole being about £7,000 per annum? I believe, within five years of the opening of the railway, the part of the line from Gulgong to Mudgee would pay.
1815. *Chairman.*] Some of the traffic upon the proposed line would be taken from the Western line, so that we should be simply robbing Peter to pay Paul? That may be. It is not likely that people will travel 45 miles to Dubbo when they can meet with a railway terminus at 30 miles.
1816. But still, if one line serves the traffic, where is the necessity for building another? There is no doubt that the Northern line robs the Western line now.
1817. Those are trunk lines, and that can hardly be said of the one under consideration? Still I am under the impression that there is sufficient settlement in and about where this line is surveyed to warrant its construction. Of course it is impossible to enumerate the farms. I do not suppose there are many people who have the slightest conception of what is produced within an area of 40 miles.
1818. You have every reason to believe that the line will pay working expenses and interest upon capital to the extent of £7,000 per annum within five years of its construction? It all depends on the cost of construction. The line from Mudgee to Gulgong will be constructed cheaper than any other part. The greater part of the timber used on the Mudgee line came through Gulgong. The sleepers for the Dubbo and Bourke line came from within 40 miles of this place.
1819. Then there is plenty of timber available for the purposes of a railway? There is an immense amount of timber between 10 and 40 miles from here. The contractors for the Mudgee line cut thousands and thousands of feet, and it all came through here.
1820. You seem to challenge the figures of Mr. Harper;—if these figures are obtained from the Mudgee railway station do you not think they are more likely to be correct than any supposition on your part? What I say is that Mr. Harper could not possibly calculate the trade between Gulgong and Mudgee, unless he went to the trouble of going to all the business people and finding out.
1821. Did he make inquiries? I believe he did, but I can vouch that he could not know the correct estimate in regard to flour.
1822. It is stated in an appendix to evidence taken before the Full Committee some time ago that “Mr. Harper reported that, besides Gulgong, the settlements of Coolah, Cooborra, Mundooran, Denison Town, and Coonabarabran, would be served by the proposed line. The following were particulars of traffic which passed through Mudgee from and to these districts in the most favourable season (1887, 1888)” ;—then follow the figures which have been already referred to by Mr. Humphery;—of course, as you have stated, Mr. Harper could not obtain information unless he made certain inquiries; Mr. Harper tells us that he did make inquiries in Gulgong? He may have done so, but if he did very few in Gulgong know anything about it.
1823. Mr. Harper was asked how he gathered his information, and he replied, “At the Mudgee station, by an inspection of the books, and from local sources at Gulgong”;—Mr. Harper is generally a live man? I am aware of that. He did not waste much of his valuable time here.
1824. Are you basing your calculation on the increased traffic on the supposition that the gold-field reserve, and the commonage, and the travelling stock reserve, will be thrown open? I am not placing much dependence upon that. Even if the line is constructed there is no certainty that they will be thrown open. There is a large country which can be taken up, apart from those areas. There are thousands and thousands of acres of land within an area of 30 miles from here, which would be snapped up very quickly by selectors, if it were thought the railway was going to be constructed.
1825. If they thought there was a probability of good land nearer to town being thrown open for selection, I suppose they would wait a little before taking it up 30 miles away? Yes, I think the reserve here is a small item, in comparison with the land which will be taken up if the railway is likely to be constructed.
1826. What is your opinion in reference to any future extension of the line from Gulgong outward. Do you think it would be desirable to make straight to Coonamble, and the intermediate places, or to connect with Dubbo? To connect with Dubbo.
1827. For what reason? For the reason that we could reach Bourke.
1828. Would you not, by going out to Coonamble, tap the Western pastoral district, whilst by going to Dubbo you might come into competition with others? There is, no doubt, a great deal to be said in favor of constructing the line direct to Coonamble, but that will depend very much on where they take the Northern line.

Mr. Christopher Young, sworn and further examined:—

- Mr. C. Young.
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1829. *Chairman.*] Did you go through the books at Mudgee station with the station master, and Mr. Harper? I had a rough look at them. I got statistics from the station master, Mr. Day.
1830. Do you recognise the quantity of goods referred to in Mr. Harper's report, as a correct statement of the produce which was recorded at Mudgee from the Gulgong district? Of course, Mr. Harper did not take in what is sent to the mills from Mudgee and here.
1831. I want to know whether the statement of Mr. Harper tallies with your knowledge of the books at the Mudgee station—of the produce coming to Mudgee from this district? I forget now.

Mr. Frederick William Russell, storekeeper, sworn and examined:—

- Mr. F. W. Russell.
24 Mar., 1890.
1832. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? A storekeeper.
1833. Have you been long in the district? About 18 years, though not in business for myself.
1834. You are aware of the agitation to induce the Government to construct a line to Gulgong? Yes.
1835. Are you identified with the league? Yes.
1836. Were any statistics worked up for the Railway Commissioners and the Government? Yes, they were worked up to show the produce of the town and district.
1837. As far as you know, were they correctly collected? Yes.
1838. Have you a knowledge of the country between here and Dubbo? I cannot say that I have, except with regard to the surroundings of Gulgong.
1839. Have you been identified with agriculture? As a storekeeper, I am mixed up with agriculture a good deal.

1840. You buy a quantity of produce? Not largely, but still I have a good deal to do with the farmers of the district.
1841. Can you say whether the farmers are in a flourishing condition, or whether they have a difficulty in carrying on their labours? As far as I know, they are in a very fair position—that is, when they have favourable seasons. Of course, last year they were not.
1842. Notwithstanding the difficulties they have to encounter in reaching market, they are in a fair and prosperous condition? I think so.
1843. But they are labouring under disadvantages, are they not? Yes, so far as a market is concerned.
1844. Where are your chief markets? We can hardly say we have any markets at all. We are obliged to take what we can get.
1845. Then you are labouring under the disadvantage of having no market? No access to a market. A farmer, having 500 or 600 acres suitable for wheat-growing, only puts in about 100 bushels of wheat, because he has no means of reaching a market to get rid of more. He is obliged to take the price ruling in the town.
1846. I suppose that the existence of the mountain barrier in the western district, the high freight charges, and other obstacles in reaching the station, handicap him against other portions of the country? Yes.
1847. If the construction of a railway through the Colo Valley is carried out with a light grade, facilities will be given to agriculturists in this district to reach market? Yes.
1848. And with such facilities the farmer would be likely to succeed in competing in markets outside? I think so. We have everything to compete with if we only had access to the markets.
1849. Have you considered the question of grades in regard to mountain lines? No. Of course, I have heard of them. I have heard that the Colo Valley line will suit the country well, and that the haulage will be easy.
1850. If freights were reduced one-third, would the farmers have much to grumble about in regard to the railways? Getting the grain to Sydney is the trouble. If the farmers could get their grain to Sydney at a price, it would no doubt suit them.
1851. You will have heard that a number of the mining community, having failed to obtain a livelihood by means of mining, are desirous of securing homes upon agricultural areas? Yes.
1852. Do you think if the lands termed commons and gold-field reserves are thrown open, miners will avail themselves of the opportunity of getting land to make a home? No doubt.
1853. Have you any knowledge of the lands in and around Gulgong? Yes.
1854. Are they suitable for agriculture? Yes.
1855. Have you any knowledge of the lands between here and Coonamble? No.
1856. What do you think is the most desirable project for the extension of the railway westward,—should it go to Dubbo, to a line intermediate between Werris Creek and Dubbo, or to Coonamble? I would say to Dubbo.
1857. You recognize that you would bring yourselves into competition with the western markets? It would give an outlet to our produce.
1858. Do you not recognize the fact that you have the Orange, the Molong, and the Wellington farmers to contend with? We should have to row in the same boat with them. We would all have to compete for the same trade.
1859. Is there any other industry likely to spring into existence by the construction of this railway? If the railway is constructed through this glorious country it will open up the land, and it will cause people to take up ground which is now locked up.
1860. As a general taxpayer, would you recommend the construction of the railway if it were to stop at Gulgong? No.
1861. You believe the extension beyond Gulgong is where the remuneration will come in? Yes.
1862. Have you any knowledge of the timber within a range of 10 or 15 miles? Most of the timber used in the construction of the Mudgee railway came from this district.
1863. There is abundance of good timber in the district? There is plenty of it left yet.
1864. In the event of the railway being constructed, you look forward to this town becoming a promising centre? There is no doubt about it. It will improve both Gulgong and Mudgee.
1865. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What kind of timber was used in the construction of the Mudgee railway? Various kinds—blue-gum, box, ironbark, &c.
1866. What distance was that timber drawn? 16 to 18 miles.
1867. How far down? As far as a place called Barney's Reef. That was where the principal timber was obtained.
1868. How far was it drawn down the line? It was drawn to Mudgee; I could not say how far down the line.
1869. What distance is it from Barney's Reef to Mudgee? About 40 miles north.
1870. Is there plenty more of that timber there? To the best of my belief, there is.
1871. You are aware of the probability of a very long line of railway being constructed from Nyngan to Cobar, Wilcannia, and Broken Hill? Yes.
1872. Do you think that that timber could be availed of for that line? I would not like to say.
1873. Do you think the construction of that line would further develop these timber resources? I could not say.
1874. How far is it from that timber district to Dubbo, or the nearest point on the Western line? 60 or 70 miles, if not more.
1875. Have you any market in Lithgow for the produce of this district? No.
1876. Nor Bathurst? No.
1877. *Mr. Humphery.*] Do you send any wheat to Sydney? I do not.
1878. Do you know the cost of sending wheat from Gulgong to Sydney? From Gulgong to Mudgee it will cost 3d. or 4d. a bushel. I could not say what it will cost from Mudgee to Sydney, because I have not sent any myself.
1879. *Chairman.*] Who else sends wheat from here besides Mr. Young? Mr. Tuxford.

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F. W. Russell.
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Mr. John Tuxford, sworn and further examined :—

- Mr. J. Tuxford.
24 Mar., 1890.
1880. *Mr. Humphery.*] Did you hear the evidence of Mr. Young as to the cost of sending wheat from Gulgong to Sydney? Yes.
1881. He stated it would cost about 7d. a bushel? Yes.
1882. Do you not send wheat to Sydney? I do.
1883. What does it cost you? I believe it costs about 7d. a bushel.
1884. *Chairman.*] From Gulgong? Yes.
1885. What proportion of that 7d. will be swallowed up between Gulgong and Mudgee? 2½d.
1886. That makes it 4½d. per bushel from Mudgee to Sydney? Yes; that is what I give, delivered from truck.

Mr. William Fletcher, miner, sworn and examined :—

- Mr. W. Fletcher.
24 Mar., 1890.
1887. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] You are a miner by calling? Yes.
1888. Are you a mining manager? No.
1889. I suppose you have been an alluvial miner for some time in this district? Yes.
1890. Were you here in the best days of the gold-fields? Yes.
1891. And you have remained here since? Yes.
1892. You are able to give an opinion as to the auriferous resources of the district? Yes.
1893. What do you think of the prospects of mining in this district? I think there are prospects of mining in deep alluvial ground in several parts of the field; also of reefing.
1894. What leads you and other miners to believe the prospects to be good? I am aware that, a number of years ago, an engine and plant were removed to another part of the district, which was bought because it was supposed to be a better claim. Payable gold was left in the old claim. It is now half a mile or a mile away from any of the claims. There are other parts too—the Star—which have been occupied by a Sydney syndicate for some time, and it has been locked up under the leasing system. That ground I believe to be payable as well.
1895. Is the Star in work? No; it is locked up.
1896. Which of these deep leads are in work? None, beyond a portion of the old Black Lead—that is, Scully's claim; and I almost believe it is idle too.
1897. Was Scully's claim being worked three years ago? Yes.
1898. Has it ceased to work? I think it is not working now, but I am not sure.
1899. What depth have they driven in the leads? I think about 170 feet, in Scully's claim; I think the Black Lead was pretty well exhausted.
1900. What indications justify you in believing these deep leads will eventually pay? The fact of gold having been obtained on the claim I alluded to, from which the machinery was removed for what was supposed to be a better spec. That claim had payable gold in it, and probably it is only the tail end of the Star, which has been locked up for a number of years.
1901. Were they not working at Canadian some time ago, with a view of going through the limestone? Yes.
1902. Did they succeed in getting any good gold that way? No, they did not. I have worked in that direction myself, and I find that the further you go down, the worse it gets. The gold becomes finer, and eventually it runs out altogether.
1903. That theory proved unsound then? Yes.
1904. Is there any deep sinking around Canadian or Home Rule? There may be around the Home Rule country, but I am not acquainted with it.
1905. Is there any alluvial at all in the neighbourhood? There are alluvial parties working out there. There is one party at a place called the Red Lead. They are working, not on a true bottom, but on a wood bottom. There is a wood roof, and a wood bottom, and the gold is between. It is a most singular thing.
1906. What do you mean by a wood bottom;—do you mean that it is petrified? It is not petrified. It is simply decayed wood, and that forms a bottom. If they could trace that upon a true bottom—a slate bottom—they would be likely to get more gold.
1907. Who are those parties who are working on the road a few miles out from Gulgong? There is a party working at Ford's Creek; I do not know what they are doing.
1908. You cannot say whether they are getting gold or not? I have heard that some of them were, but what it is I could not say. They said it was payable at first, but I have not heard since.
1909. I suppose this district has been thoroughly prospected? No; it has not. The reefs have not been much prospected; only partially.
1910. Do you think there is a chance of finding any more rich deposits on private land? I think so; on Mr. Rouse's land.
1911. He is not unwilling that miners should go there? No; as long as they pay him a substantial royalty—about one-fifth.
1912. You seem to look to the future of mining in the Deep Lead? Yes.
1913. Although, up to the present, you have not had anything very rich from the deep leads, or any sound indication that gold is there? Such a thing as £2 5s. a week was left in the claim I spoke of, away from any of the mining claims.
1914. *Mr. Hurley.*] What do you mean by the Star Lead being locked up? It has been locked up. It was held by Mr. Sutherland and a few more in Sydney.
1915. Has it been locked up for a number of years? It has been for four or five years.
1916. Has the matter been represented to the Warden, or to the Mining Department? The Mining Department has been written to year after year, I believe.
1917. Asking for its cancellation? Yes.
1918. The fact of it being locked up keeps a number of miners from prospecting? No doubt, it does.
1919. Do you think, if it were thrown open, and the leases cancelled, that it would be taken up? No doubt it would be worked.
1920. How do you account, seeing that such a large quantity of gold has been taken off this field, for so little being done in further prospecting? The fact is that people got rather too much of it. If they had got a little less gold they might have settled here; but they got too much, and went away and spent it at other places.
- 1921.

1921. Has not a large amount of money been spent in the district in prospecting the reefs? Not a great deal. The Red Hill was only partially prospected.
1922. Have you not had machinery, such as stamp-batteries, in various parts of the district? Yes.
1923. Have they not tended to the prospecting of the country? Some of the batteries used were worse than none at all.
1924. But still it is a fact that you have had batteries here which were eventually taken away? Yes.
1925. And they have not proved a success? They have principally earned their money, and dividends, by crushing cement wash-dirt and tailings.
1926. Have you any knowledge of the mineral resources of any other part of the district but Gulgong? Only Gulgong and the surrounding district.
1927. Have you been to Denison Town? No; but I know of it from hearsay.
1928. Have not companies been formed to secure outside capital in order to develop the district? Yes; but I think they have been put in the worst places possible.
1929. So that the public have been induced to go into speculations which were not likely to be remunerative? I have been on the gold-field from the beginning, and I would not have given 1d. for most of the speculations.
1930. They were called "wild cat" speculations? Yes; I was surprised that they could be floated.
1931. Then the public were gulled by the speculations placed on the market? Yes; and the best things were left untried.
1932. And that has been detrimental to the proper development of the district? Exactly so.
1933. Someone has done well out of them? No doubt of it; but harm has been done. For instance, if I wished to float a genuine thing, and required assistance from a syndicate, I could not obtain it, on account of the bogus affairs which have been floated in the past.
1934. You are aware that the Government renders assistance to those who are desirous of prospecting alluvial or reefing fields? Yes.
1935. What would best suit the mining community in regard to prospecting aid;—would you be better satisfied by having the money expended under a committee appointed in the town, or would you prefer to have it spent as at present—under the superintendence or direction of the Inspector of Mines and the Geological Surveyor? I should certainly be in favour of the expenditure of the money being supervised by a committee of practical men.
1936. Local men? Yes; I know a lot of money has been thrown away.
1937. Local men would be more likely to make more out of the money? Yes; knowing the district, we could spend it to advantage, and should not go to places which had been prospected, and which are not worth trying.
1938. At the present time the field is practically dead? Yes; and it will remain so until these leases are unlocked, and until capital is brought into the district to revive it again. There is no doubt there is plenty of gold here. The reefs have been neglected very much. I am told there is likely to be a large silver field in the Talbragar district.

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Harold D. Voss, Esq., bank manager, sworn and examined:—

1939. *Mr. Humphery.*] You are manager of the Bank of New South Wales? Yes.
1940. How long have you been in the district? Nearly seven years.
1941. Can you say whether the deposits of the bank have increased in the past five years? Yes, slightly.
1942. Has the number of your fixed deposits increased? Yes, slightly.
1943. Can you say whether the settlers around here are more prosperous now than they were five years ago? I think they are much about the same.
1944. Has there been any improvement in the district during the past five years? There has been more settlement.
1945. Do you know anything in regard to the railway under consideration;—do you know the district sufficiently well? Pretty well.
1946. You have heard the evidence which has been given as to the probable number of holders of agricultural areas likely to be served in the event of the railway from Mudgee to Gulgong being constructed? Yes.
1947. Do you confirm that evidence? I fully concur with that of Mr. Stear. I think his is the most correct.
1948. You think a large number of holders of small areas which have been cultivated, will be served by the railway? A very large number.
1949. Is a large quantity of wheat grown in this district? Yes.
1950. Do you think the estimate of the Railway Inspector as to the probable traffic between Gulgong and Mudgee is a fair one? I do not think I am in a position to tell you that.
1951. Will you look at Mr. Harper's statement;—do you think it is a fair estimate of the probable traffic, if constructed? I have nothing to do with the trucking of cattle.
1952. Have you any knowledge as to the extent of loading which passes through Gulgong? I know that an immense amount of wool passes through or near Gulgong to Mudgee.
1953. Do you think that would be carried by rail from Gulgong? Certainly.
1954. Do you think many cattle would be carried by railway? Yes; if the railway were extended from Mudgee outwards, a large quantity of cattle would be brought direct from Queensland.
1955. That is on the assumption that the railway would be connected with the Northern line? No; on the assumption that we should be nearer the Queensland border, and it would be handier to come down here for a market than to go to Dubbo.
1956. Then you think a market for Queensland stock would be established at Gulgong? No; I think they would be sent through here for Sydney.
1957. You are speaking of fat stock? Yes; and all kinds of stock which would probably come here for sale.
1958. You think it is possible that a market for stock would be established at Gulgong in the event of the line being brought here? Yes.
1959. Is there any market at Mudgee at present? Yes; there is a considerable market for store stock.
1960. The distance between Gulgong and Mudgee being only 18 or 19 miles, do you think there would be

H. D. Voss,
Esq.
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- H. D. Voss, Esq.
24 Mar., 1890.
- be any appreciable increase in the quantity of cattle which would be sent, in the event of the railway being brought to Gulgong? I think there would be an increase, but not to any great extent.
1961. Do you think a great number of sheep would be sent from Gulgong by rail? Yes.
1962. I suppose you have no idea of the quantity which travel from this district to Mudgee at the present time? There is a large quantity. Some mobs of 10,000 and 14,000 passed here within the last fortnight.
1963. On their way to Sydney? I could not say where they were going.
1964. You do not know whether they were travelling from here to be sent by rail? I could not say.
1965. *Mr. Hurley.*] Can you give any idea of the quantity of gold you receive from the district per month? Not a very large quantity. Very little gold is being obtained in the district now.
1966. But striking a contrast between the present, and the returns of ten or fifteen years ago, can you give any idea as to the quantity of gold you buy in a month? Not very well; because one parcel of 50 oz. would make all the difference—1,000 oz. a year.
1967. Am I right in anticipating that a large number of deeds are hypothecated with you from time to time in regard to arcas in the district? Yes.
1968. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Have you many bad debts in your business? No; I have not had a bad debt since I have been in Gulgong.
1969. Have you had to foreclose on any mortgages on any selections? Very few; only once. The majority of the selectors around here are in a good position, and I find that every man who has been able and willing to work has got on well and has improved his property.
1970. How many other banks are represented here? One; the Joint Stock.
1971. Was any other bank represented here? Yes; the Oriental Bank was represented, and it closed eight or nine years ago.
1972. Before the general break up of the Oriental Bank? Yes.
1973. These were the only three banks which ever did business here? Yes.
1974. The Oriental branch did not withdraw because of the general closing up, but because of the falling off in business here? Yes; they only did gold-buying, and as it fell off they closed the bank.

Mr. Richard Stear, sworn and further examined:—

- Mr. R. Stear.
24 Mar., 1890.
1975. *Chairman.*] I understand you wish to make an explanation? Yes. The Railway Commissioners estimate that fifty trucks of hay and straw will be carried on the Gulgong and Mudgee line, if constructed. My idea is, that that amount will be increased to 500 trucks. I may state that fifty trucks represents 200 tons. One witness who has given evidence here has, this year, standing within his paddocks, within $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of Gulgong, nearly 300 tons of hay and straw.
1976. Would it pay him, if a line were constructed to Gulgong, to send it to Sydney? He would have to send it there, or to somewhere else, unless that amount was required for local consumption.
1977. That is the amount he has stacked this year? Yes. I mention it to show the absurdity of fifty trucks of hay only being likely to be sent from Gulgong to Mudgee. With reference to timber, a witness was asked a question as to where the timber for the Mudgee line came from. The Committee ought to be aware of the fact that there is a steam engine and saw-mill, 16 or 18 miles on the route of the surveyed line from here to Dubbo. That supplies Mudgee with timber—red-gum and ironbark.
1978. The timber for the Mudgee line came from the neighbourhood of the surveyed route to Dubbo? Yes; the whole of the timber which was put into the viaduct across the Mudgee River came from there.

Robert Heard, Esq., Mayor of Gulgong, sworn and examined:—

- R. Heard, Esq.
24 Mar., 1890.
1979. *Chairman.*] You are Mayor of Gulgong? Yes.
1980. How long have you occupied that position? About fourteen months.
1981. How long have you been an alderman? About seven years.
1982. How long have you resided in the district? For the last nineteen years.
1983. Do you furnish a copy of a statement, which you have already furnished to the Government Statistician, as to the population, &c., of the Borough or Municipal District of Gulgong? Yes.
1984. To the best of your belief that statement is correct? Yes.
1985. What is the area of your municipal district? About 33 square miles.
1986. Do you still receive the Government endowment? We still receive the Government endowment of 5s. in the £. We also receive a special endowment.
1987. Have you any statement to make in reference to the proposed railway? I believe that if the railway were extended to Gulgong, and westward, it would ultimately prove a paying line.
1988. But not if it stops at Gulgong? I think not. There is no desire on the part of the people of Gulgong that the line should remain here.
1989. Do you think the line should be constructed direct to Coonamble, or to Dubbo? If it were constructed to cut the line at Dubbo, it would suit our purpose admirably. We would then have a market for produce in either Bourke or Coonamble.
1990. If the question is one of constructing a line giving you a connection with Dubbo, as against giving you a connection with Coonamble, pure and simple, which would you prefer? The best thing for the colony at large would be to extend the line direct to Coonamble.
1991. With the view of going further still? Yes; with the view of going right to the Queensland border.
1992. Has the surveyed line taken the best route between here and Mudgee? I am not acquainted with it. I have never been over it.
1993. You know the site of the proposed station at Gulgong, at the foot of the Magazine Hill;—do you consider it a suitable site for a terminus? I believe it would be about as suitable a place as you could have in Gulgong, unless the terminus were made at the junction of Medley and Herbert Streets, although I do not think sufficient level ground could be obtained there.
1994. Do you know that the engineers do not care for that site, as it means that they would have to dip down again when constructing a line outwards? I think the Magazine Hill terminus would suit all requirements.
1995. Is the land between here and the Magazine Hill likely to be flooded? No; the water does not remain there long. I have seen water on the ground there after heavy rain, but it soon drains off.
1996. There have been heavy rains lately? Yes.
1997. But no serious damage has been done? A good deal of damage has been done to the roads.

TUESDAY,

TUESDAY, 25 MARCH, 1890.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Gulgong, at 11 a.m.]

Present:—

JACOB GARRARD, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. FREDERICK THOMAS HUMPHERY, | JOHN HURLEY, Esq.
EDWARD WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the proposed Railway from Mudgee to Gulgong.

Richard Rouse, Esq., sworn and examined:—

1998. *Mr. Humphery.*] You live at Guntawang? Yes.
1999. How many miles from Gulgong? About 4.
2000. Did you, at one time, represent the electorate of Mudgee in Parliament? Yes.
2001. How many acres of land do you own within a radius of 10 miles of Gulgong? About 10,000.
2002. Have you a leasehold area as well? None at all;—all freehold.
2003. What area have you under cultivation? About 700 acres.
2004. Under crop or artificial grasses? Artificial grasses, principally.
2005. How many acres do you put in crop? About 150.
2006. Principally wheat? Wheat and oats; grain of some sort. I principally grow for hay. I have a small quantity of wheat, but not much. I do not consider myself a wheat grower.
2007. Can you state the average yield per acre of the agricultural land for wheat? In anything like a fair season a moderate crop will yield 25 bushels to the acre,—that is within a radius of 20 miles of Gulgong.
2008. Would that be the average of the whole district? I think so, in a good season.
2009. What will the average be in ordinary seasons, taking one year with another? It might not be quite as much, but taking one year with another it will be nearly 20 bushels to the acre.
2010. Do you grow hay? A great deal.
2011. What is the average yield per acre? The hay I have grown generally yields about 2½ tons.
2012. Do you grow it for your own use? Yes.
2013. How many acres of land, included in your freehold area, are, in your opinion, fit for cultivation and crop growing? Nearly the whole of it.
2014. Have you rented any of it? No.
2015. Have you let it to tenants? No.
2016. Have you had offers from people willing to take your land for agricultural purposes? I have.
2017. What do you think would be a fair rental? That all depends. There is a difference between upland and river land. A portion of my estate embraces the Cudgegong River, which, of course, is equal to anything in Australia. The upland—the ordinary wheat-growing land—is of a different character altogether. People have offered to rent small farms from me, but I have never opened up negotiations with them in reference to rental. I am trying to work out my property on a different plan.
2018. What use do you make of the river land? For feeding stock. I have been feeding a good many sheep upon it of late years, and I have been a great horse breeder. At present, however, I am engaged on a scheme for turning the whole of my estate into an immense dairy farm, and with that object in view I have started a factory.
2019. Would it not be more profitable to let your river land to tenants for crop-growing? No. I am inducing people now to rent my land on the river, and to bring their cattle there, with a view to dairying. Otherwise I intend to put stock upon it myself to a considerable extent. In fact, I intend to make a dairy farm of the whole of the estate.
2020. What rent have you fixed upon for the land which will be required by those from whom you have been inviting applications? The lands I refer to are the lucerne fields. There is a difference between improved and unimproved land. The lucerne paddocks are worth from 15s. to £1 an acre; that is for dairying purposes.
2021. That is the improved land? Yes.
2022. When you speak of improved land, do you refer to land you have had under grass? Yes.
2023. Land that has been under the plough? Yes.
2024. What would the upland be worth? I do not know what it would be worth if it were clear. I have never turned my attention to it. I have always improved the better portion of the land with the view of growing lucerne. I could not say what the value of the upland would be in rental. At all events I should think any good farm ought to be worth 8s. or 10s. per acre, if it were well improved.
2025. But in its present constitution? That all depends.
2026. You say the whole of the land is suitable for agriculture and wheat growing? Yes.
2027. What would be a fair rental for it in its present state? I could not say.
2028. About how many acres would support a family? No man can very well make farming a success, unless he has 100 acres under cultivation.
2029. And you think 100 families could settle, and comfortably subsist upon your estate of 10,000 acres? Yes.
2030. What means of subsistence would they have if they could obtain land of that character—dairying or wheat growing? Growing crops, in conjunction with dairy farming.
2031. How many cattle would a farm of 100 acres carry? That all depends on the way in which it is cultivated. The paddocks with grasses on the river would carry nearly a beast to the acre, but it would take 5 or 6 acres of upland to do the same thing.
2032. How long has the factory been established on your estate? A few months.
2033. Do you receive the milk from the farmers around, and convert it into butter? I have only one supply, and I milk all my own cows.
2034. Then the farmers do not send in the milk to your factory and sell it there? They are too far away to do that. In addition, they have not the faintest conception of the advantage of it.
2035. What distance from your factory will the nearest land actually used for dairying purposes be? 4 or 5 miles.

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2036.

- R. Rouse,
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2036. Do you know the system pursued in the Illawarra district in regard to these factories? I cannot say that I do. I have been down to the coast to see some of the factories, but I am working my own upon my own ideas.
2037. You know there are a great many public factories and a great number of separators used by private farmers. The small farmers send in their milk to the factories, and receive 4d. or 5d. a gallon, and they share in the profits according to arrangement? Yes.
2038. Would not the co-operative system enable a dairying population to settle here? Yes.
2039. Do you think, from the results of your own experiments, that that would be more profitable than cultivating the land for wheat? Infinitely more.
2040. Have you a market for your butter at all times? We have the Sydney market, and the world besides. I see that they send butter from Sydney to London and all over the world.
2041. Do you send the butter you manufacture to Sydney? Yes; I am just raising enough to send to Sydney.
2042. What profit does it leave you in the summer? I have not sufficiently worked the matter out, but I am so satisfied with the results of my dairy farm that I intend to go in for it solely.
2043. You are satisfied that you can make more profitable use of the land by dairying than by using it for wheat production? I am positive of it; there is no comparison.
2044. If you used it for dairying purposes, would you then be prepared to let your land to small dairy farmers, or would you use the whole of it under your own management? I would sooner let it to dairy farmers, or, if opportunity offers, cut it up and dispose of it. My idea is that there is an immense amount of money to be made out of it. It only requires capital and labour to be brought together. People have not the faintest idea of the advantage of the system.
2045. Do you know the surveyed line of railway from Gulgong to Mudgee? Yes.
2046. Does that line pass through your land? Yes.
2047. For what length? One survey, I believe, goes straight through the middle of a portion of my estate for something over 2 miles.
2048. The land is yours on both sides of the line? Yes.
2049. Can you say, whether the line, as proposed, will serve the population in and around Gulgong? As far as coming to Gulgong is concerned, it would be the best line; but, if it is a question of going beyond Gulgong, it is not the best line.
2050. What deviation or alteration can you suggest which would better serve the district? By going straight past Guntawang, along the Cobbora-road. A line was surveyed, about a mile and a-half to the west of the proposed line. It went from the river, along the road, and across Reedy Creek, and passed Gulgong, about 3 miles to the west.
2051. What are your reasons for saying you think that would be a better line than the one proposed? Because it would be cheaper and shorter.
2052. That is from Mudgee to Coonamble? I know, as a matter of fact, that a survey has been made from Gulgong to Dubbo, to join the Werris Creek line; that is what I am alluding to.
2053. Then you think, if it should be proposed to extend the line in the direction of Dubbo, it would be better to pass about 3 miles to the west of Gulgong? Yes, on the line surveyed to Coonamble, past Gulgong.
2054. That is to the west of the township? Yes.
2055. Would it not be extremely inconvenient for the people of Gulgong to have to go 3 miles to the railway? I say that if the line is going to Gulgong direct, the route, as surveyed, is the best; but if the line is to be extended, the way I suggest is the best. Of course it goes through my property under any circumstances. In one instance it would go right through, and in the other it would keep along the road.
2056. Have you considered whether it would be desirable to extend the line to Dubbo, in preference to taking it to Coonamble direct? It is a case of "Hobson's choice." We are satisfied to be able to get to the Western line somehow.
2057. Do you know the country between Gulgong and Dubbo? Yes.
2058. Can you say whether much of it is suitable for agricultural settlement? Nearly the whole of it.
2059. Would the line be difficult to construct? No, it would be very easy, after leaving Gulgong.
2060. Do you know the land comprised in the reserve and in the common, close to Gulgong? Yes.
2061. About what extent is it? The acreage of the gold-field reserve is 14,000 or 15,000 acres.
2062. Can you say if it is suitable for agricultural settlement? Most of it is.
2063. Do you know anything of the farming population around Gulgong, in the direction of Canadian, Home Rule, and Tallewang? Yes.
2064. About how many farmers are there cultivating their holdings? I could not tell you; I have no business with them; but I know there are a great many.
2065. There are a great number? Yes; a great many.
2066. Do you know whether they use their land for grazing, as well as for wheat production? They use some of it, but this common question has been very much against their interests. In consequence of this unnecessary area of commonage, they are pretty well confined to their farms.
2067. Can you say whether the farming population are fairly prosperous? I consider they are. Some of them are excessively prosperous. Those who are in poverty have themselves to blame.
2068. The industrious portion of the population is in fairly good circumstances? Some of them are, I consider, in exceptionally good circumstances.
2069. *Mr. Hurley.*] Whilst you were the representative of Mudgee, were you not a strong advocate for the construction of a line from Wallerawang to Mudgee? I was.
2070. Did you advocate the extension of the line beyond Mudgee at that time? I did.
2071. Where did you consider it should be extended to? I considered it should get to the Western line somehow or other. I always considered that the natural features of the country indicated that the line to Bourke should have come this way, but as a line was being constructed to the west, my advocacy was to join the Mudgee line to the Western line. We want a market outwards, if we can get it. I say without fear of contradiction, and it can be proved by statistics, that there is no district in the Australian colonies better adapted for agriculture than the Mudgee district. The Western is a better market than the Northern market, because we would have less competition. In addition, the line would be easier of construction. In any case, all that the people in this district desire is that the line should join the Dubbo and Werris Creek line.

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2072-3. You know the land between Werris Creek and Dubbo? I know this end of it.

2074. You are conversant with the land between this and Coonamble? Yes.

2075. And Walgett? I have not been to Walgett much, but I know most of the country between here and Coonamble.

2076. Do you think, if the railway were constructed to Walgett, Coonamble, or any other place westward, it would be likely to lead to settlement, say on the land for a distance of 50 miles beyond here? I believe so.

2077. So that the construction of a railway anywhere westward, *via* Gulgong, would probably lead to a large increase of settlement? Most certainly it would.

2078. And the land is suitable for agriculture? Most distinctly.

2079. Will the properties and holdings in Gulgong, whether large or small, have an increased value given to them by the construction of the proposed railway? Certainly.

2080. In view of the advantages gained by private holders, are you prepared, as a landholder, to concede anything to the Government for the advantages accruing to your estate by the construction of a Government railway? If the Government made the line of railway where it was surveyed for Coonamble—that is, to go along the main road, which is the easiest and best route, and passing through about 3 miles of my property, I should be perfectly satisfied to make the Government a present of the land they wanted, provided they fenced it off. I have always contended that if the Government do not interfere with a man's best interests, by destroying his land, and if they improve his property, he is entitled to nothing more than what the land was worth before the railway was constructed. The railway, if constructed to Gulgong, will cut a valuable piece of my ground in half. I am perfectly certain that for cheapness, and everything else, the line lower down and nearer the river, is infinitely better.

2081. Do you not think that the survey of that line is to meet a pressure which was being brought to bear by political supporters of the Government for the time being, and also the pressure brought to bear by the Railway League of this place? With a view to what?

2082. The construction of a line direct to Gulgong. Being an old politician, you are aware that railway surveys are sometimes carried out through the pressure of a township. Representations by constituents sometimes induce members to advise the Government to carry out a certain survey. It does not necessarily follow that the line will be constructed according to that survey? No.

2083. In view of your proposed development of the butter manufacturing industry, you will necessarily require a population in order to create a market? Certainly.

2084. And you believe a market is likely to be created west, more than east? I do. The special value of our railway would be in times of drought.

2085. Therefore, it is from no selfish motive that you recommend the construction of a railway by a different route, in lieu of the one under consideration from Mudgee to Gulgong? Not a bit. I only desire to see the best interests of the district advanced. Being a large property holder, I naturally desire to see the place go ahead. I feel, after all the years I have worked and laboured here, with others, that it is about time some value could be placed upon our property. There can be no value placed upon it unless it can be settled upon. The idea I have in view is to create an industry which will force itself upon the people, so that if I or my family wish to dispose of the estate, we can do so. I am not so wrapped up in New South Wales as to want to live here for ever.

2086. You are aware that the advocates of the line at Mudgee and here do not necessarily ask that it should be extended to Gulgong solely, but that it should be extended towards the west? I know the feeling in regard to the latter. A railway to stop here would be of no use. I know there is a certain amount of feeling and jealousy between Mudgee and Gulgong. For the size of the place, this little town is in an infinitely more prosperous condition than Mudgee. There is any quantity of land around here for settlement, and if the common arrangements can be broken up, a population will settle down, no matter whether the line stops here or goes on to Dubbo. This place must go ahead, because there is an immense amount of unalienated land in and around Mudgee. It is all large estates, and is likely to remain so. The Mudgee people do not like the idea of a terminus at Gulgong. Personally, I do not care which way the line runs, so long as it is extended. With regard to my allusion to the line going purely to the westward, it is simply a matter of £ s. d. I believe it would make a difference of £40,000 or £50,000 in the construction of a line going down there, and coming up here.

2087. You are looking forward to future settlement in connection with the extension of the line south-west, and you consider that the detour recommended now is not necessary? I do not think it is, because all the country skirting on the supposed line to Dubbo, is most valuable. If the Government took the line the other way they would be put to little expense, so far as private property holders are concerned.

2088. Therefore you would consider that a branch line, from a line extending westwards to Coonamble or Walgett, would be quite sufficient to meet the requirements of this place? I think so. I do not think the line need necessarily go through this town. You have to get up here about 300 feet, and then down again, across the Reedy Creek. If the line passes Gulgong, it will traverse for miles and miles a level piece of ground. There will be less expense to the Government in purchasing from private property holders. You have to get into Gulgong through private property, and out of it as well. The line, as surveyed, cuts through a piece of ground of about 1,000 acres, on the other side of the town, belonging to a relative of mine. I speak from a patriotic point of view when I say that it is a wasteful expenditure of money to bring the line here.

2089. Are we to understand that if the line takes a direct course, and does not take the detour to Gulgong, you are prepared to concede the land necessary for the construction of the line to that town? I am; provided the Government fences it.

2090. You have estimated that, upon certain pieces of land upon which you grow artificial grasses, you would require a rental of 20s. per acre per annum, and your estimate for the wheat-growing lands is from 8s. to 10s. per acre;—what do you think would be a fair value for the Crown to ask for the lands termed the gold-field reserve? Of course, immediately in and around the town, a special price could be put upon it; but so far as the other portions of the land are concerned, the sooner it is settled under the present Land Act the better. What we want on the ground is population.

2091. What value would you place upon improved land within 5 miles of Gulgong? Do you mean the land which has been alienated—the upland?

2092. Yes? I should think it is worth about £5 an acre.

2093. You think that the throwing open of the common and reserve for the purpose of affording agriculturalists the right of securing a homestead would lead to a large settlement? Yes; I am certain it would.

2094.

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2094. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] I understood you to say that if your scheme of converting your property into a dairy-farm is carried out, your property will carry about 100 families? Yes.
2095. Therefore, that will be a considerable addition to the population of the district? Yes.
2096. You are aware that the town of Gulgong is the natural trade centre for the farmers and graziers of this and surrounding districts? Yes.
2097. Would it be right to take a railway 3 miles away from them—from their natural trade centre—even though it would cost a little less? I think the Gulgong people are entitled to a railway. I am unprejudiced as to the question as to which is the cheapest way to take it, but most certainly Gulgong is entitled to a railway, or to railway communication—not that I think it makes much difference whether the railway is in the town or a little way out of it.
2098. You know that the Government are building a tramway from the station to Yass, simply because they made a mistake in leaving the station 3 miles out of the town—they are undoing a mistake there; and what you would suggest in regard to Gulgong would create a similar mistake? I do not care myself what course is taken. It will benefit me just as much one way as the other.
2099. I understand you only to be swayed in giving your opinion in view of the interest of the country? Yes.
2100. You think it would be more advantageous to construct the line 3 miles from the town of Gulgong, because it would be constructed £40,000 cheaper, and would be more direct for the extension of the line to Coonamble? Yes.
2101. Do you think that cheapness is the only matter which the Government should consider in constructing a line? That is a matter for the Government to determine themselves. If the Government have the money, and intend to spend it, well and good. Of course the Government have a certain amount of public land in the district. I wish it to be understood that I am not saying what I have to say with a view of getting the railway close to my door, because I would infinitely sooner that it did not pass it at all. If the railway were taken through my rich flats, I should require a large sum of money to compensate me; but if it does not interfere any more than an ordinary road does with a man's estate, I should only be entitled to small compensation.
2102. I understand that whichever way the railway goes, it will go through your property; therefore, it will benefit you whichever way it goes? Yes. I want to see a railway to Gulgong, but I want to see it carried on further. A railway to Gulgong alone would not be worth 2d. to the people here, because the matter of carriage between here and Mudgee is not worth talking about. There is a feeling in Mudgee against this place, because Nature has placed Gulgong in an infinitely better position than Mudgee. Wherever the railway goes to, Gulgong will go ahead.
2103. That being so, is it not essential that this thriving and prosperous town should be served by a railway? Certainly.
2104. Therefore it might be more conducive to the national interest, apart from the question of cheapness, to run the railway through Gulgong? Certainly.
2105. Supposing the railway taps a line between Dubbo and Werris Creek, and by so doing gives you access to the western as well as the north-western markets, and does not go to Coonamble, do you think it would be better to do that than to tap the town of Gulgong? I still think the idea I favour is the best.
2106. Even if the railway stops at the connecting line between Dubbo and Werris Creek? Yes; the more you get to the left the closer you get to another line.
2107. You expect an influx of about 100 families? No; I say the estate is capable of bearing that number. I have only established a small industry, which I am doing my best to stuff into the ignorant people of this district, for their own advantage. I am certain farming can be carried on in conjunction with dairy farming, if they will only take it up.
2108. If your anticipations are realised, and the common and reserves are thrown open for settlement, Gulgong must become an important trade centre for agriculturists, dairy farmers, and graziers? Certainly.
2109. It is essential, then, that the line should touch this important centre in going out westwards? Certainly.
2110. What do you anticipate will be the return on land carrying a beast to 2 acres? I think that, to any man who will take care of his cattle, a dairy cow of any good at all is worth £5 a year.
2111. You are aware that on the south coast, where the land carries one beast to the acre, £10 per annum is realised? Yes.
2112. In mentioning £5 you have placed the amount within the mark? I calculate it in regard to upland. I am quite certain of the value of the Cudgegong River. It is nearly all alienated. It is as good for dairy purposes as the best in the country. Of course we have to deal with a large area of upland country; and I say that every cow is worth £5 a year to any man who will keep his cattle well, and who will employ his family in the business.
2113. I suppose, when your dairy scheme is in full operation, this is likely to become a great dairying district? I am certain of it.
2114. Because it would be more advantageous to follow dairying than cultivating? They would amalgamate the two. I calculate, when it comes to a question of having to feed cows, that all the stuff they can raise to feed them is worth £5 or £6 a ton, and butter would be worth 1s. 6d. a lb. If I established a dairy, and I was in a good position, I should like to see a drought. That is when I should make money.
2115. And you would succeed when other people were in distress? Yes.
2116. *Chairman.*] Do you know the survey which has been made from Gulgong to Wellington? Yes.
2117. Do you think it is justifiable or a waste of money? It is a ridiculous waste of money.

Harold D. Voss, Esq., sworn and further examined:—

- H. D. Voss, Esq.
25 Mar., 1890.
2118. *Chairman.*] I understand you desire to make some addition to your previous evidence? Yes. Mr. Hurley asked me the question, "Are there many deeds hypothecated at the bank here," and I said "yes," meaning, of course, that if we had not our deeds hypothecated here we could not do business here. The very fact of our doing a certain amount of business in that way would give the impression that the district was very prosperous. I think, as a matter of fact, that nearly the whole of our deposits are farmers deposits, and nearly the whole of our advances have been made for the purpose of improving farmers properties, all of them more or less prosperous.
- 2119.

2119. *Mr. Hurley.*] But you recognize the fact that the hypothecating of deeds would not show the poverty of the people? Exactly; but people outside do not recognize that fact. A few knowing people have remarked outside that I had insinuated that the whole district was insolvent.
2120. A man's greatest success may be at a time when he is under an indebtedness to the bank? He may be more successful than the man who owes nothing.
2121. You have heard some of the evidence in regard to the value of land in the district;—can you in any way corroborate the statement made as to improved land being worth £10 an acre? I think land in the immediate vicinity of Gulgong would be worth from £8 to £10 an acre.
2122. And if the areas in the gold-field reserve or commonage were thrown open, a high price might be placed upon them? I do not know. They are not improved.
2123. But what ought improved land, suitable for agriculture, to realize? I could not say exactly.
2124. £3, £4, or £5 per acre? I think it ought to be worth £3 or £4 per acre.
2125. And improved land would, as represented by others, be worth £10 per acre? Yes, around Gulgong; I have known it to be sold within a quarter of a mile of Gulgong for as much as that.
2126. I saw an advertisement in the local paper of Saturday, 22nd March, in reference to a sale by the mortgagee of some land known as Michael Hickey's farm;—am I right in the information I have received to the effect that that land had only a reserve upon it of £3 to £4 an acre? I believe so.
2127. Is it improved land? Partially so.
2128. Is your bank the mortgagees? Yes.
2129. There was only a reserve of between £3 and £4 an acre upon the land;—how is it that it is not sought after? There are a good many reasons. In the first place, only a portion of it is fenced. Part of it is in selections. It is a very old selection, twenty or thirty years under cultivation. I think there was nobody present to buy. They thought there would be a heavy reserve upon it.
2130. Does this not indicate that there are no persons in the district anxious to secure land for agricultural purposes? I do not think so.
2131. Is that not the inference to be drawn? I do not think so.
2132. Are you prepared to dispose of this land now at anything like £4 an acre? Yes.
2133. Will you accept a buyer at that rate? If you will give me £4 an acre I will accept it.
2134. *Mr. Humphrey.*] What number of farmers have you in your books? Over 200.
2135. They keep their accounts with you? Yes.

H. D. Voss,
Esq.
25 Mar., 1890.

Joseph F. Bayliss, Esq., station manager, sworn and examined:—

2136. *Mr. Hurley.*] Where do you reside? At Tuckland's station, near Cobbora.
2137. Are you a land-owner? No; I am manager of a station. It is a sheep and cattle station.
2138. What distance is it from Gulgong? To this end of the station it is about 20 miles.
2139. Where is your market for stock? Mudgee chiefly, and Sydney.
2140. Do you truck your sheep and cattle from Mudgee to Sydney? Yes.
2141. Would the construction of a railway beyond Gulgong, towards Coonamble, be of advantage to your station? Yes.
2142. You would utilize the railway for the conveyance of stock to market direct from the station? Yes.
2143. Do you send a large quantity of wool to Sydney? Yes.
2144. Can you give an idea as to the number of bales or their weight? Last year we sent something like 200 bales.
2145. What quantity of stock did you send? About 100 head of bullocks and 1,000 sheep. We have disposed of some in and around the district.
2146. What is the area of your station? 40,000 acres.
2147. How much of freehold? About 3,000 acres.
2148. Have there been many selectors on your station? Yes; all the resumed area available for agricultural purposes has been taken up.
2149. Have you carried on any agriculture on the station? Only a small portion.
2150. Has it been successful? Yes.
2151. Is there plenty of water on the area you hold under freehold? Yes; but dams have to be constructed. Water can be obtained by sinking about 14 feet. By doing that we had permanent water during the drought.
2152. So that there is everything to induce an agricultural settlement, in the event of means of reaching a market being given? Yes.
2153. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Your station is in the Central Division? Yes.
2154. Are all the resumed areas about there settled? The great portion of them are.
2155. As the leasehold areas are now locked up for five years extra, it will be ten years before any more are open for selection? Yes.
2156. So that there will not be much room out there for future selections? Not until the end of the ten years.

J. F. Bayliss,
Esq.
25 Mar., 1890.

Mr. Frederick Taylor, blacksmith, sworn and examined:—

2157. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] Where do you live? At Mundooran.
2158. How far is that from Gulgong? About 55 miles.
2159. Are you always in the habit of bringing your produce into Gulgong? Not always.
2160. Where else do you go? We look towards Coonamble, as much as possible, for our market.
2161. What do you produce? Nothing at present. I am a blacksmith, but I have been carrying on farming.
2162. Then you are not a farmer at all in the full sense of the term? No; I cultivate a little—about 15 or 16 acres.
2163. For your own accommodation? Chiefly.
2164. Where do the people of Mundooran go for their stores? Gulgong and Mudgee. They send to Sydney, too. I was in the habit of sending to Sydney for my goods.
2165. How did you get your goods? I used to get them from Sydney to Mudgee, and then have them carried out by teams.
2166. So that Mudgee and Gulgong is the natural route for you for your traffic? Yes.

Mr. F. Taylor.
25 Mar., 1890.

2167.

- Mr. F. Taylor. 2167. Is that the case with all the settlers around Mundooran? Yes, within a certain radius. When you get further out, you find they go to Dubbo, because they are much nearer and have a better road.
- 25 Mar., 1890. 2168. Is much farming carried on out there? Yes, a good deal.
- 2169-70. In wheat? Yes; wheat, hay, and corn. There is not so much corn grown, because there is no market for it, excepting at Coonamble; and there is not sufficient consumption in the Coonamble district to warrant much to be grown.
2171. What do you think is the area of the wheat cultivation? Within 5 miles of Mundooran, from 2,000 to 3,000 acres.
2172. Have there been many new settlers out there lately? Not a great many. Of course people in that part of the country find it is of very little use growing grain, as they have no market. One year I grew 100 tons of hay, and cut it for chaff. I sent part of it to Coonamble, and sold parts of it in the neighbourhood. My wheat I sent to Mudgee. I had to pay 15d. a bushel to cart it to Mudgee.
2173. What did you get for it in Mudgee? 3s. 3d. for part of it, and 3s. 9d. for the other part.
2174. Would it pay you to send your wheat in from Mundooran to Gulgong, if a railway were constructed to Gulgong? Yes.
2175. You think wheat growing at Mundooran would not be a great success? It would be a success, provided there were some way of getting rid of it. Within the last three years a mill has been erected there. Previous to that, some of the farmers only grew about 100 to 200 bushels of wheat, and this year they have grown about 1,000 or 1,500 bushels. The consequence is that the mill cannot make use of all the wheat, and they are compelled to carry it away, paying as much as 10d. and 1s. a bushel to have it taken to Coonabarabran for disposal.
2176. What do they do with the flour ground at Mundooran? They send it to Coonamble, and supply the neighbourhood and district, Walgett, and so on.
2177. So that if a railway were taken out that way, they would not be very great patrons of it? They would be likely to become so, because instead of a man growing 500 bushels, as he does now, he would grow 2,000 bags. The land in that part of the country, on the Castlereagh, and through the Warranbungle Mountains, is mostly fitted for it.
2178. You think they would go in for a more extended cultivation? By far. Several settlers have come there within the last two or three years from Victoria. When they came there they spoke of going into wheat growing largely; but when they got one season's produce on hand they found they had no market. They were, therefore, compelled to reduce their growing to smaller quantities—to what they could get rid of.
2179. What size were the holdings out there usually? From 40 acres to about 640 acres.
2180. But you could take up 2,560 acres? No.
2181. You are in the Central Division, are you not? Yes.
2182. You can, by law, take up 2,560 acres? Yes, *bona-fide*.
2183. But a man could not possibly live on 40 acres out at Mundooran? Not in wheat or corn growing.
2184. I suppose the 40-acre holders are shearers, or men working on the roads, or engaged in fencing? Yes.
2185. Are there any resumed areas occupied there? No.
2186. Is there ample room for settlement out there, even though the leasehold areas will not be thrown open for ten years? Yes; there is plenty of land in the resumed areas. A large amount of land has been taken up towards the mountains.
2187. *Mr. Humphery.*] What is paid for carriage between Mundooran and Coonamble? I have paid 4s., 3s., and 3s. 6d. 3s. is the lowest I have ever paid, and that was with carriers who were going on to Coonamble about the time of the wool season. I have paid 4s. 6d. for chaff.
2188. For what quantity? Per cwt. I have paid from £3 to £4 per ton. I would like to say, with reference to a statement which has been made as to the quantity of stock trucked at Mudgee, that an investigation was recently held at Mundooran in regard to a bridge. Mr. Gilliatt came up and took evidence in reference to the disputed bridge. We collected the signatures of sheep-holders in the neighbourhood, on the western side of the Warranbungle Mountains. Something like 200,000 or 300,000 sheep have crossed the river at Mundooran backwards and forwards within twelve months.

William R. Bentzen, Esq., bank manager, sworn and examined:—

- W. R. Bentzen, Esq.
5 Mar., 1890
2189. *Mr. Humphery.*] What is your position? Manager of the Joint Stock Bank.
2190. How many years have you been in this district? Two.
2191. Have you any objection to state the number of farmers transacting business with your bank? Between fifty and sixty.
2192. *Mr. Hurley.*] Can you say whether the farmers are in a healthy financial position or otherwise? They are in a very good position.
2193. In a very fair prosperous position? Yes. I may add that the rents for this month, in this district, including Cassilis, and from the selectors out Tallewang way, will amount to about £1,000.
2194. They have no difficulty in finding their rents? No.
2195. Can you say whether your deposits from the farming population have increased during the last few years? Yes.
2196. Can you give us an idea as to what percentage of increase there has been? No; I could not.
2197. Have they doubled themselves? I do not suppose they have.
2198. But they are on the increase? Yes.
2199. *Chairman.*] What quantity of gold have you bought within the last twelve months? About 1,000 oz.
2200. Where does it come from principally? Home Rule.
2201. Is the largest portion from Home Rule? No; Gulgong, and the surrounding district. We buy it in small quantities all over the district.

Mr.

Mr. Alfred Cross, common ranger, sworn and examined :—

Mr. A. Cross.
25 Mar., 1890.

2202. *Mr. Hurley.*] What are you? Common ranger.
 2203. Have you been long in the district? Nineteen years.
 2204. What is the acreage of the common? 36,000 acres.
 2205. The common, of course, is used by persons living in Gulgong and district? Yes.
 2206. Have you any idea as to the suitability of land for agriculture? Yes.
 2207. Is it adapted for agriculture? Yes; most of it is very good land.
 2208. Have you heard of any persons desirous of securing homesteads upon it? Any amount.
 2209. You believe they would seize the opportunity of securing the land for making homes upon it? Yes.
 2210. Have you any knowledge of the district beyond Gulgong? Not a great deal.
 2211. Have you been out to Coonamble or Walgett? Yes; but it is many years ago.
 2212. Have you any knowledge of the gold-field reserve? Yes; parts of it.
 2213. Can you say whether the soil there is adapted for agriculture? Yes.
 2214. A large area? Yes.
 2215. One-third of it? About that, or a little more.
 2216. Have you been engaged in mining at all? A little.
 2217. Have you heard that the gold-field reserve is likely to prove beneficial to the mining class? No; but I have heard a little rumour about silver mines out at Denison Town.
 2218. There is no probability of the immediate opening up of any fresh mines on the gold-field reserve? I am not aware of it.
 2219. Can you say whether a railway constructed to the west *via* Gulgong would prove productive to the people? I think it would.
 2220. It would give an impetus to farming? Yes.
 2221. It would open up new markets, and would be likely to lead to increased population and the development of various industries? Yes.
 2222. Can you give an idea as to the quantity of stock on the common? Between 800 and 900 head.
 2223. Do you include horses, cows, and goats? I do not include the goats, but horses, sheep, and cattle.
 2224. *Chairman.*] I understood you to say there are 36,000 acres in the common? Yes. I wish to make a remark in reference to the number of travelling stock passing over the common, bound for Sydney.
 2225. Do you make a charge upon the travelling stock passing through? No.
 2226. Do you take an account of the number which pass over? Yes.
 2227. What number pass there in twelve months? In 1887, nearly 200,000 sheep and cattle passed.
 2228. How many passed in 1889? I have no account.
 2229. Why did you not keep an account for other years? It was simply because I had to furnish the Trustees with a report. After I had supplied them with a report for some years, it appeared to me to be unnecessary, and I did not continue it.
 2230. *Mr. Humphery.*] For how many years did you keep the record? About three years.
 2231. What number of stock passed during 1885 and 1886? I have misplaced my book. I could only find the record for 1887.
 2232. Would it be greater or less during those years? About the same—about 200,000 each year.
 2233. Were they bound for the Sydney market? Not all.
 2234. Could you tell us whether they were put into railway trucks at Mudgee, or whether they went by road? Most of them were trucked at Mudgee.
 2235. How do you know? From what the drovers said.
 2236. The greater portion were trucked there? About one-third. The rest were trucked at Rylstone, Wallerawang, and other places.
 2237. Do you think those which were trucked at Mudgee would have been trucked at Gulgong if the railway had been constructed? Yes.

Mr. James Curran, cordial manufacturer, sworn and examined :—

Mr.
J. Curran.
25 Mar., 1890.

2238. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What are you? I keep a cordial factory and a farm.
 2239. Where? Between here and Springfield.
 2240. How many acres have you? 200 in one paddock—300 altogether.
 2241. Do you cultivate largely? I used to do so; but have not done much last year.
 2242. Why? On account of the high rate of carriage to Mudgee.
 2243. What did you grow? Wheat and hay.
 2244. Which is your market? Either here or Mudgee.
 2245. I suppose you would look for your market to the west if a railway were constructed out there? Yes.
 2246. What do you average per acre in a good season? This year I got 30 bushels.
 2247. How many acres did you cultivate? About 30. I cut 5 or 6 acres for hay, and I have 24 acres left for wheat.
 2248. And that yielded 30 bushels per acre? I got 195 bags of wheat from it.
 2249. Is your land better than the ordinary run of land about here? About the same.
 2250. You think that is what good land would produce in this district in fair seasons? I believe it would.
 2251. Have you sold your wheat yet? Yes.
 2252. What did you get for it? 2s. 10d.
 2253. In Gulgong? Yes; I have got about 100 acres cleared and ready for wheat, but the market is low, and in consequence of the high carriage to Mudgee I will wait until I get a better market.
 2254. *Mr. Hurley.*] Where do you carry on your trade? In the town.
 2255. Do you do a large trade? Middling. I used to do a large trade.
 2256. Do you employ many men? Two or three; it depends on business.
 2257. *Chairman.*] Are you an original selector. Did you take up the land originally? Yes; between here and Springfield.

Mr.

Mr. Thomas Frame Fletcher, mining engineer, sworn and examined :—

- Mr. T. F. Fletcher.
25 Mar., 1890.
2258. *Mr. Hurley.*] What is your occupation? Mining engineer.
2259. Have you been long in the district? Eight years.
2260. Are you in a position to tell the Committee anything concerning the mining industry? I have formed a high opinion of the future of this place in regard to the working of the deep leads. I have been to London twice, and I have succeeded in inducing the English mining people to try this place in a straightforward manner. At the present time I am representing a syndicate, who have underwritten a company in London, with a capital of £17,500. We have now laid out close on £3,000. I have a considerable amount of money under my control in the bank.
2261. Have you expended £3,000 in the Gulgong district? About £2,500 up to date.
2262. Where? In Rouse's paddock. I took home a lease of 500 acres?
2263. Of reef? No, alluvial ground. My object is to explore the deep ground—the extension of those reefs which have been so rich at the source.
2264. Can you say in what way the mining interests of this district will be stimulated or improved by the construction of the proposed railway? It will give facilities for traffic. If I had been, when in London, in a position to say that there was a railway to the place, people would have listened to me more freely.
2265. It would only have been useful to you in connection with any representations you might have made to people desirous of investing? It would give increased facilities for mining, and would enable machinery and material, &c., to be conveyed. There are 1,750 acres of this district leased in my name, in London, and we are looking forward to employing about 1,000 men very soon.
2266. What amount do you think it is probable you will expend in this district? The capital I have for this one lease is £17,500.
2267. How many men do you employ? Only twelve at present. I am putting in machinery. At the end of the week I shall go into shafts and employ twenty men.
2268. Have you purchased the machinery? Yes.
2269. Has it been delivered to you? Yes.
2270. You have confidence in the future of this district? I have great confidence, and I have gone for it straight. I need not tell you what Mr. Wilkinson and Mr. Slee said in their Blue Book. Backed up by that I have succeeded in raising money in London. I have played entirely from my own bat, and have had nothing to do with Sydney or Melbourne people.
2271. Do you not think you are favourably situated in comparison with other fields in the country, for reaching market or obtaining machinery? Because one district is badly off, there is no reason why another should be.
2272. Are you not better situated than any other gold-field in the country for getting your machinery? Possibly.
2273. You have a good road nearly all the distance to the mine? Of course the freight would be lower by rail than otherwise.
2274. Can you point out a gold-field in the country which is better situated for reaching market than the one you represent? No.
2275. Therefore, in the matter of access to market, and obtaining machinery, you stand in a better position than any other place in the country? Yes; all the better for Gulgong. All we want is cheaper transit, and facility of intercourse.
2276. But you do not deal with any market? We are looking forward to importing a large amount of machinery. This matter is not altogether in one nest. These deep leads are branching in various directions. There are now three companies formed at home. I am revealing my hand to a certain extent, but if the affair goes ahead, there is no reason why we should not float more. A great deal depends on the success of the first, but in the meantime the capital is subscribed.
2277. You are not selfish in character? Not more than is general.
2278. Is the country of a virgin character? Entirely, and through basalt.
2279. So that you are merely speaking theoretically in regard to probable developments? Just as theoretically as men like Mr. Slee and Mr. Wilkinson. I have been mining for thirty years.
2280. But you have not proved the country? Yes, we have. We have gold at both ends, and the supposition is, that there is gold in the middle. I believe the connecting link is in the middle.
2281. You generally find "where it is, there it is"? Not here.
2282. Have you any idea how much gold has been taken out of this district—can you tell us? We have had upwards of 18 tons weight of alluvial gold, certified by the banks and the escort returns.
2283. Do you look upon the district as having a greater mining future before it than it has had in the past? Yes. It will require capital and combination. It will be wages to the men, and success or heavy loss to the capitalists.
2284. You employ eight men on 1,700 acres at present? No, I have eight men working on one lease—carpenters and engineers, who are finishing work. We have sunk a shaft through basalt, at an expense of £1,000. Whilst sinking I had seventeen men working.
2285. How is this land held? Freehold property from Mr. George Rouse, of Guntawang. Then I have leases, taken from the Government, of 100 acres.
2286. Do you look upon yourself as a land monopolist? No; I want to explore the country. It is a straightforward trial, and I believe we shall get our money back with profit, and that it will employ labour.
2287. What is the class of machinery you have now? Pumping, winding, and driving machinery,—the ordinary alluvial mining machinery.
2288. Are you likely to give employment to some hundreds of people within the course of the next four months? In the course of the next six months I may have fifty men in one place and fifty in another. The areas I have secured are miles apart.
2289. *Mr. O'Sullivan.*] What indications have you had that you are successful? Because I am close to where the last gold was obtained, and because of the geological configuration of the ground. The out-crop of the basalt shows the indications.
2290. Are these deep leads anything like the deep leads in Victoria? Yes, partly. Ballarat halted for a time, after being successful, and then they worked favourably under the basalt.
2291. Are you alluding now to the Baldanabin? I am speaking generally.

2292. After years of hard work they proved great successes? Yes.

2293. And paid handsomely? Yes.

2294. And you think you have a similar country, which is likely to have a similar result? It is upon that ground that the London people are finding all this capital.

Mr.
T. F. Fletcher.
25 Mar., 1890.

Thomas Kennedy, Esqⁿ, sworn and further examined:—

2295. *Chairman.*] You have heard the statement of Mr. Rouse—that, in his opinion, the line to Dubbo should not go near Gulgong, but at the back of the Guntawang Estate. Do you know anything of that survey? I have been on the road, and I know it pretty well.

T. Kennedy,
Esq.
25 Mar., 1890.

2296. Would it be an easier country from the river, than the line under the consideration of the Committee? The summit level would not be so great. It would be easier to construct.

2297. With easier earthworks? No; the earthworks are not heavy upon this line through Gulgong.

2298. The distance, I presume, would be shorter than going through Gulgong. To go through Gulgong it is necessary to make a detour is it not? Yes, I should say about 1½ mile. This would be only in case of going to Dubbo; if to Coonamble, the distance would only be about 1 mile.

2299. Do you think that detour is justified with the view of giving Gulgong railway communication? I think so.

2300. You think that you are justified in going 1½ mile further, for the purpose of giving direct access by railway to Gulgong? Yes.

2301. *Mr. Humphery.*] What would be the difference in the cost of construction, if the line were taken by way of Guntawang? It would only be the same per mile. It would make £8,000 or £10,000 difference.

2302. Would the compensation to be paid be very great if a line were constructed through Gulgong, near the Magazine? No; there are only a few paddocks between Gulgong and Reedy Creek.

2303. So that the probability is that £12,000 would cover the increased cost of construction? I think so.

2304. And give facilities to the residents of the town of Gulgong? Yes.

2305. What would be the cost of constructing a branch line from Gulgong to meet this line if it were constructed as suggested from the Guntawang Road? Between £5,000 and £6,000 a mile.

2306. What would be the cost of the branch line to cut the suggested line past Guntawang? £15,000 to £20,000.

2307. So that it would cost more to construct a branch line from here to Guntawang than to carry the line as proposed through Gulgong? Yes.

2308. *Chairman.*] If the line Mr. Rouse referred to were constructed, with a branch to Gulgong, it would be much steeper than 1 in 80;—where is your summit level? About 3½ miles from here. They have got 1 in 40 on the trial survey by way of Guntawang.

2309. Did we understand you, when giving evidence previously, to say that the survey to Wellington, which you are engaged on, is likely to be a somewhat difficult one? Yes; 15 or 16 miles will be through rough country.

2310. Necessitating tunnels to keep the grades you have on the other line? Yes; at least two tunnels.

Mr. John Tuxford, sworn and further examined:—

2311. *Chairman.*] I understand you desire to amend certain portions of your evidence? Yes, in regard to the value of land. I understood Mr. O'Sullivan was referring to outside land. I stated that it was worth the Government price—that is the selectors' price; but of course I was not aware of the inside land.

Mr.
J. Tuxford.
25 Mar., 1890.

2312. What do you call outside, and what do you call inside? It is outside land at a distance of 2½ miles or 3 miles.

2313. You think it would be worth £1 per acre—the Government price? Yes.

2314. What do you think the land inside would be worth? From £2 to £3 per acre.

2315. I suppose there is not much of that inland left? Yes, there is a good deal.

2316. And the outside land is worth £1 per acre, and the inside land £2 to £3 an acre? Yes.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Mudgee to Gulgong.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

APPENDIX.

A.

STATEMENT OF PASSENGER AND PARCELS TRAFFIC BETWEEN MUDGEE AND GULGONG, FROM 1ST JANUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1889.

John Barry's Line of Mail Coaches.

1889.				1889.			
Date.	Passengers	Fares.	Parcels.	Date.	Passengers	Fares.	Parcels.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.
January 1	.....	.....	0 11 6	March 8	3	0 14 0	0 1 0
" 2	.....	.....	0 12 0	" 9	4	1 0 0	0 1 0
" 3	2	0 12 0	0 1 0	" 12	2	0 10 0	0 1 0
" 4	6	1 16 0	.....	" 13	1	0 5 0	.....
" 5	5	1 5 0	0 11 6	" 14	1	0 5 0	0 2 0
" 6	2	0 9 0	.....	" 15	.....	.....	0 2 0
" 7	1	0 6 0	0 1 0	" 18	2	0 10 0	.....
" 8	2	0 12 0	.....	" 19	2	0 10 0	.....
" 9	5	1 8 6	0 6 9	" 20	.....	.....	0 4 8
" 10	5	1 10 6	0 8 0	" 21	1	0 5 0	0 2 0
" 11	1	0 4 0	0 1 3	" 22	.....	.....	0 3 6
" 12	1	0 6 0	0 6 0	" 23	1	0 4 0	.....
" 13	1	0 6 0	0 2 0	" 24	.....	.....	0 2 0
" 14	3	0 18 0	0 1 0	" 26	.....	.....	0 2 0
" 15	1	0 3 0	0 5 5	" 27	1	0 5 0	.....
" 16	6	0 18 0	0 4 6	" 28	.....	.....	0 4 7
" 17	1	0 3 0	0 2 6	" 30	1	0 5 0	0 8 0
" 18	.....	.....	0 8 3	" 31	1	0 5 0	0 1 6
" 19	1	0 3 0	0 1 6		33	7 3 6	2 2 9
" 20	.....	.....	0 1 1	April 2	.....	.....	0 1 0
" 21	.....	.....	0 1 0	" 3	.....	.....	0 2 0
" 23	.....	.....	0 2 0	" 4	.....	.....	0 1 0
" 24	.....	.....	0 5 7	" 5	1	0 5 0	0 6 0
" 25	5	0 15 0	.....	" 6	2	0 10 0	0 2 6
" 26	6	0 19 6	0 1 0	" 7	2	0 10 0	.....
" 27	1	0 3 0	.....	" 9	1	0 5 0	.....
" 28	1	0 3 0	.....	" 10	.....	.....	0 7 11
" 29	3	0 9 0	.....	" 11	2	0 10 0	.....
" 30	.....	.....	0 2 4	" 12	1	0 5 0	0 4 8
" 31	2	0 6 0	0 2 0	" 13	.....	.....	0 5 0
	61	13 15 6	4 19 2	" 14	1	0 5 0	.....
February 1	3	0 8 0	0 3 0	" 16	.....	.....	0 1 6
" 2	.....	.....	0 3 6	" 17	2	0 10 0	0 8 7
" 3	4	0 11 0	.....	" 18	2	0 7 6	.....
" 5	2	0 4 6	0 2 1	" 19	.....	.....	0 4 0
" 7	1	0 3 0	0 5 9	" 21	3	0 15 0	.....
" 8	2	0 6 0	0 6 1	" 22	4	0 18 0	.....
" 9	3	0 7 6	0 2 0	" 24	5	1 5 0	0 2 1
" 11	1	0 3 0	.....	" 25	2	0 10 0	0 2 0
" 12	5	0 13 0	0 2 6	" 26	.....	.....	0 4 10
" 13	1	0 3 0	0 3 3	" 27	.....	.....	0 2 0
" 14	3	0 9 0	0 3 1	" 28	.....	.....	0 4 10
" 15	.....	.....	0 1 10	" 30	.....	.....	0 5 0
" 16	1	0 3 0	0 2 1		28	6 15 6	3 4 11
" 17	3	0 9 0	0 1 0	May 1	1	0 5 0	0 2 0
" 19	.....	.....	0 5 0	" 2	.....	.....	0 4 0
" 20	1	0 3 0	0 1 1	" 3	1	0 5 0	0 3 6
" 21	5	0 12 0	0 2 7	" 4	1	0 5 0	0 11 1
" 22	1	0 3 0	.....	" 5	2	0 10 0	0 1 0
" 24	.....	.....	0 3 6	" 7	2	0 10 0	0 1 4
" 28	2	0 6 0	.....	" 8	7	1 10 0	0 4 0
	38	5 4 0	2 8 4	" 9	.....	.....	0 1 4
March 1	3	0 9 0	0 7 6	" 10	1	0 5 0	0 1 0
" 3	5	0 15 0	.....	" 11	.....	.....	0 8 6
" 6	1	0 5 0	.....	" ..	4	0 15 6	0 6 6
" 7	4	0 16 6	.....	" 14	2	0 10 0	0 4 9

1889.				1889.			
Date.	Passengers	Fares.	Parcels.	Date.	Passengers	Fares.	Parcels.
May 15		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	August 22	1	0 5 0	0 3 1
" 16			0 1 6	" 22	1	0 5 0	
" 17	2	0 10 0	0 2 6	" 23	2	0 10 0	0 1 1
" 18	4	1 0 0	0 10 6	" 24			0 7 0
" 20			0 2 0	" 25			0 1 0
" 21	1	0 5 0	0 1 0	" 26			0 1 0
" 22	1	0 5 0	0 9 7	" 28*			0 3 6
" 23			0 7 0	" 29			0 2 6
" 24	4	1 2 6	0 6 6	" 30			0 1 6
" 26			0 2 6	" 31			0 1 0
" 27	1	0 5 0			13	2 15 6	2 12 5
" 28			0 4 6				
" 29	2	0 10 0					
" 30			0 9 0				
" 31			0 2 0	September 1			0 5 3
	36	8 13 0	5 10 7	" 4	1	0 5 0	0 9 6
June 1	2	0 10 0	0 2 0	" 5			0 1 0
" 2	2	0 10 0		" 6	1	0 5 0	0 3 3
" 3	1	0 5 0		" 7	1	0 2 6	0 6 0
" 4			0 4 6	" 8	1	0 5 0	0 7 6
" 5	1	0 5 0	0 2 0	" 10			0 2 1
" 6			0 2 6	" 11			0 3 7
" 7	1	0 5 0		" 12	1	0 6 6	0 6 10
" 8			0 7 6	" 13	2	0 10 0	
" 9	1	0 5 0	0 1 0	" 14	1	0 5 0	0 2 4
" 10	1	0 5 0		" 16			0 1 0
" 11	3	0 15 0		" 17			0 3 7
" 12	2	0 8 0	0 4 1	" 18			0 4 0
" 13			0 1 1	" 20			0 5 3
" 14	2	0 10 0	0 1 6	" 21	2	0 10 0	0 3 3
" 15	2	0 10 0	0 3 6	" 22			0 1 1
" 16	1	0 5 0	0 1 0	" 24	1	0 3 0	0 4 10
" 19			0 6 11	" 25	3	0 11 0	0 3 0
" 22	6	1 6 6	0 7 0	" 26	3	0 15 0	
" 23	1	0 4 0	0 1 0	" 28	1	0 5 0	0 3 3
" 25			0 2 0	" 30	1	0 4 0	0 7 6
" 26	3	0 14 0	0 11 9		19	4 7 0	4 4 1
" 27			0 5 6				
" 28	1	0 5 0	0 2 0	October 1			0 1 3
" 29	1	0 4 0	0 8 1	" 2	3	0 12 6	0 2 6
	31	7 6 6	3 14 11	" 3			0 2 8
July 1			0 1 6	" 4	3	0 15 0	0 3 0
" 2	2	0 7 6	0 3 6	" 6	2	0 10 0	0 1 0
" 3			0 3 9	" 8	1	0 5 0	
" 4	1	0 5 0	0 4 11	" 9			0 0 9
" 5			0 6 0	" 10	1	0 4 0	0 2 6
" 6	2	0 10 0	0 6 6	" 12	1	0 5 0	0 4 0
" 7	1	0 5 0	0 3 10	" 13	3	0 10 6	0 4 11
" 9	2	0 10 0		" 15	1	0 4 0	0 4 6
" 10	1	0 5 0	0 2 0	" 16	2	0 10 0	0 2 0
" 11	1	0 5 0	0 2 7	" 17	3	0 11 6	0 9 9
" 12			0 3 7	" 18			0 1 0
" 13	3	0 13 6		" 19			0 1 4
" 14			0 2 0	" 20	1	0 1 0	0 3 0
" 16	2	0 10 0	0 5 7	" 22			0 2 1
" 17			0 6 6	" 23			0 5 5
" 18	2	0 10 0	0 2 0	" 24	2	0 6 6	0 2 0
" 20	1	0 5 0	0 4 3	" 25			0 6 9
" 21			0 1 6	" 26	1	0 5 0	0 3 0
" 22			0 3 6	" 27	1	0 5 0	0 4 0
" 23	2	0 10 0	0 11 0	" 28			0 2 6
" 24			0 9 0	" 29	2	0 10 0	0 3 0
" 25			0 4 10	" 30	1	0 5 0	0 2 6
" 26	2	0 10 0	0 5 2	" 31	2	0 10 0	0 2 0
" 27	2	0 10 0	0 3 1		30	6 10 0	3 17 5
" 30			0 13 3				
" 31			0 1 0	November 1	1	0 5 0	0 2 0
	24	5 16 0	5 10 10	" 2			0 3 6
August 1	1	0 5 0		" 3	1	0 5 0	0 4 3
" 2			0 6 3	" 4	2	0 10 0	0 6 0
" 3	3	0 15 0	0 3 6	" 5	1	0 5 0	0 4 0
" 4	1	0 5 0		" 6			0 3 6
" 5	1	0 1 6		" 7	1	0 5 0	0 3 0
" 6			0 1 0	" 8			0 4 3
" 10			0 5 7	" 9	2	0 10 0	0 6 0
" 14			0 3 1	" 10	1	0 5 0	0 2 3
" 15	1	0 5 0	0 4 0	" 11			0 3 6
" 16	2	0 4 0	0 1 3	" 12	1	0 5 0	0 4 0
" 18			0 3 0	" 13			0 4 2
" 20			0 3 1	" 14	1	0 5 0	0 3 9
				" 15	2	0 10 0	
				" 16	1	0 5 0	0 5 0
				" 17			0 6 0
				" 18	2	0 10 0	0 4 0
				" 19	1	0 5 0	0 3 0

Date.	Passengers	Fares.	Parcels.	Date.	Passengers	Fares.	Parcels.
1889.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	1889.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
November 20			0 2 0	December 9	3	0 10 0	0 6 0
" 21	1	0 5 0		" 11			0 3 6
" 22			0 5 3	" 12			0 2 4
" 23	2	0 10 0	0 6 0	" 13			0 1 0
" 24			0 8 3	" 14	2	0 10 0	0 11 3
" 25	1	0 5 0	0 3 9	" 16	2	0 7 6	0 2 0
" 26	1	0 5 0		" 17			0 7 1
" 27			0 4 3	" 18			0 12 6
" 28			0 3 0	" 20	1	0 4 0	0 2 6
" 29			0 3 1	" 20	3	0 12 6	0 4 7
" 29	2	0 12 6	0 1 0	" 21	1	0 5 0	1 12 0
	24	6 2 6	5 8 9	" 22	3	0 10 0	
December 1	3	0 11 0	0 2 0	" 24	3	0 15 0	0 5 6
" 2			0 1 0	" 25	1	0 5 0	0 6 8
" 3	1	0 5 0		" 26			0 1 3
" 4	2	0 10 0	0 2 0	" 27	4	1 0 0	
" 5			0 3 0	" 28			1 3 10
" 6			0 7 0	" 29	3	0 12 6	
" 7			0 2 1	" 30			0 1 0
" 8	1	0 5 0	0 1 0	" 31	1	0 1 6	0 9 7
					34	7 4 0	7 10 8

Recapitulation.

Mudgee to Gulgong and intermediate stations.

	Passengers.	Fares.	Carriage of Parcels.
1889.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
January	61	13 15 6	4 19 2
February	38	5 4 0	2 8 4
March	33	7 3 6	2 2 9
April	28	6 15 6	3 4 11
May	36	8 13 0	5 10 7
June	31	7 6 6	3 14 11
July	24	5 16 0	5 11 10
August	13	2 15 6	2 12 5
September	19	4 7 0	4 4 1
October	30	6 10 0	3 17 5
November	24	6 2 6	5 8 9
December	34	7 4 0	7 9 8
	371	81 13 0	51 4 10
			81 13 0
Buggy hire, &c., to and from Gulgong			132 17 10
			30 0 0
Total			£162 17 10

Gulgong to Mudgee and intermediate stations.

	Passengers.	Fares.	Parcels.
1889.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
January	66	15 6 0	3 8 6
February	40	5 16 0	1 16 0
March	45	8 14 0	2 1 6
April	26	6 13 0	2 11 0
May	31	8 2 0	2 3 0
June	34	8 13 0	3 12 6
July	27	6 11 0	4 12 6
August	22	5 9 6	2 14 0
September	21	4 19 0	3 16 0
October	31	7 4 0	3 2 0
November	25	6 13 6	4 18 9
December	28	6 8 0	2 13 0
	396	90 14 0	37 8 9
			90 14 0
Total			£128 2 9

	Passengers.	Fares.	Parcels.
Mudgee to Gulgong	371	£ s. d. 81 13 0	£ s. d. 51 4 10
Gulgong to Mudgee	396	90 14 0	37 8 9
Buggy hire to and from Gulgong		172 7 0	88 13 7
			30 0 0
			172 7 0
Total			£201 0 7

B.

[To Evidence of Charles Zimmer, Esq.]

NUMBER OF FARMS SITUATED WITHIN AN AREA OF TEN MILES AROUND GULGONG RAILWAY STATION.

1 Samuel Blackman.	64 Michael Rogers.	128 Charles Wilson.
2 Edwin Bond.	65 Frederick Ruith.	129 James Isbester.
3 E. M. Bowman.	66 Gustave Rothe.	130 C. Cluff.
4 Joseph Broglio.	67 Richard Rouse.	131 Thomas Cluff.
5 Robert Casburn.	68 Edwin Rouse.	132 John Copeland.
6 Vincent Charivini.	69 Philip Schneider.	133 Thomas Copeland.
7 John Colgan.	70 Martin Schneider.	134 Dick Martin.
8 Patrick Considine.	71 Jacob Schneider.	135 James Cole.
9 Dennis Cooney.	72 John Searle.	136 Patrick Healey.
10 Joseph Crane.	73 John Smith.	137 James Kennedy.
11 James Curran.	74 James Smith.	138 E. O'Connell.
12 James Curren, junr.	75 George Smith.	139 Philip Flood.
13 Thomas Donoghue.	76 Jesse Smith.	140 Patrick Flood.
14 Michael Donoghue.	77 John Smith.	141 Phil Morgan.
15 Michael Duggan.	78 Thomas Smith.	142 M. Connors.
16 Francis Duggan.	79 John Snelson.	143 James Sharpe.
17 Hugh Duggan.	80 George Stott.	144 J. Honeysette.
18 John Egan.	81 John Stott.	145 John Clarke.
19 Patrick Egan.	82 Patrick Sweeney.	146 J. Holly.
20 Edward Farry.	83 John Tuxford.	147 Frank Morgan.
21 George Farthing.	84 Henry Upham.	148 John Mayberry.
22 William Finnigan.	85 John Wall.	149 W. Mayberry.
23 Henry Fitchen.	86 William Wesley.	150 Conrad Stoll.
24 Patrick W. Dunn.	87 John Williams.	151 — Hanslow.
25 Arthur F. Garling.	88 Joseph Williams.	152 B. Newson.
26 John Glazier.	89 Christopher Williardt.	153 Philip Morgan.
27 Peter Grady.	90 Joseph Williardt.	154 Thomas Freeman.
28 John Griffin.	91 John Winters.	155 George Vittrell.
29 James Gudgaon.	92 Thomas H. Woods.	156 R. Rouse, junr.
30 Arthur Crawford Garling.	93 John G. Woorth.	157 Thomas Tattersall.
31 John Glynn.	94 John G. Woorth, junr.	158 John Callaghan.
32 John O'Halloran.	95 Samuel Bond.	159 George Rouse.
33 Patrick O'Halloran.	96 Henry See.	160 James Cunningham.
34 Michael Hickey.	97 Mrs. Carr.	161 Henry Cunningham.
35 Michael Hickey (Home Rule).	98 — Campbell, senr.	162 John Cunningham.
36 James Hollow.	99 — Campbell, junr.	163 George Rush.
37 William Hutchinson.	100 J. Davis.	164 — M'Goldric.
38 Mrs. Hutchinson, senr.	101 C. Maul.	165 Thomas Wright.
39 William Hawkins.	102 — Graham.	166 William Hughes.
40 Thomas Isbester.	103-4 J. Clarke.	167 James Gardner.
41 Abraham Kent.	105 Thomas Taylor.	168 William Lett.
42 Joseph Cameron.	106 William Taylor.	169 Mathew Homer, junr.
43 Joseph Cameron, junr.	107 John Taylor.	170 George Leeson.
44 Thomas Letheren.	108 Mrs. Cook.	171 John Golden.
45 Richard Letheren.	109 Joseph Wade.	172 John Drew.
46 Arthur M'Cauley.	110 Charles Wade.	173 Fred Cable.
47 Bernhard M'Cauley.	111 William Wade.	174 George Black.
48 Dominic M'Cauley.	112 Thomas Wade.	175 Richard Black.
49 Montague Marks.	113 Mrs. G. Spratford.	176 John Darwell.
50 Hugh Mathews.	114 James Buckley.	177 E. Webb.
51 David Miln.	115 W. Jackson.	178 W. Riley.
52 John Thomas Milne.	116 Thomas Jackson.	179 E. Kosbey.
53 James Miskin.	117 George Jackson.	180 H. Woods.
54 John T. Moir.	118 Thomas Butler.	181 Bernhard Noughten.
55 Patrick Morrissey.	119 William Watts.	182 B. M'Coy.
56 Fred Neff.	120 Sam Bennett.	183 W. Jones.
57 John W. Norris.	121 James Grimshaw.	184 Percy Lowe.
58 Sydney Norris.	122 — Burrows.	185 George Sager.
59 Owen O'Brien.	123 — Mansfield.	186 John A. Campbell.
60 Edward Payne.	124 C. Artz.	187 Benjamin L. Campbell.
61 Charles Ed. Payne.	125 James Murphy.	188 Antonio Gimelli.
62 John Rigg.	126 — Dowera.	
63 Terence Rogers.	127 James Wilson.	

C.

[To Evidence of Sergeant Steele.]

STATISTICS COLLECTED BY THE POLICE DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY, 1890.

Where collected.	Freshhold.		Under Cultivation.		Wheat.		Hay.		Other Crops
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Bushels.	Acres.	Tons.	Acres.		
Gulgong	35,329	2,637	1,854	35,260	725	987	1,058		
Denison Town	61,014	3,081	2,260	30,370	264	446	567		
Cobbora	38,356	2,225	1,145	25,190	530	708	500		
Mundooran	99,091	1,937	911	25,266	740	1,077	286		
Coolah	109,033	401	300	7,724	75	139	26		
Wellington (within 20 miles of Gulgong)	15,398	926	785	12,760	119	182	22		
Totals	358,221	11,207	7,255	136,570	2,503	3,539	2,459		

This does not include any statistics collected by Cassilis Police, embracing a large area having a trade connection with Gulgong, viz., Uarbry, Uhlán, Sportsman's Hollow, &c., extending to within 3 miles of Gulgong; also, no statistics are included from Biraganbil Estate.

C. Zimmer, Esq., Gulgong.

GEO. STEELE,
Sergeant.
STATISTICS

STATISTICS COLLECTED BY THE POLICE DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY, 1890.

Where collected.	Horses.	Sheep.	Pigs.	Cattle.
Gulgong.....	1,103	21,755	520	1,794
Denison Town	920	67,660	460	2,084
Cobbora.....	795	102,610	169	2,268
Mundooran	1,174	100,000	226	1,978
Coolah	258	485,915	207	1,104
Wellington (within 20 miles of Gulgong)	342	13,316	116	498
Totals.....	4,592	791,256	1,698	9,726

This does not include any statistics collected by Cassilis Police, embracing a large area having a trade connection with Gulgong, viz., Uarbyr, Uhlán, Sportman's Hollow, &c., extending to within 3 miles of Gulgong; also, no statistics are included from Biragambil Estate.

C. Zimmer, Esq., Gulgong.

GEO. STEELE,
Sergeant.

D.

[To Evidence of Robert Heard, Esq., Mayor of Gulgong.]

STATISTICAL INFORMATION FOR YEAR ENDING 3RD FEBRUARY, 1890.

Borough or Municipal District of Gulgong.

Estimated population	2,000
Estimated number of dwellings	380
	£ s. d.
Amount of rate levied in the pound—ordinary	0 1 0
Capital value of fee-simple of unimproved lands.....	12,000 0 0
Fair average annual rental of buildings, cultivated lands, &c., upon which rates are struck	7,780 0 0
Estimated capital value of all property in the Municipality.....	87,000 0 0
*Receipts from ordinary rates	307 17 8
Government.....	191 13 3
Other sources	13 12 6
Total receipts, exclusive of loans	513 3 5
Loans	2,000 0 0
*Expenditure—Salaries and office expenses.....	175 6 6
For public works	467 10 4
Miscellaneous	155 15 7
Interest on loans (not including interest or repayment of overdraft, which should be placed under "Miscellaneous")	60 0 0
Total expenditure	801 2 1
Assets at date of balancing (including outstanding rates and all property belonging to the Municipality, excepting streets and Municipal buildings)	2,349 4 11
Liabilities at date of balancing (excepting outstanding loans, but including overdraft, if any)	20 0 0
Outstanding loans, if any	2,000 0 0
Rate of interest, outstanding loans	6 per cent.
Total extent of roads and streets made	55 miles.
Do do unmade.....	19 "
Estimated value of made roads and streets. (This is the estimated sum which would require to be expended to construct the roads and streets in their present condition.).....	£7,800
Estimated value of Town Hall or Municipal Buildings, if the property of the Council	Leasehold.

5th March, 1890.

ROBT. W. HEARD, Mayor.

* These amounts should be exclusive of balances brought forward, deposits on contracts, bank overdrafts, &c.

[Two plans.]

1890.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

GOULBURN AND CROOKWELL RAILWAY BILL:
(MESSAGE No. 8.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 12 June, 1890.

CARRINGTON,
*Governor.**Message No. 8.*

In accordance with the provisions contained in the 54th section of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends, for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly, the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses in connection with a Bill to sanction the construction of a line of Railway from Goulburn to Crookwell.

*Government House,
Sydney, 12th June, 1890.*

1890.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

CULCAIRN TO COROWA RAILWAY BILL.

(MESSAGE No. 9.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 12 June, 1890.

CARRINGTON,
Governor.

Message No. 9.

In accordance with the provisions contained in the 54th section of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends, for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly, the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses in connection with a Bill to sanction the construction of a line of Railway from Culcairn to Corowa.

Government House,
Sydney, 12th June, 1890.

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